

Riding Around the Sierra Nevada Roads



Six Mile Canyon Road
May 6th, 2007

Here's another road that will take you to Virginia City. It's called Six Mile Canyon Road. Getting there is not very interesting from a scenic perspective. Just get on Hwy 50 from Carson City and start riding. You'll pass Mound House and Dayton and then some. It gets pretty empty pretty fast on Hwy 50 as you can see in the picture on the left. This is the kind of scenery that inspires musicians to write sad songs. You'll almost wonder if you missed the turn. Don't worry. There's a big sign where you will make a left hand turn.



You'll pass through two neighborhoods – one old and one new – on what seems to be a relatively flat part. Don't let it fool you. You're climbing a 1% to 2% grade. Suddenly, the road texture changes and the houses disappear. It becomes very open and the climb begins.



As the name of the road implies, you'll soon enter a small canyon but you wouldn't notice it unless you look around and realize that you're riding between two walls of rock! At some point you'll see a lot of trees appear and hear the sound of rushing water. Yes, there's a creek off to the side but don't trust the water. It's probably treated sewage. Good for the trees... bad for the stomach.

The road will pitch up a bit and then relax as it takes you up to Virginia City. It's not a viscious climb like Hwy 341/342 so it will feel quite easy. Soon enough, the outskirts of Virginia City appear. These are the houses of the people that actually live there – not the touristy strip. Be prepared as the climb begins to dish it out to you. All that relaxed climbing means the road was banking it up for you! Make sure you ate that extra banana because you'll need it. I tried to capture the last couple hundred of feet looking back since it is representative of the last mile. Expect a 10% to 15% grade near the top.



Six Mile Canyon Road is actually 7.92 miles long. I had a starting elevation of 4315 feet and an ending elevation of 6121 feet which makes for an average grade of 4.3%.

