Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness

Year opened: 1962 Acres: 6,858 Highlights: Old Green Barn Visitor Center, wilderness hiking, picnicking, backpacking, access to Ohlone Wilderness Trail. Did you know? Indian Joe Creek Trail was named for Joe Brinker, who worked as a ranch hand for the Geary family and for Willis Brinker.

FEES

HISTORY
Chocheyu Ohlone-speaking Taumans lived with this land for countless generations, employing horticultural techniques that increased habitat diversity and plant and animal numbers. For the Taumans, everything had a life and spirit, including water, breezes, and rocks. For today’s Ohlones, this landscape endures cultural and historical intrigue. The park has been ranted continuously since the 1860’s, with Patrick and Mary Ann Geary among the first homesteaders. In 1895 the Geary’s son, Maurice, built the home and barn that would become today’s In- tercessive offices (rebuilt 1954) and Green Barn Visitor Center. When Willis Brinker bought local homesteads in 1939 for his JB Ranch, Geary descendants were among his ranch hands, and Geary relatives still call this area “The Ranch.”

GEOLOGY
Clues to the area’s geologic history include sandstone outcrops with fossil brachiopods deposited in what was once ancient sea, now uplifted and tilted to form prominent ridges. Much older metamorphic boulders of greenstone, blueschist, and metachert indicate a turbulent past in a subduction zone. Cave Rocks is a massive, metamorphic outcrop. Exposure of serpentinites, provide a valuable refuge for native plants.

VEGETATION
Alameda Creek harbors shady riparian woodland. Soaring hibiscus host oat savannah and grassland communities. Canyons, seasonal streams, and vernal pools add to the area’s plant diversity. Spring brings colorful hillside of California poppies and lupine, while serpentine outcrops glow gold, pink, and lavender with some of the most endangered wildflowers. The herbarium in the Visitor Center is helpful for wildflower identification.

ANIMALS
Hikers may see bobcats, raccoons, and deer. Campers may observe bats catching insects at night and hear the sounds of coyotes, owls, and foxes. Mountain lions are uncommon, but occasionally sighted, as are reptiles, including western pond turtles and rattlesnakes. Late summer/fall marks the emergence of male tarantulas during the mating season. Newt breed in ponds during winter. Birding is superb along Alameda Creek, with 178 species identified in the park.

HIKING
A description of some park trails is found on the other side of this brochure.

PICNICKING
Picnic sites and barbecue pits are provided along Alameda Creek on the valley floor. No open fires or barbecues are allowed during high fire danger days. The Alameda Grove picnic area is available for reservation.

SUNOL BACKPACK AREA, AND HIGH VALLEY GROUP CAMPING
Camping is year-round by advance reservation only (5 business days): phone 1-888-327-2757, option 2. An Ohlone Wilderness Trail Permit is required at Sunol Backpack Camp. Camping fee is $15/day per person, plus $10 for each non-pet person (subject to change). Dogs not permitted overnight. No campfires. See trail descriptions section for Ohlone Permit information. High Valley Camp is a hike-in camp located on steep, one-mile walk from the Visitor Center.

OHLONE WILDERNESS TRAIL
This trail links Mission Peak Regional Preserve, Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness, and Del Valle Regional Park. Together with Sunol, the area exceeds 16,500 acres. Hikers must carry their Ohlone Wilderness Trail Permit, which includes a map of the Ohlone Wilderness.

LITTLE YOSEMITE
The scenic gorge on Alameda Creek is two miles upstream from the Visitor Center. It is open to the public through a lease agreement with the San Francisco Water Department. Please do not trespass onto San Francisco Water Department lands. Swimming is not allowed in the Little Yosemite area. No alcohol.

PARK HOURS
8 a.m. to dusk year-round. Gates are locked at night. The park is subject to closure or restrictions during fire season (June through October).

WELCOME!
Please enjoy the Regional Parks safely, and help protect and preserve the parklands by complying with park rules and regulations.

SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE
• Stay on trails. Taking shortcuts can be dangerous and causes erosion.
• Wading and/or swimming in undesignated areas is dangerous and may harm the watershed.
• Bring, carry, and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. There is no water at drinking fountains in the valley. Be prepared to treat water at backpack stove.
• Be prepared for sudden changes in weather conditions.
• Trails can be slippery, rocky, and steep. Proceed carefully at your own risk.
• Feeding or approaching wildlife is prohibited.
• Bicycles are permitted on designated trails only. Horses have the right-of-way on trails.
• All park resources are protected. Take only photo graphs.
• Keep the parks beautiful. Pack out what you pack in.

RULES
• Pets must be leashed 200 feet from any trail or park entrance. Pets must be leashed in parking lots, picnic areas, developed areas such as lawns and play fields, on some trails, and where grazing animals are present. They must be under voice control at all times.
• Smoking is prohibited.
• Drones are prohibited.
• State law requires that all bicycles under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadways. All bicyclists and equestrians are strongly encouraged to wear helmets at all times.
• Visitors are responsible for knowing and complying with park rules (Ordinance 3B). Visit www ebparks.org/rules.

HIGHLIGHTS
• Cave Rocks is a massive, metamorphic outcrop. Canyons, seasonal streams, and vernal pools add to the area’s plant diversity. Spring brings colorful hillside of California poppies and lupine, while serpentine outcrops glow gold, pink, and lavender with some of the most endangered wildflowers. The herbarium in the Visitor Center is helpful for wildflower identification.

1899 Geary Road, Sunol, CA 94586

To Reach Sunol Regional Wilderness:
From Fremont, drive north on I-880 to exit at Calaveras Road (near the town of Sunol.) Turn right at the exit onto Calaveras Road and proceed about four miles to a left turn onto Geary Road, which leads directly into the park. (If you find yourself driving uphill on a narrow winding road you’ve missed the Geary Road exit.) To reach the Old Green Barn take the first left past the park entrance.

From the Oakland-Berkeley area, drive east on I-880 to the junction with I-680. Take I-680 south and exit at Calaveras Road/Hwy 84 just south of the Sunol exit. At the intersection of the exit turn left onto Calaveras Road and proceed as noted above.

From the Walnut Creek-Danville area, drive south on 680 and exit at Calaveras Road/Hwy 84 just south of the Sunol exit. Proceed as noted above.

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Rev. 2/2020