Geology

Las Trampas is known for its geologic and paleontologic resources as well as its underground aquifers and springs. Two major Bay Area faults – the Las Trampas and Bollinger faults – account for the uplift and exposure of well-defined geological formations.

Rocky Ridge and Las Trampas Ridge represent the floors of ancient seas that once covered most of the present area of the Coast Ranges. Some of the youngest rocks in the park are Miocene Formation sediments thought to be under six million years old. The oldest rocks in the area are marine sandstone, conglomerate and shale thought to be about 135 million years old.

These occur outside the south boundary of the park and west of Rocky Ridge.

Paleontology

Fossil deposits at Las Trampas represent a fauna that is thought to be about ten million years old. One of the more interesting finds were two complete lower jaws of an ancient elephant known as Gomphotherium, found just northwest of the park. The most common remains found in the vicinity of the park are teeth from an extinct three-toed horse. Remains of ancient camels, small squirrels, toads, and the honey badger have also been found, along with a variety of fossilized marine clams.

Facilities

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Animals

The park’s extensive and isolated wilderness provides habitat for much wildlife, including deer, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, opossums, bobcats, skunks, and squirrels. Chaparral habitat suitable for the Alameda whiprawie, a species listed as threatened by the State of California, encompasses a large part of the parkland. Be wary of rattlesnakes in the warmer months. If you see a rattlesnake, do not approach or harass it.

Red-tailed hawk

The park is a good place for birdwatching. There are many species of hawks, and golden eagles are occasionally sighted.

Vegetation

The dominant woodland vegetation on the western and southern exposures of Las Trampas and Rocky ridges is black sage, chamise, and buckbrush. There are some creek dogwood along Bollinger Creek. Please beware of poison oak, a shrubby or bushy plant with oak-like glossy green or reddish leaves that occurs in threes and can cause a long-lasting, itchy rash if the oils come in contact with skin, clothing, shoes, or pets.

Tree species include coast live oak, bay laurel, buxeye, big leaf maple, canyon live oak, black oak, and scrub oak. The latter, with its mistletoe, prefers the ridgeway habitat at the end of Chaminade Trail.
Las Trampas Wilderness Regional Preserve

**Year Opened:** 1966  **Acres:** 5,593

**Highlights:** biking, horseback riding, group camping, birdwatching, wildflowers in season, The Ranch at Little Hills (swimming, picnicking), Las Trampas Stables (horse riding and boarding)

**Fun Fact:** Eugene O’Neill wrote several plays while living in the Tao House, his home adjacent to the park. O’Neill inspired the trail name “Cordury Hills,” saying the long, dry grass on the hills was like corduroy.

**O**ne of the East Bay Regional Park District’s largest parks, Las Trampas lies on the western edge of the San Ramon Valley. Its dramatic landscape, commanding views, and relatively undisturbed natural environment make this parkland very special. The 40-mile trail network provides access to Las Trampas Ridge and Rocky Ridge – the preserve’s two main ridges – providing an unparalleled recreational experience for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders.

Growing a Parkland

Las Trampas had its beginnings in the 1964 passage of a state bond that provided funding to counties and local jurisdictions for parkland development. The Contra Costa Board of Supervisors designated “Bollinger Canyon” as a future park, and a 2,000-acre park was envisioned by the Park District to include hiking, riding, and primitive camping. The Park District began acquisition of private properties for the wilderness area in 1966.

Pre-Parkland History

The Tatcan, one of six Bay Miwok-speaking tribes, inhabited the hills and valleys along the San Ramon Creek drainage. They managed the land using specialized techniques that enhanced the numbers and health of the plants and animals on which they relied. Bay Miwoks continue to live in the Bay Area and are active in the protection of local ancestral cultural sites.

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**Facilities**

The Ranch at Little Hills is a 100-acre picnic park located adjacent to Las Trampas on Bollinger Canyon Road. The facility is available for group picnics by reservation only. Call (510) 837-8158, or see bookyourpicnic.com.

Las Trampas Stables offers western horseback riding lessons for adults and children older than age 8. Call 925-855-1570.

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DRINKING WATER: The park's water supply is inconsistent and running may be unavailable at any time. Carry plenty of drinking water for yourself, your dog(s), and your horse(s) when visiting the park.

PARK ENTRANCE:
- Bollinger Canyon Road: No Vehicle Access, No Parking, Walk-in Only
- Starview Drive: No Vehicle Access, No Parking, Walk-in Only

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EBMUD permit required.

About 8.2 miles from Rocky Ridge Loop Trail to EBMUD Chabot Staging Area and Anthony Chabot Regional Park.

Private Property. This area closed to public except along Fiddleneck Trail.

Area closed to public except along Fiddleneck Trail.