

# *A Wheelchair Rider's Guide*

San Francisco Bay and the Nearby Coast

BONNIE LEWKOWICZ

A COASTAL CONSERVANCY BOOK



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**THIS GUIDE IS AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE** by calling 510/286-1015 and also on the Coastal Conservancy website: [www.scc.ca.gov](http://www.scc.ca.gov)

**THE COASTAL CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION** published this book with a grant from the Coastal Conservancy, a state agency that works with others to protect and restore coastal resources and improve public access along the California coast and on San Francisco Bay. Since 1976, the Conservancy has helped to open hundreds of miles of shoreline to the public and to preserve more than 185,000 acres of wetlands, dunes, wildlife habitat, parks, and farmland. Many trail improvements resulted from block grants from the Conservancy to the Bay Trail Project.

The Coastal Conservancy Association is a nonprofit organization which assists the Conservancy with projects undertaken in keeping with the mandate of the California Coastal Act.



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A much smaller book with the same title, by Erick Mikiten, was published by the Coastal Conservancy in 1990.

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**ALSO AVAILABLE:** *A Wheelchair Rider's Guide: Los Angeles and Orange County Coast*, by Erick and Elisa Mikiten, published by Coastwalk with the Coastal Conservancy in 2001: [www.coastwalk.org](http://www.coastwalk.org) or [www.scc.ca.gov](http://www.scc.ca.gov)

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**ALTHOUGH WE HAVE DONE OUR BEST TO BE CLEAR** and accurate in this guide, we cannot guarantee that we have always achieved our goal. Also keep in mind that trail conditions change. You are responsible for your own safety. Please exercise due caution. Neither the Coastal Conservancy, the Coastal Conservancy Association, nor the producers of this book assume any liability for any injury or damage arising out of, or in connection with, any use of this book or the sites described in it.



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# A Wheelchair Rider's Guide

**M**OST BAY AREA RESIDENTS consider themselves lucky to be surrounded by so much natural beauty, yet too few find the time to explore more than a few of the numerous parks, trails, and open spaces within easy reach of their homes. Those in need of a fairly level and firm traveling surface—be they wheelchair riders, parents wheeling strollers, or people with canes or walkers—tend to frequent places they already know. They remain unaware of the many delights they could enjoy elsewhere along the bay and ocean, from the Point Reyes National Seashore to the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, from San Francisco's lively waterfront to the wide open marshes of the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge, to historic Benicia and Antioch on the Carquinez Strait, to the protected wetlands on the Petaluma River. These and many other places are public, and you can visit many free of charge.

This guide, produced as part of the Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy and access programs, is a greatly expanded second edition of the 1990 book by Erick Mikiten. A great many more areas have been made wheelchair-accessible in the past 15 years. We hope this book will encourage you and many others to venture to some of the places here described—more than 100 sites—and to discover others that we could not fit in, or that had yet to be built when we went to press.

You may be amazed that so much public access to the shore exists in such a densely populated metropolitan region, despite the fact that real estate values are among the highest in the country. This is no accident. San Francisco Bay was saved from destruction by local citizens. Until the 1960s, its nearshore waters were widely considered to be prospective real estate. Some areas were subdivided already, though the lots were under water. Throughout the region, cities were filling the bay with garbage and rubble



to make more land for building. But then three women in Berkeley stopped all that by launching the Save the Bay movement in 1961, which led to legislation that established the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) in 1965 to prevent unnecessary filling of the bay and ensure public access. This was the first coastal management law in the country and it served as a model for the California Coastal Act of 1976. When BCDC was created, only four miles of the bay shoreline were accessible to the public. Now, 41 years later, about 200 miles are open to everyone.

It's in the law: the bay is a priceless natural treasure, to be enjoyed by all the people and to be protected for other species. In December 2005, celebrating the 40th anniversary of BCDC and Save the Bay, elders and their successors took pride in the fact that not only had the bay stopped shrinking, it is continuing to expand because of all the wetland restoration now going on. They also cautioned, however, that the bay's future can never be secure. Citizens must continue watching over it. If you want to find out more about bay restoration work and perhaps even get involved, look at "Resources" (see page 190) for names of some organizations that welcome volunteers.

Before you begin planning a trip to any of the parklands described in this book, look at "How to Use This Book" and "Resources" (see pages xi and 190). You will find useful hints, website addresses, and phone numbers. As you travel, please keep firmly in mind that you are on your own and need to use your own judgment. I visited most of the places described in this guide; a few were visited for this edition by Erick and Elisa Mikiten or other researchers. My descriptions are based on my experience as a quadriplegic using both a manual and a motorized wheelchair. All of us did our best to make the guide clear and accurate, but we cannot guarantee that nothing has changed, that we have made no errors, or that your experience will match ours.

Even as we visited these parks and trails, changes were occurring, or were planned, in numerous locations. Many of these changes will create even greater accessibility. However, time and weather can also bring unwanted changes, such as erosion, drifting sand, and damage to trails and

facilities. When planning an outing, we strongly advise you to consult park staff regarding current conditions.

Some of the places described in this guide are in relatively isolated industrial or formerly industrial locations. While many people visit these areas safely, we recommend that you explore them in the company of others, and exercise caution.

I learned a lot in researching and writing this guide, and hope to convey to you some of my appreciation for the places I discovered, my love for the outdoors, and the concern I now have about the future of San Francisco Bay and the coast. Happy travels to you!

Bonnie Lewkowicz, the project team,  
and the Coastal Conservancy



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*Along the Bay Trail in Hayward Regional Shoreline*

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### **THE BAY TRAIL: A WORK IN PROGRESS**

The San Francisco Bay Trail is a trail system that circles the bay, linking public open spaces along the entire shoreline. These include parks, piers, wildlife reserves, historical sites, and shoreline communities. Largely wheelchair-accessible, the Bay Trail connects with the California Coastal Trail, various local trails, and with the Ridge Trail, which is forming a second ring around San Francisco Bay. When completed, the Bay Trail will be about 500 miles long and will connect 47 cities and nine counties. As of March 2006, more than half—270 miles—of the trail system had been completed and work was under way on numerous additional trail segments. To learn more, contact the Bay Trail Project at 510/464-7900 or visit [www.baytrail.org](http://www.baytrail.org).

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# How To Use This Book

SOME HINTS TO HELP YOU USE  
THIS GUIDE TO BEST ADVANTAGE










**T**AKE A FEW MOMENTS to familiarize yourself with this guide. The sites included are generally within rolling distance of a shoreline, and offer a variety of outdoor experiences to satisfy differing interests and accessibility needs. We have done our best to insure that this guide is accurate, but we cannot guarantee that information hasn't changed since publication, or that we didn't miss something here and there. This book is based on the author's experience, not on any agency's approval of sites as meeting ADA guidelines. Also, weather and time can alter trail conditions. Therefore we strongly recommend that you phone ahead, where possible, before visiting parks and other locations, to verify key information and determine current trail conditions. Check Internet sites (addresses for many follow the site descriptions in this guide) for additional information, directions, and printable maps.

## Organization and Maps

The book is organized by region. It follows the Marin County coast from Point Reyes south through the Marin Headlands, then moves along the San Mateo County coast and into Santa Cruz. Next it takes you through San Francisco along the city's oceanfront and bay shoreline, continues south around the bay, then north to Carquinez Strait, around San Pablo Bay to the Marin County bay shoreline, ending in Sausalito.

Regional maps are meant to provide only a general sense of site locations. For some sites that might be confusing, you will find more detailed maps. Note, however, that the scale varies, so neither regional nor site maps should be used to determine actual distances. For that, refer to the text and to road or park maps. Restrooms noted on maps meet some key accessibility guidelines (see below). Other restrooms that may be useable are mentioned in the text.

## MAP KEY

-  **PARKING:** Indicates parking areas with dedicated blue spaces. Check the text for accessibility.
-  **RESTROOMS:** Don't rely only on the symbol. Read the text for details: some "accessible" restrooms are old and not up to ADA standards. Some that are not marked "accessible" may work for you.
-  **INFORMATION CENTER**
-  **PAVED TRAIL**
-  **UNPAVED TRAIL**
-  **ROAD**
-  **HIGHWAY**
-  **WOODEN BOARDWALK OR DECK**
-  **BRIDGE**

## Accessibility and the ADA Guidelines

It is widely acknowledged that access means different things to different people. With this in mind, we did not rate trails based on their level of accessibility; rather, we have provided accessibility details about trail routes and key features. This information is intended to help you make informed choices about places to visit, based on your particular access needs. We used the ADAAG (Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines) and Title 24 as a basis for evaluating the accessibility of various features such as restrooms, parking, and picnic tables. However, we have also included trails and facilities that do not meet the guidelines, if we considered them accessible to at least some wheelchair riders.

The accessibility guidelines for some key features are as follows:

- ▶ **RESTROOMS** The path of travel to the restrooms is accessible, entry and stall doors have at least 32-inch clearance, toilet height is 17 to 19 inches, grab bars are on the back wall and at least one side, and there is a roll-under sink with 27-inch knee clearance.
- ▶ **PARKING** Identified by the international access symbol, located on a firm and stable surface, and with an access aisle unless otherwise noted. We did not indicate whether spaces were van accessible.

- ▶ **PICNIC TABLES** Located on a level, firm, and stable surface with table height of at least 27 inches. Seating may be at either end of the table or on the sides.
- ▶ **FISHING PIERS** Level access onto the pier and at least a 32-inch pathway. Safety regulations require that railings be 42 inches high, which may limit views and fishing access from a seated position.
- ▶ **ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND** Has an accessible path of travel to the playground and is located on a firm and stable surface as approved by the Access Board. May or may not have accessible play structures.
- ▶ **RAMPS AND INCLINES** The steepness of ramps and inclines is measured by a ratio. The standard measurement is 1:12, meaning that it rises 1 inch for every 12 inches of length. Gentle slopes are less than or equal to 1:12, while steep slopes, by varying degrees, are greater than 1:12.

## Hiking Safety

Many of the trails in this guide are level, but some may require good upper body strength and careful navigation. Rather than make assumptions about people's ability or interests, we have included trails of varied difficulty. If a trail is described as "steep" or "difficult," it is based on the author's experience as a quadriplegic using both a manual and a motorized wheelchair, and it exceeded the 1:12 ratio. You are your own best judge for choosing trails that are safe for you; however, please be cautious.

Come prepared to stay longer than you think you will by bringing water, sunscreen, snacks, and hats. Gloves are recommended for manual wheelchair riders. If you have a cell phone, consider programming it with the emergency number of the park or entity that manages the trail. Binoculars and field guides can enhance your trip.

Some of the places described in this guide are in relatively isolated industrial or formerly industrial locations. While many people visit these areas safely, we recommend that you explore them in the company of others, and exercise caution.

## Weather

Foggy, windy days are common along coastal and shoreline trails, so take layered clothing. To fully appreciate a place, you need to visit more than once and at different times of the year. Wildflowers and wildlife absent on one visit can magically appear on another. In wet weather, dirt trails will most likely become muddy. Call ahead for trail conditions.

## Beach Wheelchairs

Large chairs with balloon tires specifically designed to roll over sand are available free of charge at some beaches. They have to be pushed by someone, and are easiest to push on wet sand. Generally they cannot be reserved in advance, but it's advisable to call ahead to see if they're available. For a list of California beaches with beach wheelchairs, visit [www.coastal.ca.gov/access/beach-wheelchairs.html](http://www.coastal.ca.gov/access/beach-wheelchairs.html). For a catalog of adaptive recreation items, including beach wheelchairs, visit [www.AccessTR.com](http://www.AccessTR.com).

## Fishing

Anyone may fish from a public pier at the ocean or a bay without a license. To fish at other locations, people 16 years old and above need a license. Free fishing licenses are available to disabled people; call 916/227-2245 for an application.

## Discount and Free Parks Passes

California State Parks offers a lifetime discount pass for permanently disabled persons for \$3.50. It enables you to pay half price for parking, camping, boating, and day-use fees in state-operated parks, except for Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument. Applications are available online at [www.parks.ca.gov/pages/737/files/dpr818a.pdf](http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/737/files/dpr818a.pdf), at district offices, or from the Department Pass Program Office, 3930 Seaport Blvd., West Sacramento, CA 95691. For more information, call 800/777-0369 (option 5) or visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

Permanently disabled people can enjoy free entry to the national parks, and a 50 percent discount on camping, swimming, boating, and parking fees, through the lifetime Golden Access Passport, available free of charge at any national park.



**REGION 1:**

**MARIN COAST**

Pt. Reyes to Fort Baker

Page 2

**REGION 6:**

**CARQUINEZ STRAIT and  
NORTH BAY SHORE**

Pt. Pinole to Petaluma River

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**REGION 7:**

**MARIN BAY SHORE**

Las Gallinas Ponds

to Sausalito

Page 170

**REGION 5:**

**EAST BAY SHORE**

Hayward to Richmond

Page 112

**REGION 3:**

**SAN FRANCISCO and  
NORTHERN PENINSULA**

Fort Funston to

San Mateo Bridge

Page 42

**REGION 4:**

**SOUTH BAY SHORE**

Foster City to Alameda Creek

Page 84

**REGION 2:**

**SAN MATEO and  
SANTA CRUZ COAST**

Pacifica to Santa Cruz

Page 20





MARIN COAST

To Bodega Bay

Pierce Pt. Rd.

