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## **Santa Barbara Area Rides**

### **Santa Ynez Mountains**

### **Romero Trail Complex (Intermediate to Advanced)**



Focus on You Photography  
View from atop the Santa Ynez Mountains  
Romero trail complex

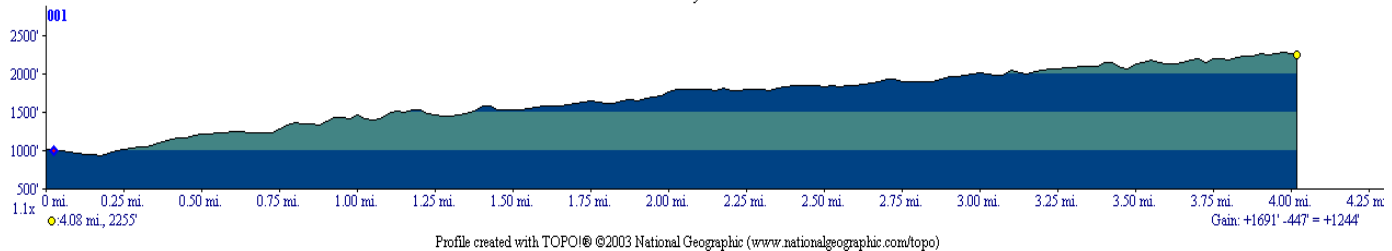
This has to be one of the best mountain bike trails in area. Of course this is the only area that I have ridden in this area, but it still has to be one of the best. It has great views, great climbs, great downhill, and great technical sections. The rides have been written up in sections so that you can add up many different sections to make the ride as long or as short as you like. This area is mostly intermediate in technical ability, but advanced in climbing and distance with some very technical downhill. There are two downhill trail sections that are for the advanced rider only. This complex of rides is supported and maintained by the Santa Barbara Mountain Bike Trail Volunteers. Feel free to check out their web site for other trails in the area by going to [www.sbmtv.org](http://www.sbmtv.org). They have also instituted a great bell program. At the start of the trail is a little box with miniature cow bells, it is requested that every mountain biker attach one of the bells to their bike or person. This is a multi use trail. The bells enable hikers and horses to hear you coming. Much of the trail has blind corners, so it also enables you to hear other bikers coming down hill. It is a great practice that should be implemented in every multi use area. Bikers please yield to hikers and horses. As sharing the trail respectfully guarantees trails remain open to all.

From Santa Barbara, California, take Hwy 101 south to Summerland and take the Sheffield Drive exit. Once off the exit, take a left under the freeway, and you will be at a stop sign. Take a right on Sheffield Drive. Follow Sheffield Dr. for about 1.5 miles where you will hit a "T" intersection. Take a left on East Valley Rd, then an immediate right on Romero Canyon Road. Follow Romero Canyon Rd. for another 1.5 miles and take a right on Bella Vista Road. This intersection is a "V" intersection and is easy to pass. So drive slowly and look for the turn. Take the right on Bella Vista Rd, and as soon as you see water running over the roadway, you will see the trailhead on the left. It is easily identifiable by the red steel gate. Park on Bella Vista Road directly above or below the red gate. The dirt area in front of the gate is fire access only. Grab a bell, and enjoy the ride.

### **Romero Canyon Climb (Blue Trail)**

## 4.1 miles 1690 ft. total elevation gain (Intermediate)

Romero Canyon Climb



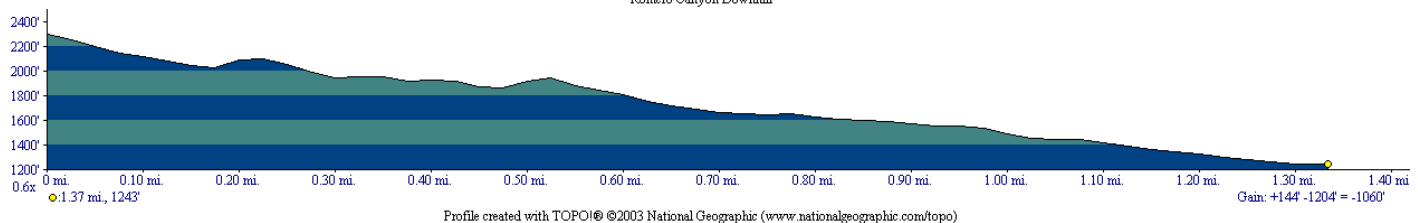
From the red gate, follow the jeep road up hill in a northerly direction. If you look at the picture on the left, you can see most of your jeep road climb. The left side of the picture in the saddle is where the single track starts. The beginning of this ride is one of the steepest and most rutted sections of the ride. So don't be alarmed. Follow this jeep road up hill for .55 miles where you will cross through a stream. Once you cross the water you will see the **Romero Canyon Downhill** on your left. Do not try to climb up the canyon. It may be possible, but you would have to hike a bike quite a bit. So stay strait and follow the jeep road up hill. This road will continue up the hillside with great views of the ocean on every

