



# The Trail Companion

Summer 1999

## Changes at the Trail Center

Changes? What changes, you may ask. Let's start with the most obvious one:

### The Newsletter is Going Quarterly

Why? Most Bay Area environmental organizations have been doing their newsletters quarterly, or less frequently, for a long time. We've been different because we've included an activity schedule that needed to be up to date. However, in the last year or so, most of what's gone into the activity schedule has just been transcribed from the activity sponsoring organizations' Web sites. This means we've been putting a load on volunteers, finances, and the environment (paper) to support a need that's dwindling. So we've decided to change the goal of the newsletter to providing information on the Trail Center's accomplishments and more long term information related to trails, parks, and the seasons of

our California year. We will focus on a different theme for each issue and hope to include short literary works as well as articles (see additional information on page 2). Watch for this shift beginning with the next issue.

Our website ([www.trailcenter.org](http://www.trailcenter.org)) now has a list of links to organizations sponsoring hikes and other activities, and we will continue to provide information about important activities scheduled well in advance, including Trail Days, mapping, and Crew Leader Training Seminars. We will provide an annual (or possibly more frequent) activity schedule listing agency and group contact information, as well as regularly scheduled ongoing events, such as Bay Area Action's Arastradero restoration project and the Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Association's maintenance work-days.

In tandem with the changes to the newsletter, we are undertaking a major change in our website with

an expanded Trail Companion as the centerpiece. We aim to provide more comprehensive information about Bay Area outdoor recreation and opportunities with expanded hikes and rides, maps, photos and links. Check us out in the upcoming weeks.

### We're No Longer Regularly Staffing the Office and Have Gone Out of the Retail Map Business

Why? Office personnel costs have been consuming all of our member dues, and most of our additional income from trail building contracts and grants. When we analyzed where the office time was being spent, at least half was on activities directly or indirectly related to providing a mail and phone ordering service for maps. Furthermore, most of the maps we

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Changes -- find out what we've been up to the past few months -- page 1  
Park News -- what's going on in California and the Bay Area -- page 3  
Biking in Coal Creek Preserve -- a mellow ride with good scenery -- page 4  
Sun Protection -- be safe this summer and slop on the sunscreen -- page 11  
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# From the Editor

A few new columns which we hope to make into regulars - Park News, summarizing what's been happening with local land, and Along the Trail, where members get highlighted, premier in this issue. As our lead article mentions, we're going quarterly and we plan to have a theme for each issue. By announcing the themes early enough we hope to provide our members with chances to submit articles along the

themes' lines (though you needn't be restricted by that).

Here are the themes we hope to cover over the next few issues::

Fall 1999: Trails and the Americans with Disabilities Act - focus on what new guidelines mean for access and trail design, and a survey of access on the Peninsula and South Bay.

Winter 1999/2000: Taking Trails into the Next Millenium - where have we

come from, where are we, and where are we headed. Also an overview of the changing face of public lands since the TC's inception.

As usual, please send comments, especially now where lots of things are changing.

Scott Heeschen

## The Trail Center

The Trail Center is a non-profit volunteer organization formed in 1983 to provide and promote quality non-mot-erozed trail oportunites for all people in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Alameda and San Francisco counties. The Trail Center works with government agencies, outdoor enthu-siasts and other interested parties to create and manage an interconnected network of trails for the five-county region. The Trail Center publishes The Trail Companion, which includes an activ-ity schedule, and organizes trail build-ing, repair and mapping projects.

The Board of Directors meets every month on the third Thursday at 6:30 at the Peninsula Conservation Center

### Board of Directors

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(650) 968-7065

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www.trailcenter.org

### Trail Companion:

Scott HeeschenEditor

## Thank you all for renewing your membership!

R. Alarcon  
Richard Allsop  
Joane Anderson  
John and Marlene Arnold  
M.M. Bales Brady  
The Chanslers  
Eric Cope  
Harold Drake  
Mrs. Richard Edgren  
Kenn Ehman  
Bill Freedman  
Diane Gingell  
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Michelle Taketa  
Katherine Thomas  
Ann Turner  
Peter Vanderbilt  
Jack Wain  
Betsy Wallace and Tom Beckett  
Kurt Wampler  
Patti and Ed White  
Kevin Wilkinson

## And Welcome to our New Members!

Michael Ellery  
Carie Ferreira  
Martin Horowitz  
Bill Nelson  
Bill and Ginny Pitts  
Nilima Ragavan  
Gail Seeds  
Katie Viren  
Bernadette Yap

# Park News

## State of California

The State budget has been approved, and it allocates several million dollars to preserving land and building trails in our area. Some of the projects mentioned in the San Jose Mercury News are

- a bike trail in Half Moon Bay
- a 6,100 acre addition to Henry Coe State Park
- a trail linking Los Alamitos Creek Trail to the Guadalupe River Park Chain
- buying the 4,800 acre Palo Corona Ranch in Monterey

In addition, the Bay Area Conservancy will receive \$10 million which it will use to buy and preserve land in the Bay area, and the San Francisco Bay Trail will receive \$2.5 million.

## Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

**Bear Creek Redwoods:** This 1,065 acre addition to the MROSD was just approved at the end of June. It lies above Lexington Reservoir, south of Los Gatos and west of Highway 17. The land will be closed to the public for up to 5 years while the District inventories wildlife areas and historic buildings on the site. The area will be suitable for hiking and fishing, and may become open to mountain biking and horse riding. MROSD plans to hold public hearings on how the land is to be used. The land purchase was a cooperative effort between the MROSD and the Peninsula Open Space Trust - the District is purchasing the lower portion of the parcel for \$15 million, while POST is taking out a loan of \$10 million to buy the upper portion. POST expects to start raising funds to pay off the debt soon. Call POST

at (650) 854-7696 to contribute or for more information.

**EI Corte de Madera:** The MROSD board decided to concentrate on Area 2 (Skeggs), a portion of EI Corte de Madera not covered in the original trails plan. Despite great opposition from the mountain biking community, MROSD has decided to close some of the popular technical trails, known to cyclists as Devil's Staircase, Nose-break, and Outhouse trails, and improve some of the others in the area. One other technically challenging trail, known as Voodoo/Totem, will be retained and cyclists will gain access to the Sierra Morena (Blue Hair) trail.

