

Bicycling in Kimble County

by Scott Richardson

The beautiful scenery and lack of traffic make the paved secondary roads of the Texas Hill Country some of the best in the U.S. for cycling. Of course, along with these are the “hills,” so bring your low gears. Located on the northwestern edge of the Hill Country, Kimble County has the great scenery and even less traffic on its paved country roads than other more “discovered” areas. It also has several hundred miles of graveled county roads, ideal for exploring on mountain or hybrid bikes. For these county roads, obtain a county road map from the Chamber of Commerce. If the road does not have a “KC” number, it’s probably private. If you’re looking for a paved route that begins and ends in Junction, the smallest such loop is 70 to 80 miles long. However, there are four out-and-back routes of 10 to 50 miles. A description of each of these routes is listed below.

Junction to Roosevelt: Take FM Rd. 1674 off U.S. 83, between the Sonic Drive In and the North Llano bridge. This road was once the old U.S. 290 and goes west up the North Llano River valley to the small community of Roosevelt. It goes under or over Interstate 10 about three times before you get to Roosevelt, about 20 miles west of Junction. There are no stores or services until you get to Roosevelt, so plan accordingly. Traffic is low, and you’ll cross the North Llano River three times on the way.

Junction to Cleo and Bear Creek: Take the same FM 1674 as the above ride, but about 4 miles west, take FM Rd. 2291 to the right (north). This road eventually comes out in Menard, about 30 miles north of Junction. You’ll be riding up Bear Creek Valley through an old community called Cleo. This ride crosses Bear Creek up to five times if you go about 2 miles past Cleo, which is about 12 miles from downtown Junction. Again, there are no services along the route or at Cleo.

Junction to Telegraph: Take Hwy. 377 south out of Junction toward Rocksprings. This road has more traffic, but has an excellent wide shoulder for the first 10 miles. You’ll be going up the South Llano River valley, crossing the river two times before you get to Telegraph Store, about 15 miles from Junction. If you want to climb hills, continue south past the store for some of the steepest climbs around, with fantastic views of the South Llano River valley and surrounding countryside.

Junction to Segovia: Take FM Rd. 2169 south of the South Llano River bridge and head east. This road follows the Main Llano River valley for about 3-4 miles and then turns up the Johnson Fork Creek valley to Segovia, about 10 miles from Junction. Continue along FM 2169 through Segovia where there are services, for additional low-traffic miles. On your way, you’ll cross Johnson Fork creek three times.