

Welcome to Deer Creek Hills!

Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) is a nonprofit land trust that owns this preserve in partnership with the County of Sacramento, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. SVC manages the 4,500 acre site with input from local ranchers, neighboring landowners and the general public. Preserve uses include wildlife & habitat preservation, cattle grazing, and public use.

The California blue oak habitat range in the low foothills of the Central Valley is under substantial pressure from development. The Deer Creek Hills Preserve and its Master Plan serve as models for how to save and care for our oak woodlands. As a respectful user and by supporting SVC, you can help forge long-term conservation relationships with ranchers, landowners, nonprofits, youth groups, research institutions, local businesses and public agencies.

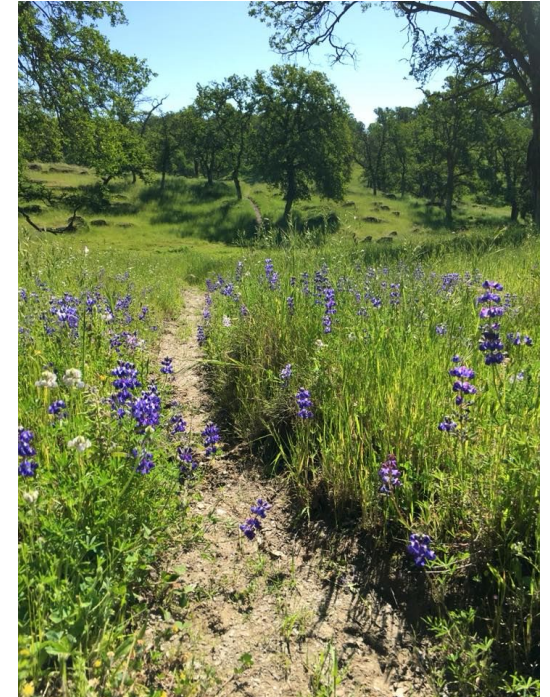


Trail Rules and Safety

Please help keep the Preserve pleasant for all.

- Stay on signed hiking trails, obey all signs.
- Only use pedestrian walk-throughs, do not climb over fences.
- Respect private property. Do not trespass.
- Leave no trace and keep trails clean.
- Do not pick plants/flowers or collect rocks.
- Respect all wildlife, and be aware of potential encounters with snakes, ticks, or large mammals including mountain lions, bobcats, and deer.
- No dogs or pets, except working service dogs (please check in with SVC Staff)
- No motorized vehicles.
- Be aware of poison oak. Ask staff for more info.
- Do not disturb cattle. Move slowly and give them a clear exit path. Never approach a calf, mothers are very protective.
- Avoid wet and muddy conditions.
- Share the trail.
- Respect the rights of others, regardless of their mode, speed, or skill level.
- Do not block trails or gates.
- No hunting, fishing, catching wildlife, weapons mining, collecting, or removing anything from the Preserve.
- Carry a working Cell Phone. Call 911 in case of emergency and notify SVC as soon as you are able at 916-612-3719.
- Hydrate before you hike! Bring good walking shoes, water, sunscreen, and hat. No running water provided at Preserve.

