

© E. DAN KLEPPER



Life's better outside.®

The Contrabando Multi-Use Trail System

Big Bend Ranch State Park
P. O. Box 2319
Presidio, TX 79845

Barton Warnock Visitor Center:
(432) 424-3327
Sauceda Ranger Station:
(432) 358-4444
Fort Leaton State Historic Site
(432) 229-3613

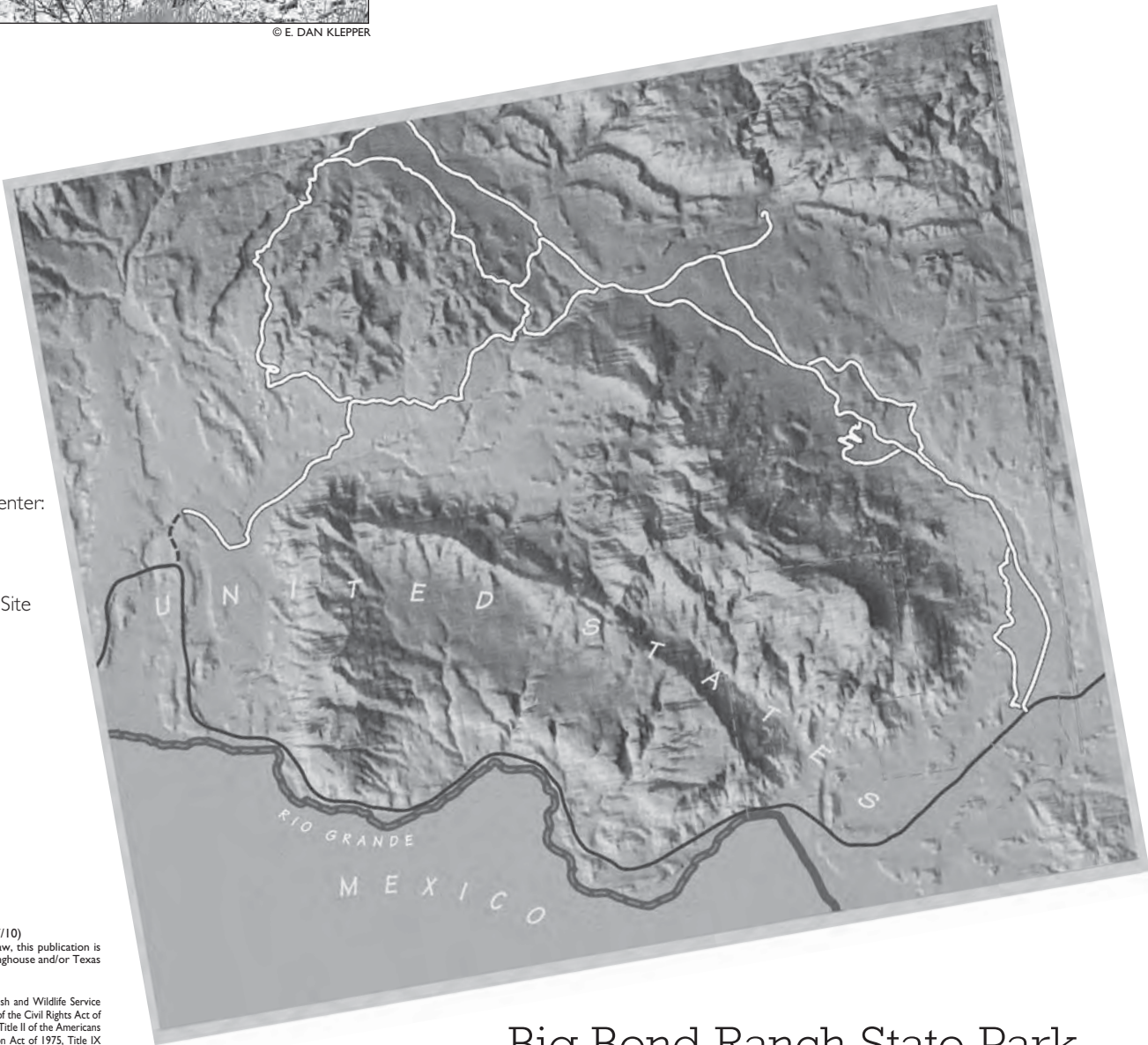


Life's better outside.®

4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744
www.tpwd.state.tx.us

© 2010 TPWD. PWD MP P4501-1521 (7/10)
In accordance with Texas State Depository Law, this publication is available at the Texas State Publications Clearinghouse and/or Texas Depository Libraries.

TPWD receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies and is subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and state anti-discrimination laws which prohibit discrimination the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any TPWD program, activity or facility, or need more information, please contact Civil Rights Coordinator for Public Access, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.