outside turn. Follow the road for 1.45 miles (2 miles from the start) and you will see a split in the jeep road. The right has a locked gate and follows the power line, so continue strait. In .1 miles (2.1 miles) the jeep road will turn into a single track and continue up the hillside. Continue up the single track, and in 2.1 miles (4.1 miles) you will be at a cross roads. If you go left, you will drop down the **Romero Canyon Downhill**, an advanced trail with quite a few rocky drops. If you go right, you will climb strait uphill for 1 mile on the **East Ocean View Trail**. This climb is 850 feet and has many sections of hike a bike. It is best done as a down hill. If you continue strait you will be on the **Blue Canyon Trail** which does have some technical sections, but is mainly an intermediate trail. So at this point, you can turn around and retrace your steps back for 8.2 miles, or take one of the options below.

## Romero Canyon Downhill (Pink Trail)

### 1.4 miles 1060 ft. total elevation loss (Advanced)

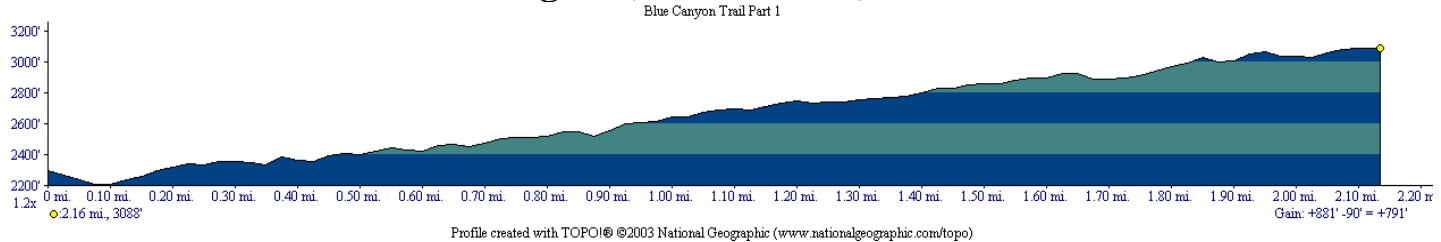
Romero Canyon Downhill



From the **Romero Canyon Climb** intersection, take a left. Be very careful on this downhill. At first it is a beautifully smooth trail. There are some tight switchbacks, but not bad. However, further down the canyon the trail gets very rocky with lots of rocky drops. I cleared the trail on a 3" travel Cannondale Scalpel, so it is doable, but a 4-5" travel bike would make the ride much more enjoyable. This trail is very strait forward with no way to get lost. It just goes downhill for 1.4 miles and drops you out on the **Romero Canyon Climb**. Once on the jeep road, take a right and follow the jeep road back to the car for a total ride distance of 7.6 miles and just over 2000 feet of climbing.