**Rancho San Antonio:** Although many people came out in support of constructing a new trail to replace the PG&E access road from the upper end of the Black Mountain single-track trail all the way to the top of the ridge, MROSD weighed the project against proposals for work elsewhere and decided against the reroute for this year. One of the difficulties is that PG&E will continue to need access to the transmission towers; options for a new trail could include replacing the existing road with a new road that would serve both trail users and PG&E. If that alternative doesn't work, another option may be a parallel trail for trail users while the road remains open for PG&E.

**Windy Hill:** One of the two main projects for 1999/2000 is a new trail which will be opened to link the parking lot on Portola Road to Spring Hill Trail. Some work has already been done on the trail, which passes by Sausal Pond.

## Santa Clara County Parks

12 Santa Clara County parks will begin charging a \$4 parking fee beginning next year - the parks are

Almaden Quicksilver, Alviso Marina, Anderson Lake, Calero, Chesbro Reservoir, Chitactac Adams, Lexington Reservoir, Rancho San Antonio, Santa Teresa, Stevens Creek, Uvas Canyon and Uvas Reservoir. The additional monies will go towards providing services and rangers at these parks as well as to offset a 5 percent cut in funding from the county due in 2002. The county already charges \$4 for its other parks, but access by bicycle or foot will still be free for all county parks.

**Almaden Quicksilver Park:** The park has opened a section with new trails in the Mine Hill area. The newly-opened section had been closed due to mercury contamination, and includes a few buildings constructed by the miners who lived there while the "quicksilver" mining was in its heyday. The county has removed some contaminated material while burying the rest under several feet of soil to prevent leaching.

In addition to opening a new section, the park has opened access to mountain bikers for a one year pilot program. During this time, volunteers will monitor trail use. If you wish to volunteer for trail monitoring or join their Trailwatch patrol, call John Heenan, the county parks Volunteer Coordinator at (408) 354-6583. Trails allowing mountain bikes are accessible via the main park entrance (Hacienda Entry) on Alamitos Road. Oh, and dogs are now allowed in the park, too, as long as they're on a leash.

**Calero Reservoir Park:** The Peninsula Open Space Trust has been busy. In addition to helping MROSD with the Bear Creek Redwoods park (above), they've also

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## A Bike Ride Through Coal Creek Open Space Preserve

by Scott Heeschen

Along with Windy Hill, Coal Creek Open Space Preserve is one of the most easily-accessed open preserves from Palo Alto, where I lived when I first moved to the Bay area. When I felt adventurous, I would pedal up to the end of the paved part of Alpine Road, stop to eat a small snack, then proceed up the roughly 2 miles of dirt road to Page Mill. From there I could turn left to head down Page Mill Road and return home, cross into Monte Bello Open Space Preserve to descend towards Stevens Creek, or turn right and meet up with Skyline Boulevard, where the options for cyclists (road and mountain) are very open.

All my visits to Coal Creek while I lived in Palo Alto were simply to get up to Page Mill. I never left the fire road until a few years ago, when a landslide completely eliminated about 100 feet of the road. When that happened, the Open Space District opened up a short section of singletrack to allow users to continue hiking or riding through. The slide still remains, a reminder of

how dynamic the Santa Cruz mountains really are.

Since I've moved to Campbell, most of my riding has been concentrated around there, so I looked forward late this Spring to revisiting Coal Creek and seeing what I hadn't seen when I was simply "passing through". Starting out from Palo Alto, I took my old standard route, following Alpine Road to the south, crossing under Highway 280 and through the town of Portola Valley. After passing Portola Road (about 3 miles from 280), the road starts to climb and becomes less traveled. One of the parking lots for Windy Hill (and Coal Creek, for that matter) is about a mile later, at the intersection with Willowbrook. There is no parking further along Alpine Road, so you must hike or ride your bike or horse along the road for a while to get to the gate for Coal Creek.

For the next mile and a half (roughly), Alpine Road follows Corte de Madera Creek, which provides a cool, fresh feel to the air, before the pavement turns into a dirt fire road. The scenery along

this stretch of road is often lush and rugged. There is very little traffic on the road here, and the only sounds I heard were the leaves rustling in the trees and the creek rushing down the canyon to my right.

The preserve's namesake flows into Corte de Madera Creek about half a mile before the entrance to the preserve, so you actually don't see the creek while traveling the trails.

After entering the Preserve, Alpine Road becomes a fire road and starts switchbacking while rising out of the canyon. I soon left the coolness of the creek behind and began to feel the warmth of the day on my back. After less than a mile, I came upon the slide that had taken the road out years ago. The slide is impressive, having completely eliminated the road and leaving in its place a sheer cliff of dirt and rock. Just a little further back on Alpine Road is the singletrack that the Open Space District opened up as an alternate route. The poison oak is thick in places along this route, so beware! As careful as I tried to be, I still brushed against it a few times. In addition to being singletrack, this route differs from Alpine Road in that it is well-shaded, a big plus in the summer months, I'm sure.

The singletrack shortly dropped me back onto Alpine Road, where I continued for a short time before coming to the intersection with Crazy Pete's Road. It was a little hard to notice because it heads backwards to the right. This trail isn't as winding as the detour around the slide, and is really a nice, gentle, shaded trail through the oaks and madrones. I soon came to a fork in the trail and went to the right to enjoy the Valley View Trail. True to its name, there were great views to the northeast of the

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Santa Clara Valley. A few small trickles of water were running down and across the trail, but nothing too major. I would guess, though, that this trail could be a mess in the wintertime.