Big Bend Ranch State Park

The Contrabando Multi-Use Trail System is composed of 25 miles of interconnecting wagon paths and single-track trails. In the early 1890s the East Main Trail was part of the supply and stage route that connected Lajitas and the Terlingua Mining District to the Marfa Railhead of the Southern Pacific Railroad located 80 miles to the north. This route also connected several ranches and homesteads in the area. From the 1890s to the 1950s, prospectors blazed many of the trails in this area in search of cinnabar. The West Main Trail began as a rugged jeep and wagon road that served as the main passageway from Presidio to Lajitas and Terlingua. It was abandoned in the early 1960s when FM 170 was completed along the Rio Grande.

Today the Contrabando Trail offers the modern-day adventurer a chance to experience the rugged beauty of the Chihuahuan Desert. The trail offers dramatic vistas—from the Rio Grande River corridor to hidden canyons. The geology and landscape are constantly changing, and you will find several historical points of interest along the trail. While using the trails please remain conscientious, helping us protect our natural and cultural heritage for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders share the Contrabando Trail System. Some special considerations must be observed in order for all users to enjoy the trail. We ask your help in observing the following:

ALL TRAIL USERS

- Obtain day-use permits and camping permits at Barton Warnock Visitor Center, Fort Leaton State Historic Site or Sauceda Ranger Station.
- Always let park personnel know when you are going to be on the trail and when you expect to be off.
- Yield the trail as follows: Hikers and mountain bikers yield to horsebackriders; mountain bikers yield to hikers.
- Be self-sufficient; carry at least one gallon of water per person per day, and carry food, and sun protection. First-aid kits are recommended.
- Check weather reports for hazardous conditions before taking to the trail; thunderstorms and flash floods can appear rapidly without warning.
- Practice “leave no trace” skills and ethics (park staff can provide guidance). Pack out what you pack in; take only pictures, and leave only footprints.
- Dogs and pets are allowed only within 1/4 mile from the trailhead, for their own safety and to protect the wildlife. Keep pets on a leash not more than 6 feet in length. Pick up after your pet—feces can spread diseases and viruses to wildlife.
- Natural water sources are fragile ecological zones in the desert. Keep equestrian stock away from all water holes and seep springs. Use buckets to water your animals. Since lotions and oils on your skin will dramatically affect aquatic life, do not bathe in natural water sources. Always filter and/or treat drinking water.
- Leave backcountry camps as clean as, or cleaner than you found them. Camp stoves are permitted, as well as fires built in fire rings at designated campsites (provided no bum ban is in effect). Open ground fires are strictly prohibited. Be careful not to leave food behind; doing so can artificially attract unwanted insects and wild animals. Toss grey water away from your camping area. If you cannot pack it out, dispose of all human waste by digging a “cat

- hole” 6 to 8 inches deep, 300 feet from the trail or camping area and 300 feet from any water source. Pack toilet paper out.
- Help us preserve the rich heritage of historic ruins by staying off of walls and foundations. Look, but leave artifacts where you find them. If you notice any looting or vandalism of a historic site, please report it to a park ranger or the nearest visitor center.
- There are several private land in-holdings within the state park; be aware of these in-holdings, respect private property and do not trespass.

MOUNTAIN BIKERS

- Always wear a helmet while riding.
- Remember to yield right-of-way to horses and hikers.
- Always stay on the trail. Do not shortcut switchbacks or ride around water bars.
- Be kind to our trails by controlling your speed and not skidding. Avoid riding on muddy trails.
- Safety comes first. If necessary, walk your bike over rough terrain.
- Always carry two spare tubes and plenty of water.

HORSEBACK RIDERS

- A permit is required for each horse, which may be obtained at Barton Warnock Visitor Center, Sauceda Ranger Station or Fort Leaton State Historic Site.
- Each horse must have a completed VS Form 10-11 (Texas Animal Health Commission) showing that the horse has tested negative for an official Equine Infectious Anemia test within the previous 12 months.
- Be kind to our trails. Always stay on the trail; do not shortcut switchbacks, and avoid riding when trails are muddy.
- Use weed-free hay and restrict animals from browsing on the vegetation.
- Use a bucket for watering. Protect our fragile water sources by not letting horses drink directly from springs or watering holes.
- Use hobbles; horses tied to trees or shrubs can damage the vegetation.
- Be considerate of hikers and mountain bikers by scattering manure off and away from the trail, and at least 300 feet from a campsite.

The Contrabando Multi-Use Trail System

TRAIL	DISTANCE	DIFFICULTY
East Main Trail	8.5 mi.	easy
West Main Trail	5.0 mi.	difficult
Camino Viejo Trail	1.2 mi.	moderate
Contrabandista Spur	0.6 mi.	easy
Crystal Trail	1.3 mi.	moderate
Dog Cholla Trail	1.4 mi.	moderate
Dome Trail	4.0 mi.	difficult
Rock Quarry Trail	1.0 mi.	moderate