## Blue Canyon Trail Part 1 (Yellow Trail)

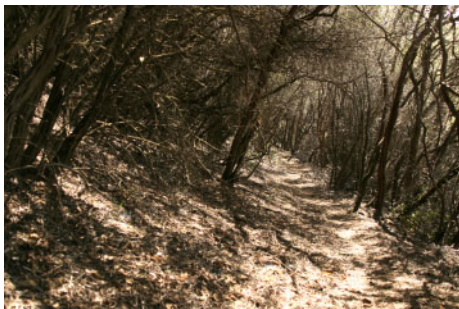
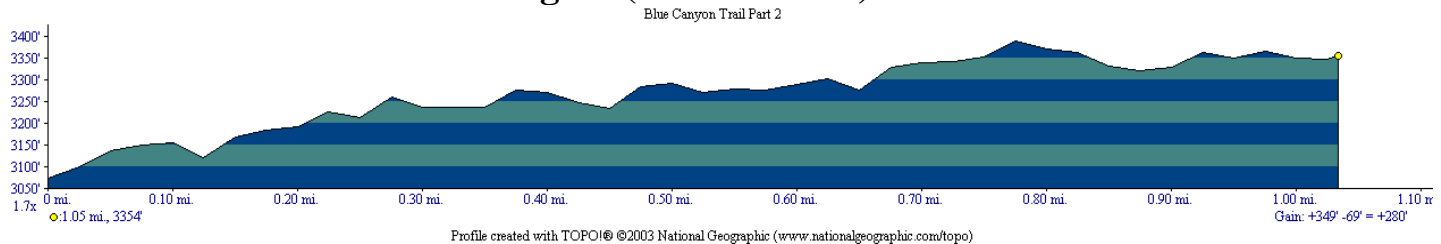
**2.16 miles 880 ft. total elevation gain (Intermediate)**



From the Romero Canyon climb intersection, continue straight on the Blue Canyon Trail. The entire trail is actually 3.2 miles long, but it can be cut into two parts. The first part is 2.16 miles and the second part is 1.05 miles long. For this section, continue straight, and the trail gradually climbs uphill, and does have a couple challenging rocky step up sections. In 2.17 miles you will hit a saddle with 2 more trail options. You can go left and take the **Blue Canyon Trail Part 2**, or go straight to end up on the **East Ocean View Trail**, or to end up on the **Back Side Romero Canyon Downhill Trail**.

## Blue Canyon Trail Part 2 (Light Green Trail)

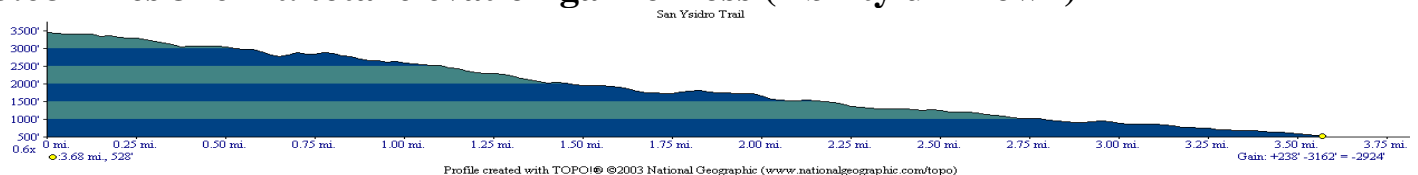
**1.05 miles 350 ft. total elevation gain (Intermediate)**



From the **Blue Canyon Trail Part 1** saddle, take a left and follow this single track through the canopy of Mountain Mahogany trees. It feels like you are riding through a tunnel of trees. See the picture on the left. This single track does have one tough section, but is fairly flat. It continues for 1.05 miles and drops you out on East Camino Cielo Road. This is a paved road at the point that the trail ends. From here you can take the pavement downhill to the right to hit the **East Ocean View Trail**, turn left and follow the paved road to the San Ysidro Trail, or just turn around and head back the way you came.

## San Ysidro Trail (Red Trail)

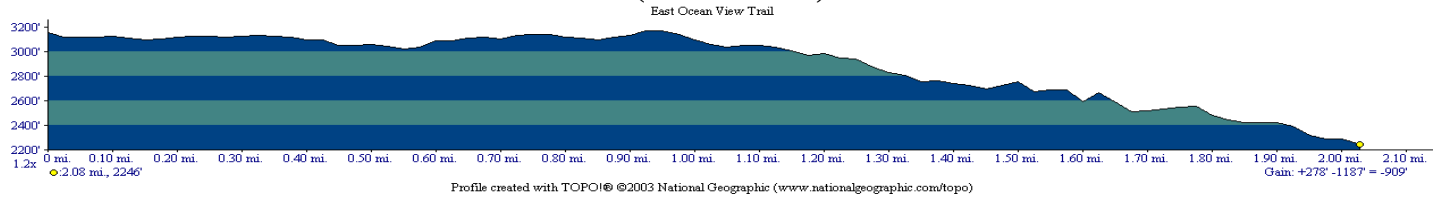
**3.68 miles 3162 ft. total elevation gain or loss (Ability unknown)**



When I went out to ride this trail system, I had no idea that this trail existed. While out exploring the complex of rides, I came upon this trail head. It is marked in red on the map below, but I unfortunately did not have time to ride the trail. So, I have no idea if this trail is best done as an uphill, or downhill, or both. It looks like tons of fun from the top, but I have no idea what to expect. So approach with caution! I used National Geographic Topo to build the profile, so it may not be that accurate. All other rides were taken from GPS data.