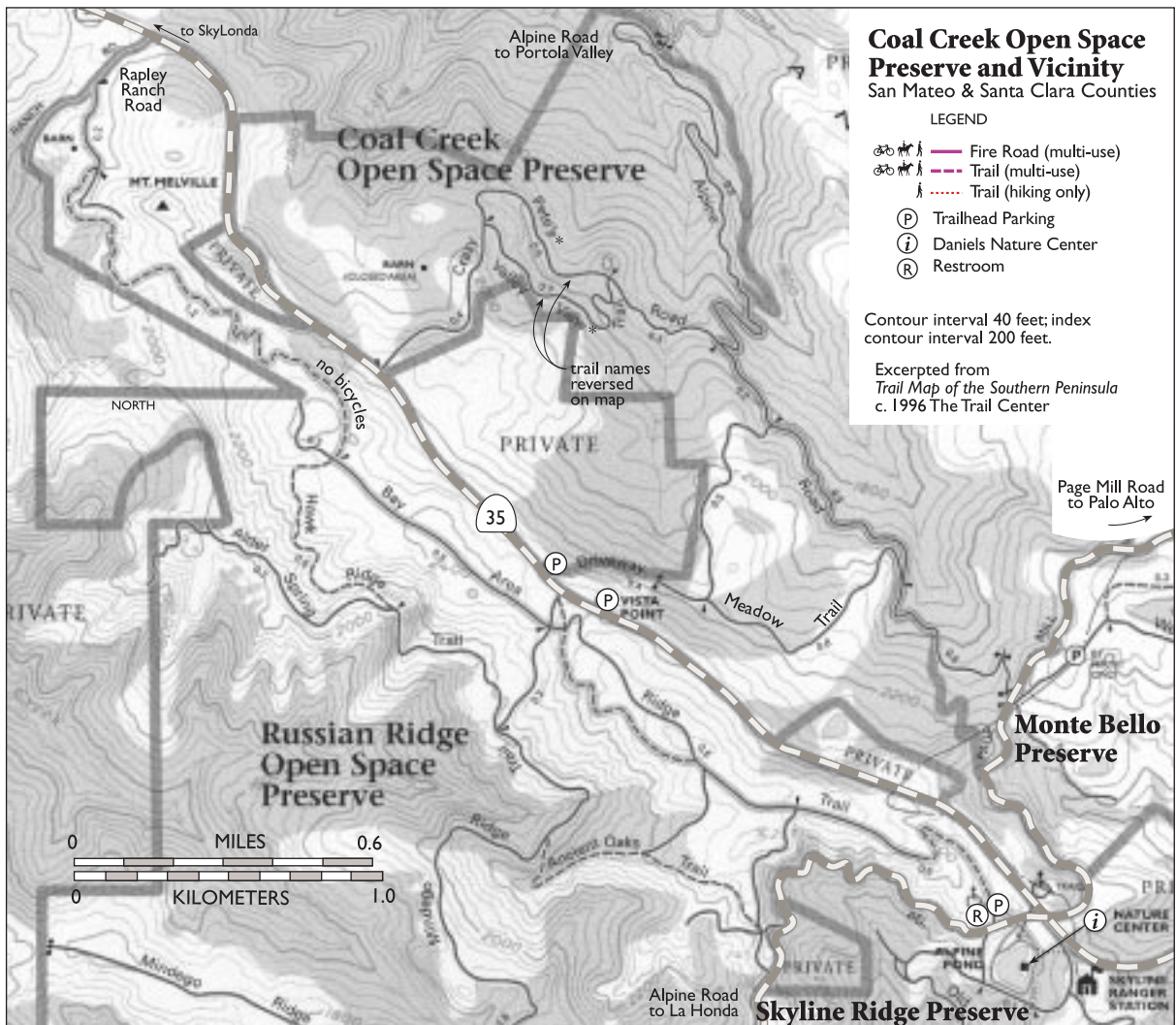
I then actually descended the Valley View Trail back to the fork and took the other branch, up Crazy Pete's Road. The two routes are very comparable, both with good views (though Valley View did have more), and similar terrain. I then continued up to Skyline Boulevard and the Crazy Pete's parking area, roughly 1.7 miles north of Page Mill.

Once on Skyline, I headed south-east about half a mile to the Caltrans vista point. People often use this parking area to visit Russian Ridge, but it also provides good access to Coal Creek. Just before getting to the parking for the vista point, I took a small road heading off to the east, which is the trail back into Coal Creek. I followed this trail for a little less than half a mile to where it intersects with the Meadow Trail. This junction has fantastic views out to the Bay and made it very clear that these trails were different from the Valley View/Crazy Pete's pair. They're much

more open and have less shade, so they're probably nicer in the early spring and fall.

I chose to go down the trail on the left, and met up with Alpine Road after about a half mile. At this point, I was only a fifth of a mile above the junction with Crazy Pete's Road that I had taken earlier. I chose instead to go up the hill to

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# Trail Notes

## California Trails Day at Arastradero Preserve

**Arastradero Preserve, Palo Alto:** Our 1999 California Trail Days project with Bay Area Action brought out fifty volunteers, including large contingents from BAA and the Stanford Cycling Team. Over California Trails Day and one subsequent workday, we cleared thistles and rebuilt a large stretch of the Perimeter Trail, making it a good trail for all trail users.

The Trail Center is helping BAA to



plan trail work for the next three years, including several potential reroutes and restoration projects in the southeastern portion of the preserve.

## Celebrating National Trails Day at Castle Rock

Trail Center crews joined thousands of volunteers across the country in celebrating National Trails Day on June 5th. The national event, organized by the American Hiking Society, featured projects ranging from hikes to trails census projects, restoration work to cleanups, theater on the trail to basic trail work. Our own fell into

the last category as opened up the first section of our Castle Rock Trail reroute at Castle Rock State Park with the help of Any Mountain Ltd.

After our last workday preceding the event (May 22nd), the old trail was still open and the ends of the new trail didn't connect with anything yet. A small group of volunteers (mostly crew leaders and trainees) had worked hard to complete technically difficult sections before National Trails Day, including a massive rock wall and a set of eight steps. Although the steps weren't quite finished because we broke the head off our only sledge hammer by trying to drive a foundation stake through solid sandstone, we were ready for the forty-plus volunteers who turned out for NTD.

The enthusiasm of the NTD crew exceeded our expectations as we put the finishing touches on the new trail, building over 200 feet of tread, and closed the old trail. We put extra effort into stopping erosion on the old trail and covering it with natural materials so that nature would take its course in healing the scars. We celebrated with a gala ribbon cutting, followed by a BBQ party at the Partridge Farm area. Any Mountain was kind enough to donate sunglasses, sunscreen, and raffle prizes. Noah's Bagels in Palo Alto donated bagels, and anonymous Trail Center members donated the BBQ items and other food. Everyone was pleased with the event and we look forward to working with Any Mountain for future National Trails Day events.

Construction began on the second part of the project on June 26th and will continue through the summer. We expect the section to go more quickly than the first because we should not have to build as

many rock walls (roughly half the distance of the first section is walled!), though we may be surprised by what we uncover as we clear and dig!

## Other Trail Center projects

### **Jasper Ridge, Stanford University:**

Winter storms once more brought a load of fresh silt down Corte Madera Creek toward Searsville Lake. Last year's storms piled several feet of silt across the flood plain and into the lake, reducing its size severely. The creek itself shifted dramatically in 1997/1998 and began to flow near Trail 12 (Mapache Trail), site of our 1995-1997 work. This winter's storms caused it to flood and wash away part of Trail 12. We expect to install another bridge to make the trail passable once more.



