



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Rio Hondo
River Trail**
California



Rio Hondo River Trail

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The emerging trail system in and around the greater Los Angeles area may surprise visitors. The 17-mile Rio Hondo River Trail has become a key component of this system. While much of it follows the concrete drainage channel for Rio Hondo through urban and suburban sprawl, two sections follow the river on open ground with varied landscapes.

Several neighborhood parks along the way provide opportunities to picnic, play or relax, including Crawford Park in Downey, where a bridge transports trail users over the river, John Anson Ford Park in Bell Gardens, Treasure Island Park in Downey, Veterans Memorial Park in Commerce, Grant Rea Park in Montebello and the trail's northern endpoint at Peck Road Water Conservation Park in Arcadia.

The large Whittier Narrows Recreation Area is perhaps the most scenic element along the trail's route. The popular local destination offers hiking trails, lakes perfect for fishing, and tennis and volleyball courts, among many other amenities. Trail users can also connect to the winding [San Gabriel River Trail](#) from the recreation area via a trail spur extending southeast from San Gabriel Boulevard.

Starting from the trail's southern end, where the Rio Hondo (Spanish for "deep river") meets the Los Angeles River and the [Los Angeles River Greenway](#), which heads south 12 miles to the Port of Long Beach. While there's an entrance ramp to the Rio Hondo Trail on the east side of the river on Imperial Highway in Lynwood, the trailhead closest to parking is 1.5 miles south in Hollydale Regional Park in South Gate.

As you make your way along the channel, you're often traveling below the surrounding terrain without noticing whether you're in residential, commercial, or industrial districts. An advantage is you don't have to stop for the cross streets that pass overhead. In addition, the trail runs on both sides of the channel in one 3-mile segment, making it more accessible to local residents.

About 4.7 miles along the route, you'll notice a natural landscape along the corridor in what is called the Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds. This is a 2-mile stretch where water is allowed to leave the concrete channel and percolate into the soil. Heading north, keep a keen eye out for the Montebello Barnyard Zoo on the north side of the trail. It's not unusual to look up and find an ostrich or a donkey checking out the happenings on the trail.

About 2 miles north of the spreading grounds, you'll take a switchback up the side of a dam structure and enter the 1,500-acre Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. The scenery changes dramatically from concrete channel to wide-open wetland sanctuary with woodlands typical of river shorelines and lakes. You might see migrating waterfowl in season in the



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States: California

Counties: Los Angeles

Length: 17.8miles

Trail end points: Los Angeles River Trail at Imperial Hwy (South Gate) to Live Oak Ave, between Hempstead Ave & Eighth Ave (Arcadia)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

Trail activities: Bike, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at several of the local parks along the Rio Hondo River Trail's route, including Crawford Park (7000 Dinwiddie Street) and Treasure Island Park (9300 Bluff Road) in Downey, John Anson Ford Park (8000 Park Lane) in Bell Gardens, Veterans Memorial Park (6364 Zindell Avenue) in Commerce, Grant Rea Park (600 N. Rea Drive) in Montebello and Peck Road Water Conservation Park (5401 N. Peck Road) in Arcadia.

Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.

