



TRAIL CENTER

Trail Information and Trail Volunteers for
Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Alameda & San Francisco Counties

Mountain Biking on the San Francisco Peninsula and in the South Bay Area

Rev. July 2000

Introduction

The San Francisco Bay Area is rightly regarded as a mountain biking Mecca. In the South Bay and on the SF Peninsula alone, over 440 miles of trail are open to mountain biking as of July 2000:

California State Parks	198 mi. open
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)	74 mi. open
San Mateo County	5 mi. open
Santa Clara County	85.9 mi. open
City of Palo Alto	6 mi. open (approx.)
Misc. Baylands Parks	18 mi. open (approx.)
Misc. Bike Trails	54 mi. open (approx.)

Maps of these parks are available from the parks and many are included on the Trail Center maps *Trail Map of the Southern Peninsula* and *Trail Map of the Central Peninsula* (forthcoming). Another excellent source of information (including trail/road grades) are the Krebs Cycle Products mountain biking maps, which are available from many bike and outdoor stores and from Krebs Cycle Products (P.O. Box 7337, Santa Cruz, CA 95061). We recommend contacting the park for current information before riding.

If you are new to the sport of mountain biking or would like to ride with others, you may wish to contact the cycling clubs active in our area:

- ROMP (Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers) is a local group that organizes rides, encourages responsible riding, and advocates greater access to trails for bicycles. Check the current listing of rides.
- Western Wheelers: This is a large club that leads many rides on the Peninsula. Check the current listing (also listed on the ROMP site).

The public lands in the South Bay and SF Peninsula are more bike-friendly than in many areas, but the public perception of irresponsible bikers threatens trail access.

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Please ride responsibly and observe the International Mountain Biking Association's (IMBA) Rules of the Trail (an expanded version, along with other tips can be found on ROMP's *Beginner's Guide to Mountain Biking*):

- Ride on open trails only – Respect trail closures and private property.
- Leave no trace – Be sensitive to trail conditions and be especially careful about riding muddy trails, which can leave grooves that will later erode. Skidding causes severe trail damage and isn't an efficient way to stop.
- Control your bicycle! – Stay within posted speed limits and always slow down or stop when approaching other trail users.
- Always yield the trail – Let others know you're approaching and be courteous. Stop and get off for equestrians! Yield to uphill bike traffic - they have the right of way.
- Never spook animals – Use special care around horses, but be careful around all animals - a startled animal may be dangerous to you, for others, and for the animal. Leave gates as you find them.
- Plan ahead – Know your equipment, your route and your abilities! Wear a helmet and keep your bike in good condition. Always carry sufficient food, water and other supplies.

And finally, consider volunteering to maintain trails with the Trail Center, ROMP, or MROSD.

California State Parks

Many State Parks allow biking on fire roads but generally not on trails. Consult the park ranger for further information.

- Big Basin (831) 338-6132: 12 mi. of fire roads open. Moderate terrain.
- Butano (650) 879-0173: 3 mi. of fire roads open. Moderate to steep terrain.
- Forest of Nisene Marks (831) 335-4598: 15 mi. open. Single-track west of steel bridge open to bikes. Gentle to steep terrain.
- Henry Cowell Redwoods (831) 335-1598: 3 mi. of fire roads open.
- Henry Coe (408) 779-2728: 100 (more or less) miles open (yes, it's that big!). Very steep terrain. Ask for the free bicyclists' map at the Visitor Center.
- Pacheco (209) 826-6283 or (209) 826-1196: 28 mi. of ranch and fire roads open. Gentle to moderate grades.
- Portola (650) 948-9098: 2 mi. open. Connects to Pescadero Creek and Memorial County Parks. Gentle terrain - good beginner's ride.
- Wilder Ranch (831) 423-9703: 35 mi. of old ranch roads. Gentle to moderate terrain. Great views.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

17 different preserves, including Sierra Azul, Long Ridge, Montebello and Fremont Older, permit bicycling on trails and fire roads. There is no mountain biking permitted

at Rancho San Antonio, [or - beginning Sept. 1, 2000 - at Foothills, La Honda Creek, Los Trancos, Picchetti Ranch, Pulgas Ridge, Teague Hill, or Thornewood]. Only the fire road on Spring Ridge is open for mountain biking at Windy Hill. There are also isolated trails, which are marked, throughout the 17 preserves, upon which biking is prohibited. Use of fire roads is encouraged. See the MROSD website, contact the MROSD office at (650) 691-1200 or contact the Trail Center for more information.

