History

Most of Briones Regional Park was once part of Rancho Bosa de la Carlota 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, Maria Juana Melba 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. Later, much of the rancho was purchased by Simon and Elau Blum. In addition to Rancho San Felipe, the current park includes small portions of Rancho del Hambre y las Bolas, and Rancho Acalanes.

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. Cattlegrazing is also a major industry. 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 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923. In 1957 the East Bay Municipal Utility District acquired People’s Water Company in 1916 and built San Pablo Dam in 1923.

Briones Pilot Project

The Briones Pilot Project is a two-year pilot program to test strategies in addressing trail congestion, trail safety, and illegal bootleg trails, which have negative impacts on wildlife, including sensitive and endangered species.

The pilot project—launched in April 2023—is limited to the Pilot Zone located in the northeastern corner of the park, which is accessible from the Reliez Valley, Alhambra Creek, and Briones Road entrances.

The pilot project establishes rules such as limiting specific trail uses (biking and horseback riding) and temporarily opening some narrow trails to bikes only. Other illegal bootleg trails will be closed and restored to protect natural habitats for wildlife. Visit ebparks.org/BPP for more information.

Ours to Explore, Enjoy and Protect

Please enjoy Regional Parks safely and help protect and preserve the parklands by following all park rules and regulations.

Safety

• Stay on trails. Taking shortcuts can be dangerous and cause erosion.
• 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.
• Keep the parks beautiful. Pack out what you pack in.
• Inform someone where you are going and when you will be back.
• Store our 24/7 Dispatch Center number on your mobile phone. Emergency 510-881-1121. Non-emergency 510-881-1833.

Rules

• Dogs must be leashed in parking lots, 200 feet from any trail or park entrance or as posted, in picnic areas, developed areas such as lawns and play fields, on some trails, and where grazing animals are present. Pets must be under voice control at all times. Clean up after your pet, bag it, bin it.
• Bicycles are permitted on designated trails only.
• Horses have the right-of-way on trails.
• State law requires all bicyclists under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadways. Equestrians and bicyclists are also strongly encouraged to wear helmets at all times.

• The following are prohibited:
  • Wading and/or swimming in unauthorized areas
  • Consuming alcohol in non-designated areas/parks
  • Feeding or approaching wildlife

• Releasing animals into parklands
• Causing damage to plants, geological or archaeological features
• Smoking
• Drones

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

Year Opened: 1967  Acres: 6,256

Highlights: hiking, biking, horseback riding, bird watching, picnicking, archery range, 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 Tamalpais, Mount Diablo, and Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. Also, naturalist John Muir, a resident of nearby Martinez, hiked these hills in the late nineteenth century.

Fees: see ebparks.org/parks/briones