Tomales Bay State Park

Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Bear Valley

Limantour Rd.

Drakes Beach

Pt. Reyes Lighthouse

Shoreline Hwy.

Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Mt. Tamalpais State Park

Panoramic Hwy.

Muir Woods

Stinson Beach

Steep Ravine Cabins

Muir Woods Rd.

Muir Beach

Fort Baker

Fort Cronkhite

Conzelman Rd.

Golden Gate Bridge



# Marin Coast

**F**ROM POINT REYES to the Marin Headlands and Golden Gate Bridge, Marin County's Pacific coastline is rugged, incredibly beautiful, and almost entirely protected, either for parks or agriculture. Much of it is within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). The Point Reyes National Seashore, established in 1962, allows dairy ranches to continue to operate within the park. The terrain can present challenges to wheelchair riders, but there are accessible trails—including a wonderful boardwalk through Muir Woods—as well as scenic drives, accessible beaches and visitor centers, and opportunities for observing whales and other wildlife.

MICHELLE VIGNES





## *Point Reyes National Seashore*

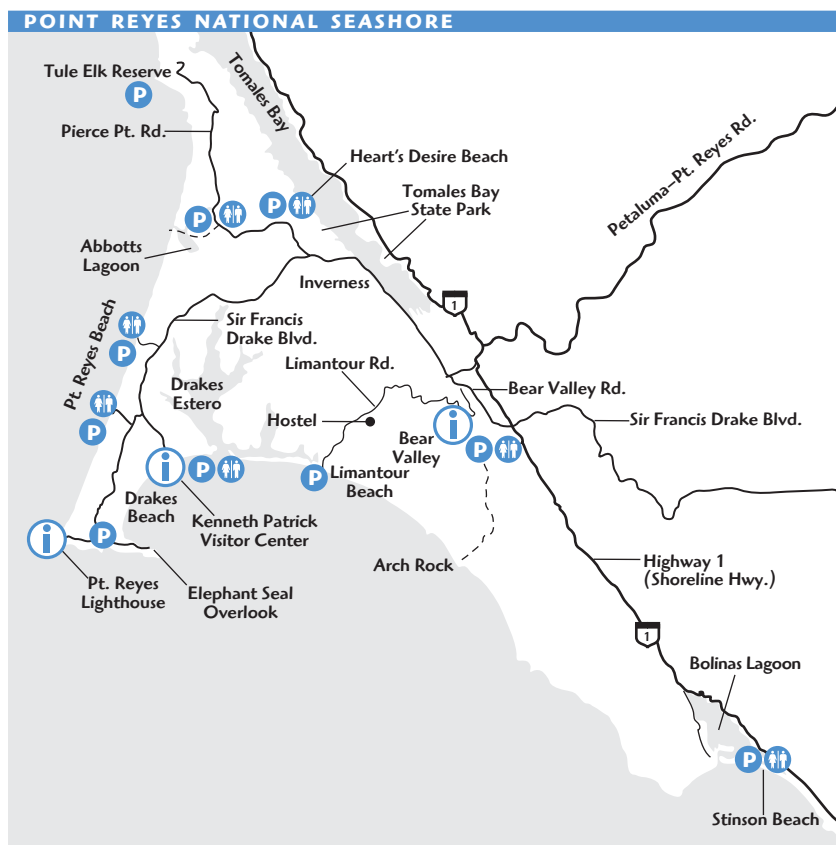
**THIS MAGNIFICENT EXPANSE** of parkland is one of the nation's great treasures. Its 71,057 acres include rolling grasslands, forested ravines that open onto steep, rocky bluffs, broad beaches, lush salt marshes, and 600-foot-high granite promontories at the Point Reyes Headlands. Wildlife abounds and hiking trails extend more than 140 miles, although the terrain makes many of them inaccessible to wheelchair riders. There is also a hostel. This park is a good place to learn about tectonic plates and earthquakes: the Point Reyes Peninsula is partly separated from the mainland by 15-mile Tomales Bay, which lies in a rift valley formed by the San Andreas fault.

The weather varies dramatically around Point Reyes, and sudden changes should be expected. A sunny day on the east side of Inverness Ridge may be foggy and cold on the ocean side, and clearing fog often signals the onset of strong winds. Try to learn what conditions are expected for the entire day to avoid being caught in bad weather during a several-mile hike, especially on trails that are likely to become muddy quickly.



UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, MARIN COUNTY

*Dairy cows at the Giacomini Ranch in Point Reyes*



## Bear Valley

### BEAR VALLEY ROAD OFF HIGHWAY 1 NEAR OLEMA

**T**O BEGIN EXPLORING the park's inland areas, you might start at the Bear Valley visitor center, which offers displays and specimens of native wildlife mounted in dioramas, as well as a seismograph station monitoring activity along the San Andreas Fault. The multilevel interior is ramped, with the exception of one raised station, and all displays are well conceived for use or viewing from a seated position. Movies about the shoreline are shown on request. A wheelchair is available to visitors.

The Earthquake Trail, a .6-mile asphalt loop, leads from the Bear Valley visitor center to a spot where the 1906 earthquake cut a fence in two and moved it. The two pieces are now 16 feet apart. The trail provides a pleasant



STEVE SCHOLL, CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

*Bear Valley visitor center**Point Reyes National Seashore:***415/464-5100;**[www.nps.gov/pore](http://www.nps.gov/pore)*Bear Valley Visitor Center:***415/464-5137**📍 *Bear Valley visitor center:*

Mon.–Fri., 9 am–5 pm;

Sat.–Sun., 8 am–5 pm

Closed Dec. 25.

stroll through forest and meadows. On a grassy oak-shaded knoll near this path's beginning are picnic tables and barbecue grills.

Also leading out of the upper parking lot is the Bear Valley Trail, which runs west a little more than four miles to Arch Rock and the ocean. This wide hard-packed dirt trail follows Coast Creek as it winds under Douglas fir and other trees amid fern undergrowth. For the first 1.5 miles, the trail slopes gently uphill, becoming moderately steep for the last several hundred feet of that stretch. Manual wheelchair riders will get a good workout, but there are also level sections where you can rest. Gloves are helpful during extended braking. During the rainy season, this trail may become impassable.

At 1.5 miles out, the trail enters the large and beautiful Divide Meadow, a good place to loll around or picnic. Beyond the meadow, it continues at a gentle slope for another 2.5 miles to Arch Rock. The steep, uneven trail to the overlook atop the rock may be accessible to the more adventurous, but otherwise ocean views are limited.

► **GETTING THERE** Just south of San Rafael, exit Highway 101 or I-580 West on Sir Francis Drake Blvd. and follow it about 20 miles through town and country until it ends at Highway 1 in Olema. Turn right on Highway 1, left on Bear Valley Rd. and, after .5 mile, turn left past the big red barn to the visitor center.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Four blue spaces are in the lower paved lot at the visitor center. The upper dirt-and-gravel lot has two spaces at the Bear Valley trailhead and two at the Earthquake trailhead. Accessible restrooms are next to

the visitor center. An accessible portable toilet, approached on a moderately steep incline, is at Divide Meadow, 1.5 miles out on the Bear Valley Trail. The stalls in the Earthquake Trail restrooms are not deep enough to close the door, have no grab bar on the back wall, and require a frontal transfer.

## *Point Reyes Hostel*

**S**IX MILES WEST OF THE BEAR VALLEY of the Bear Valley visitor center and two miles northeast of Limantour Beach on Limantour Road, you come upon the Point Reyes Hostel in a wooded valley. Operated by Hosteling International, it comprises a ranch house and redwood bunkhouse that together can accommodate 44 guests. A concrete ramp from the parking area between the two buildings leads into the ranch house's utility room.

You pass through the kitchen and dining room to reach the bedrooms. If you want to stay in one of the small dorm rooms, which have five bunks each, make reservations to ensure you get a lower bed. The one private room can also be reserved. Next to the ranch house is a barbecue grill on an accessible patio. The redwood bunkhouse is inaccessible.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The small paved lot has no blue spaces, but guests with special needs can reserve a space. Restrooms in the ranch house have wide stalls with grab bars and high toilets. Curtains serve for doors and don't get in the way. The shower is small but has grab bars and a removable wooden seat.

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**415/663-8811;**

[www.norcalhostels.org](http://www.norcalhostels.org)

🕒 Check out 7:30–10 am;  
check in 4:30–9:30 pm;  
closed 10 am–4:30 pm daily

**FEES** Dorm bed \$16 adults,  
children under 18, \$10;  
one family room, \$54

**RESERVATIONS 888/464-4872**

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## *Abbotts Lagoon*

**A**BBOTTS LAAGOON, a dune-sheltered freshwater lagoon on the north side of the Point Reyes Peninsula, is a short drive out Pierce Point Road, which intersects Sir Francis Drake Boulevard two miles past the town of Inverness. A decomposed granite-and-dirt trail skirts the southern side of the lagoon and leads out to beach. The first .5 mile is accessible, although

erosion from a wet winter may make it impassable. Look for coots, western grebes, and quail.

At the end of rolling Pierce Point Road, past some dairy ranches, you may be lucky enough to spot tule elk. These animals were hunted almost to extinction in the late 1800s. In 1978 a reserve was established for them here, and today there are two separate herds at Point Reyes, totaling nearly 400 animals. They can often be seen from the road. On your return, before the intersection with Sir Francis Drake Blvd., turn left into Tomales Bay State Park and Heart's Desire Beach on Tomales Bay. You will find a level lawn with a picnic area and a sheltered sandy cove.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces and accessible restrooms are in the dirt lot for Abbots Lagoon.

## Drakes Beach

### SOUTH SIDE OF POINT REYES PENINSULA

**W**AY OUT ON THE PENINSULA, about seven miles past the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Pierce Point Road, turn left off Sir Francis Drake to reach Drakes Beach, on Drakes Bay. Although there is no access to the beach, the fully accessible Kenneth C. Patrick Visitor Center is well worth the trip. It offers park information and excellent displays on local marine life and Sir Francis Drake's 16th-century explorations. On blustery days the spa-

cious viewing deck keeps you above the blowing sand but close enough to the pounding surf to feel its might. If a chill gets you, warm up with barbecued oysters (available in summer), hot drinks, soup, or other fare from the café.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The large parking lot has three blue spaces. Accessible restrooms are off the deck between the visitor center and the café.

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**Visitor center: 415/669-1250**

**Café: 415/669-1297**

🕒 **Visitor center:** Memorial Day–Labor Day, Fri.–Tues., 10 am–5 pm; weekends and holidays year-round, 10 am–5 pm. Closed Dec. 25.

**Café:** Weekends only; during winter whale-watching season, Dec.–April, also open Thurs.–Mon.

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## Lighthouse Visitor Center

**A**T THE END OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE Boulevard, about 45 minutes from Bear Valley and five miles west of Drakes Beach, the Point Reyes Lighthouse stands on a rocky promontory at the western tip of the Point Reyes Peninsula. Built in 1870, it was retired from service in 1975 when it was replaced by an automated light. The lighthouse is not accessible, but the visitor center, on a cliff 300 feet above it, is. The center's displays and photographs offer a chance to learn something about maritime history, marine life, shipwrecks, and lighthouse keepers.

**415/669-1534**

**Thurs.–Mon., 10 am–4:30 pm**

A paved path extends 100 feet beyond the visitor center to an accessible clifftop observation platform from which you might see gray whales passing offshore on their annual migrations between December and April. During whale-watching season the road from South Beach to the lighthouse is closed to autos, but visitors with a disabled license plate or placard can drive in.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** A lot at the end of Sir Francis Drake Blvd. is about .5 mile below the visitor center. Disabled placards or license plates will allow you to open the gate and drive to a dirt-and-gravel parking area, where a short climb up a paved road leads to the visitor center. The gate is unlocked and opens out toward you; close it after entering. An accessible portable toilet is next to the visitor center.

### Point Reyes Lighthouse







## GGNRA: *Fort Baker and Marin Headlands*

GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

**A DRIVE THROUGH** the hills and valleys of the Marin Headlands gives you some of the most breathtaking views in the Bay Area. Waves crash at the base of cliffs, San Francisco gleams across the water, and the towers of the Golden Gate Bridge rise and vanish beyond the hills. Old concrete bunkers amid the vegetation remind you of the military history of these lands, which became parklands in 1972 thanks to far-sighted legislation by Congressman Phillip Burton. Points of interest are easy to find, with clear signs along the roads and maps and descriptive information available at parking-area kiosks.

### *Fort Baker*

**F**ORT BAKER, AT THE NORTHEASTERN end of the Golden Gate Bridge, is blessed with a lot of sunshine, open space, a sandy beach, and a bit of rocky shoreline. The fort was established in 1866 as part of the Golden Gate's defense system. During World War II it served as a depot for underwater mines intended to protect the bay, while the guns of Battery Yates were manned for surface raids.

