

Long Beach Wetlands

Overview

This 6.2 mile route takes us on a tour of some of our LA River wetlands.

Wetlands serve many purposes and are becoming increasingly important as a means of preserving natural habitats. Along the LA River, there are a number of wetlands that in addition to preserving habitats for many animals, also serve a number of other purposes. Today's ride will explore two very distinct interpretations of wetlands and give you an opportunity to explore some of the most unique spots along the LA River's lower portion.

The ride begins along Del Mar Ave, around the corner from Los Cerritos Elementary school (515 W San Antonia Dr, Long Beach 90807). If you choose to drive to this location, there is ample parking along Del Mar on the East side of the street. If you choose to take public transportation, the starting location is a short bike ride away from the Wardlow Ave Metro Station on the Metro A-Line (formerly Blue Line).

To access the trail, head north on Del Mar and just before the road veers to the right, there will be a brief patch of red curb that marks the location of the gate to access the Los Angeles River. Approach this curb and you'll see the gate slightly below street level.

Ride Logistics

Link to self-guided route: <https://izi.travel/browse/eb5a82ea-ad10-4f70-b613-3ce29dab364f/en>

Link to route only: <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/33585576>

Cue sheet:

Leg	Dir	Type	Notes	Total
	←	Left	Turn left	0.3
1.2	→	Right	Sharp right onto Los Angeles River Bicycle Path	1.5
3.3	→	Right	Slight right to stay on Los Angeles River Bicycle Path	4.8
0.2	←	Left	Sharp left	5.0
0.1	→	Right	Sharp right	5.0
0.5	↑	Straight	Continue onto Los Angeles River Bicycle Path	5.5
0.4	←	Left	Slight left	5.9
0.1	→	Right	Turn right	6.0

Dominguez Gap Wetlands

As soon as you cross the yellow gate, you're greeted by the sight of the Dominguez Gap Wetlands, which are generally flooded year-round, though the water level can vary greatly. This location is inhabited by all manners of wildlife, so keep an eye out for lizards darting across the ground, rabbits scampering about the vegetation, chipmunks and squirrels racing around gathering seeds, and keep your eyes peeled for the occasional heron gliding above or wading in the waters of the wetlands.

As you enter the wetlands, you have a choice of paths to take. Proceed straight to follow the horse path for a partially shaded ride along the outer edges of the wetlands. Or, look slightly left and you'll notice a dirt path which leads down into the wetlands. Take this path for a short, but pleasant jaunt down into the vegetation to be surrounded by native plants, including many different aromatic varieties, such as white sage. This path rejoins the horse path after about a quarter mile.

David C. Molina Park

The horse path ends as you approach David C. Molina Park. Use this opportunity to take a quick break as facilities are more difficult to come by on the next section of the ride.

This park is named after Dr. C. David Molina. According to the LA Times, Dr. Molina was a pioneer in managed health care for welfare recipients. In 1962, he developed Long Beach's first intensive care unit at Pacific Hospital. He was also the director of the emergency department for 21 years. Apparently, he also earned a grant to develop a paramedic system in Long Beach and trained its first firemen. To read the LA Times piece from 1996, click here: www.latimes.com

If you're ready to proceed, keep left and follow the ramp up to the paved LA River Trail. Head north on the trail and observe how different the river looks here as a concrete flood control channel as opposed to the lush vegetation of the Wetlands. Follow the River Trail until you approach the bridge for Long Beach Blvd.

Flood Control Station

This facility is a flood control station and serves to pull overflow from the LA River during heavy storm events to feed the wetlands. As this location also doubles as a collection point for storm drains, you're likely to notice some trash that is washed into local storm drains end up here as well.

Shared Path

Here, you'll see several signs with further details about the wetlands' unique features. Take the time to stop and read. Also, make sure to ride slowly here as you are likely to encounter people out for a stroll.

Wooden Bridge

As you get about halfway up the wetlands, you'll see a wooden bridge that leads over some water. Dismount and walk along the bridge to catch a glimpse of ducks and turtles that have made this little stretch of land their home.