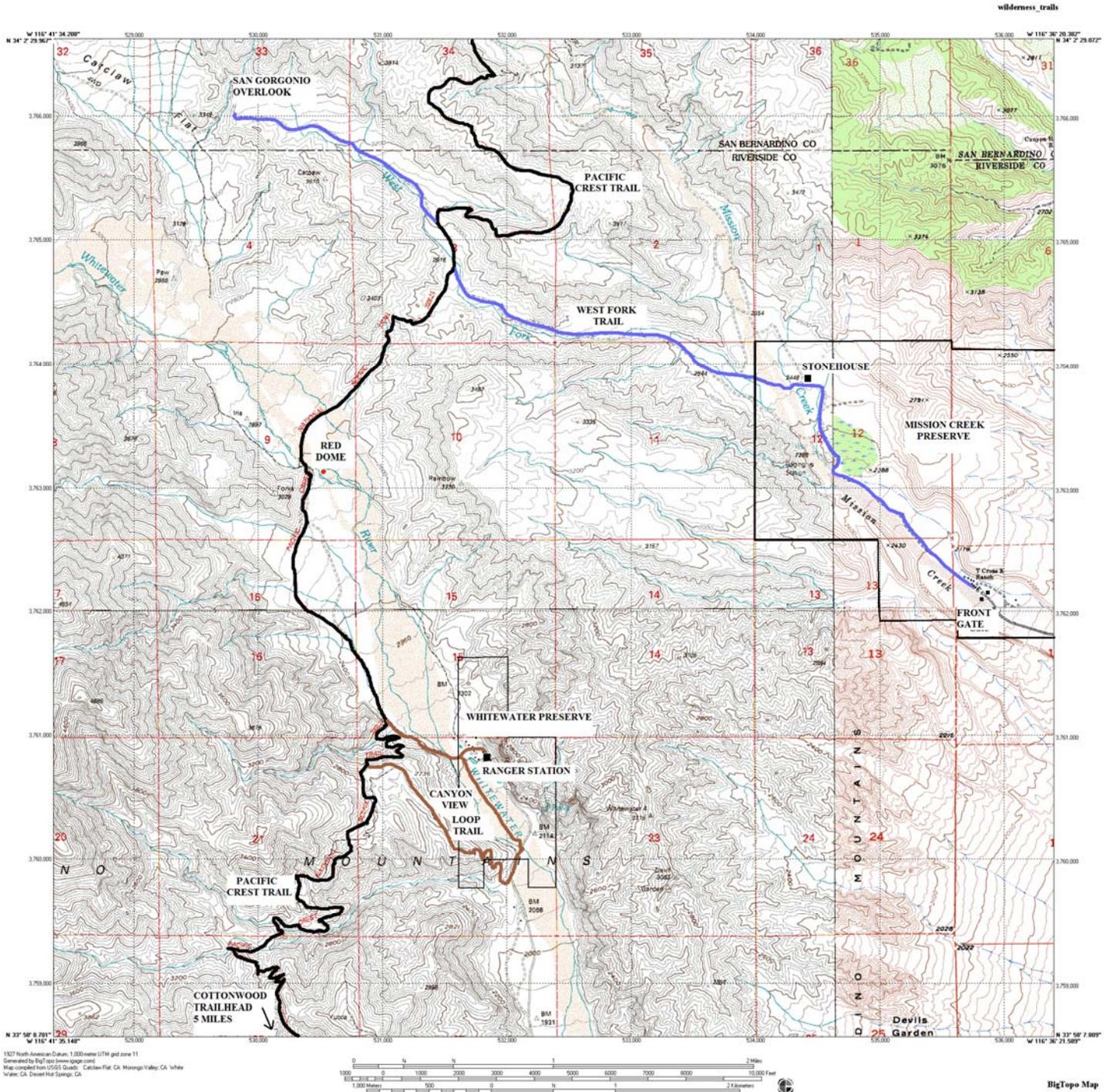


WHITEWATER PRESERVE TRAIL MAP

Whitewater Preserve

9160 Whitewater Canyon Road, Whitewater, CA 92282

(760) 325-7222



THE WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY

"To preserve the beauty and biodiversity of the earth, and to fund programs so that children may know the wonder and joy of nature"

www.WildlandsConservancy.org

Trail Information

The Whitewater Preserve hosts one of the best trailheads to the San Gorgonio Wilderness and the 2,650 mile- long Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT). The PCT traverses the Wilderness from south to north on its journey from Mexico to Canada, and is accessible from the parking area at the Whitewater Preserve via a half-mile connector trail that begins at the ranger station. Visitors are welcome to walk along any of the preserve trails, or take one of the hikes listed below. Please sign in at the Ranger Station or trailhead, and always carry plenty of water!