The Horseshoe Bay fishing pier, along East Road, is accessible. You can park at the pier and continue on a paved road, part of the Bay Trail, past barricades and very steeply up, to pass under the Golden Gate Bridge. The perspective on the bridge's underside, with its massive steel and concrete support system, makes it worth getting help up the hill. Adventurous wheelchair riders can also get to this spot from a trailhead parking lot on the other side of the bridge (see the section on Battery Spencer, p. 12), although the steep climb back to the parking lot is very difficult.

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**Discovery Museum**  
**415/339-3900**

🕒 **Tues.–Fri., 9 am–4 pm;**  
**Sat. and Sun., 10 am–5 pm**

**FEES** Adults, \$8.50; ages 1–17,  
\$7.50; 62 and above, \$6.50

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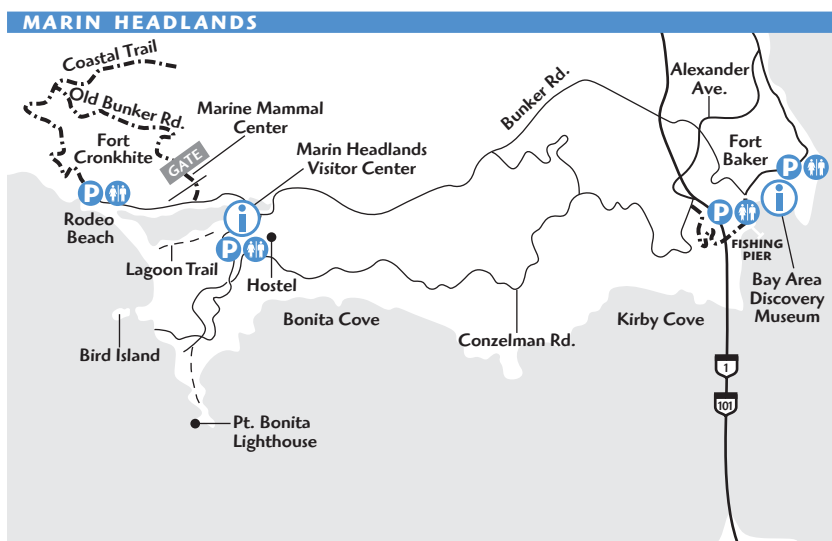


DAN ROBBIN

*View of the Golden Gate Bridge from Fort Baker*

Alexander Ave. exit, which comes up quickly after Bowers Vista Point. At the bottom of the long hill, make a U-turn to the right on East Rd., which descends into Fort Baker. From Highway 101 South, take the last Sausalito exit, just before the Golden Gate Bridge, and follow the signs to East Fort Baker and the Discovery Museum.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is at the entrance to the pier and six are on East Rd. across from the Discovery Museum. An accessible portable toilet is across the road from the pier. The museum has accessible restrooms in the Tot Spot and Discovery Hall. Others are in the art studio, the performing arts theater, and at Lookout Cove.



## *H. Dana Bowers Vista Point*

(FORMERLY JUAN DE AYALA VISTA POINT)

**T**OURISTS FLOCK TO this cliff-top overlook at the Marin County end of the Golden Gate Bridge for its extraordinary views of San Francisco and the East Bay. The stone wall along nearly two-thirds of the lookout's perimeter is just under three feet high. I sit fairly high in my chair and could see out but not down. Two viewing scopes are at wheelchair height. The larger-than-life bronze statue of a "Lone Sailor" commemorates the thousands of sailors who have shipped out from San Francisco.

Close to the parking lot entrance, the first curb cut on your right leads down to the eastern walkway onto the Golden Gate Bridge (the west side is reserved for bicyclists). I found the 1.7-mile roll across the bridge unnerving, with cars zooming by so close, shaking the bridge. The overlook offered a quieter, more enjoyable experience of the bridge and bay views, despite its crowds.

► **GETTING THERE** After crossing the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, take the first exit to your right. There is no access from Highway 101 South.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Six blue spaces and two accessible restrooms are in the parking lot.

## *Bay Trail and Battery Spencer*

**F**OR AN EXHILARATING but challenging ride, and a different perspective on the Golden Gate Bridge, you can't beat the stretch of paved service road that winds from the west side of a trailhead parking lot off Conzelman Road, just west of the bridge, steeply downhill and under the bridge to Horseshoe Bay in Fort Baker. Part of the Bay Trail, the road is closed to vehicles except those used for maintenance. But be careful: I went down only as far as the underside of the bridge, and my power wheelchair worked hard on the return. For manual wheelchair riders the continuous uphill climb would be extremely difficult.

A few hundred feet down Conzelman Road past the Bay Trail trailhead lot is a roadside parking area for Battery Spencer. Two steep gravel paths lead south from the parking area up to the battery, one of the many artillery em-

placements built to guard the Golden Gate in the late 1800s. One path has steps on the approach, and during my visit the other had deep ruts that prevented access beyond 50 feet. But even from the parking area you can look down on the bridge and out to the ocean and feel as if you're perched on top of the world. Binoculars are a must here.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 South in Marin, just before the bridge, take the Sausalito exit and follow the Golden Gate National Recreation Area signs. From Highway 101 North, after crossing the bridge from San Francisco, take the Alexander Ave. exit. At the stop sign, turn left under the freeway, then take Conzelman Rd. to the right (be careful not to get on the freeway here or you will end up back in San Francisco). The trailhead parking lot is on your immediate left after you turn onto Conzelman, shortly before Battery Spencer.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The trailhead parking lot has three blue spaces; there are none in the dirt-and-gravel parking area for Battery Spencer. The portable toilets at Battery Spencer are not accessible. The Marin Headlands visitor center, three miles northwest on Field Rd., has accessible restrooms.

## *Point Bonita Lighthouse and Bird Island Overlook*

**F**ROM BATTERY SPENCER, drive west on Conzelman Road along the edge of the headlands, where there are several observation points with parking and benches from which you can enjoy spectacular views of the Golden Gate and bridge, with San Francisco in the distance. Turn left at the Point Bonita YMCA center and continue to a gravel parking lot at the start of a steep .5-mile trail leading down to Point Bonita Lighthouse. Most motorized wheelchair riders can make it partway down for the rewarding south-facing views, but those in

EILEEN ECKLUND



*Along the trail to Point Bonita Lighthouse*

manual wheelchairs may need assistance. For west-facing views, head to a gravel parking lot at the end of Conzelman Road, named Bird Island Overlook for the small rock island 500 feet offshore.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The lots for Point Bonita Lighthouse and Bird Island Overlook are gravel with no blue spaces. An accessible portable toilet is in a gravel lot 100 feet past the Point Bonita Lighthouse trailhead.

## *Fort Barry, Fort Cronkhite, and Rodeo Beach*

**F**ROM BIRD ISLAND OVERLOOK, drive back to the YMCA center and continue straight onto Field Road, following signs to the Marin Headlands visitor center in the old Fort Barry chapel. Here you will find information about Rodeo Lagoon, Rodeo Beach, and their surroundings. A shaded picnic area is connected to the visitor center. At the west side of the parking lot, next to the restrooms, is an entrance to the Rodeo Lagoon Loop Trail. This dirt trail offers excellent birding and views along the .5 mile before it hits the sands of Rodeo Beach, preventing further access.

To reach Fort Cronkhite and Rodeo Beach from the visitor center, continue down Field Road and turn left on Bunker Road. The pebbly beach is at the outlet of Rodeo Lagoon, where you may see herons, egrets, pelicans, and harlequin and tufted ducks. In winter, rain floods the lagoon, causing it to breach its sandbar and mix with the Pacific. An accessible bridge, part of the loop trail, spans a narrow point in the lagoon near the first beach parking lot on Bunker Road. The second beach parking lot, .25 mile farther at the end of Bunker Road, has a paved picnic area with barbecue grills and ta-

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*Marin Headlands visitor center:*

**415/331-1540;**

[www.nps.gov/goga/mahe](http://www.nps.gov/goga/mahe);

9:30 am–4:30 pm

*California Marine Mammal*

*Center:* **415/289-7325;**

[www.tmmc.org](http://www.tmmc.org); 10 am–4 pm

*Marin Headlands Hostel:*

**415/331-2777;**

[www.norcalhostels.org](http://www.norcalhostels.org).

Dorm beds \$18–20 adults,

children under 18, \$9;

private room, \$54

*Center for the Arts:*

**415/331-2787;**

[www.headlands.org](http://www.headlands.org);

Mon.–Fri., 10 am–5 pm;

Sat.–Sun., noon–5 pm

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EILEEN ECKLUND

*Pelicans at Rodeo Lagoon*

bles. Plans are underway to make a beach wheelchair available for Rodeo Beach; call the Marin Headlands visitor center for more information.

From the second parking lot you might try a strenuous and rewarding two-mile paved loop that climbs steeply on the Coastal Trail for .75 mile to Battery Townsley, then returns to Fort Cronkhite on Old Bunker Road, passing the entrance to the Marine Mammal Center. Manual wheelchair users may require assistance on this loop, starting at the uneven path around the vehicle gate near the parking lot. Foghorns sounded in the distance as I made the climb, alternately gazing out over the ocean and inland to the blooming spring wildflowers. At the top, just past Battery Townsley, the Coastal Trail leading to the left is inaccessible. Turn right onto paved Old Bunker Road, which has a gentler grade but is worn in places. It leads downhill one mile to a locked vehicle gate, where it becomes a road. Just beyond the gate we passed the entrance to the Marine Mammal Center, where injured animals are brought back to health, and then wound our way back through Fort Cronkhite to the beginning of the loop.

A note of caution: When I visited, the path around the locked gate on Old Bunker Road had deep ruts that would be impassable for anyone traveling alone. My companion was able to carefully lift and steer my power wheelchair over the ruts. If you want to do this loop, it's best to first drive to the trail entrance on Old Bunker Road to see if the path around the gate is navigable. If it is, consider doing the loop in reverse by parking at Rodeo Beach and rolling back to this entrance. This way you avoid the steep uphill on the Coastal Trail.

Other points of interest at Fort Barry include the Marin Headlands Hostel, which has accommodations for wheelchair users, and next to it, the Headlands Center for the Arts. The hostel's registration area is upstairs, so you must make prior arrangements for check-in.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The visitor center has one blue space. At Rodeo Beach, one blue space is on the right side of Bunker Rd. near the lagoon bridge, and two are in the lot at the end of Bunker Rd. Accessible restrooms are at the visitor center and at the beach lot at the end of Bunker Rd.



## GGNRA: Muir Woods to Stinson Beach

GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

AN ANCIENT REDWOOD FOREST, two picturesque beaches, and rustic cabins overlooking the ocean are within a 30-minute drive of the Golden Gate Bridge.

### *Muir Woods and Muir Beach*

**G**OING NORTH ON HIGHWAY 1 (Shoreline Highway), turn right onto Panoramic Highway, then left onto Muir Woods Road, and you'll arrive at Muir Woods National Monument. A wonderful, wide, 1.5-mile wooden boardwalk and paved loop trail take you through an awe-inspiring old-growth coastal redwood forest. All facilities, including the visitor center, café, and gift shop, are accessible.

From Muir Woods, head west on Muir Woods Road to Highway 1, then south for a short distance to Muir Beach. This

**415/388-2595; [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)**

🕒 **Muir Woods:** 8 am–sunset  
**Muir Woods visitor center:**  
 summer, 9 am–6 pm;  
 winter, 9 am–4:30 pm  
**Muir Beach:** sunrise to one  
 hour after sunset

**FEES** **Muir Woods:** adults, \$3;  
 16 and under, free





NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

*Muir Woods*

dog-friendly beach has a one-mile loop trail that might be accessible during dry weather. Windblown sand and a surface layer of rock for erosion control cut my trip short. From the beach parking lot, take the wooden bridge across Redwood Creek. At the end of the bridge, where the sand begins, a dirt-and-gravel trail leads left, traveling by a marsh and looping back to the parking lot via the entrance road. A picnic area with barbecue grills is at the south end of the beach parking lot.

For a panoramic ocean vista and a chance to watch migrating whales (December–April), head north from Muir Beach one mile up Highway 1 to Muir Beach Overlook, a former Army observation post. The narrow dirt trail from the lot to the overlook is manageable in a power wheelchair, but views from the lot are almost as good. Nearby picnic tables are on level grass.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Muir Woods has six blue spaces in the main lot, the beach has three in its gravel lot, and the overlook has two in a paved lot. Muir Woods has accessible restrooms near the gift shop and parking lot, the beach has several accessible portable toilets in the parking lot, and the overlook has an accessible pit toilet in the parking lot.



## Steep Ravine Environmental Cabins and Campground

HIGHWAY 1 SOUTH OF STINSON BEACH

**T**EN RUSTIC CABINS WITH OCEAN views perch on the rim of a steep ravine at the foot of Mt. Tamalpais. Built in the 1930s, the cabins can provide solitude, a romantic getaway, or an enriching spot to gather with family and friends. Each cabin accommodates up to five people and has a table with two benches, a wood-burning stove, and sleeping platforms. There is no electricity, and you must bring sleeping bags, mattresses, linen, and a cooking stove, if you want one. Water is available from a faucet outside the cabin and you can buy wood at nearby cubbies.