## East Ocean View Trail (Dark Green Trail)

### 2.08 miles 1187 ft. total elevation loss (Advanced)

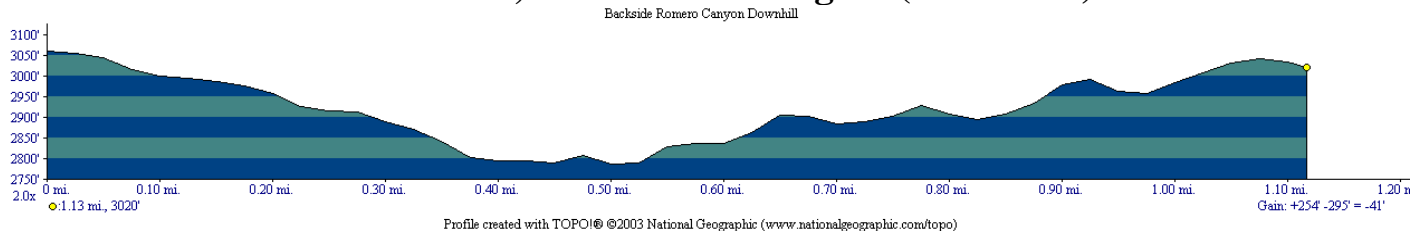


From the saddle of the **Blue Canyon Part 1**, continue strait over the saddle on the single track. In .5 miles you will ride around a water tank and drop out onto East Camino Cielo Road. On the right you will see a semi looking road heading strait up the ridge. This is your trail/road. The uphill section is very unimproved and only ¼ of a mile long, I had to walk most of it. Once on the ridge, continue .32 miles (1.07 miles from the saddle) where you will be at a 4 way intersection. If you go strait, you just follow a jeep road along the ridge. If you turn left, you drop down the **Back Side Romero Canyon Downhill Trail** to East Camino Cielo Road. However, take a right and drop down to the **Romero Canyon Downhill**. This downhill is fairly steep, and has very tight and steep switchbacks. Watch your speed, and take it easy. Follow this trail downhill for 1 mile (2.07 miles from the saddle) where you will be at the intersection of the **Romero Canyon Climb**, **Blue Canyon Trail Part 1**, and the **Romero Canyon Downhill**. From here you can cross over the single track and start the downhill, or take a left and follow the **Romero Canyon Climb** downhill back to your car.



## Backside Romero Canyon Downhill (Purple Trail)

### 1.13 miles 254 ft. elevation loss, 254 ft. elevation gain (Advanced)

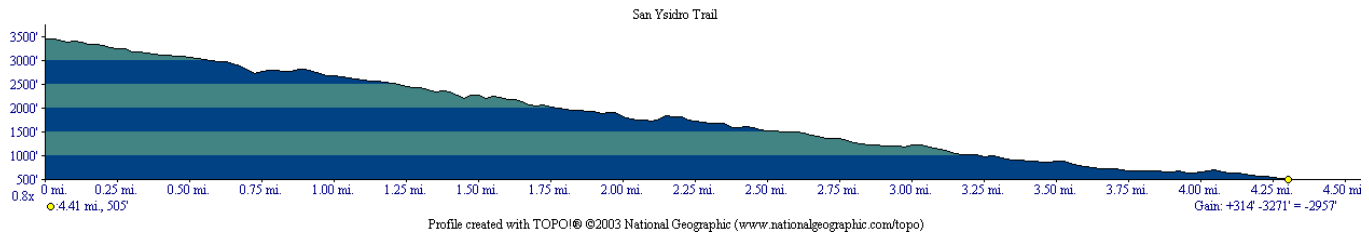


From the top of the **East Ocean View Trail**, you will take a left. This trail is unimproved as of March 8, 2007. This simply means that the trail is not cleared of all debris, and is a little rough in areas. The trail is simple to follow, it drops strait down the canyon, and in .5 miles you will have to walk up and around a washout. The hillside at one time or another washed out the trail. It is simple to walk around. Continue on the trail and in less than a ¼ mile the trail will drop out onto East Camino Cielo Road. Take a left on the road and follow it for .55 miles where you will again be at the water tank mentioned in the **East Ocean View Trail**.

