

Picketwire Dinosaur Trackway by Mountain Bike

1 semester credit hour

May 7-8, 2011

LaJunta, Colorado

Cost: With tuition \$140. Without tuition \$90.

Check out our website: coloradorivertrip.com

The world's most extensive Jurassic dinosaur trackway, with over 1300 dinosaur tracks is located right here in Colorado. This site proved to the world that dinos were herding animals. It is an incredible site, with some of the tracks big enough to sit in. Native American Petroglyphs abound in the area, some with paleoastronomical significance. There are hundreds of them, unmarked and undeveloped waiting to be discovered. As we mountain bike the 13 miles (round trip) to the dino site, we pass by an old Spanish mission with a graveyard from the 1800's and ruins of an adobe homestead. This is a weekend class, so the second day we get to tour Old Bent's Fort, which was a trading post on the Sante Fe Trail. It has been restored and is absolutely fascinating. We also will get to see an old stage coach trail with the wagon ruts still visible across the prairie. It should be a wonderful history weekend - everything from the Jurassic of 150 million years ago to the ancient natives of 1000 years ago to the Sante Fe Trail of the 1860's.

The scenery is spectacular as we bike along the Purgatoire River. Several Spanish soldiers were lost along this river canyon and died without receiving Last Rites. Legend has it that their souls are still riding the grasslands forever in Purgatoire. Maybe we will see them or hear their silver spurs jingling in the distance. (Hey, not a bad place to spend eternity.)

Necessary Equipment: Mountain Bike, Helmet, Spare Tube or Repair Kit (we got 2 flats on the recon trip), lots of water, sack lunch.

Physical Challenge: This is mountain biking. You should be in good physical shape. The first 1/4 mile is steep. We will walk the bikes down. It is mostly contouring after that along a semi-smooth trail. Locals tell me that April and Sept. are the best times to bike this trip.

Sleeping: Motels are quite cheap - or there is camping.

The class will start in LaJunta, Colorado on May 7 at 8:00 a.m. at the Comanche National Grasslands Ranger District 1420 E 3rd St.

Road Directions to LaJunta:

Travel on I-25 to Pueblo, Colorado which is about 40 miles south of Colorado Springs. At Pueblo, turn east on Highway 50 and travel 63 miles east to LaJunta. When you arrive in

LaJunta, continue traveling east to 3rd street, where you will find the Comanche Natl. Grasslands Ranger District.

From the ranger district, we will drive about 27 miles south to the Picketwire Trailhead. Since this is dirt road and quite a drive, please be on time. I'd like to give us plenty of time for the bike ride and to look for petroglyphs. (This is going to be so fun.)

Please bring plenty of water with you. This is prairie desert with no potable water along the way. (I will bring my backpacking filter, just in case.)

Here is a list of motels etc. in LaJunta. Since this is a little, tiny town, you should probably make reservations before you get there. Joyce and I are staying at the Mid Town Motel.

Mid Town Motel 1-719-384-7741
Super 8 Motel 1-719-384-4408
Holiday Inn 1-719-384-2900
Stagecoach Inn 1-719-384-5476

There are lots of places to eat on Saturday evening, so I won't even include a list.

Need to bring list:

Mountain Bike
Helmet
Extra tire or bike tire repair kit
3 liters of water
sack lunch
dress in layers
rain poncho maybe- hope not
sunscreen - hopefully

The second day, we will be touring Bent's Old Fort and doing a small bike ride into Vogel Canyon. You will need a lunch that day as well. LaJunta has a Walmart and a Safeway store.

To register, send in your check (made out to The Colorado River Trip) to:
Melanie Phelps
1351 N. Tabasco Dr.
Pueblo West, CO. 81007