The accessible cabin (#1) is the first one you come to, near the blue parking space. It can accommodate up to five people. Two accessible sleeping platforms are high when you add a mattress and require upper body strength to transfer from a wheelchair; the bunk bed is inaccessible. The area beside the cabin is flat. A nearby .5-mile dirt-and-gravel fire road with several steep sections may be accessible to some power wheelchair users. The campground on your left as you approach the cabins has an accessible campsite (#7). A locked gate at the entrance just off Highway 1 and the lock on the cabin door may be difficult to open for people with limited hand function.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 just north of Sausalito, exit at Highway 1 toward Stinson Beach. A gated entrance is on the hill on the ocean side of the road as you head down into Stinson Beach.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is next to the accessible cabin, and one is near the campsite. Only one vehicle allowed per site. An accessible pit toilet a few feet from the accessible cabin serves the campsite and cabin.

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*Mt. Tamalpais ranger station:*  
**415/388-2070**

**RESERVATIONS** 800/444-7275, accepted seven months in advance; they fill quickly

**FEES** Cabins, \$75; campground, \$15; 50 percent discount for campground with a State Parks Disabled Discount Pass (call 800/777-0369)

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## Stinson Beach

**S**TINSON BEACH AND ITS 3.5 MILES of sandy oceanfront are especially popular during summer. Part of the beach is maintained by the National Park Service, which provides volleyball equipment free of charge, runs a snack bar, and staffs several lifeguard towers between late May and mid-September. Call ahead

to arrange for a beach wheelchair and ask for it at the lifeguard tower when you arrive. The park entrance is to the left off Highway 1 not far from the stop-sign intersection in the little town of Stinson Beach. Picnic tables and barbecue grills on a level grass area are between the first and second (northern and central) parking lots. Across the entrance road from the central lot, a short path and bridge over a creek lead to another (privately owned) snack bar and restaurant and, one block north, the town's galleries, restaurants, bookstore, surf shop, and small grocery store. There are no sidewalks and many of the shops have steps.

For an alternative route to Stinson Beach, take Panoramic Highway, to the right off Highway 1 just outside Mill Valley, bypassing Muir Woods. This is an exhilarating ride. The road climbs and winds along the side of Mount Tamalpais, through rolling meadows and forest, then descends steeply into Stinson Beach. The views are so breathtaking it's hard to keep your eyes on the road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The park has three paved lots: the first two have three blue spaces, the last (southern) has one. Two accessible restrooms with changing rooms are along the beach near the first and second parking lots.

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*Recorded information:*

**415/868-1922**

*Ranger station:* **415/868-0942**

🕒 9 am–sunset

**RESERVATIONS** Beach  
wheelchair: **415/868-0734**

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# San Mateo and Santa Cruz Coast

**W**HILE THE BAY SIDE of San Mateo County is densely populated, on the other side of the hills the coast has remained largely rural. Along the 55-mile stretch of shoreline known locally as the Coastsides, rows of artichokes and Brussels sprouts extend from the foothills to the ocean bluffs. On a clear day, as you travel south along Highway 1, you get views of the ocean, dizzying seacliffs—especially at Devil’s Slide, south of Pacifica—sandy beaches, lush coastal terraces, and rolling hills. You pass Pigeon Point Lighthouse, towering on a scenic headland, and Año Nuevo State Beach, where thousands of northern elephant seals gather each year to mate and breed. As you approach the rugged Santa Cruz Mountains and northern Santa Cruz County, the hillsides become steeper and more forested. The drive alone can be well worth the trip.

*Pigeon Point Lighthouse*

© WWW.CALIFORNIACOASTLINE.ORG





## *Pacifica and Half Moon Bay*

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IN THE EARLY 1900s the northern San Mateo coast was linked to San Francisco by the Ocean Shore Railway, which carried passengers from the city for weekend and holiday beach outings as far as Tunitas Creek, south of Half Moon Bay, and transported artichokes, beans, Brussels sprouts, and other vegetables from coastal farms to the city. Today housing has replaced many of the fields where flowers and pumpkins used to be grown around Half Moon Bay, and many of the people who live in the area commute south or across the hills to jobs on the bayside of the peninsula. You can still buy some local produce on farmstands, however, and purchase fresh fish and crabs in season off the fishermen's boats in Pillar Point Harbor.

### *Pacifica Municipal Pier and Sharp Park Beach*

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BEACH BOULEVARD, PACIFICA

**I**F YOU ARE A BAY AREA FISHER, you probably already know about this 1,140-foot open-ocean pier (41-inch railings). In

season, people catch king salmon, surf perch, striped bass, and halibut. You can go out on the pier even if you don't fish. On the lawn near the pier there are picnic tables and grills. A wide, paved promenade runs along Sharp Park Beach for about .5 mile south to Clarendon Rd. From there, if you can manage a short but steep and sometimes sandy slope, you can access a hard-packed dirt and rock levee trail and continue south for another .5 mile to the end of the beach at Mori Point. The promenade can be a difficult ride because of wind-blown sand, standing rainwater, and bird droppings. The levee trail runs between the beach and Sharp Park Golf Course. From this elevated vantage point you may spot pelicans skimming the ocean's surface, shorebirds probing the sand, and occasionally, sea lions and whales swimming close to shore. You're almost certain to meet dogs and energetic walkers on this trail.

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🕒 Pier: 4 am–10 pm

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EILEEN ECKLUND

*Pacifica Municipal Pier*

► **GETTING THERE** From San Francisco, take Highway 280 South to Highway 1. In Pacifica take the Francisco Blvd. exit, turn right on Paloma, follow it to the end, then turn left on Beach Boulevard.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are on Beach Blvd. just past

Santa Rosa Ave., and two are at the southern end of Beach Boulevard. Accessible restrooms are at the foot of the pier. The turn into the women's restroom is a tight 90 degrees, and the entry is 30 inches wide.

## *Headlands Trail and Rockaway Beach*

NEAR ROCKAWAY BEACH AVENUE OFF HIGHWAY 1, PACIFICA

**T**UCKED BETWEEN Rockaway Point and Pedro Point, Pacifica State Beach is largely inaccessible. If you want a challenging climb and thrilling ride, however, stop and park in the lot for Pacifica State Beach to pick up the Pedro Point Headlands Trail, which runs behind the beach to accessible points north and south.

From the lot, which is off Highway 1, .25 mile south of Crespi Drive, you can take a quick .25-mile roll southward to San Pedro Creek by maneuvering through two parking lots to pick up the Headlands Trail south of the Taco Bell. Eventually, an accessible .9-mile addition to this trail is expected to climb from San Pedro Creek up to Highway 1 just north of the stretch of road famous as Devil's Slide. (When Caltrans completes the tunnel through Montara Mountain, possibly by 2010, autos will bypass Devil's Slide and a dramatic stretch of the coast road may be turned over to pedestrians and bicyclists.)

Traveling north from the state beach parking lot, the Headlands Trail is level for .75 mile, then ascends to Rockaway Point. Signs indicate steep grades (8.3 percent), but I easily made it in my power chair. When you reach the top you're treated to fresh ocean breezes and bird's-eye views of central Pacifica and the closer Rockaway Beach district. Whiz downhill to Rockaway Beach, traveling past the parking lot at the end of Old Country Road, and cross a pedestrian bridge to Nick Gust Way. From here, the sidewalk leads to

a concrete platform where you can view breakers and surfers, then travel along Rockaway Beach boardwalk, ending at the parking lot. From the northeast corner of the parking lot, the paved .75-mile Calera Creek Trail runs through restored wetlands to a memorial for victims of the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center.

► **GETTING THERE** Rockaway Beach is 12 miles south of San Francisco. From Highway 1 South, turn right at Rockaway Beach Ave., right at Dondee Way, and left at San Marlo Way. Pacifica State Beach is one mile south of Rockaway Beach. The entrance is on the right, .5 mile south of Crespi Drive.

► **PARKING** Blue spaces are plentiful at Pacifica State Beach. Three serve northern Rockaway Beach at the end of San Marlo Dr. and three are in the south end lot on Old County Road. The lot on Reina del Mar, before the Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant, has one blue space.

► **RESTROOMS** The accessible restrooms at Pacifica State Beach are open 7:30 am–3 pm. Semi-accessible restrooms are at the Rockaway Beach Plaza on Dondee Way. The entry door is heavy, the stall is too small to close the door, and there's only room for a frontal transfer. Two accessible restrooms in the Old County Rd. parking lot are also open only 7:30 am–3 pm.

## *Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel*

16TH STREET AT HIGHWAY 1, BETWEEN MONTARA AND MOSS BEACH

**S**OUTH OF PACIFICA, at the end of Devil's Slide, is the Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel, operated by Hosteling International. A fog signal was established at Point Montara in 1875 and the current lighthouse was built in 1928. The Victorian house that originally was the lightkeeper's quarters now houses hostel staff. A simpler residence building, dating from World War II when the site became a navy training base, now houses the hostel office, kitchens,

**650/728-7177;**

[www.norcalhostels.org](http://www.norcalhostels.org)

🕒 Check out 7:30–10 am, check in 4:30–10 pm. Office hours 7:30 am–10 pm. Access to guest facilities during the day is limited.

**FEES** Vary seasonally. Adults, \$19 or more; children under 18, \$12 or more; private rooms, \$53–87.

**RESERVATIONS 888/464-4872**



NORA J. LEE, COURTESY SAN MATEO  
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

common rooms, and most guestrooms. The guestrooms have ample maneuvering space, but the large kitchens are not modified for use from a wheelchair, and the stoves' burner controls are on top, next to the back burners.

At the north end of the hostel complex is a small accessible guesthouse that has four private rooms with bunk beds that are queen-size below and twin-size above. These rooms are popular, so reserve early. The Fog Signal Building is now a carpeted common room with several couches. A concrete path leading out to the cliff's edge next to the lighthouse is less than 30 inches wide, but navigable. From here, between December and April, you can see gray whales on their annual migration south to Baja California and back to the Arctic. Groups can arrange for day use of the hostel and its audiovisual equipment for an additional charge.


- ▶ **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 1 at 16th St. between Montara and Moss Beach (look for hostel signs).
- ▶ **PARKING** Call ahead to reserve the one blue space next to the private rooms. Three other convenient spaces are just south of the Victorian house.
- ▶ **RESTROOMS** One shower room and two toilet rooms in the small guest house are generously sized and have grab bars, high toilets, a handheld shower, and pull-down shower seat. The staff residence building has no accessible bathroom.



## Pillar Point Harbor

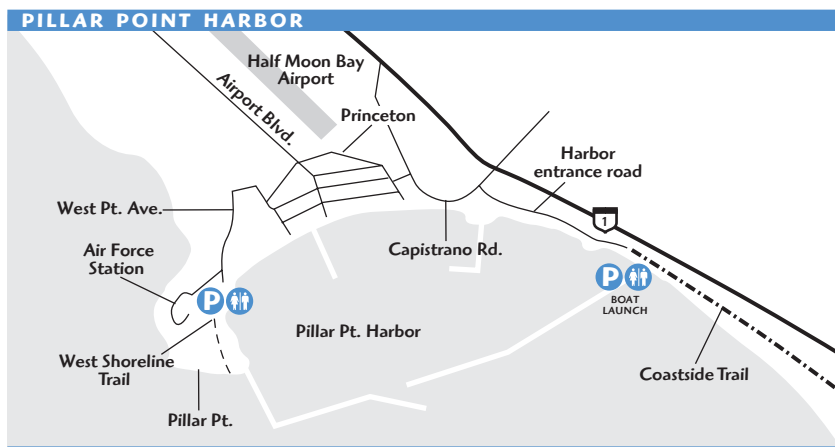
CAPISTRANO ROAD OFF HIGHWAY 1, PRINCETON

**A**PPROXIMATELY 25 MILES SOUTH of San Francisco, in the small town of Princeton, Pillar Point Harbor is a home port for commercial and sport fishing boats and a take-off point for whale watching, scuba diving, and kayaking in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The harbor is sheltered by the Pillar Point headland to the north and two large breakwaters to the south. You can stop for a meal or a snack on the lively little waterfront and, in season, go directly to the fishing boats to buy fish from the people who caught it. The docks themselves aren't accessible during low tide, but the fishers will bring the fish to you. You can also try to catch something yourself from the recreational fishing pier (42-inch railings).

 **West Shoreline Trail:**  
Sunrise to sunset

To explore the harbor or set yourself up for catching perch, jacksmelt, halibut, and starry flounder, turn left off Capistrano Road onto the harbor's entrance road. To reach a .5-mile section of the Coastside Trail, which takes off to the south, drive to the end of the harbor road. On the trail, the harbor is to your right.

