Welcome to Briones

In the 1850s and 1860s, Alhambra Valley was developed into rich orchards and vineyards. It became Contra Costa County’s most important fruit growing area. The remains of many of these old orchards are still noticeable. Cattle grazing has been the major land use in the Bear Creek watershed and the ridges since the Briones family first settled there. Hay and grain have been produced in the valleys intermittently for some years, as well as truck crops.

In 1906, the People’s Water Company began purchasing land in the San Pablo and Bear Creek areas for watershed lands. The East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 Contra Costa County and EBMUD agreed to a land conveyance that established a large open space park in the Bear Creek watershed to be called Briones. In 1964, when portions of Contra Costa County were annexed to the East Bay Regional Park District, the County and the Park District agreed to a transfer of county land to the Park District, with the District to carry out additional land acquisition. Since 1966, watershed lands and other acquisitions have combined to form today’s parkland.

THE PARK TODAY Today there are five staging areas that provide access to all sides of the park. Predominant uses include hiking and horseriding over the park’s scenic trails; picnicking, birdwatching, and similar activities; and informal recreation such as kite flying, photography, and nature study.

GROUP CAMPING The three group camping areas – Wee-Ta-Chi, Maud Whalen, and Homestead Valley – may be reserved by calling 1-888-327-2757, option 2. Reservations must be made at least 7 days in advance.

ARCHERY RANGE The Briones Archers archery club range is accessible off the Crescent Ridge Trail from Briones’ west-side Bear Creek Road entrance. For information, visit www.brionesarchers.org.

PICNICKING A number of first-come, first-served picnic sites with tables and barbecues are located at the Bear Creek Staging Area and the Alhambra Creek Staging Area. The park also has two larger, reservable group picnic areas at the Bear Creek Staging Area: Oak Grove (capacity 50), and Newt Hollow (capacity 150). Crow, a 50-person reservable site, is located at the Alhambra Staging Area. For information or to make a reservation, call EBRPD Reservations at 1-888-327-2757, then press option 2.

HISTORY Most of Briones Regional Park was once part of Rancho Boca de la Canada del Pinole, popularly known as Rancho San Felipe. In 1829, Felipe Briones built a home near what is now the Bear Creek entrance to the park, cultivating the land and raising cattle. In 1842 Felipe’s widow, María Manuela Valencia Briones, petitioned Governor Alvarado for a grant to the land the family had occupied. The grant, covering three square leagues, was issued in June 1842. The title was contested when California achieved statehood, but was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1878.

The land the family had occupied. The grant, covering three square leagues, was issued in June 1842. The title was contested when California achieved statehood, but was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1878. Challenges to the boundary survey continued and it was not until 1878 that a patent to the 13.316.26-acre rancho was issued. In addition to Rancho San Felipe, the park includes small portions of Rancho Canala del Hambre y las Bolsas, and Rancho Acalanes.

DOGS MUST BE ON LEASH (six-foot maximum) at all times on the Tavan Trail, Diablo View Trail between Alhambra Creek Trail and Hidden Pond Trail, Alhambra Creek Trail from the Alhambra Creek Staging Area south to the water trough, and Orchard Trail between Alhambra Creek Trail and west to the Briones Road gate.

FEES There is a fee for parking and for dogs.

POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL EMERGENCY ............. 9-1-1

EBRPD HEADQUARTERS ............... 1-888-327-2757

PICNIC, GROUP CAMPING RESERVATIONS .......... 1-888-327-2757, option 2

PARK OFFICE ............... 1-888-327-2757, option 3, ext. 4508

TRS RELAY FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED .............. 7-1-1

Welcome to Briones

Year opened: 1967

Acres: 6,256

Highlights: hiking, biking, horseriding, birdwatching, picnicking (including reservable sites), archery range, reservable group camping, wildflowers in season.

Did you know? From 1,483-foot Briones Peak, hikers can enjoy 360-degree views of the California Delta, Mount Diablo, Mount Tamalpais, and Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. * Naturalist John Muir, a resident of nearby Martinez, hiked these hills in the late nineteenth century.

Alhambra Staging Area
2537 Reliez Valley Road, Martinez, CA
Bear Creek Staging Area
1611 Bear Creek Road, Lafayette, CA

To Reach Briones Regional Park:
From Highway 24, take the Orinda exit on the east side of the Caldecott Tunnel to Orinda/Orinda Village. Go north on Camino Pablo about 2.5 miles to Bear Creek Road and turn right. The Bear Creek Staging Area is about five miles ahead, on the right. Several staging areas on the park’s east side are accessible from Reliez Valley Road in Martinez and Pleasant Hill, and on the park’s north side from Alhambra Valley Road in Martinez.

East Bay Regional Park District
2950 Paradise Oaks Court
Oakland, CA 94605-0381
1-888-327-2757 (1-888-EBPARKS)
www.ebparks.org Fax: 760
### RULES

- **Dogs** must be leashed 200 feet from any trail or park entrance. Dogs must be leashed in parking lots, picnic areas, developed areas such as lawns and play fields, and on some trails. They must be under voice control at all times.

- Visitors are responsible for knowing and complying with park rules (Ordinance 38). See ebparks.org/rules.

### MEMBERSHIPS

The Regional Parks Foundation offers Memberships to park users. For information, see www.regionalfoundation.org, or call (510) 844-2210.

In order to reduce or prevent the risk of serious head injury or death, state law requires that all bicyclists under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadsides. The District also requires that all equestrians and bicyclists wear helmets at all times.

### PARK RULES

- **SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE**
  - Stay on trails. Taking shortcuts can be dangerous and causes erosion.
  - Wading and/or swimming in undesignated areas may be dangerous and may harm the watershed.
  - Carry and drink plenty of water. Dehydration is a leading cause of injuries on the trail.
  - Be prepared for sudden changes in weather conditions.
  - Trails can be slippery, rocky and steep. Proceed carefully at your own risk.
  - Wildlife may be present on the trails at any time. Feeding or approaching wildlife is dangerous and illegal.
  - Bicycles are permitted on designated trails only. Horses have the right-of-way on trails.
  - Keep the parks beautiful. Pack out what you pack in.

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