



Juanita Cooke Trail

— Laguna Lake Park in Fullerton

A view of the Juanita Cooke Trail.

Hello again, everyone!

This month, I wanted to choose a path with no hills, lots of shade and plenty of trees, so that everyone can take part. I found the Juanita Cooke Trail in Fullerton. The trail is pretty flat and has lots of trees along the way.

The best place to start is at the Laguna Lake Park in Fullerton. You can park your car right next to the lake and start exploring from your very first step. This trail has lots of activities from beginning to end – you can walk, jog, bike, horseback and even fish. If you like to fish, look no further than the lake. You can bring all your fishing gear and relax while your family goes ahead

and walks the trail. We had a lot of fun walking through the trail. This trail has it all joggers, bikers and even horseback riders. The trail is only about 2.5 miles long.

Laguna Lake is guaranteed to please park visitors, whether they are nature lovers, hikers, joggers, equestrians, bicyclists or fishermen. Park guests can picnic in the park area just below the dam; stroll around the lake on hard pack dirt trails, or depending on the time year, cast a line for rainbow trout, catfish, bass or bluegill. Laguna Lake Park also serves as the site of the Equestrian Center. Home to the Fullerton Recreation Riders, the center is furnished with riding rings, show rings, and grandstand seating.

History

The trail is named for Juanita Cooke, who once served as a liaison for the Fullerton Recreation Riders, a local equestrian group that helped get the trail built. A plaque posted at West Valley View Drive gives the history of the trail. Also posted at this location is the route of a 12-mile mountain bike ride around Fullerton. Yet another trail, the Bud Turner Trail, named for another Fullerton Recreation Riders leader influential in making a trail a reality, connects to the greenbelt. Together, these two trails provide a refreshing space for all trail enthusiasts.

The Hike

The Juanita Cooke Greenbelt is a wonderful escape from the often-busy streets and highways of Orange County. This 2.5-mile trail in Fullerton connects some of the area's quiet neighborhoods with the downtown area, making it a great commuter path as well. The wide mulch and dirt surface makes this trail ideal for equestrian, pedestrian and bike use alike.

Setting out from the northern trailhead at Laguna Lake Park, you will pass through some established neighborhoods. The scents provided by the flowering shrubs, citrus trees and the rest of the surrounding lush vegetation is a delightful bonus. As the trail approaches bustling downtown Fullerton, it crosses high above an active railroad corridor.

As you follow the trail, you will find after about a mile that the trail becomes a regular street. Just keep going until you reach West Bastanchury Boulevard, and go up the steep incline to continue back on to the trail.

When you reach Laguna Road and the trail appears to come to an abrupt stop, cross the road and follow Morelia Place (directly across the street from the trail) for



Fishing in Laguna Lake.

Juanita Cooke Trail

3120 Lakeview Dr., Fullerton

TRAIL END POINTS: Laguna Lake Park to North Euclid, and W. Valencia Mesa.

COUNTY: Orange County

TRAIL LENGTH: 2.5 miles (one way)

TRAIL CATEGORY: Rail-trail

TRAIL SURFACES: Woodchips, dirt

TRAIL ACTIVITIES: Horseback riding, mountain biking, walking.

DIRECTIONS:

To reach the Laguna Lake Park endpoint from Highway 91 (the Riverside Freeway) in Fullerton, take the Euclid Street exit. Head north on Euclid Street for about 4 miles to Lakeview Road. Turn right (east) on Lakeview Road and go 0.5 mile to Hermosa Drive. Turn right (east) on Hermosa Drive and go 0.1 mile to Lakeside Drive. The northwest entrance to Laguna Lake Park is at this intersection.



Angel Gomez, Director of Member Services

Send your photos to me at agomez@cityemployeesclub.com. I would love to see them!



Aden and Angel Jr. find a beautiful log bench and take a short break.



Angel Jr. and Aden find a makeshift fishing pole.

BELOW: Kathy, Aden and Angel Jr. with our new friends, Sweetie Pie and Getaway.



Aden is happy to see the end coming up soon.



Angel Jr. finds a trail marker.



Aden wants a piggy-back ride from his brother, Angel Jr.

a few hundred yards of on-road travel. At the intersection of West Bastanchury Boulevard, cross this busy street and pick up the mulch and dirt trail once again on the other side. The last stretch of the trail is especially wide. Neighbors on both sides of the trail have put in beautiful landscaping, including lush gardens and high palms. Near Harbor Boulevard, very close to downtown Fullerton, the trail ends. Just to the left of the trail endpoint is a large Orange County courts parking area that can also be used by trail-goers.

As you walk the last section of the trail, you will see the Fullerton Court on your left, and then the trail ends. However, if you want to start at this location (N. Harbor and N. Berkeley), you can begin here. Or if you started at Laguna Lake, this would be the halfway mark.

I really enjoyed this short trail. When we finished, we decided to go south on Harbor Boulevard and refuel at the Old Spaghetti Factory.

Thanks again for reading *Be Alive!* If you know of any places you would like me to visit, please send me an email.

Special Note: Although the trail's official north end is at Hermosa Drive near Laguna Lake, the path continues north until it is interrupted by the Coyote Creek channel. A rough informal path goes as far north as Imperial Highway, where the railroad spur still exists and there is a signalized grade crossing.

Don't forget to bring your camera and take plenty of photos. Send them to me at agomez@cityemployeesclub.com.

**As always,
be safe and Be Alive!,
Angel**

Angel Jr. adds jumping to the list of activities you can do at the park.