For a ride that allows close-up observation of life in a saltmarsh, take the hard-packed-dirt West Shoreline Trail, which starts at Pillar Point Marsh





*Buying fish fresh off the boat*

and leads south to the point, a 1.2-mile round trip. To get to there, exit Highway 1 at the southern outlet of Capistrano Road, near the harbor. Drive past the harbor entrance road on your left, turn left onto Prospect Way, left onto Broadway, right onto Princeton Drive, and right onto West Point Avenue. Continue around the marsh on West Point and into the lot on your left, at the base of the hill (do not drive up the hill).

As you roll out on the trail, the harbor is to your left and the Pillar Point Air Force Station, a radar facility atop a promontory, surrounded by a fence and Monterey cypress, is above you. Looking out at the breakwater, you may spot harbor seals lounging on the rocks or pelicans diving in the ocean. Farther along, at a small inaccessible beach, the trail climbs slightly, and with the cross slope, wheelchair riders will want to hug the hillside. The trail ends 50 feet from the breakwater.

A lovely way to end the day is to dine at one of the ocean-view restaurants on Capistrano Road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is at the boat launch near the Coastsides Trail. The dirt lot at the end of West Point Ave. has one signed blue space by the trailhead. Accessible restrooms are at West Shoreline trailhead (portable) and across from the boat launch at the harbor.

## Half Moon Bay State Beach—Francis Beach

END OF KELLY AVENUE OFF HIGHWAY 1, HALF MOON BAY

**J**UST SOUTH OF PILLAR POINT, Half Moon Bay, the oldest town in San Mateo County, lies along a gently curving, sandy shore that is protected as parkland. The most accessible of the three beaches within Half Moon Bay State Beach is Francis Beach, off Kelly Avenue. A beach wheelchair is available on request at the entrance station, and five of the picnic tables perched on bluffs overlooking the beach are on accessible concrete pads.

The paved Coastside Trail runs for nearly 3.5 miles behind the beaches, from Mirada Road, one mile south of Pillar Point Harbor, to Poplar Street, .5 mile south of Francis Beach. At the northern end of Francis Beach campground, the Coastside Trail connects to a 130-foot-long accessible beach boardwalk that takes you toward the ocean. The small visitor center at Francis Beach has displays about local wildflowers, birds, and animals, as well as local history.

Francis Beach campground has 52 campsites for tent, trailer, and RV camping (RV hookups are not available, but there is a dump station). All sites have tables and fire rings, and four are designed and posted as accessible. To camp there or at Sweetwood Group Camp, which can accommodate groups of 10 to 50 people, requires reservations.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The Francis Beach lot for day users has six blue spaces. The campground has one next to each restroom and one at each of the four accessible campsites. The restroom in the day-use lot is accessible. Each of the two restrooms in the campground has one accessible stall with grab bars and one accessible shower room. The showers have hot water and are coin-operated.

**Entry gate: 650/726-8820**

**Half Moon Bay State Beach:**

**650/726-8819;**

[www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

🕒 **Beach:** 8 am–sunset

**Visitor center:** Sat.–Sun.,

10 am–3 pm

**FEES** \$6 per vehicle for day use, \$25 to camp; 50 percent fee discount with State Parks Disabled Discount Pass (call **800/777-0369**).

### RESERVATIONS

**Campsites: 800/444-7275;**

[www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com)

**Beach wheelchair: 650/726-8820**

## Miramontes Point Trail

MIRAMONTES POINT ROAD OFF HIGHWAY 1, HALF MOON BAY

**T**HE VIEWS ARE SPECTACULAR from the paved one-mile Miramontes Point Trail, which runs past and through a championship golf course, through the Ritz Carlton Hotel complex, and along the ocean bluffs.

Start your trip on this stretch of Coastal Trail from the public parking lot on Miramontes Point Road. Several hundred feet down the trail from the lot, a spur trail leads left across a bridge over Cañada Verde Creek and extends for only a few hundred yards. From the bridge you get a lovely view of the ocean and, in rainy season, of a waterfall.

The main trail is about .75-mile long and has some steep sections that may be challenging for manual wheelchair users. At first you travel gently uphill to the south side of the Ritz Carlton, then pass between the ocean's edge and the hotel. Then you wend downhill in a northeasterly direction, cross an access road, and turn left, passing along the east side of some hotel bungalows. At this point the trail becomes very steep and takes you across a wooden bridge before ending at a fence and gate.

► **PARKING** Two blue spaces are in the small lot on Miramontes Point Road. The Ritz Carlton Hotel makes 25 parking spaces, including two accessible spaces, available to the public from sunrise to sunset, for access to the Coastal Trail; at the gatehouse just before the hotel, the greeter will give you an access code and directions to an accessible spot. Outside the garage a sign indicates the Coastal Trail.

► **RESTROOMS** An accessible portable toilet is 50 feet from the trailhead at the lot on Miramontes Point Road.





*An elephant seal blocks the way at Año Nuevo.*



## *Cowell Ranch State Beach to Año Nuevo*

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AS YOU CONTINUE SOUTH, the coast seems to have changed little for the past century. Fields of artichokes and Brussels sprouts stretch from the hills down to the marine terraces; lonely beaches lie at the feet of steep cliffs. Beach access is limited and there are few trails, but you can enjoy sweeping ocean vistas as you drive on the winding two-lane highway. You can picnic on the bluffs, tour the Pigeon Point Lighthouse and stay in its hostel and, in Año Nuevo State Reserve, watch northern elephant seals in the world's largest mainland breeding colony for these giants.

### *Cowell Ranch State Beach*

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HIGHWAY 1, .5 MILE SOUTH OF MIRAMONTES POINT ROAD

**T**HE ONLY WAY TO REACH this beach is by a steep bluffside stairway, but a trip to the blufftop is worthwhile if you'd like to look down at harbor seals lolling about on the sand and rocks below you. They tend to be here

from late winter through spring. With binoculars you may spot some seal pups in March and April. Take the .5-mile hard-packed dirt trail that runs slightly downhill from the unpaved parking area, between farmed fields and grazing lands, to the bluff. Interpretive panels along the trail describe common plants and wildlife, and offer a bit of local history. The trail ends at the blufftop overlook.

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*Call Half Moon Bay State Beach for information: 650/726-8819*

🕒 8 am–sunset

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► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two signed blue spaces are in the unpaved lot. Accessible portable toilets are in the parking area and near the overlook.

## *San Gregorio, Pomponio, and Pescadero State Beaches*

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HIGHWAY 1, 10.5, 12, AND 14.5 MILES SOUTH OF HALF MOON BAY

**F**OR WHEELCHAIR RIDERS, the views of the ocean, coastal cliffs, and broad swaths of sand strewn with driftwood are the main attractions of this series of wild beaches. Getting onto the beaches is difficult, although Pomponio and Pescadero (at the northernmost of three entrances) may be accessible to some who bring their own beach wheelchairs.

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🕒 8 am–sunset

**FEES** \$6 per vehicle; 50 percent discount with State Parks Disabled Discount Pass (call 800/777-0369); no charge at Pescadero's two southernmost lots

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Both San Gregorio and Pomponio Beaches have picnic tables near the parking lots, on grassy level areas that should be accessible to most wheelchair riders. The ones at San Gregorio have a water view. Pescadero Beach has three entrances; I recommend the southernmost one, at Pescadero Road, for the view. There a large, rough-surfaced parking lot is situated well above the beach sand. Several picnic tables on a dirt pad are accessible via a rocky, uneven dirt path, and offer a beautiful overlook of the cliffs and waves. Manual wheelchair riders may need assistance.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** San Gregorio and Pomponio Beaches have several signed blue spaces in paved lots, but Pescadero has none. All the beaches have accessible pit-toilet restrooms at the parking areas, but the one at the Pescadero Rd. lot has no side grab bars.

## *Bean Hollow State Beach*

HIGHWAY 1, 17.5 MILES SOUTH OF HALF MOON BAY

**T**HREE MILES SOUTH OF PESCADERO State Beach, a rocky outcrop separates two coves at Bean Hollow, the southernmost of San Mateo County's state beaches. There is no wheelchair access from the cliffs to the beach, but a couple of accessible picnic tables stand on dirt and grass at the parking level.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is in the first unpaved parking lot. An accessible portable toilet is near the entrance.

## *Pigeon Point State Historic Park and Lighthouse Hostel*

PIGEON POINT ROAD OFF HIGHWAY 1, SOUTH OF PESCADERO

**T**HIS HISTORIC LIGHT STATION and hostel look out over the ocean from a promontory 45 feet above the rocky shore.

The 115-foot-tall lighthouse, built in 1872 with unreinforced brick, is the tallest on the California coast. It was closed to the public in 2001 as unsafe, but State Parks intends to restore it when funds are available. The light flashes every ten seconds. The original Fresnel lens, no longer in use but still in the tower, has 1,008 glass prisms and produced a unique light pattern.

Near the lighthouse, four simple bungalows that used to house Coast Guard families now accommodate up to 52 hostel guests. The hostel office is in the building at the entrance gate and has six-inch steps at its front and rear doors. The adjacent Dolphin House, like the bungalows, has an accessible and generally usable living area and kitchen. The couples' room in the Dolphin House has a three-foot-wide door, a full bed, and more floor space than the

dormitory rooms, which have single bunk beds. This room is in greater demand than the dorms, so reserve early. The hostel is operated by Hosteling International.

The Fog Signal Building, built in 1909, is now a recreation and meeting room, with a Ping-Pong table, television, and VCR. Outside is an accessible boardwalk that leads to the tip of the point, where an accessible bench provides a broad view of the coast and ocean and a chance to see seals and migrating whales.

Pigeon Point is named after the Boston clipper ship *Carrier Pigeon*, bound for San Francisco in 1853 when it ran aground near what was then called Punta

de las Ballenas, or Whale Point, because a whaling station was located here in the late 1800s. Guided, accessible half-hour history walks around the grounds are given Friday through Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm, except on rainy days.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 1, take Pigeon Point Rd. to the entrance gate.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The unpaved lot has no blue spaces. An accessible portable toilet is at the entrance to the park. For hostel guests the spacious shared restroom in the Dolphin House has grab bars, a high sink, and an elevated toilet. A separate shower room has two stalls, each with a chair and grab bars. One stall has an adjustable track-mounted showerhead.

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**State Historic Park:**

**650/879-2120**; [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

**Hostel: 650/879-0633**;

[www.norcalhostels.org](http://www.norcalhostels.org)

🕒 **State Historic Park:**

8 am–sunset

**Hostel:** Check out 7:30–10 am,

check in 4:30–9:30 pm;

access hours 7:30–10 am and

4:30–11 pm

**FEES** **Hostel:** dorm beds

\$18–25 adults;

children under 13, \$14;

private rooms, \$59

**RESERVATIONS** **Hostel:**

**650/879-0633, 888/464-4872**

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## Año Nuevo State Reserve

HIGHWAY 1, 55 MILES SOUTH OF SAN FRANCISCO

**T**HIS IS THE PLACE TO VISIT northern elephant seals and their pups during their breeding and birthing season, December 15 to March 31. Tens of thousands of people flock to this reserve each year to see them, and to watch



huge males rear up and make threatening sounds as they compete for females. Elephant seals sleep a lot, sometimes piling up together by the hundreds, and they grunt a lot too. As many as 1,500 have been born in this reserve in a single year. But even when the seals are away, the 4,000-acre reserve is worth a visit.

During breeding season, all visitors must make advance reservations to tour the seals' beach area with a park docent. "Equal-access tours" are offered twice a day on weekends for those with limited mobility. A docent will pick you up at the visitor center in an accessible van and drive you to the Equal Access Trail, a .25-mile boardwalk that runs over dunes on the beach.

The van can accommodate several passengers and two wheelchairs. Check in for the tour at the visitor center. To get there from the parking lot, follow the hard-packed gravel path.

Once you're on the boardwalk, you must stay 25 feet from the giant animals. This means that the boardwalk could be off limits if seals are dozing on

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**650/879-2025**; [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)  
Obtain permits for April 1–  
Nov. 30 visits at the entrance  
station before 3:30 pm

🕒 8:30 am–sunset  
Seal-viewing area closes at 5 pm.  
*Visitor center*: open Dec.–March,  
8:30 am–3:30 pm  
*Equal-access tours*: weekends  
Dec.–March, 10 am and 1 pm

**FEES** *Parking*: \$6, \$5 seniors,  
\$3 with Disabled Discount Pass  
(call **800/777-0369**)  
*Equal-access tour*: \$5

**RESERVATIONS** Required  
for all tours, Dec.–March  
*Equal-access tours*:  
**650/879-2033**

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it or near it. When that happens, docents take visitors along a nearby dirt road. (If it's muddy, you might need assistance.) Equal-access tours are two hours long and are only offered during breeding season, but special arrangements can sometimes be made at other times. Ask park staff about the beach wheelchair.

The visitor center, in an old barn, offers a 30-minute video about elephant seals as well as live-feed video from the breeding grounds. Three accessible picnic tables are behind the barn; those in front of the barn have ocean views, but the downhill approach is a challenge.

