



Mountain Biking

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Southwestern
Region

*Spectacular vistas of mountains and meadows will reward cyclists who challenge the roads and trails of the **Carson National Forest**. This guide will assist you in planning a day of biking fun. Be sure to plan for emergencies and ride safely-enjoy your visit in the **Carson National Forest**!*

Rio Grande del Rancho Trail #18

Trail Length: 12.2 mile out and back

Difficulty: Easy with a few hills and a rocky section.

Other trail users: This trail is popular with horseback riders and joggers.

Finding the Trailhead:

From Taos: Go south out of town on New Mexico Highway 68 for 7 miles to NM518. Go south on NM518 for 2.8 miles to a parking pullout on the right directly across from the trailhead.

Route Description:

The beginning of the ride is the most difficult and most novice cyclists will want to walk this section. Thankfully this section is short lived, and trail mellows out to wonderful doubletrack riding that parallels NM 518 and the Rio Grande del Rancho to the west. The riding is not very difficult and passes through several arroyos on its way to Forest Road 438. The trail is well marked and easy to follow. There are several roads and trails that shoot off from the main trail. Follow the mileage cues and you will have no problem enjoying this great ride. This is a fairly long ride, so novices should take it easy and keep a nice and steady pace.

Policarpio #13 Trail

Trail Length: 14.5 miles

Difficulty: Advanced single track/Intermediate road

Other trail uses: Dirt bikes

Finding the Trailhead:

Drive south out of Ranchos de Taos in Highway 518 for 8 miles, going over U.S. Hill. At the intersection of Highway 518 and Highway 75 go left toward Tres Ritos staying on 518. When you reach Tres Ritos turn left on Forest Road 76 (La Junta Canyon Rd.) Park at the pavement/dirt junction.

Route Description:

Ride along road 76, 2.0 miles up the gentle hill. Turn right at the Duran Canyon Campground and cross the Rio La Presa on the bridge. Ride up road 76A along Duran Creek. The road climbs up the steep, rocky roadbed and at 4.1 miles from the start (2.1 on 76A) the road ends. Go straight ahead on the old road through a fence and into the large meadow. The road is very hard to follow here but goes up the right side of the meadow. At 5.1 miles from start you pass an old log cabin in the meadow. Keep going uphill along the meadow and soon the road becomes clearer. Another mile past the cabin up the meadow (6.1 miles from the start) you intersect Forest road 722. Turn left on this wide logging road and ride only .4 miles and turn left on an old two track heading down a meadow at 6.5 miles from the start. This two track disappears in the large meadow that you enter. Cross the meadow to the far side and intersect Trail #13 at 7.5 miles from the start. Turn right and ride up trail #13 along the treeline. Trail #13 soon enters the forest again and at 8.0 miles from the start you cross an unnumbered road. Cross the road and continue on the single track and enter another meadow at 8.3 miles from the start. Look for trail #13 heading down a very steep hill on the left towards Policarpio Canyon. At the bottom of the hill the trail crosses a road. Stay on #13, down along the stream. Now you begin 2 miles of some of the best single tracking around. The trails crosses the stream several times and at 10.5 miles you intersect a road. Go right and cross the Rito de la Presa on the bridge and intersect road 76. Turn left and ride 4.0 smooth miles to the car.



Amole Canyon # 10

Trail Length: 4 miles

Difficulty: Beginner

Other Trail Uses: Hiking and horseback riding



Finding the Trailhead:

Drive south out of Ranchos de Taos on Highway 518 for 14.3 miles. Park on your left by the entrance to the Amole Canyon Nordic Ski Area.

Route Description:

This area has recently been developed for cross country skiing and offers the beginner mountain biker the opportunity to gain the skills and endurance to attempt more difficult rides. The Amole Canyon ski area is a series of short linked loops. Although we have chosen just one, there are several other rides that are just as enjoyable. Don't hesitate to ride and explore for as long as you want. To start the Amole Canyon loop, ride up the main road approximately 1.0 miles where the road forks. Go right and ride for another .2miles where you will reach a gate. Pass the gate you will skirt a big meadow and climb a short but very steep hill. The top is 1.5 miles from the start. At the top go right. The left fork drops steeply and dead ends. Proceed on the right fork and ride on old logging roads. The road becomes faint in this section but continues with some occasional berms across it as it gradually descends back to the main road. Just 50 yards before this road intersects the main road becomes very faint. Continue downhill through the trees. At 3.0 miles intersect the main road. Turn left and ride 1.0 miles downhill to the car.