

RT Steward Notes
March 2020

From Rabbit Road Trail Head (TH) parking approximately 12 trail miles south to US 285, 10 miles class 5, last 2 miles class 2, see below. From Rabbit TH north to REI and train depot, about 4 miles paved. During summer 24 mile round trip to US 285 and back to Rabbit TH requires two water bottles minimum.

South along RT several branch trail options are available.

About a mile south from Rabbit TH at RR crossing heading east one enters Arroyo Hondo (AH) community trail system. These trails are preferred community and guest routes across each owner's land, but they are amenable to polite mtb traffic as long as mtb always yield to pedestrians and especially horse riders. Options are not well documented nor well maintained. Definitely recommend mtb tires and sealant. I usually get lost on these circuitous trails, but eventually they cross a main paved road to help find one's way. Google maps and GPS helps in this community.

Two miles south of Rabbit TH Spur Trail (ST) heads west three miles down to community college on Richard's Blvd./Road. Averaging three percent descending grade, county made a serious blunder four or five years ago laying six inch deep pea-type gravel on this trail making it very difficult to pedal. It was a miscalculated experiment altering ST from a class 3 to class 1 lousy along some stretches. Gravel is slowly washing/migrating to one or the other side and county is very slowly trying, with only partial success, to remove gravel from worst sections. Returning back to RT is a rideable slog along some sections, but doable with mtb size rubber. From the community college heading west and south one connects to the Rancho Vistoso community paved trail system. Land west of R.Vistoso one can follow the abandoned NM North Central Railroad bed, unfortunately all on private or annual \$35 permit NM State Trust land.

Seven miles south from Rabbit TH is the Eldorado community. I've documented 25-plus kilometers of common/greenbelt 'public' dirt trails. Officially these are also preferred community and guests only, but greenbelts are not owned by individual residents. Considered yourself my guests if you stay on main greenbelt trails and NOT ride the many small connecting paths that cross onto private land. Fifty-fifty single track class 3 and bit rougher class 4, so make sure your sealant is refreshed. Eldo community is three miles wide north south and seven miles long east west. The west boundary backs onto NM State Trust land, \$35 annual permit. Parking is available on both sides of Eldorado community at junctions RT and

Avenida Vista Grande and two miles further south at junction RT and Avenida Eldorado Road.

Nine and a bit miles south from Rabbit TH is final parking area at junction RT and Spur Ranch Road. Class 5 RT ends at this junction and remaining couple miles to US 285 are class 3 and 4, which I try to maintain until county rebuilds to class 5 in the next two or three years. Warning, warning Will Robinson... If there have been recent rains I would not recommend this last RT segment. Final mile are dragons, quick sand, and thick sticky calichi mud that clogs tires, brakes, forks and rear triangle like rubber cement. The vultures circle.

However, at Spur Ranch Road intersection, if courageous, one may continue south along RT a mile. Here be a secret, rogue, social optional trail sou-west to the basin (Galisteo Basin Preserve). Land is New Moon community and trail is preferred community and guests. Crossing New Moon Overlook Road hundred meters or so one enters the north basin class 1 trail system. Going east is Eliza's Ridge, going sou-east is Cooka's Loop East, which leads to Thumb TH. North basin trails are class 1. For the wise less experienced riders some hike-a-bike is necessary through Juniper and Pinon woodland of rocks, doom, and broken bike parts.

Speaking of broken body parts... er, hike-a-bikes, I rather enjoy these HERE WE GO AGAIN SCHLEPPING MY BICYCLE respites that stretch and rest muscles, gives one pause to enjoy our southwest magnificence, and take photos. Don't forget to take photos. Exercise is exercise, yeah? 🙄