

# From Ohlone Land to Parkland

**HISTORY** Brushy Peak is a 1,702-foot landmark at the juncture of the San Francisco Bay Area, the California Delta, and the Central Valley. The peak and its environs have been recognized as sacred by generations of native Californians.

Due to its geographical position, the area lies at the center of a network of ancient trade routes that linked Bay Area Ohlones, Bay Miwoks, and Northern Valley Yokuts, who were drawn to the area for economic, social, and ceremonial events. The Ssaoam tribelet of the Ohlone peoples was probably the most closely linked to the Brushy Peak area, living in the surrounding dry hills and tiny valleys around the peak and nearby Altamont Pass. Ssaoam populations in the dry summer months may have dispersed and reconverged at various camps throughout the year. The tribelet hosted trade feasts near Brushy Peak, acting as brokers in a regional trade network with the Volvons, a tribelet of the Bay Miwok, and the Tamcans of the Northern Valley Yokuts. The Ssaoam's ability to prosper may have had as much to do with their occupying this strategic trading location as with their ability to use the area's food and limited water resources.

By the early nineteenth century, life had changed for these tribes. In 1772, Pedro Fages made the first European expedition into west-central California, passing through the Livermore Valley on his return to Monterey. From 1806 to 1836 the Ssaoam lived at Mission San Jose, founded in today's Fremont in 1797. By the mid-1800s, as mission lands were divided into Mexican ranchos, some of the former Mission San Jose Indian people became laborers on the new ranchos. By 1848, at the conclusion of the Mexican-American War, the rancho lands of central California had become part of the United States. During California's Gold Rush period, the rocky outcrops of Brushy Peak became retreats for bandits, and a favorite retreat of the legendary Mexican bandit Joaquin Murietta. During the 1870s homesteads were settled on and around Brushy Peak, and the land itself was probably grazed as part of the Rancho de los Vaqueros. Between the 1890s and World War I, local ranch families held picnics and dances around the rock outcrops, and in 1900 and 1901 San Francisco's Bohemian Club held outings on the peak for prominent local citizens. During the 1920s and 1930s Joseph Laughlin

built farm buildings on the property, which are probably the remains of the buildings seen in the parkland today.

Brushy Peak was first identified as a potential park by the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARP) in the 1970s, and that agency acquired 507 acres as parkland in 1994. In 1997 an agreement between LARP and the East Bay Regional Park District pledged cooperation in the further acquisition, planning, and protection of Brushy Peak Regional Preserve.

## Parkland Rules

Welcome to your Regional Parklands. Help protect park resources and ensure an enjoyable visit for everyone by complying with these rules and any posted regulations. Violators will be subject to citation or arrest. For more information, ask a Park Ranger, Public Safety Officer, or telephone (510) 881-1833.

**PARK GATES ARE OPEN** to the public during hours posted at the park entrance. Unless otherwise posted, CURFEW is between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., except for persons possessing a permit to remain on parklands.

**ACCESS TO PEAK AREA:** Visitors desiring to access the top of Brushy Peak and the northern 507 acres of the preserve should contact LARP directly at (925) 373-5707 for information on guided tours.

**MOTOR VEHICLES** are restricted to paved public roads and designated parking areas only. Vehicles must exit at posted gate closure hours.

**BICYCLES** may be ridden on designated bicycle trails, and on fire or service roads, unless otherwise posted. Bicycles are not permitted, either ridden, walked or carried, in areas posted "No Bicycles," or on narrow hiking or narrow equestrian trails. State law requires that all bicyclists under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadways. Riders should call out or sound a warning when overtaking other trail users.

**DOGS** must be leashed (six-foot maximum) and under control at all times in Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. No dogs or other animals are permitted at any wetland, marsh, creek, or pond. Dangerous animals are not allowed in the parks. Please dispose of your dog's waste by placing it in a garbage can. Persons who walk more than three dogs at a time on Regional Parks trails must obtain a permit; commercial dog walkers are required to obtain a permit regardless of how many dogs they walk at one time (limit of six). Please call (510) 690-6508 for information.

**SWIMMING, WADING** and other water contact activities are not permitted at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve.

**PLANTS, ANIMALS, GEOLOGIC, ARCHAEOLOGIC OR HISTORIC OBJECTS** are protected by law. Please do not disturb or remove any of these features.

**HELP PROTECT OUR PARK WILDLIFE** by not releasing or feeding ducks, cats or other animals. Do not feed wild park animals; enjoy them from a distance.

**FIREWORKS** are not permitted in any regional park.

**FIRES** are permitted in barbecue pits or personal cooking equipment in designated picnic areas or irrigated turf areas only, placed at least 30 feet from flammable materials. Please do not place hot coals on the ground or in a garbage can. Dispose of hot coals or other burned fuel in barbecue pits or in designated hot coal disposal receptacles.

**CAMPING** is not permitted within District parklands without a permit.

**FISHING** is not permitted at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. At parklands that permit fishing, a state fishing license is required and a District Daily Fishing Access Permit is required when posted.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are not permitted at pools, swim beaches or within 50 feet of paved roads or parking lots, or in posted areas. Otherwise, beer and wine are permitted at picnic areas and elsewhere on parklands.

**GAMES and ACTIVITIES**, including model rockets, model airplanes, hang gliding, golf and other activities with potential risk to property or park visitors are not permitted at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve.

**ASSEMBLIES, PERFORMANCES, SPECIAL EVENTS** or similar gatherings require a permit. Please be considerate of other park visitors if you use a RADIO. A permit is required for AMPLIFICATION of voice, music or other sounds.

**FIREARMS or BOWS AND ARROWS** are not permitted on Regional Parklands except at established ranges. Crossbows, spears, slingshots, air pistols or rifles, and other dangerous weapons are prohibited anywhere on Regional Parklands.

**PARK VISITORS** are responsible for knowing and following park rules.



### To Reach Brushy Peak:

From I-580 in Livermore, exit north at Vasco Road and immediately turn right onto Northfront Road. After about .8 miles turn left onto Laughlin Road and proceed approximately two miles to the staging area at the end of Laughlin Road.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact the EBRPD Public Affairs Department at (510) 544-2200, fax (510) 635-3478, TDD (510) 633-0460, or [info@ebparks.org](mailto:info@ebparks.org).

A Partnership with the



Livermore Area  
Recreation & Park District  
*An independent special district*

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East Bay Regional Park District

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# Brushy Peak Regional Preserve

East Bay  
Regional Park District



Marc Crumpler



**POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL EMERGENCY** .....9-1-1  
**EBRPD HEADQUARTERS** ..... 1-888-EBPARKS  
**PARK OFFICE** ..... 1-888-EBPARKS,  
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