

DIRECTIONS TO PLACITAS OPEN SPACE

Directions to West Access Gate

From I-25, take exit 242 to Placitas

Go east on Hwy 165. Turn left onto Frontage Road for 1.5 miles

Turn right onto Camino Manzano for 1.3 miles. Turn left onto Santa Ana Loop for 0.9 miles

Turn left onto Cloud View Court

Open gate at end of Cloud View Court. Please close gate behind you. Drive up the gravel road to the turn-around where you may park. Go through the pedestrian gate, which lets you onto BLM land. Head across the wash and towards the right up the pipeline road. The gate into the Placitas Open Space is ¼ mile further.

Directions to East Access Gate

From I-25, take exit 242 to Hwy 165/ Placitas.

Go east on Hwy 165 for 6.9 miles (just past the Post Office). Turn left onto Camino de las Huertas for 2.7 miles.

After crossing a low point at Las Huertas Creek, the road climbs upward. At the very top of the hill, make a quick left onto Palomino Road.

Follow Palomino Road ~ .7 miles to where it meets a dirt road (Llano del Norte Rd., but it is unmarked here).

Turn left. Follow the dirt road about 0.3 miles.

Just *before* a cattle guard with a sign saying "Entering Public Land", turn left onto a dirt road that parallels the south side of the fence (do not cross the cattleguard).

Proceed another ~ .2 miles to the parking area and City of Albuquerque Open Space sign.

Go through the gate (or the fence if the gate is locked).

Make an immediate right turn; the trail heads down to your right.

Note: Pedestrian gates to the Open Space have been temporarily locked, so you may need to enter by going under/through the fence. The gates were locked after a spate of incidents in which people illegally let horses onto the Open Space to graze.

Trails--West Access

The trail at the West Access gate takes you up the Pipeline Road Trail. You can stay on this wide easement or turn left onto the Alta Vista trail (watch for the sign) along the ridge top. The terrain is mostly rolling hills. You can also cross over the ridge and down into a sandy wash called Coyote Canyon. Following the Canyon down to the left takes you to the north boundary of the Open Space and to where the canyon merges into Las Huertas Creek.

Trails--East Access

The Las Huertas Creek Trail, which starts at the East Access gate is usually the best trail for birding, wildflowers and riparian vegetation. From the gate, it heads steeply down to the creek basin (a short distance from the top is a spur trail going off to the right which provides nice view to the north). Once in the creek basin, the trail parallels the creek and you can go left or right.

If you follow L.H. Creek Trail to the left, you'll have nice views of the creek basin and steep bluffs rising above it. The trail crosses the (usually) dry creek bed, climbs up and past a pumping station, and then climbs the pipeline easement for a short distance. At the top of the hill above the pumping station, the trail goes to the left (look for the sign) and joins a dirt road that circles the south side of the Open Space.

If instead when you reach the creek basin, you follow the L.H. Creek Trail to the right, you'll have views of the creek basin and meadows and eventually end up at the north boundary of the Open Space. Here, the bottom of Coyote Canyon merges with Las Huertas Creek. At this point you can turn back and retrace your steps or go through the gate and continue your walk on BLM land. Although there's no clear trail, you can also head across the creek and turn left into Coyote Canyon, a shady, sandy arroyo. You can follow the canyon up and eventually come out near the Pipeline Rd. Trail.

Placitas - ABQ Open Space