**Parker Ranch, Saratoga:** Although our contract with the City of Saratoga was terminated before we had completed all our planned work, we will likely return to Parker Ranch in the future. The work on the Diamond Oaks/Star Ridge Court Trail has held up well under winter weather and has received high marks from the residents of Parker Ranch.

**Almaden-Quicksilver County Park:** Trail Center surveyors flagged a reroute of the very steep

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# Outdoor Activity Schedule

for the San Francisco Peninsula and South Bay  
summer 1999

## Trail Center Activities

### Trail Building and Maintenance

You provide your lunch and water, boots or sturdy shoes, long sleeves, long pants and a hat. We provide a spectacular setting for awesome trail building, plus tools and training - no experience necessary. You may get hooked! Call our office for information, at (650) 968-7065.

August 21, 1999 - Saturday

September 11 - Saturday

October 2 - Saturday

October 23 - Saturday

More trail work on our latest project at Castle Rock State Park.

### Crew Leader Training

Start off on the road to becoming a crew leader (or simply someone who knows a bit more about building trails). We'll be teaching the technical aspects of building trails on our September 11 trailbuild at Castle Rock. Call the office to sign up for this special training

### Office

Volunteers are always needed to help around the office, mailing map orders and newsletters, and occasional research.

### Mapping

The Map Committee is forging ahead on our planned map of the Central Peninsula as well as updating the Peninsula Parklands and Southern Peninsula Maps. Team and individual work opportunities.

## Other Trail Building and Maintenance

**Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Association**  
SCMTA volunteers maintain the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail, and trails in Big Basin Redwoods and Castle Rock State Parks. Regular workdays include:

First Saturday of each month at 9 AM. Trail maintenance in Big Basin State Park. Starts from park headquarters. Call Bob Kirsch at (408) 243-4245 for details.

Second Saturday of each month at 9 AM: Trail maintenance on the Skyline to the Sea Trail. Meet at Saratoga Gap parking lot (Hwy. 35 at Hwy. 9). Call Al Lisin at (408) 252-8106 for details.

Third Saturday of each months at 9 AM: Trail maintenance in and around Castle Rock State Park. Meet at Saratoga Gap parking lot. Call Martin Donald at (650) 966-1984 for details.

Fourth Saturday of August and September - clearing downed trees and building trail at Shadow Mountain Camp. Call Tony Look (650) 948-6790 for more details.

San Pedro Valley County Park

Trail maintenance and construction on the slopes of Montara Mountain. 2nd Saturday of each month at 8AM. All ages welcome. Meet at Visitor's Center Rain or shine. Call (650) 355-8289 or (650) 355-5454.

### Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Projects are regularly held on the third Saturday each month. Call Paul McKowan at (650) 691-1200 to register.

### Marin County Open Space District

Complete construction of the new Ship's Mast Trail in the Indian Tree Preserve in Novato. Call (415) 499-3778 for more info.

## Habitat Restoration

### AUGUST 15 - sunday

Work with the Marin County Open Space District to help remove egeria (an invasive water weed) from Pacheco Pond at the Indian Valley Preserve in Novato. Call their volunteer office at (415) 499-3778

### Edgewood Park

Exotic plant removal with the California Native Plant Society. Call Ken Himes (650)591-8560 or Elly Hess (650) 368-8993 for information.

### GGNRA

Non-native plant patrol volunteers needed - schedule varies - call location most convenient for you. Marin Headlands (415) 331-0732. Fort Funston (415) 239-2366. Muir Woods (415) 388-2596. For general GGNRA volunteer info, call (415) 561-3034 x3429.

### Arastradero Preserve

Remove non-native invasive plants, plant natives, repair trail, with Bay Area Action. 2nd and 4th Saturdays each month. Upcoming dates are Apr. 10th, Apr. 24th (with the Trail Center), May 8th, and May 22nd. Meet 9AM, work to about 1PM. Directions to preserve: From Hwy 280, head west on Page Mill for 0.25 mile, turn right at Arastradero Rd.; parking lot is approx. 0.25 mile north, on the right. From Alpine Road, turn onto Arastradero Rd. (at the Alpine Inn) and follow the road 1.5 miles to the parking lot, on the left. For information on Bay Area Action, or this project, call (650) 321-1994.

### San Mateo Coast Dune Restoration

California State Parks Department. Work continues on Pescadero State Beach and Dune restoration. Exotic plant removal, fencing, seed collection and more. Contact Laurie Neville, Senior Resource Aide at (650) 726-8816 or (650) 712-9133 for details on times and locations.

Half Moon Bay State Beaches Restoration  
Restore native coastal dune and bluff plant communities and protect the nesting sites of the threatened Snowy Plover. Contact Marianne Kjobmand (650) 726-8801 of the Resource Ecology Department, California State Parks, Half Moon Bay State Beach. Work at 10AM Saturdays and Sundays.

### California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter

For information on exotic plant control projects, contact president Don Mayall, (650) 856-7579, Email to seleve@netcom.com

### Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA)

GGNRA Habitat Restoration Team conducts regular habitat restoration/exotic vegetation removal projects throughout the GGNRA. Call the Habitat Hotline at (415) 561-4848. Usually each Sunday from 9:30 AM until 2:30pm

Restoration work in the Marin Headlands from 9:30am until 1pm on Wednesdays. Call (415) 332-5193 for more info.

### Wildlands Restoration Team

Santa Cruz-based organization works on exotic plant removal. For all projects bring layered clothing, long pants, hiking boots, at least 2-quarts of water and lunch. Instruction and gloves provided. Call the hotline (408) 662-3039 for more!

Saturdays 10AM-1PM for 10-year olds and older. Call (408) 464-9141 for locations and to get on mailing list.

Sundays at 9AM meet at Denny's restaurant in Santa Cruz on Ocean Street to carpool to a work site. 18-years or older and expect a full days workout.

## Kids and Families

### Hidden Villa

Weekend Farm Tours offered every Sunday. For youngsters but fun for all ages. Meet the animals & vegetables that live on the farm. 11AM-1PM. Call (650) 949-8653 for reservations one week in advance. Fee.