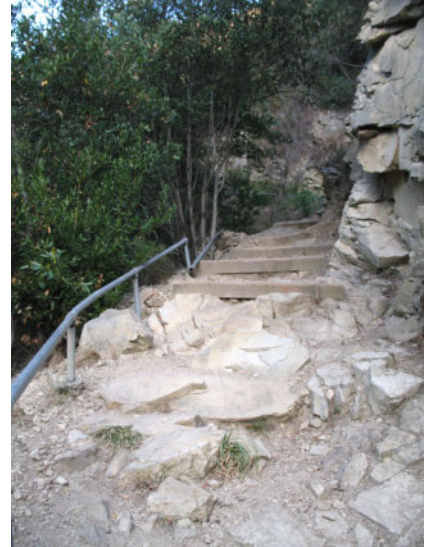


## San Ysidro Trail (Red Trail)

**4.41 miles 3271 ft. elevation loss, 314 ft. elevation gain (Advanced)**

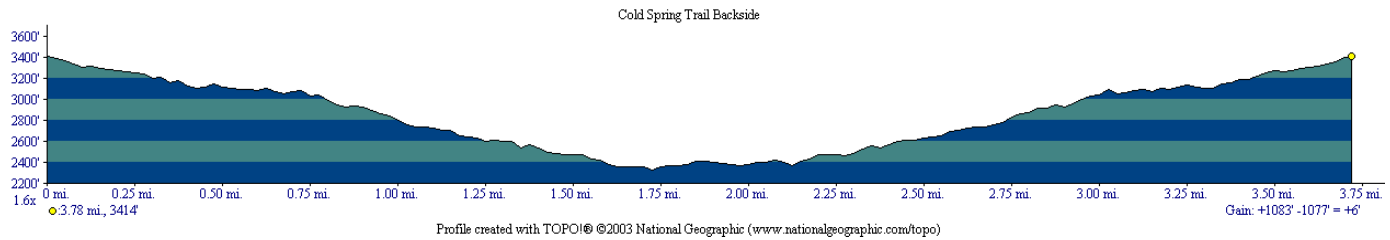


This downhill is done by the locals as a shuttle. They drive to the top, and take a longer travel bike to the bottom. I rode this entire trail system on a Cannondale Scalpel with 3" of travel. It was slow, but achievable. After riding this trail, I do think that a 5", 6" or more travel bike would be great. If you ask me, a Santa Cruz Nomad, Cannondale Prophet or Cannondale Perp. would be great for this trail. So, from the Romero Saddle, head left (east) on Camino Cielo road. It is paved to the east, and dirt to the west. So head left on the pavement and follow the road for 2.75 miles and about 500 ft. of elevation gain. This road follows the ridge line and just meanders up and down. Keep an eye out on the left side for a steel sign marking the San Ysidro Trail. Once at the marker, the trail is simple to follow. Not simple to ride, but simple to follow. The first mile is not that bad, a little rocky, but not bad. The rest of the trail is very rocky. The further into the canyon that you ride, the rockier it gets (see picture left and right.) If you don't feel comfortable riding these sections, please walk. Once you get to the wooden steps (picture right) you are almost done with the downhill. Continue downhill, and right near the end of the ride you will see a dirt road on your left side, and a singletrack on your right. The singletrack on the right just goes up the side hill and ends at a house. So follow the dirt road downhill, and you will drop out at the intersection of E. Mountain Dr. and San Ysidro Ln. Cross over E. Mountain Dr, and you can follow San Ysidro Ln. downhill to Highway 192 also known as East Valley Road. That is where I got picked up.