- Coal Creek: 4 mi. open to bikes. Connects to Monte Bello OSP. Moderate to steep terrain.
- El Corte de Madera: 15 mi. of old logging roads and trails open to bikes. Moderate to very steep terrain.
- El Sereno: 4 mi. open. Steep dirt roads, great views.
- Fremont Older: 5 mi. open. Connects to Stevens Creek Co. Park. Moderate to steep terrain. Very popular.
- Long Ridge: 7 mi. open. Connects to Saratoga Gap, Upper Stevens Creek Co. Park. Moderate terrain, some single-track. Great views from the ridge.
- Monte Bello (Page Mill Road area): 8 mi. open. Connects to Coal Creek, Long Ridge, Skyline OSP and Upper Stevens Creek Co. Park. Canyon Trail very popular mtn. bike trail. Moderate terrain.
- Purisima Creek Redwoods: 7 mi. open. Moderate to steep trails. Beautiful redwood forests. Whittemore Gulch Trail open to bikes during dry weather only.
- Russian Ridge: 6 mi. open. Grassy ridgeline with panoramic views. Moderate terrain.
- Saratoga Gap: 1 mi. open. Connects to Long Ridge and Upper Stevens Creek Co. Park. Moderate to gentle terrain. Narrow single-track trail (experienced riders only.)
- Sierra Azul: 10 mi. open. Connects to Lexington Reservoir recreation area. Steep terrain. Very popular with strong riders. Hot and exposed in summer months.
- Skyline Ridge: 3 mi. open. Connects to Montebello. Moderate to steep terrain.
- St. Joseph's Hill: 2 mi. open. Moderate climb to the top of the hill. Great view of Santa Clara Valley.
- Windy Hill: 2 mi. open. Spring Ridge Trail open to bikes. Steep terrain.

San Mateo County Parks

Pescadero-Sam McDonald Parks allow mountain biking on Old Haul Road, but prohibit bicycles elsewhere. All other parks are closed to bikes except on paved roads. For specific trails, contact the park at (650) 747-040 or the main parks office at (650) 363-4020. San Mateo County also manages the dirt portion of Alpine Road between Joaquin and Page Mill roads, providing an alternative to Page Mill Road for access to the South Skyline preserves, including direct access to Coal Creek OSP.

Santa Clara County Parks

The following parks allow some off-road access: Almaden-Quicksilver, Ed Levin, Grant Ranch, Lexington Reservoir, Upper and Lower Stevens Creek, and Santa Teresa. Check

the SC Co. Parks list of multi-user trails open to bikes, call the Parks' office at (408) 358-3741 or contact the Trail Center for more details.

- Almaden-Quicksilver: 10.6 mi. open. Gentle to moderate grades.
- Coyote Creek Parkway: 15 mi. or paved trail.
- Ed R. Levin: 4 mi. open. Connects to Monument Peak. One steep trail open.
- Joseph D. Grant (Grant Ranch): 21 mi. open. Gentle to steep terrain.
- Lexington Reservoir (408) 356-2729: 3.6 mi. open. Connections to Sierra Azul and St. Joseph's Hill OSP. Gentle to steep grades.
- Los Gatos Creek Trail: 10 mi. of paved trail. Gentle grades.
- Penitencia Creek Trail: 1.9 mi. of paved trail (not contiguous). Gentle grades.
- Rancho San Antonio: 0.75 mi. of paved trail. Gentle grades.
- Santa Teresa: 11.5 mi. open. Moderate to steep terrain.
- Stevens Creek: 1 mi. open. Connects to Fremont Older OSP. Gentle to steep terrain.
- Upper Stevens Creek: 7.2 mi. open. Connects to Long Ridge, Montebello, and Saratoga Gap OSPs. Charcoal Road/Table Mtn. Trail open uphill only.

City of Palo Alto

Bikes are permitted on trails at the Arastradero Preserve (except on the Perimeter Trail) and on dirt trails and roads in the Palo Alto Baylands. Bikes are not allowed off pavement at Palo Alto Foothills Park. Call (650) 329-2423 for more information.

Miscellaneous Baylands Parks

Generally, bikes are permitted on paved and dirt roads and trails. This is true for Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Preserve, Mountain View Shoreline Park, and Sunnyvale Baylands Park.

Miscellaneous Bike Trails

- Alamitos Creek Trail (City of San Jose): Paved trail from Almaden Lake Park to McKean Rd.
- Coyote Creek Park Chain (City of San Jose): 10 mi. open. Partially paved.
- Coyote Creek Levees: 8 mi. open. All levee (level) trails.
- Guadalupe River Levees: 10 mi. open. All levee (level) trails.