1. Canyon View Loop Trail 3.5 mile loop (Moderate)

This loop trail follows a section of the Pacific Crest Trail south, ascending 500' to the top of a winding ridge, with excellent views of Whitewater Canyon and the north face of Mount San Jacinto. In the spring, this loop is the best place to see fields of poppies, lupines, coreopsis, and many other wildflowers. Leaving the ranger station, head northwest along the marked trail between two palm trees, cross the Whitewater River, and reach the Pacific Crest Trail in one-half mile. Turn left and wind up switchbacks for roughly three – quarters of a mile. At the top of the switchbacks, look for the trail post and turn left for the **Canyon View Loop**. Follow the trail along the top of the ridge, stopping at several overlooks to enjoy views of the preserve and Whitewater Canyon. Continue south along the ridge as it descends via switchbacks to Whitewater Canyon Road. Walk up the road several hundred yards to the trail marker just beyond the river by a preserve sign. Follow the rock-lined trail from there back to the ranger station.

2. Whitewater Preserve to Red Dome 2 miles one way, 4 miles round-trip (Easy-moderate)

Walking from the ranger station to Red Dome is an excellent hike along the Pacific Crest Trail, and is a good introduction to hiking in Whitewater Canyon. The trail is mostly flat and well maintained. Leaving the ranger station, head northwest along the marked trail, cross the Whitewater River on a foot bridge, and reach the Pacific Crest Trail in one-half mile. Continue north along the Pacific Crest Trail for one-and-a-half miles to reach Red Dome, a twenty foot tall brick red hill of volcanic mud in the riverbed. Beyond, the trail crosses the riverbed and can be difficult to find. Turn around and head back to the Preserve, enjoying views of Evening Star Ridge and the cliffs above the Ranger Station.

3. Whitewater to Mission Creek Preserve Eight miles one way (Moderate-strenuous)

This scenic hike takes you through two important desert watersheds along the Pacific Crest Trail. Leaving the ranger station, head northwest along the marked trail, cross the Whitewater River and reach the Pacific Crest Trail in one-half mile. Continue straight along the Pacific Crest Trail heading north for one and a half miles to reach Red Dome, a small, (25 feet high) brick red hill of volcanic mud in the riverbed. Cross the Whitewater River following the Pacific Crest Trail and switchback up a canyon filled with junipers, sugarbush, and Mojave yuccas until you reach “Blue Ridge” - the obvious crest that divides Whitewater drainage from Mission Creek. Enjoy the views before dropping into the West Fork of Mission Creek. Reaching the sandy canyon bottom, look for the marked trail and turn right to continue down the dry canyon 2 miles towards the Mission Creek Stonehouse, an historic building from the turn of the century. Pick up Mission Creek road at the Stonehouse and follow it one and a half miles east to the front gate of the preserve, passing the Painted Hills wetlands, a year-round lush desert oasis abundant with birds and wildlife. Most groups choose to pre-park a car at the Mission Creek Preserve, drive to the Whitewater Preserve, and hike back to Mission Creek. For more information on Mission Creek, please call (760) 369-7105.

4. Whitewater Preserve to Cottonwood Trailhead Eight miles one way (Moderate-strenuous)

The walk from Whitewater to the Cottonwood trailhead off the Haugen-Lehmann I-10 exit traverses the eastern boundary of the coastal chaparral community. Leaving the ranger station, head northwest along the marked trail, cross the Whitewater River, and reach the Pacific Crest Trail in one-half mile. Turn left wind up switchbacks for roughly three – quarters of a mile. At the top of the switchbacks, turn right at the trail post marked PCT South and wind back into the Cottonwood Hills. Two miles further, cross the top of Toutain Canyon (springs) and climb switchbacks before hitting the long downhill stretch on the Pacific Crest Trail in Golden Canyon that leads to a trail head parking lot off the Haugen-Lehmann exit on Interstate 10. Most groups leave a car at one end, drive to the other end, and hike back along the eight mile one-way trail.