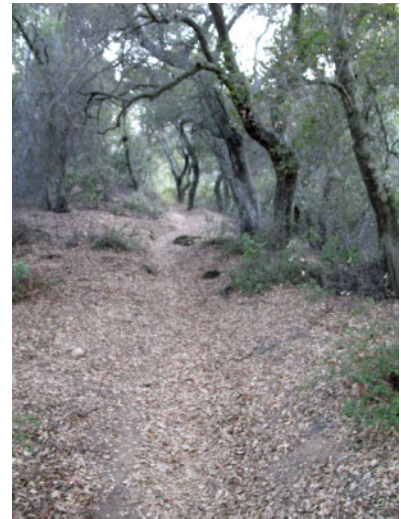
## Cold Spring Trail Backside (Dark Blue Trail)

### 3.78 miles 1080 ft. elevation gain (Advanced)



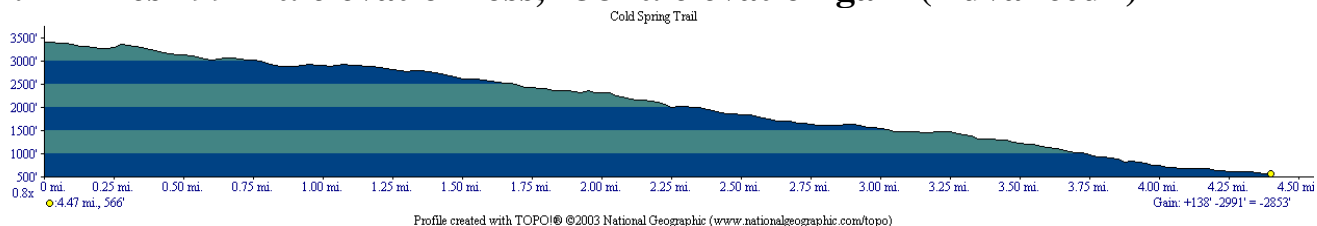
This trail is really an intermediate trail. It is not that technical, but the hard part is getting there. If you climb up Romero Canyon to get here, you will have climbed almost 4000 ft. to get to the trail head, then you have a 1000 ft drop towards Blue Canyon. Once at the bottom, you will have to climb out 1000 ft back out making for 5000 ft. of climbing in a day. This trail drops of Camino Cielo Road and drops into Forbrush Canyon towards

Blue Canyon. It is impossible to get lost. There is only one option down. The trail is relatively smooth and fast all the way to the bottom. Once there you can cut left or right. I have not taken either of them, but they are there. At this point, I just turned around and climbed back out of the canyon to Camino Cielo Road. Then from the main road, you have a number of options for your return.



## Cold Spring Trail (Orange Trail)

### 4.47 miles 2991 ft. elevation loss, 138 ft. elevation gain (Advanced+)





Of the trails in this section, I think that this trail is the hardest of them all.

There are still a couple that I have not ridden, but as of November 2007, this was the most challenging trail of them all. I would never dream of riding this trail up hill. It is rather like riding down a sandstone creek bed with rocks everywhere in the bottom of the bed. Every trail in this section I was able to ride non stop. However, this one required stopping a couple of times to allow blood back into my fore arms.

The first mile of this downhill is smooth and fast, then the bottom drops out. From the top, there are no options to get lost. There is only one trail down, and you are on it. After talking

to the locals, I could not find one that would ride up this trail, or any of the others for that matter. Everyone runs a shuttle up Gibraltar road to the east, and then out Camino Cielo road. This trail is best suited for a



longer travel bike. Again, I cleared it on a Cannondale Scalpel with 3" of travel, but 5"-6" would be great. So, however you want to ride the trail, have fun but be careful. If you ride up Romero Canyon to Romero Saddle, this trail is 3 miles and 700 ft of climbing from Romero Saddle. Once at the trail head, start downhill. Again, this first mile section is simple. It is smooth and fast. Once you clear the first mile, the ride starts. The ground is like sandstone, and the trail appears to go straight down something like a creek bed with large rocks everywhere. This is not a trail that you can pick a line and fly down. The trail is so steep that you can't pick a line very far in front of you because you just can't see the trail that far in front of you. So, you have to watch your speed, and constantly watch your line. It is not hard to get thrown off track. At 2.85 miles from the top, the trail drops out on a pole line road. The road goes left and right from here. Take a right, and in just 50 feet you will see the singletrack pick back up on the right side. So keep an eye out. I missed it the first time. From this point to the bottom, the trail has some slightly rocky sections, but nothing like what you just came from. So, follow the trail down the canyon from here for



1.62 miles where the trail will drop you out on E. Mountain Dr. From here I took a left and followed E. Mountain Dr. downhill to Ashley Road. I then took a right on Ashley Road and followed it down to Highway 192 also known as E. Valley Road where I was picked up.