On the ocean side of the visitor center, two dirt and gravel paths, open year-round, branch around a pond. The one on your right as you leave the barn can be accessible for about .75 mile as it rolls along the hillside overlooking the pond. Ask park staff if it's in good condition. The path to your left is accessible as far as the pond, less than .5 mile from the barn. Its surface is generally more compacted, but several sections with water bars resembling speed bumps are steep, and may be difficult for manual wheelchairs on the return uphill.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Five blue spaces and one accessible restroom are in the parking lot. A portable toilet is at the beginning of the Equal Access Trail.



## *Northern Santa Cruz County*

### *Natural Bridges State Beach and West Cliff Drive*

#### NORTHERN EDGE OF SANTA CRUZ

**I**N FALL AND EARLY WINTER, thousands of monarch butterflies roost in eucalyptus trees at Natural Bridges State Beach, the largest overwintering site for these butterflies in the United States. Each year they fly amazing dis-

*Natural Bridges State Beach and wheelchair reservations:*

**831/423-4609**

*Surfing Museum:* **831/420-6289**

*Lighthouse Field State Beach:*

**831/420-5270**

🕒 *Natural Bridges State*

*Beach:* 8 am–sunset

*Visitor center:* 10 am–4 pm

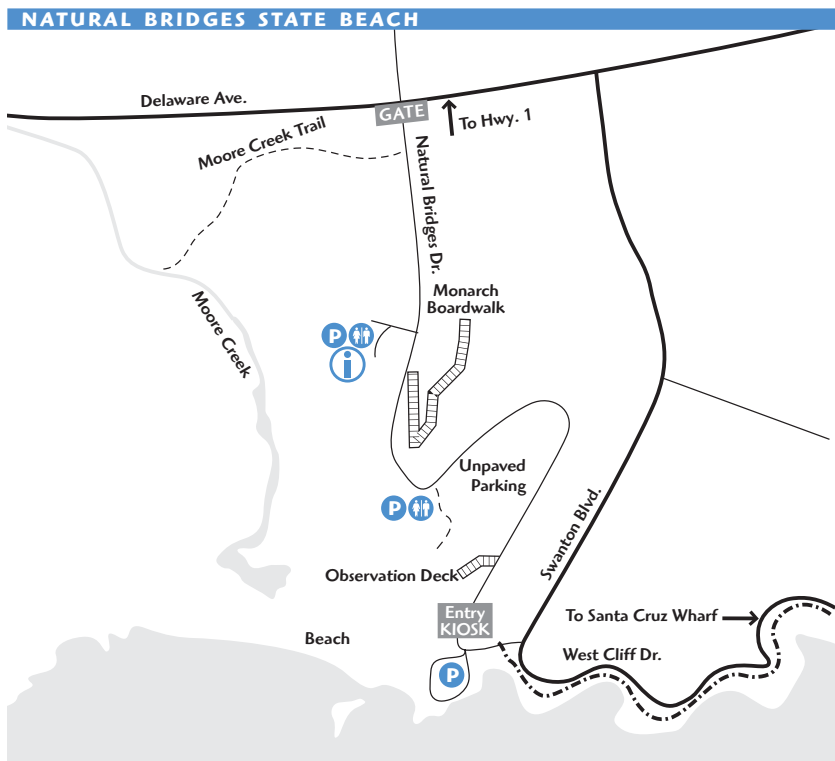
*Butterfly tours:* mid-Oct.–Feb.,  
weekends, 11 am and 2 pm

*Santa Cruz Surfing Museum:*

Wed.–Mon., noon–4 pm

**FEES** *Parking:* \$6,  
\$3 with disabled parking  
placard

tances from their milkweed patches in the northern United States and southern Canada to the same grove. As the days begin to grow longer, they mate and then set off once again for the north. It takes about five generations to complete the round trip. If you come when the butterflies are up north, however, there is plenty more to see and do here. You'll find trails leading through woods and past a pond to great ocean views and, if you arrange to borrow a beach wheelchair, you can get right onto the beach.



Before you reach the park's entrance kiosk on Natural Bridges Boulevard off West Cliff Drive, you might want to stop at an ocean overlook. The paved parking area here is free if you have a disabled parking placard. Past the kiosk, you can pull into an unpaved parking area on your left and backtrack less than 100 yards to the foot of an accessible boardwalk that juts out over sand dunes, offering views of the beach and ocean. An interpretive panel describes some of the wildlife you might see in the neighborhood.

A quarter-mile past the boardwalk, on your left, is a paved parking lot and a restroom nearby. From here a level path extends to an opening in the seacliffs through which you can reach the beach. One beach wheelchair, for use at this beach area, and one standard chair are available for free at the visitor center.

To reach the visitor center, continue on Natural Bridges Drive. Stop by to see the exhibits and an outdoor milkweed demonstration patch. There is a paved, accessible picnic area. The accessible .25-mile Monarch Boardwalk begins at the visitor center and leads down into the eucalyptus grove, with fre-

quent level stopping points and benches. The railing is at eye level but allows for downward views. The boardwalk winds among the trees, around a pond and marsh, and down to a small wooden platform, then leads downhill again to a two-level viewing platform. From the lower platform you can look up at the orange, black, and white butterflies hanging in clusters from the tall trees. When it's cold they remain in the trees, but on warmer sunny

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*Only one of the "bridges" the area was named for remains standing.*

days they take flight, and against the background of green branches they look like airborne stained-glass ornaments.

Natural Bridges Drive is closed to automobiles east of the visitor center. You can wheel past the barricade on the road to reach the wide, dirt Moore Creek Trail, which takes off to the left less than 200 feet before you reach Delaware Avenue. For wheelchair riders it will end at a vista point; for others it continues to the beach. I traveled .25 mile of the trail in my power chair and found one section of thick gravel that would be challenging in a manual wheelchair, but possible with assistance. In the rainy season, mud and deep ruts may make this trail impassable. When you reach the vista, you'll see the last of the three natural bridges that the area was named for. It's a reminder that California has an eroding coast: This bridge was carved out by waves from the sandstone bluffs.

After you return to the West Cliff Drive park entrance, you may want to follow the paved, gently rolling bike and pedestrian path that leads south for three miles to the Santa Cruz Wharf. This path frequently veers away from the edge of the road and runs along the top of a bluff covered with ice plant. Intersecting streets have curb cuts and pullout parking areas with no blue spaces.

Passing along Lighthouse Field State Beach, you will see surfers heading down the stairs to Steamer Lane, a renowned surfing spot. Binoculars can heighten your experience of such places, which are inevitably inaccessible. The lighthouse has been converted into the small but informative Santa Cruz Surfing Museum. The promenade at the edge of the cliff is the northernmost coastal point from which Monterey Bay is visible.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 1, turn toward the ocean (west) onto Swift St., right onto Delaware Ave., and then left onto Swanton Boulevard. At the end of Swanton is West Cliff Dr., where you turn right into the park.

► **PARKING** The gravel lot serving the beach boardwalk and the lot near the park entrance have no blue spaces. Two blue spaces are in the paved lot .25 miles past the boardwalk, and three blue spaces are in the paved lot serving the visitor center. At Lighthouse Field State Beach, the lot in front of the lighthouse has two blue spaces and the field-side lot has five.

► **RESTROOMS** At the top of the ramp to the Natural Bridges visitor center is an accessible restroom. Semi-accessible restrooms are near the paved parking lot a third of a mile from the entrance. The doorways are wide but the stall is not deep enough for closing the door, there's only space for a frontal transfer, and the grab bars have a large gap from the wall. Lighthouse Field State Beach has an accessible restroom in the field-side parking lot.

## *Santa Cruz Wharf and Boardwalk*

### BEACH STREET AT PACIFIC AVENUE

**R**EACHING OUT far beyond the breakers, the .5-mile Santa Cruz Wharf is a great place for wandering and observing sea life and people, and for fishing, eating, or shopping for souvenirs. Large square holes in the decking let you peer down at sea lions lounging on the lower beams and starfish clinging to pilings; benches at the end of the wharf encourage you to stay awhile and watch the ocean. If you want to fish, an accessible sink will let you clean your catch. If you want to just eat fish, several restaurants serve seafood and other fare. To get to the restaurants on the second floor, take the elevator near the end of the wharf.



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*Santa Cruz Boardwalk*

Immediately north of the wharf, behind the Coast Hotel, a concrete ramp leads down to Cowell Beach. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, interlocking plastic panels are placed over the sand to enable you to get close to the ocean's edge. If you borrow a beach wheelchair from Lifeguard Tower #1, you can go all the way to the water's edge. This beach is the site of the annual "A Day on the Beach," which takes place each July and is organized by the nonprofit organization Shared Adventures. At this event, people with special needs have the opportunity to surf, kayak, scuba dive, paddle outrigger canoes, explore the beach in motorized beach wheelchairs, and build sand castles.

South of the wharf is the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, California's oldest amusement park, with a roller coaster, video game arcade, and other attractions. The boardwalk is a colorful public stage set against a backdrop of mountains, with beach and ocean in the foreground. On a clear day you can see to Point Piños, the southwestern point of Monterey Bay; to the north is Point Santa Cruz. From the wide sidewalk above the beach, just before you reach the boardwalk, you can watch games of beach volleyball. Near the carousel on Beach Street you can board the Roaring Camp Railroad for a trip through the redwood forest of Henry Cowell State Park.

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*Wharf and Cowell Beach:*

**831/420-5030;**

[www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us](http://www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us)

*Boardwalk:*

[www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com)

*Shared Adventures:*

**831/459-7210;**

[www.sharedadventures.com](http://www.sharedadventures.com)

*Roaring Camp Railroad:*

**831/335-4400;**

[www.roaringcamp.com](http://www.roaringcamp.com)

🕒 *Wharf:* 5 am–2 am

*Boardwalk:* see

[www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com)

*Cowell Beach:* 9 am–7 pm

**FEES** *Boardwalk rides:*

\$1.95–\$3.90; several ride packages are available

*Wharf parking, summer:*

two hours free with disabled placard, then \$2–3 hourly

rate up to \$21 maximum for 10 hours or more;

*winter:* more than two hours runs to maximum \$12 for

eight hours or more

*Boardwalk parking:* \$10

*Roaring Camp train:*

Adult \$20, children \$15

**RESERVATIONS** *Beach*

*wheelchair:* Memorial Day–

Labor Day, **831/420-6015**

(bring photo I.D.)

**NOTE** Download a

boardwalk accessibility guide

at [www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com),

from the About Us page.

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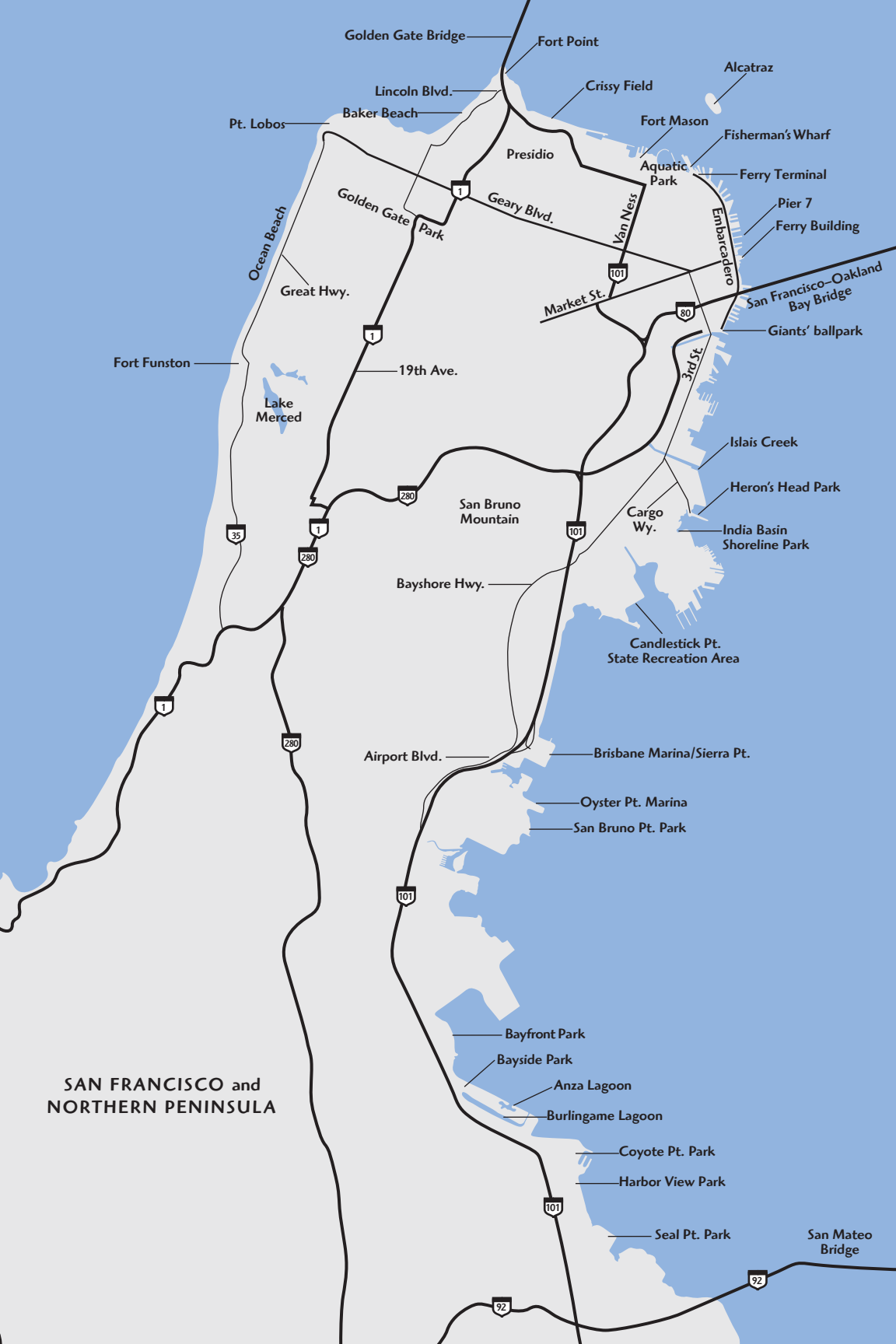




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- ▶ **PARKING** Four blue spaces are at the circular drive leading to the paid parking lot near the wharf, ten are scattered throughout the paid lot on the wharf, and two are near the skateboard park at the foot of Pacific Ave. across from Cowell Beach. The boardwalk parking lots across Beach St. all have blue spaces.
- ▶ **RESTROOMS** Two accessible restrooms are at the top of the ramp leading onto Cowell Beach. One accessible restroom is on the west side of Beach St. near the volleyball area, two are on the wharf west of the wharf headquarters, and another is at the end of the wharf. Accessible restrooms are scattered throughout the boardwalk.





