

Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline

Bull Valley Trail/Carquinez Overlook Loop Trail/Bull

Valley Trail Loop

Length: 4.8-mile loop Elevation Gain: 784 feet

Location: Crockett

GPS Coordinates: 38.052571, -122.201252

Intensity: Moderate



Park Features: This parkland comprises 1,415 acres of bluffs and shoreline between the towns of Crockett and Martinez. It is home to mule deer, gray fox, and many small mammals. Birds such as the western meadowlark and American goldfinch forage and nest in the area. Visitors might also spot owls, hawks, and other birds of prey roosting in the eucalyptus. Equestrians, hikers, bikers, and picnickers enjoy this scenic space. Boats cruise through the strait into the river delta. Remnants of a grain warehouse, residences, and a brick office building in the Eckley area are reminders of the history of this region.

Trail Highlights: From the blue waters of Carquinez Strait to the north, to the rolling hills to the south, this park offers magnificent views. There are several benches along the way for rest and contemplation. The picnic areas at Eckley Pier are a fine place to end your hike. The trail traverses open grasslands and small eucalyptus groves that provide welcome shade on a sunny day. At the midway point, the trail takes you through the historic town of Port Costa for a short way. You may wish to explore the town on your own before returning to the trail route.

Trail Directions: From the Eckley Pier parking lot, find the gate and trailhead near the traffic circle, and head east and uphill on the Bull Valley Trail. Make a left in about half a mile onto the Carquinez Overlook Loop Trail. After .4 miles, stay left at first unmarked trail intersection and continue on the Carquinez Overlook Loop Trail for another .13 miles. Keep right at the second unmarked trail junction, then, stay left when the Carquinez Overlook Loop Trail forks. A short distance past the benches and picnic table, turn left at the unmarked trail junction, heading downhill towards the eucalyptus trees. After 0.1 miles, keep left to continue towards Prospect Ave. Exit through the gate and continue down the semi-paved pathway. After 0.2 miles, you will reach Prospect Ave. Follow Prospect for 0.2 miles until it intersects with Canyon Lake Dr. Cross at the crosswalk, head right for 400 feet, then turn left onto Reservoir St. Continue for 0.1 miles, then cross through the Fire Trail gate on your left and follow the trail for .4 miles. Turn left at the cattle pen and keep left for .25 mile, then take another left. Follow this trail for .21 miles across a stock pond dam and uphill to a viewpoint. To hike back, head downhill the way you came for .46 miles, making sure to keep right, then make a right at the cattle pen. After .4 miles, you will be back on Reservoir. Turn right on Reservoir, and then turn right on Canyon Lake after 0.1 miles. Follow Canyon Lake for .2 miles, then turn left on Prospect. Walk about 20 yards up Prospect and turn left at the "Narrow Winding Road" sign. Head through the gate and turn left to take Bull Valley Trail back to Carquinez Overlook Loop. After .63 miles, turn left and continue for 0.11 miles, then turn right to walk the last .4 miles back down to the Eckley Pier parking lot.



Photo: Marc Crumpler

Driving Directions: The Bull Valley Staging Area offers access to Eckley Pier and the western portion of the park, accessible from Carquinez Scenic Drive. From Highway 4 west of Martinez, exit at Cummings Skyway. Turn right on Crockett Boulevard, right again on Pomona Street in Crockett. Pomona Street becomes Carquinez Scenic Drive. Proceed to the staging area, on the left and drive to the lower parking lot near Eckley Pier.

Park Hours: 5am-10pm (unless otherwise posted).

Fees: No parking or dog fees.

Website: www.ebparcs.org/parks/carquinez