### Parent/Infant Hikes in Edgewood Park

Sierra Club Family Outings meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 10:30AM for a 2-3 mile hike at easy pace accommodating infant needs. Parents with 2-9 month old infants in carrier,

snugly, sling or pack. Boots recommended. Meet at the main Edgewood Park entrance on Edgewood Road 1 mile east of Hwy 280. Call Laura Harter (650) 364-8216 for information or reservations.

### Coyote Point Museum

Always has interesting exhibits for families! Call to see what's there now. General museum admission: \$3 adults, \$2 seniors and students (13-17), \$1 children (4-12), children under 4 and Museum members free. Hours: Tues.-Sat.



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10am-5pm, Sunday 12 noon-5pm. Call for information  
(650) 342-7755.

## Hikes and Walks

**Midpen Regional Open Space District**  
Offers several docent-led hikes throughout their preserves on the Peninsula and on most days of the week (mostly Wednesday through Sunday). Call (650) 691-1200 for more info.

**Pescadero Marsh Nature Walk**  
Meet State Park docent at Pescadero State Beach in the first parking lot south of the Highway 1 bridge over Pescadero Lagoon. Free walks held year-round, weather permitting. Saturdays 10:30-12:30, Sundays 1-3PM. (not offered every weekend; call (650) 879-2170 for dates).

**Henry Cowell State Park**  
Redwood Grove Walks at 2pm every Saturday. 0.8 mile walk to visit amazing trees. Wheelchair and stroller accessible. Call (408) 335-7077.

**Butano State Park Nature Walks**  
Every Saturday and Sunday at 2pm. Pink orchids and scarlet mushrooms! Orange newts and yellow banana slugs! Come see the color of nature. \$5 parking fee. Hwy. 1 south of Half Moon Bay, take Pescadero Road or Gazos Creek Road to Cloverdale Road. Call (650) 879-0173.

**Big Basin Redwood Loop Walk**  
11am and 2pm every Saturday and Sunday. See the power of mother nature  
visit the new twist in the trail since the February storms. Easy 1/2 mile walk meets in front of Park Headquarters. Wheelchair- and stroller-accessible. One hour.

**Wilder Ranch Nature Walk**  
SATURDAYS at 11am along the spectacular trails either on the coastside or back country.. Call (408) 426-0505 for information.

## Bicycling Events

**ROMP - off road**  
ROMP (Responsible Organized Mountain Peddlers), leads several mountain bike rides in parks throughout the area - Fremont Older, El Corte de Madera, Stevens Creek and more. For more information about ROMP including their current schedule, contact Pete Luptovic, ROMP's ride coordinator, at (650) 964-6590 or pete3584@alink.net. .

**Western Wheelers - road**  
Lead many road rides in the area. Regular morning rides Monday through Thursday, and evening rides on Thurs-

day. Also lead several other rides throughout the week and on weekends. Several contact people depending on average ride speed - for slower pace rides contact Don Burnett (408) 253-6953, medium pace contact Roxana Heppner (650) 347-0627, and faster pace contact Jo Vlasteris (650) 591-5359 or Stella Hackell (650) 327-7949.

**Almaden Cycle Touring Club**  
Offers rides practically every day of the week, often several options every day. Contact them at Almaden Cycle Touring Club, P.O. Box 7286, San Jose, CA 95150

## Equestrian Events

**August 21 - Saturday**  
Tilden Wildcat Horsemen's Association is having an overnight in Tilden. Call Jim Morgan (510) 234-7834 for more info.

**August 22 - Sunday**  
San Mateo County Horsemen's Association is holding their Open Western/English Show at the Mounted Patrol

Grounds beginning at 8:30am. Contact them at P.O. Box 620092, Woodside, CA 94062

**August 28 - Saturday**  
The Swanton Pacific Endurance Ride - 100 mile endurance ride north of Santa Cruz. Call Barbara McCrary (831) 423-4572 for more info.

Los Altos Hills Horsemen's Association

LAHHA promotes all activities concerning horsemanship and trail access in the Town of Los Altos Hills and neighboring communities. LAHHA also sponsors frequent shows and other events between March and October. Write to Drawer , Los Altos, CA 94023-4009. Fax (650) 968-4686. Email to SHAZE@WORLDNET.ATT.NET

Los Viajeros Riding Club  
Organized rides and social events. Call Carleen Whittelsey (650) 851-4000 or write P. O. Box 620171, Woodside, 94062.

Quicksilver Endurance Riders, Inc.  
2nd Wednesday of each month at Santa Clara County Horsemen's Grounds. Sponsor trail rides, poker rides, moonlight rides, endurance rides plus trail building and maintenance projects. Contact Maryben Stover (408) 265-0839 or write P.O. Box 71, New Almaden, CA 95042.

San Mateo County Horsemen's Association.  
Educational seminars, general meetings and group rides. Publishes a newsletter of trail information and stories of local rides. P.O. Box 620092, Woodside, 94062. (650) 568-1045.

Santa Clara County Horsemen's Association  
Non-profit organization dedicated to promoting good horsemanship and trail use. Monthly meetings the 3rd Friday of every month include educational programs. Regular monthly trail rides as well as special events such as play-days, dances and poker rides. Call Janice Frazier at (408) 927-1670 or (408) 268-2177 for information.

Santa Cruz County Horsemen's Association.  
Meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30PM at the Clubhouse at the Graham Hill Showgrounds at Graham Hill and Sims Roads in Santa Cruz. Polocrosse, shows, rides and other events. Write to P.O. Box 1014, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 for information and membership. Call Lynn Christiansen (408) 454-9513.

Tilden/ Wildcat Horsemen's Association  
Organizes rides and events in the East Bay Regional Parks area. Contact Joan Andrews, President at (925) 254-7860, or Morris Older, Newsletter Editor at (925) 254-1408.  
Heading

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## Spotlight on Volunteers: Equestrian Volunteers Make Trails in San Mateo County

The equestrian community in San Mateo County has long been a rich source of support for trails and parks, with equestrians involved in organized volunteer activities since the 1930s. Major portions of the Skyline Trail (now part of the Bay Area Ridge Trail) and the trails in the Phleger Estate (now part of the GGNRA) were built by horsemen in the Woodside Trail Club. In the early days, it was not uncommon for equestrians to sponsor 5 to 6 trail days per year and have 75 people show up each time to build and maintain trails. Local equestrians also donated time to lobby for the creation of the California State Hiking and Riding Trail (now largely incorporated into Huddart and Wunderlich County parks) and to

help convince local land owners such as James Huddart and Martin Wunderlich to donate property to conserve land and secure equestrian riding trails. While there have been a succession of volunteer trail efforts over the past 70 years, the current Volunteer Horse Patrol dates from 1985. San Mateo County data on volunteer efforts for trail patrol only go back to 1986. Since then, Huddart ranger David Moore reports that 24,800 hours are on record for trail patrols through 1998. Equestrian patrols were expanded to include foot patrols in 1995.