Golden Gate Bridge

Fort Point

Alcatraz

Lincoln Blvd.

Crissy Field

Pt. Lobos

Baker Beach

Fort Mason

Fisherman's Wharf

Presidio

Aquatic Park

Ferry Terminal

Golden Gate Park

Geary Blvd.

Van Ness

Pier 7

Ferry Building

Ocean Beach

Great Hwy.

Market St.

Giants' ballpark

Fort Funston

19th Ave.

Lake Merced

Islais Creek

Heron's Head Park

San Bruno Mountain

Cargo Wy.

India Basin Shoreline Park

Bayshore Hwy.

Candlestick Pt.  
State Recreation Area

Airport Blvd.

Brisbane Marina/Sierra Pt.

Oyster Pt. Marina

San Bruno Pt. Park

Bayfront Park

Bayside Park

Anza Lagoon

Burlingame Lagoon

Coyote Pt. Park

Harbor View Park

Seal Pt. Park

San Mateo  
Bridge

SAN FRANCISCO and  
NORTHERN PENINSULA



# San Francisco and Northern Peninsula

**S**URROUNDED BY WATER on three sides, San Francisco has a wealth of accessible shoreline attractions. You can easily spend days exploring the most famous spots—the Ferry Building, Fisherman’s Wharf, Alcatraz, Fort Point, the Golden Gate Bridge. Yet there is much more to see and do along the city’s 29.5-mile shoreline, and along the bayshore just south of the city, on the northern San Francisco Peninsula. No matter what sort of activity you’re interested in—shops and restaurants, scenic views and wildlife sightings, a rigorous workout on a long stretch of trail, information on local cultural and natural history, a fishing or boating excursion—you are likely to find it here.

COURTESY PIER 39



*Crowds gather to watch the sea lions at Pier 39.*



NPS PHOTO BY RICHARD FREAR

*Ocean Beach, on San Francisco's western shore*



## *San Francisco Coast*

**SAN FRANCISCO'S OCEAN SHORELINE**, from the headlands just west of the Golden Gate Bridge to Land's End and along the coast to Daly City, is mostly parkland and beaches. Here you can explore old military installations, take in views of the Golden Gate and its bridge from Baker Beach and the rocky cliffs of Land's End, stop at the Cliff House to see the Camera Obscura (a giant optical device), visit the western edge of Golden Gate Park, view the 1930s murals inside the Beach Chalet, roll along Ocean Beach, and watch hang gliders soar above the dunes and surf at Fort Funston.

### *Baker Beach*

**OFF BOWLEY STREET IN THE PRESIDIO**

**A**T THE NORTHERN TIP of the San Francisco Presidio, Baker Beach offers spectacular views from outside the Golden Gate. An accessible bench sits in the northwest corner of the oceanfront

*Presidio visitor center:*

**415/561-4323; [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)**

🕒 **April–Oct., 6 am–10 pm;  
Oct.–April, 6 am–7 pm**

parking lot, and nearby, behind the restroom, a short path leads to a grassy area where picnic tables are set on pavement and dirt among cypress trees. Battery Chamberlin, near the north end of the northern parking lot, is an artillery installation the U.S. Army maintained and frequently remodeled from the late 1800s through World War II. It still has a six-inch “disappearing gun” from the early 1900s, designed to pop up from behind a parapet to fire, then drop down again. The gun is revealed every weekend, weather permitting, and on the first full weekend of each month, from 11 am to 3 pm, park rangers demonstrate how it works. The approach from the parking lot is level but three steps prevent close access to the installation. Groups can reserve a campsite within the Battery Chamberlin compound that has an accessible restroom, fire ring, and grill.

- ▶ **GETTING THERE** From Lincoln Blvd., take Bowley St. to the beach.
- ▶ **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space with no access aisle is to your right as you enter the parking lot, and two face the ocean at the lot’s northern end. Two more are near the restroom. The restroom is accessible, except for lack of turnaround space in the sink area.

## *China Beach*

### END OF SEACLIFF AVENUE

**T**HIS BEACH, below one of the city’s most elegant neighborhoods and looking out on the Golden Gate, was a campsite for Chinese fishermen during the Gold Rush. Now surfers come here to catch the waves that break off a rocky point to the west. A steep, paved service road leads from the parking lot right down to the beach. I navigated the slope easily in my power wheelchair; manual wheelchair riders will likely need assistance.

- ▶ **GETTING THERE** From Baker Beach turn right on Lincoln Blvd., which turns into El Camino del Mar, right on 27th Ave., and left on Seacliff Avenue.
- ▶ **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are in the lot. The restroom building down at the beach has wide stalls and the approach to the roll-under sinks requires a tight 90-degree turn. There are no grab bars, and most wheelchair users will want help opening the stall door.

## *Eagles Point*

### ALONG EL CAMINO DEL MAR

**N**EAR THE California Palace of the Legion of Honor art museum in Lincoln Park, a ramped overlook perched atop Eagles Point offers great views of the Marin Headlands, Golden Gate Bridge, Farallon Islands (on a clear day), and even Point Reyes more than 20 miles to the north. The handsome old homes of the Seacliff neighborhood are to your right as you gaze at the water. A hard-packed dirt trail leads from El Camino Del Mar to the overlook.

► **PARKING** Parking is on-street and limited.

## *Fort Miley and Point Lobos Overlook*

**W**EST OF Eagles Point, near Land's End, more great views can be relished from the parking area at Fort Miley, formerly the site of an Army defense battery and now home to the Veterans Administration Medical Center. A piece of the bridge of the Navy's heavy cruiser *USS San Francisco* has been installed here as a memorial to those who fought and died on the ship in the World War II battle of Guadalcanal. For a short but pleasant stroll through the woods, take the El Camino Del Mar Trail toward the Palace of the Legion of Honor. It won't take you all the way to the museum, though: it's paved for several hundred yards, then dirt, and soon is impassable.



USHA MOSS

*The ruins of Sutro Baths,  
from Point Lobos Overlook*

Point Lobos Overlook, just below Fort Miley and uphill from the Cliff House, offers another spectacular vista, as well as a view of what's left of the Sutro Baths below. Splashed with surf at high tide, the concrete slabs and stairs are all that remain of a grand glass-enclosed bathhouse, with fresh and saltwater pools, which stood here from 1890 to 1966, when it burned down. Adolph Sutro, mining magnate and mayor of San Francisco from 1895 to 1897, built the baths for the public. Try to visit the site of his home and gardens, now Sutro Heights Park, just across Point Lobos Avenue, atop a bluff.

► **GETTING THERE** From Baker Beach, turn right on Lincoln Blvd., which becomes 25th Avenue. Go right on Geary Blvd., which becomes Point Lobos Ave. at 39th Avenue. Then go right again on El Camino del Mar for a short drive into Fort Miley. From Eagles Point, take El Camino del Mar through the golf course, turn left on Legion of Honor Dr. and right on Geary. To get to Point Lobos Overlook, return to Point Lobos Ave., take an immediate next right onto Merrie Way, then park in the parking area above Louis' Restaurant.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are in front of the *USS San Francisco* memorial and two are in the Point Lobos Overlook lot. One accessible portable restroom is in the Fort Miley parking area.

## *Sutro Heights Park*

**A**CROSS THE STREET from the Point Lobos Overlook, wide and level decomposed-granite paths lead through the formally landscaped 18-acre park that used to be the grounds of Adolph Sutro's mansion. From a stone parapet you can look down the full length of Ocean Beach. One of the city's major surfing spots is below you. Interpretive panels will help you imagine the place as it was in Sutro's day.

► **PARKING** Park on 48th Ave. south of Point Lobos Ave. and roll down the moderately steep sidewalk on Point Lobos for about 100 feet to the two stone lions marking the entrance. The last 25 feet or so are dirt and may be challenging for manual wheelchair users.



*Sutro Heights Park*

## Cliff House

GREAT HIGHWAY JUST NORTH OF OCEAN BEACH

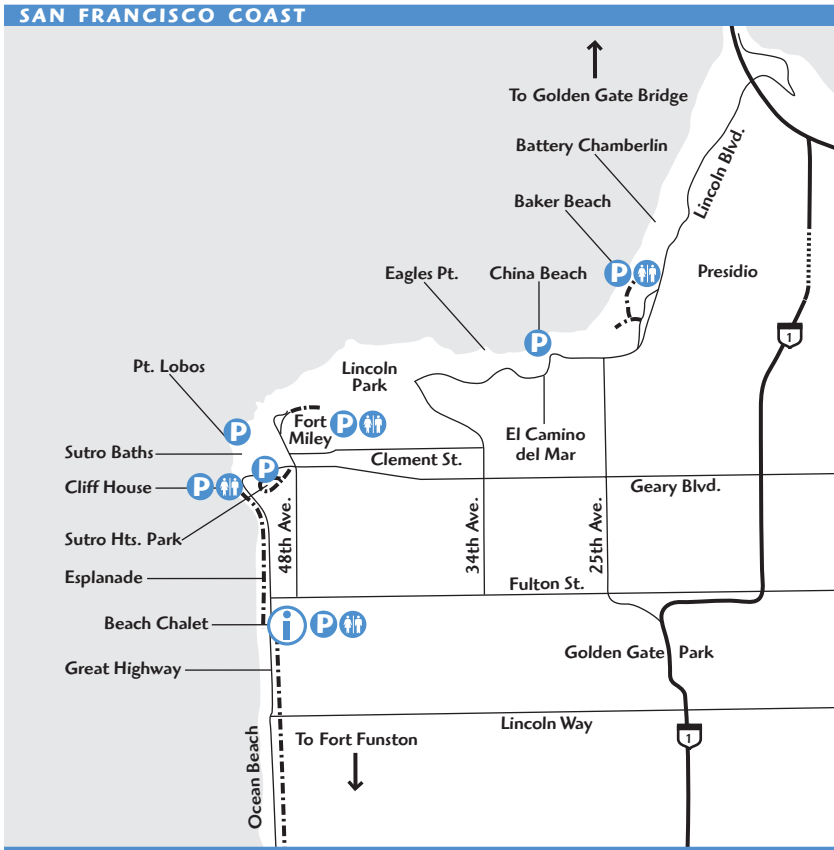
**B**ELOW SUTRO HEIGHTS PARK and Point Lobos Overlook, the Cliff House has an accessible street-level entrance leading to restaurants and a gift shop. A ramp to the right of the entrance leads to the small north observation deck, which overlooks the Sutro Baths ruins. Inside the building, take the elevator down to the ground level to get to the Cliff Terrace, with views of the Baths, the headlands to the north, Seal Rocks to the west, and Ocean Beach to the south.

Here on the terrace, check out the Camera Obscura (if it's open). This human-sized optical device was a marvel in its day and is still fascinating. It has a mirror that rotates 360 degrees every six minutes, capturing live images of the scenes outside—including Seal Rocks and Ocean Beach—

**415/386-3330;**  
[www.cliffhouse.com](http://www.cliffhouse.com)

🕒 **Cliff House:** 9 am–9:30 pm, call for restaurant hours  
**Camera Obscura:** usually 11 am–7:30 pm, closed during rain and heavy fog

**FEES** **Camera Obscura:** \$3;  
\$2 seniors and children under 13



and projecting them, magnified 12 times, on a parabolic table inside. Hordes of California sea lions used to hang out on Seal Rocks, but shortly after the 1989 earthquake most of them moved to Pier 39 on Fisherman's Wharf, where they remain a popular attraction. No one knows why they left, but some speculate that they were pursuing an unusually large herring run in the bay.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Six blue spaces are along the Great Highway (called Point Lobos Ave. north of the Cliff House). Only the two in front of the Cliff House are level. The Cliff House restrooms, indoors on the street level, are accessible.



