

## MATAGUAY CONNECTOR TRAIL ROUTE WEST FROM BARREL SPRINGS

The Mataguay Connector Trail (MCT) connects the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) near Barrel Springs with the Mataguay Scout Ranch (MSR). There is about 100' that needs to be constructed at the PCT junction and a lot of the trail needs maintenance. But the trail is hikeable. This write up describes the 7 mile route from Barrel Springs to the MSR Barn. Use the map that can be downloaded from the HAT places webpage to follow this description.

From the turn off to MSR go north on Highway 79 to S-2. Turn right and drive 4.6 miles to the junction with S-22. Turn left and drive 1.0 miles to a turn out on the right. About 300' into this turn out, park.

The gate (3445') for the PCT is south of the parking. Walk through the gate and go south about 100 yard along a dirt road to Barrel Springs. From the horse tough walk about 75 feet northeast to the start of the PCT. Follow this trail for a quarter of a mile to new trail being constructed on the right, above the PCT. It is just after a boggy climbing segment and short of a culvert in a flat section of trail. (3570'-0.3 miles from gate). This trail is not yet suitable for horses. (Note: If you climb out of the trees and go through some gate before you turn onto the the MCT, you have gone too far up the hill. If you turn down from the PCT, you have gotten on the side trail to a future campsite.)

Turn up the hill and climb over the construction area to the completed trail. A sign warns that this is a private trail for use by permission only from the Vista Irrigation District (Which has been given to the Scouts, but not others. It is important to clear the use of this trail with the Mataguay Ranger before your trip). Climb up the completed section of the MCT (with one short dip to cross a wash) to an old fire break at a saddle (3670-0.8).

Cross the fire break and descend across two minor washes, go around a bump to a small saddle and down to cross a small stream bed, then climb over a low ridge and descend to a junction with the Old California Riding and Hiking Trail. (In this area the MCT tread is hard to follow due to new growth. From where the trail bottoms out from its decent, generally head slightly north of west towards the highway.) Continue another 150 feet beyond the CR&HT to the Highway S-2 gate (3500-0.9-2.0). (There is a nice set of bars for climbing over the fence next to these gates.)

From the west S-2 gate follow the south side of the gully west, then cross it and head through a minor saddle. The trail goes northwest around the hill into an oak filled canyon (3600-0.5). Then it climbs along the south side of this canyon. (About a quarter mile up this climb there is a large scruboak blocking the tread. It is easy to go around it to the right.) Where the canyon turns south, look for a continuation of the trail on the west side of the wash. The CDF cut a wide firebrake going up the main canyon. Be careful not to follow the firebrake/cow trail. Instead follow the south bank of the side wash and pick up the

MCT. Where it looks like the MCT goes up a wash, look to the right and find the MCT and follow it as it climbs north around a minor ridge.

Now climb steadily northeast up to the Baldy View turn (3820-0.7). On a clear day Mount Baldy shows through the Sunshine Summit notch, east of Palomar Mountain. Now the trail goes south up the hill to cross the Pacific Crest (4100-0.7). Here you can see Whale Peak, and Granite, Vulcan, and San Ysidro Mountains. You continue to climb west over the trail's high point (4190-0.4-2.3). (Just before you get to this high point you cross a minor wash and the trail disappears into new growth. Contour south to a point just to the right of a minor saddle in the ridge.) By walking Southeast along this ridge you can get to the San Felipe Overlook. It is a great place for a lunch stop.

From this ridge make a gradual descent (We are in the process of removing buckwheat and other plants that have over grown this section of trail. Where the new clearing ends it may be easier to drop down the wash and follow the jeep track up the canyon.) to cross a jeep track in a meadow (4070-0.9) (To find this crossing note where the trail shows on the meadow to the north east of the jeep track and note where it should cross the jeep trail. The brush on the south side of the jeep trail is beginning to crowd the start of this point on the trail. Turn south and follow this trail). A minor climb takes you to the Big Oak (4120-0.3-1.2).

From this oak the trail follows a ranch road south for a hundred yards or so. Where the dirt road turns southwest look for the trail on the left as it drops to follow the east edge of the meadow. On the south end of the meadow the trail drops down some turns to the Southside MSR Loop Trail Junction (3930-0.8) which is about 100 yards after you enter onto Mataguay Scout Ranch property.

Turn right and descend under beautiful oaks to HALTT Upper Lake Trail Junction (3730-0.5). Trend right and continue down the canyon to another trail junction (3650-0.2), which also goes to Upper Lake. The MCT continues down the canyon past a horse trail junction (coming in from the right) to another junction (3540-0.2). Turn left, cross Matagual Creek on the Barn Bridge and walk up the trail to the barn (3590-0.1-1.8). The Old Commissary and Mountain Man Meadow are to the right, just down the valley.

From S-22 at Barrel Springs to the barn below the training center is 7.3 miles. From S-2 it is 5.3 miles.

A 10 mile hike can be done by following the MCT from Barrel Springs to the Barn Bridge Trail and then doing the counter clockwise 3 mile hike that goes down through camp to the Lake Henry/Indian Rock wash and back up the south side of the creek to Mountain Man Meadow. The description of this counter clockwise 3 mile hike can be downloaded from the HAT places webpage

PERMISSION IS NEEDED TO DO THIS HIKE ACROSS VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT PROPERTY. (SEE THE MATAGUAY CAMP RANGER FOR PERMIT.)

You can help complete the permanent route by joining us on one of our scheduled trail building outings. 6 March 2013

### **TEN MILE HIKE WITH A 1000' ELEVATION GAIN HIKE**

The Camping Merit Badge now has an optional requirement for a 1000' elevation gain hike. This trip describes how to do the MCT hike from the west with a 1000' gain and a 10 mile hike.

Start from the 90-degree turn on the road into Mataguay and follow the road east through camp to the Parker Dining Hall parking lot. At the radio transmitter pole near the top of the Campfire Bowl, pick up the Blackfoot trail and follow it to the uphill side of the Nature Den. Climb the dirt road to the Crow Campsite and turn uphill, going about 30 degrees to the right of straight up the hill. In about 100 yards you will hit the North Side Trail, which takes you around a canyon and down to the MCT west of the Barn Bridge. Continue east on the MCT to the PCT.