An additional 8,369 hours 1995-1998 of volunteer equestrian "host" activities are documented at



Sam McDonald Park according to Ranger John McKinney. Host activity has been going since the early 1980s at this location, according to Rob Krensky of Los Viajeros Riding Club. The on-site hosts clean restrooms, assure appropriate facility use, provide information to visitors, and a uniformed volunteer presence at the Jack Brook Horse Camp in McDonald Park from April through October annually (an average of 2,000 hrs./yr. x 13 years=26,000 hours).

The equestrian community continues to put great effort into supporting local trails. Although many trails are kept free of brush at hiker and bicycle level, many equestrians regularly help maintain the over-

# Good Day, Sunshine!

## Staying Safe in the Sun

by Geoffrey Skinner

Many of us escape to the outdoors whenever possible, especially in the summer, when the weather invites hikes, rides, and backpacking trips to the mountains, along with visiting the beaches, swimming, etc. As a child, I spent hours under the California sun with few clothes on, let alone sun block, and was tanned a dark brown every summer. These days, however, very few of us are likely to spend long outside without some sort of sun protection. News about the thinning ozone layer and general warnings about skin damage from the sun's rays abound. The "healthy" tan no longer has appeal it once did; even Doonesbury's Zonker long ago left the world of tanning competitions. With that in mind, I don't wish to simply admonish against going out in the sun, but explore the options and the science of sun protection.

Why UV radiation is a concern  
Ultraviolet radiation from the sun comes in three flavors: UVA, UVB and UVC, all of which are harmful to unprotected skin. UVA has a wavelength just slightly shorter than visible violet light (320-400 nanometers) and is not blocked by the ozone layer. UVA has the potential to penetrate the most deeply into the skin. UVB is the next shorter wavelength (280-320 nm) and is partially blocked by the ozone layer. UVB is the most dangerous for humans (and other organisms) and can cause DNA damage and skin cancers. UVC has the shortest wavelength (shorter than 280 nm) and is also harmful, but fortunately, UVC is completely absorbed by the ozone layer and ordinary oxygen. Altogether, the

ozone layer and stratospheric oxygen absorb 97-99% of UV radiation shorter than 300 nm.

Particularly for light-skinned people, reducing and preventing exposure to UVB radiation is important for long-term health, particularly as the ozone layer continues to thin. A small increase in the amount of UVB radiation will cause a large increase in the number of basal and squamous-cell carcinomas; some researchers estimate that 90% of skin carcinomas are attributable to UVB exposure. Fortunately, most are easily treatable and rarely fatal if detected early.

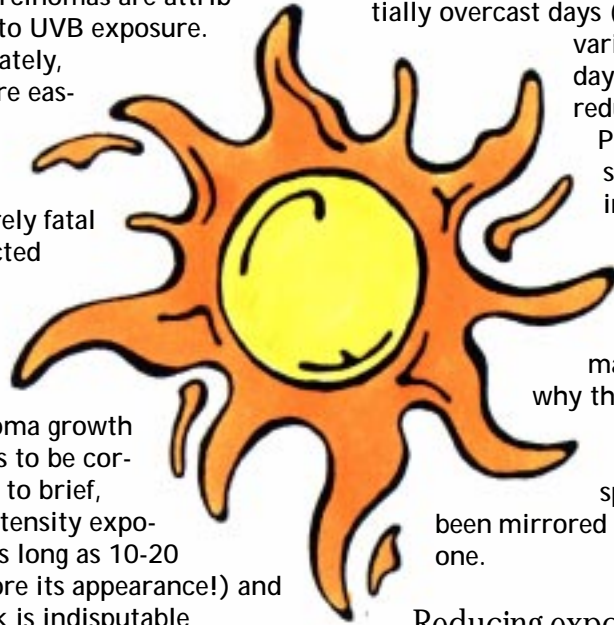
Melanoma growth appears to be correlated to brief, high-intensity exposure (as long as 10-20 yr. before its appearance!) and the link is indisputable between UV exposure of all varieties and premature aging of the skin. Even mild tanning alters the skin DNA and damages the connective tissues. There is no such thing as a safe tan!

In addition to skin damage, UV light can damage the eyes, particularly the cornea, which is a good UV absorber. High doses can cause temporary clouding of the corneas, which is the cause of "snow-blindness." Even more insidiously, ultraviolet radiation can suppress

the immune system, which plays a part in skin cancer growth, but may also be a factor in the body's ability to fight off other diseases.

How much UVB you absorb depends on several factors, including latitude and elevation, cloud cover and proximity to an industrial area. The higher the elevation, the thinner the atmosphere above you, and so the more UVB will strike you. The closer you are to the equator (or to the summer solstice), the more direct the sun's rays, likewise increasing exposure. Cloudy skies will absorb a significant portion of UVB - as much as 50% or more on rainy or substantially overcast days (partially or

variably cloudy days do little to reduce exposure). Photochemical smog containing ozone also reduces the amount of UV radiation, which may help explain why the great ozone losses over the southern hemisphere have not been mirrored in the northern one.



### Reducing exposure

If we didn't all enjoy the outdoors, staying out of the sun might seem a reasonable solution, but for many of us, including me, an all-day jaunt in the mountains or a trip to the beach are pleasures which we would be loath to forgo entirely. Fortunately, a number of simple steps are available to allow us to continue our days outdoors in relative safety.

