

Rio Laja Trail- Section 8: *Capilla de San Judas Tadeo*

Description:

The preferred trail here is on the right side of the river for all of Section 8. Signs of sand and gravel extraction here in the riverbed are profuse. The trail has often eroded into river, also demolishing agricultural fields. Section 8 of the trail ends at the poblito of Capilla de San Judas Tadeo, after 2.92 miles/ 4.67 km.

Access to trailhead parking:

Beginning at the intersection at Ventanas golf course, travel on the 51 to Dolores for roughly 9.8 miles/ 15.7 km. Take left immediately after the Puente Las Tumbas sign after passing through La Petaca. Travel dirt road and make a right about 70 yards/ 60 meters before the river. The place for parking is prominent, but be careful not to block any road.



Waypoint 1: Trailhead parking, mile 0.0/ km 0.0. GPS coordinate: 21.061, -100.803. Walk toward the river about 60 yards/ roughly 50 meters where a well-used trail is visible on the right side. The trail follows the tree line about 20-40 feet from the river. Keep trees on the right.

Trailhead parking

Waypoint 2: Fork in the trail at a concrete post at .28 miles/ .45 km. Follow a well-defined trail bordering agricultural fields to the right. At .46 miles/ .74 km, a road intersects the trail. In this area of the river we saw less extraction. The trail angles to the left and then to the right at a small arroyo. Stay high.

Waypoint 3: Modern looking white house, .65 miles/ 1.05 km. The riverbed is quite wide here. A road and trail merge, and the road becomes the trail.



Waypoint 4: At .82 miles/ 1.32 km, the trail drops to the river. The trail will leave the road. During the dry season, it is possible to walk along the edge of the river, avoiding extraction pits. The west side of the river is preferred, however, there is no distinct trail and no clear riverbed. At 1.19 miles/ 1.9 km, the trail ascends the river heading in a NNE direction. On the opposite bank fencing comes down to the riverbed making any trail impassable. Remain on the high trail through a mesquite forest. The trail takes a steep descent to the riverbed.

Waypoint 5: Trail descends steeply into river. Navigate through the riverbed it bends to the left. Finally there is a marked trail, ascending on the right riverbank, and intersecting with a road.



Waypoint 6: Collapsed stone structure in the river at 1.88 miles/ 3 km. Hike through mesquite trees then descend toward stone structure. Eventually a trail appears on the high riverbank paralleling a cultivated field on the right.

Stone structure in riverbed

Waypoint 7: Pueblito Capilla de San Judas Tadeo at 2.92 miles/4.67 km. GPS coordinate: 21.079, -100.821. Observe a suspension bridge. There is a giant tree, which makes for a nicely shaded parking underneath or picnic site. This location is 20.97 miles/ 33.6 km from the start of Section 1.

