

Welcome to Briones

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 Diablo, Mount Tamalpais, and Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. • Naturalist John Muir, a resident of nearby Martinez, hiked these hills in the late nineteenth century.
Fees: Check website.

Dogs must be on leash (six-foot maximum) at all times on the Tavan Trail, Diablo View Trail between Alhambra Creek Trail and Hidden Pond Trail, Alhambra Creek Trail from the Alhambra Creek Staging Area south to the water trough, and Orchard Trail between Alhambra Creek Trail and west to the Briones Road gate.

HISTORY Most of Briones Regional Park was once part of Rancho Boca de la Canada 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 Manuela Valencia 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 Elias Blum. In addition to Rancho San Felipe, the current park includes small portions of Rancho Canada del Hambre y las Bolsas, 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. Cattle grazing is also a major industry. Hay and grain have been produced in the valleys intermittently for some years, as well as truck crops.

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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 Contra Costa County and EBMUD agreed to a land conveyance that established a large open space park in the Bear Creek watershed to be called Briones.

In 1964, when portions of Contra Costa County were annexed to the East Bay Regional Park District, the County and the Park District agreed to a transfer of county land to the Park District, with the District to carry out additional land acquisition. Since 1966, watershed lands and other acquisitions have combined to form today's parkland.

THE PARK TODAY This park is a popular destination for many recreational activities:

Picnicking A number of first-come, first-served picnic sites with tables and barbecues are located at the Bear Creek Staging Area and the Alhambra Creek Staging Area. The park also has two larger, reservable group picnic areas at the Bear Creek Staging Area: Oak Grove (capacity 50), and Newt Hollow (capacity 150). Crow, (capacity 50), is located at the Alhambra Staging Area.

Archery Range The Briones Archers archery club range is accessible off the Crescent Ridge Trail from Briones' west-side Bear Creek Road entrance. For information, visit www.brionesarchers.org.

Group Camping The three group camping areas – Wee-Ta-Chi, Maud Whalen, and Homestead Valley– must be reserved at least 5 business days in advance.



Alhambra Creek Staging Area
 2537 Reliez Valley Road, Martinez, CA

Bear Creek Staging Area
 1611 Bear Creek Road, Lafayette, CA

To Reach Briones Regional Park:
 From Highway 24, take the Orinda exit on the east side of the Caldecott Tunnel to Orinda/Orinda Village. Go north on Camino Pablo about 2.5 miles to Bear Creek Road and turn right. The Bear Creek Staging Area is about five miles ahead, on the right.

Several staging areas on the park's east side are accessible from Reliez Valley Road in Martinez and Pleasant Hill, and on the park's north side from Alhambra Valley Road in Martinez.



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Briones Regional Park

Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Lafayette

East Bay Regional Park District