(cont'd on page 12)

## The Trail Companion

- Wear sun-protective clothing. Any clothing will help protect against the sun, but the tighter the weave, the better. One rule of thumb is to check the amount of light that you can see through the fabric. Some clothing is marketed as incorporating special sun-protective fabric with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 30 or more. In general, minimize the amount of bare skin as much as possible. A loose fit also helps by preventing rays from passing directly through the fabric and into your skin.
- Wear a hat. The neck, ears and face and eyes are particularly vulnerable to sun damage. Wide brimmed hats (3" or more) offer the greatest protection. Baseball caps may be comfortable, but don't shade very much of the head. In Australia, where the periodic hole in the ozone layer allows large amounts of UV radiation to hit the earth, wide brimmed hats (and sunglasses) are mandatory parts of school uniforms.
- Wear sunglasses. Make sure that your sunglasses will block UV rays. Look for peel-off labels stating the amount of blockage; although any glasses (including ordinary glasses) will block some UV, a rating of 100 is best. Sunglasses lacking a label won't necessarily block a significant portion.
- Use sunscreen on unprotected skin. A sunscreen with an SPF at least 15 will block most UV, although it must be applied liberally and reapplied every two hours if you are working, exer-



cising or playing outdoors. Even waterproof sunscreen can be wiped off by toweling after swimming. The effectiveness of sunscreen greatly depends on your skin type.

- Avoid unnecessary exposure to UV radiation. Stay away from tanning parlors and sun lamps. There is no safe tanning. Pay attention to the UV Index if it is available in newspapers or on

TV. This index developed by the Environmental Protection

Agency rates UV radiation from 1-15, with anything 10 or higher considered as

extremely high. Also consider cloud cover and time of year if the UV Index is not

available.

- Finally, stay out of the sun at peak hours. UV radiation is most intense in the six hours closest to noon (or 1 p.m. during daylight saving time). The amount of radiation at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. is half that of 1 p.m. DST. Schedule your outings for mornings or evenings - in addition to reducing sun damage, you may be rewarded by lower temperatures and more wildlife sightings. Siestas have a lot going for them.

For more information about protecting yourself from sun while still

enjoying the outdoors, you may wish to call or write some of the following federal agencies which have information on the effects of UV exposure, UV protection and related issues. Public inquiry telephone numbers are provided where available.

NOAA/National Weather Service  
National Meteorological Center  
Washington, DC 20233 301-713-0622 (for information on Experimental UV Index)

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Technical Information 1-800-35-NIOSH

EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline 1-800-296-1996

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division of Cancer Prevention and Control 4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop K-57 Atlanta, GA 30341-3724

Be Sun Wise! Program U.S. EPA 401 M Street SW (6205J) Washington DC 20460

Cancer Information Service National Cancer Institute 1-800-4-CANCER

Your physician, dermatologist or local hospital/clinic should also be able to provide you with more detailed information on sun protection and preventing skin cancer.

References: The Experimental Ultraviolet Index factsheet. EPA/NOAA, 1994.

Action steps for sun protection. EPA, 1995.

Sperling, Brien. Ultraviolet radiation. NASA, 1999.

# Along the Trail: Member notes

by Geoffrey Skinner

With this issue, we are initiating a column focusing on our members' and volunteers' activities outside the Trail Center (is there really a life beyond the Trail Center??). If you have interesting tales to tell, have created a website that may be of interest to our membership, or basic gossip that you'd like to share, we'd like to hear about it. Think Herb Caen in the backcountry. Note: websites mentioned in this column will be available as links on our own website for a period of three months (until the next issue of the Trail Companion is released). Aaron Thies, a trails volunteer who worked with us at Jasper Ridge, left his good job as an engineer in Silicon Valley and invested roughly half of his personal savings to set up a nonprofit, The Rig Foundation. His foundation aims to inform and educate people about important issues of open space preservation, largely through his website (<http://www.therig.org>). It is also a vehicle for directing donations toward preservation efforts. One of the main activities of the foundation is to sponsor a series of educationally-based journeys, beginning with a four-month trek to explore the "outdoor public-use areas of the western United States, Canada and Alaska." Aaron left Orinda on April 16th and is nearly three quarters of the way on his journey. His website contains a chronicle of the adventure, as well as numerous photos. He is due back in San Francisco in early August.

Crew Leader and long-time Trail Center volunteer, Cathy Sewell, and I traveled to Edinburgh, Scot-

land in May to help former Crew Leader, Angus Miller, celebrate his marriage to Penny Radway. The marriage took place on May 1st in the town of Peebles, twenty-three miles south of Edinburgh, beginning with a private ceremony in the Town Registrar's Office, followed by a wedding walk along the River Tweed (past a 14th century castle and through a very long and dark disused railway tunnel), and an evening of dinner and a ceilidh dance (roughly translated as a Scottish barn dance) at the Peebles Community Centre. The evening festivities were replete with lots of men in kilts, Angus' brother on bagpipes and much energetic Scottish dancing. The couple rented a house in Peebles for the week (which they graciously opened up to their friends as well) before returning to Edinburgh, where they recently bought a house.

Angus, a geophysicist who was a visiting scholar at the US Geological Survey while working with us as a crew leader, is in business for himself as a geological tour guide, operating as Geowalks Volcano Tours (<http://www.geowalks.demon.co.uk>). I can personally recommend his service from our tour of Arthur's Seat, an extinct volcano in Edinburgh, during which we learned about how Scotland was formed, how prehistoric settlers farmed the slopes of Arthur's Seat, and where James Hutton, the "Father of Modern Geology," found evidence that the earth was formed long before 4,000 BC.

Penny works as a countryside ranger for the National Trust for Scotland, Scotland's leading conservation charity (<http://www.nts.org.uk>).

Congratulations to Penny and Angus in their Act of Union!

Ben Pease, who served on the Trail Center Board of Directors for many years before retiring this spring, is looking forward to publishing his second map, Trail Map of Half Moon Bay. His company, Pease Press, published Trail Map of Pacifica, which has sold well. His new map will be a companion to his first map, and will also complement the upcoming Trail Center map, Trail Map of the Central Peninsula.

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## (Equestrian, from page 10)

head clearance. Over 50 equestrian volunteers maintained trails at a number of venues throughout San Mateo County for the 1999 California State Trail Days, including Skyline Trail and Edgewood Park. No historical data exists for hours spent on trail construction and maintenance, but they are clearly substantial. Based on hours spent for this effort in the first six months of 1999, an extremely conservative estimate for the 1986-1999 period would be 2,600 hours. (50 people/year x 4 hours each x 13 years) of trail work. If all the documented and estimated volunteer hours donated to San Mateo County for the past thirteen years are added up (nearly 35,800 hours - also a conservative estimate!), the equestrian community has provided the equivalent of 1.3 full time staff each year in service of the park and trails of San Mateo County.

Thanks for , in part, to EnviroHorse (<http://www.envirohorse.org>), for data included in this article. EnviroHorse is an educational forum for addressing issues of equine research and management related to equine land use and access.