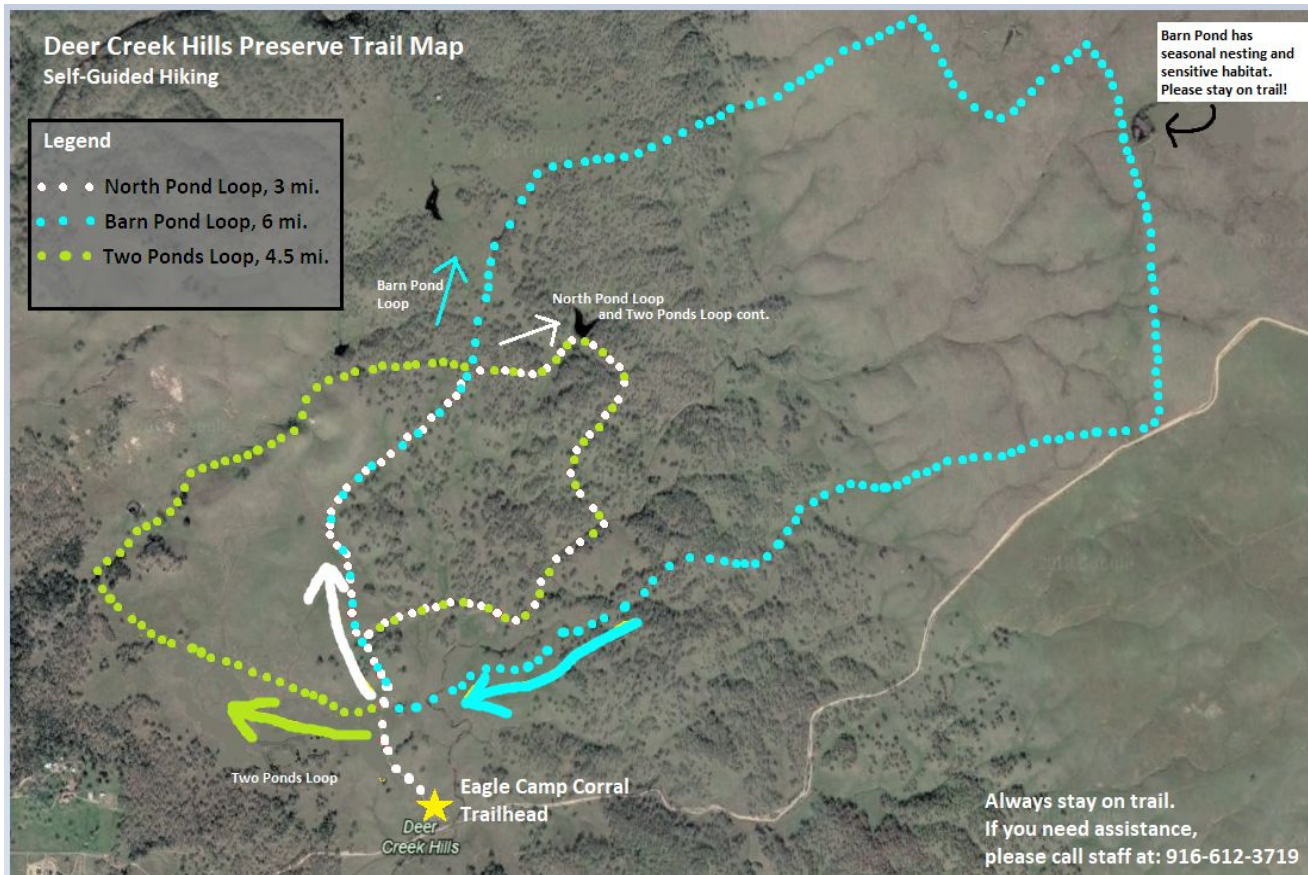
Deer Creek Hills Oak Woodland Preserve & Working Ranch



deer creek hills
Sacramento Valley Conservancy

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The North Pond Loop weaves in and out of the oak woodland for approximately 3 miles. **The Barn Pond Loop**, approximately 6 miles, is partly shaded and partly open to the sun. **The Two Ponds Loop** is mostly in open skies, traversing through the grass prairie for about 4.5 miles. On all trails, sunscreen and a hat is suggested!

Please plan to hike out with enough time to return to the corral no later than 1pm. Gates will be locked at 1pm. The 6 mile loop should be started no later than 10:30am. The 4.5 miles loop should be started no later than 11am.

If you are lost or have any issues while on trail please call SVC Staff at 916-612-3719. If it is an emergency, call 911 first.

Scavenger Hunt Checklist:

- A cluster of Blue Oaks (*Quercus Douglasii*)
- Purple or orange wildflowers scattered through the grasses.
- A group of cows standing on a far away hill.
- Salt Springs Slate: layers of rock emerging from the ground, tilted and almost appearing as a tombstone.
- A family of deer quietly walking through a shaded forest.
- A red-winged blackbird flying in the sky or perched on a tree limb.
- A lone coyote, trotting across an open field.
- Animal tracks following along the trail, then disappearing from sight!

History and Environment

Oaks: A Resource for Native People

Native American People of this area valued oak trees for a dietary staple, the acorn. Some oaks produce 200-300 pounds of acorn on a single tree. A whole village would gather the acorns in the fall, dry them in the sun, and then store them in baskets and granaries.

Mining and Ranching

The town of Michigan Bar numbered about 15,000 people during the Gold Rush period. The town site (near Deer Creek Hills) now hosts only a few stone chimneys. Evidence of small mining operations abound on the preserve. Basque sheep ranchers ran their livestock here in the 1880's. Cattle ranching started in the early 1900's. Cattle families had winter pasture in the valley and summer pasture in the Sierra. The Scott family (Scott Road) ranched nearby and summered their cattle at Squaw Valley. The cattle ranching tradition continues with the Lucky Seven Ranch, a three-generation operation that has ranched at the preserve for over 50 years. Cattle are an important component of SVC's management practices on the property.

Blue Oak Woodland & Valley Grasslands

The backdrop around you is a typical, low foothill, California natural landscape. The native blue oaks provide important cover for deer, coyotes, bobcats, burrowing owls, and mountain lions between the valley and the mountains. Hawks, falcons, eagles, kites, owls, red-winged blackbirds, acorn and Lewis' woodpeckers reside here.