(Trail Notes, from page 6)

Prospect #3 Trail between the Randol and Mine Hill Trails at the end of March. The existing trail was too steep for most equestrians and many hikers, in addition to being erosion-prone. The new route is nearly three times as long, but is a much easier hike or ride. San Jose Conservation Corps members brushed the new route in April. Santa Clara County Parks constructed the new route with their trail machine and will put on the finishing touches this summer.

We will flag additional reroutes in the park this summer, including an extension of the Prospect # 3 trail between Randol and New Almaden Trails. A volunteer trail currently links the two trails (not shown on maps), but is too steep to be designated as an official trail. The new trail will allow hikers and equestrians to make a great mid-point loop. We will also survey a reroute of the Mockingbird Trail, another steep path.

Although we are not currently scheduling any trail work in the park, Trail Center volunteers may have the opportunity to work on one or more of these projects.

Ridge Trail, Sanborn-Skyline County Park: We may yet have a chance to use several thousand dollars of Ride-for-the-Ridge money for Ridge Trail design and construction in Sanborn-Skyline County Park between Skyline Boulevard and Black Road. Preliminary surveys took place nearly ten years ago, but nothing else happened while the trails element of the Santa Clara County General Plan waited for approval. Santa Clara County Parks staff assured us they would push for action on this project.

Further information on most of these projects can be found in the Trail Building section of the Trail Center website. If you have recently visited the site of one of the many past Trail Center projects and have information on current conditions, please send email to [info@trailcenter.org](mailto:info@trailcenter.org) or call 650 725-1159.  
--Geoffrey Skinner

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(Park News, from page 3)

helped to double the size of Calero by channeling part of a \$5 million grant from the Packard Foundation towards helping to purchase Rancho Canada de Oro. The new acquisition is not yet open to the public.

City of Sunnyvale

The San Francisco Bay Trail recently came 2.75 miles closer to completion when a section between Calabazas Creek and the West Channel opened in Sunnyvale Baylands Park. 210 miles of the eventual 400-mile Bay Trail have been built so far. When completed, users will be able to bike or hike completely around the bay.

All the information in this article was gained through newspaper articles, websites, and minutes from agency board meetings. If you hear of news relating to trails, parks or open space in the San Francisco Bay area, please let us know. Contact us at [info@trailcenter.org](mailto:info@trailcenter.org), (650) 968-7065 or 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Simply letting us know where the information can be found is all that we need. Writing up a summary is even more appreciated.

(Coal Creek, from page 5)

the southeast and towards Page Mill Road. This hill climbs at a gentler grade than the lower part of Alpine Road, and I was soon at the junction with the Meadow Trail. By continuing on, I would have reached Page Mill Road in another half mile, but I decided to continue covering new ground and took the Meadow Trail.

After a half mile on the Meadow Trail, I was treated to what I can only describe as a "very cool view experience". The great view I had seen earlier became nicely framed by the trees to the left and right, as well as their branches on the top.

Overall, Coal Creek Preserve is not huge, but it provides a variety of terrains to enjoy - thick oak and madrone in the Crazy Pete area, and open grasslands in the Meadow Trail area. Alpine Road itself varies from being somewhat open to sheltered. I would classify most of the riding in the preserve as beginner level. The alternate route to get around the slide on Alpine Road requires a little more skill, but can be done by someone with a little experience. Most rides within the preserve can be done in little over an hour, but they can be combined with trails in Russian Ridge, Long Ridge, Montebello and Los Trancos for a longer ride.

Dogs are allowed on all the trails in the Preserve as long as they're on a leash. For more information on the preserve, call the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at (650) 691-1200.

(Changes, from page 1)

carried were from sources other than the Trail Center, and most of those are carried in retail stores already. The sales margins from the maps (many of them free) came nowhere near covering the related personnel costs of the activity. We also discovered that most of the requests were from non-members, and that (as with activities) more and more of the map information was becoming available online.

The outcome is that we are no longer directly selling or reselling maps. We've signed a contract with Pease Press to handle distribution of the maps authored by the Trail Center (Peninsula Parklands and Southern Peninsula Trails) to stores, and they will also provide a limited mail order service for those who can't get to a retailer. Our remaining stock of other maps will be distributed as premiums to members and volunteers.

We then realized that without map orders to fill, the amount of office work no longer justified having an employee. Having then eliminated accounting for retail sales, sales and payroll tax and other employee issues, the finances of the Trail Center were not only solvent, but simple enough for volunteers to handle, while funding a significant level of trail building and mapping activities.

### Our Funds Will Now Go to Directly Fund Trail Building and Mapping Activities

These changes are already having an effect. We are in the black, and able to directly fund activities we care about: trail building, mapping, and providing outdoor information via our website and newsletter.

We have funded pre-press production of a new edition of the Peninsula Parklands map, without having to look for grant money. This will let us go directly to an outside pro-

fessional publisher to get wider distribution for our volunteers' work. A brand new Central Peninsula Trails map is lined up and ready to go next.

We've undertaken a large pro bono trail project at Castle Rock State Park, rebuilding the Castle Rock Trail to make it more accessible and less damaging to the environment. Since the state parks system has almost no money for facilities improvements, this is an important project we can undertake only because we have our own funding. While we'll continue to work with agencies that can provide contract monies to support our activities, we have a new flexibility. Your membership dollars will go further towards building and maintaining trails in the parks that need the most attention, instead of only in parks that have money.

### In Summary

Many of these changes were painful to contemplate and make, since we wanted to continue providing services and information that we and our members have become accustomed to. The internal discussions were often challenging, and have cost us the services of a few of our board members. The positive outcome is that have greatly simplified the organization, and now have a clear focus on connecting parks that need trails and maps, volunteers who want to do the work, and members willing to help fund the activities and give back to the Bay Area outdoors.



# Upcoming Trail Center Events

## Trail building

August 24 - Castle Rock  
September 11 - Castle Rock  
October 2 - Castle Rock  
October 23 - Castle Rock

## Trail building Skills Course - September 11

Join us from 9am to 3pm while we teach the tools and terminology of trailbuilding. We'll also give seminars on trail layout and flagging, benching, drainage, and finishing. We will teach a section on rock walls for more experienced trailbuilders. You must have previous trailbuilding experience to take this course.

Come away from this class with a better understanding of how we build trails and why we have trail standards. This class is the first step towards becoming a Trail Center Crewleader or simply a better trailbuilder. Register by calling the office (650) 968-7065 by September 4. Space is limited.



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