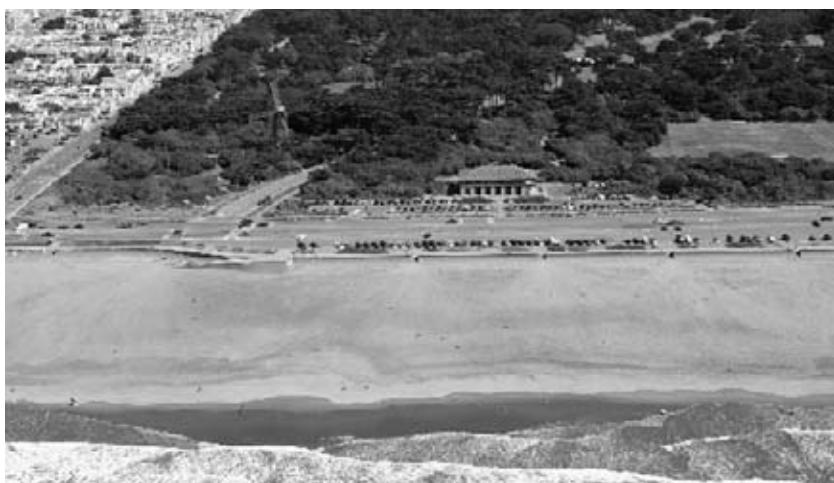
## Ocean Beach

### GREAT HIGHWAY AT THE WEST END OF GOLDEN GATE PARK

**S**AN FRANCISCO'S MAIN BEACH is four miles long and well worth visiting even though it offers a wheelchair rider only visual access, and even that is limited. A seawall blocks your view from the Esplanade, the wide walkway running along the ocean side of the Great Highway from the Cliff House to Golden Gate Park. But you do see the beach and ocean through the many breaks in the wall where stairs lead to the sand. The ocean can be wild with huge breakers, and often the riptides are so powerful that even wading is prohibited. Experienced surfers, nonetheless, are in these waves nearly every day.

Take the Esplanade to Golden Gate Park and cross the Great Highway at its intersection with John F. Kennedy Drive. Here you can stop at the Beach Chalet Restaurant and Brewery to view the frescoes that Works Progress Administration artists painted in the 1930s on the ground floor walls, in what is now the Golden Gate Park visitor center.

Golden Gate Park is a day's trip—or more—all by itself. If you decide to visit, you may want to just cruise around on the myriad level and paved trails and sidewalks that wind through the park's 1,000 acres; on Sundays some roads are closed to autos. Three lakes and the San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum, the Conservatory of Flowers (known to many as the Glass Palace), and the new, copper-sheathed DeYoung Museum, are all



© WWW.CALIFORNIACOASTLINE.ORG

*Ocean Beach, the Beach Chalet, and the western end of Golden Gate Park*

accessible. The Japanese Tea Garden has limited access, and the California Academy of Sciences is expected to return in 2008, when its new building is scheduled to open. Its temporary quarters are downtown, on Howard Street. To orient yourself for a day of exploring Golden Gate Park, you might stop at the visitor center in the Beach Chalet, where you will find various exhibits.

Resume your oceanside trip via a paved multiuse trail that runs for more than two miles along the east side of the Great Highway from the Beach Chalet south to Sloat Boulevard. Jogging paths flank the trail's center. At Noriega, Pacheco, and Rivera Streets, you can cross the Great Highway to a wide, paved walkway that runs along the ocean side, below street level, between Noriega and Santiago. The Noriega entrance is not recommended—it's steep and requires you to travel in a bike lane along the Great Highway a short distance before reaching the entry—and there is no wheelchair access to the walkway at Santiago. The crossings at Pacheco and Rivera streets are good, with signal lights, crosswalks, and ramps leading to the walkway. Grasses help screen out the noise of highway traffic. The walkway's seaward wall blocks a wheelchair rider's views of the beach, but those in higher wheelchairs can catch glimpses of the ocean and Marin Headlands to the north—except, of course, when it's foggy. Drifting sand may block either end of this walkway.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Four blue spaces are at the Beach Chalet and several are along Sloat Blvd. across from the San Francisco Zoo at the south end of Ocean Beach. The restroom at Sloat is generally well maintained, but avoid the one at Judah Street. Good accessible restrooms are at the Golden Gate Park visitor center in the Beach Chalet.

## *Fort Funston*

OFF SKYLINE BOULEVARD SOUTH OF OCEAN BEACH

**A**T FORT FUNSTON, OCEAN BEACH becomes Phillip Burton Memorial Beach. This former military site, now part

of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is a wonderful spot to watch hang gliders leap off the ocean bluff. You will meet many dogs here. Enter from Skyline Blvd. and proceed to a large parking lot. Four picnic tables

🕒 Dawn to dusk

*Fort Funston*

afford ocean views. Nearby, a boardwalk leads across sand to a clifftop viewing deck next to the hang gliders' take-off point. On a clear day you can see far down the long beach; when it's foggy you may feel you're sitting at the edge of an abyss.

From the parking lot, the paved Sunset Trail, a one-mile loop, runs through the dunes and along the top of the bluff. You may find that sand has blown across the path—up to two inches deep in places—but the hard surface below makes wheelchair passage possible. It's easiest to travel the inland part of the loop first because it slopes more steeply, and to return along the gentle grade atop the bluff.

This trail passes through the concrete shell of Battery Davis, a gunnery built in 1939 for coastal defense. From the northern side of the battery you get a panorama of the city, with Lake Merced inland and downhill, Ocean Beach to the north, and the Marin Headlands beyond the Golden Gate. This spot begs for binoculars. A picnic table is beside the trail here.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Four blue spaces are at the ocean end of the parking lot. A portable restroom is next to the blue spaces. The unit is on a concrete pad with a three-inch threshold. A new accessible restroom is planned for the near future.



## *Bayside San Francisco: Northern Waterfront and Alcatraz*

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A TRIP ALONG SAN FRANCISCO'S bayside from China Basin south of the Bay Bridge to the crashing surf at Fort Point, beneath the Golden Gate Bridge, takes you past the Ferry Building, Pier 39, Fisherman's Wharf, Aquatic Park, Fort Mason, and Crissy Field. Don't even try to travel this entire seven-mile stretch of Bay Trail all at once; if you do, you'll miss too much. A ferry excursion from Pier 41 to Alcatraz Island is a day trip in itself. But if you want to take a long ride with amazing views, follow the Bay Trail from Lower Fort Mason to Fort Point.

### *China Basin to Pier 39*

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**O**N ANY SUNNY DAY, scores of walkers, joggers, rollerbladers, and skateboarders are likely to be streaming along Herb Caen Way, the wide three-mile bayside promenade running along the Embarcadero from South Beach Harbor to Fisherman's Wharf.

Before you hit this pavement at any junction, however, consider starting out at China Basin Park, situated in what was once the docking area for Asian



*San Francisco Giants' ballpark*

SAN FRANCISCO CONVENTION AND  
VISITORS BUREAU PHOTO BY BOB ECKER

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*Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors: 415/281-0212; [www.baads.org](http://www.baads.org)*

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trade ships. Here you get a southern view of the Giants' ballpark (most recently named AT&T Park) and the ferry terminal across McCovey Cove, where hundreds of game-goers arrive from across the bay. Concrete benches—engraved with dedications as well as the names and statistics of Giants players since 1958, when the team moved to San Francisco—wind along a wide paved path toward McCovey Point and the towering statue of Willie McCovey, a

Hall of Fame inductee. If children are with you, bring a ball and bat to enjoy the Barry Bonds Jr. Giants Field, a small softball field located next to Pier 48.

From McCovey Point, head for the stadium by crossing the mouth of Mission Creek on Lefty O'Doul Bridge, the Third Street drawbridge. A free viewing area, where you can take in both the baseball game and the views, lines the stadium archway and public promenade on the northern shore of McCovey Cove, near the ferry landing. Inside the ballpark, below the giant Coca-Cola bottle, a small accessible play area is open free of charge Thursday to Sunday, 11 am–5 pm, except for game days.

From there you travel along the bay side of the stadium and continue north past South Beach Harbor, where the Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors (BAADS) docks at Pier 40. BAADS offers free sailing lessons by reservation. South Beach Park, next to the harbor, has a 70-foot kinetic sculpture by Mark di Suvero as its centerpiece, a stepped seating area overlooking the bay, and a fenced children's play area with picnic tables. Here King Street



*Ferry Building*

ARON KOHR, COURTESY FERRY BUILDING

turns into the Embarcadero, San Francisco's wide waterfront thoroughfare, with traffic breezing by. Along the wide bayside sidewalk are black-and-white-striped posts with text and photos related to the waterfront's history. As you pass under the Bay Bridge, the Ferry Building's clock tower comes into view, as does a giant red bow-and-arrow sculpture, "Cupid's Span" by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. The sculpture, in Rincon Park, is surrounded by native grasses. Seating walls adorned with bronze sea creatures are along the trail.

The recently restored Ferry Building features Bay Area foods and those who grow and prepare them, mostly on a small scale. At tables inside the building or on benches outside, facing the water, you can enjoy a great Japanese, Mexican, or French meal, oysters from Tomales Bay, or organic coffee with organic milk from Marin County. You can order salads, sandwiches, and soups to go and buy fruit, vegetables, or organic meat to take home from vendors inside and, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, at the outdoor farmers market. Behind the Ferry Building, past the statue of Mahatma Gandhi, commuter ferries dock, linking the city's downtown with Sausalito, Tiburon, Vallejo, Larkspur, and Oakland/Alameda. (The ferry for Alcatraz leaves from Pier 41, past Pier 39.) At Pier 1, north of the Ferry Building, is the port office, where you will find a display on the port's history.

As you continue north, stop at Pier 7, a beautiful 840-foot-long, wood-decked recreational and fishing pier. From there it's .75 mile, past a couple of waterfront restaurants, to the Aquarium of the Bay and the adjacent Pier 39, a multilevel complex of shops and restaurants arranged around a merry-go-round and performance area. Don't miss the sea lions lounging on floating docks on the north side of Pier 39. If you don't feel like wheeling from the Ferry Building, you can take a historic streetcar along Muni's F line to Fisherman's Wharf, with accessible stops along the way.

► **GETTING THERE** Muni's N line (originating at Ocean Beach) runs from Market St. along the Embarcadero, past the Giants' stadium, to the CalTrain station, with accessible stops along the way. To reach China Basin Park, take Third St. south across Lefty O'Doul bridge, go one block, turn left on Terry A. Francois and follow it to the park. On game days, take Third St. to Mission Rock and turn left (for local traffic only) to the parking lot by Pier 48.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are in the lot by China Basin Park, and two are near the BAADS dock north of South Beach Harbor. Metered street parking is along the Embarcadero. The China Basin ferry terminal near the ballpark has an accessible public restroom and phone. Accessible restrooms are at both ends of the Ferry Building. Accessible pay toilets are on the Embarcadero at Harrison St., at the south end of Justin Herman Plaza across from the Ferry Building, and just south of Broadway.

## Alcatraz

BY FERRY FROM PIER 41

**A**LCATRAZ ISLAND IS FAMOUSLY known as “The Rock,” the prison where criminals Al Capone, “Machine Gun” Kelly, and Robert Stroud, the “Bird Man of Alcatraz,” were confined. Far less familiar is the fact that the island was the site of the first U.S. fort on the West Coast, and from 1969 to 1971 was occupied by Native Americans under the name of Indians of All Tribes. Today Alcatraz is a popular tourist attraction and home to one of California’s largest breeding colonies of western gulls. On a clear day, views of San Francisco are breathtaking.

Loading on and off the ferry at Pier 41 can be challenging, depending on the tide, the particular boat, and the type of wheelchair. Most power wheelchair users should have no difficulty with the steep ramps leading down to the ferry boats. Be aware that for some of the boats the gangplank is steep no matter how high the tide is and problematic for scooters or chairs with anti-tip devices. If you wish, however, the ferry crew will assist you and let you embark and disembark first.

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**415/561-4900;**  
evening tours: **415/561-4926**

**FERRIES:** Depart Pier 41 every 30 to 45 minutes, 9:30 am–4:15 pm, in summer. Depart island every 30 to 45 minutes, 9:50 am–6:30 pm, in summer.

Call **415/705-5555** or visit [www.blueandgoldfleet.com](http://www.blueandgoldfleet.com) for off-season schedule.

**RESERVATIONS** Strongly recommended in summer; call at least one week ahead: **415/705-5555;** [www.blueandgoldfleet.com](http://www.blueandgoldfleet.com) Groups of 15 or more: **415/705-8214**

**FEES** Ferry and entrance to park: adults, \$11.50 (\$16.50 with audio); children 5–11, \$8.25 (\$10.75 with audio); seniors 62 and up, \$9.75 (\$14.75 with audio)

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*Alcatraz from Pier 39*

When you first arrive on the island, a docent will explain certain rules, and then you are free to explore. You might start by watching the film at the visitor center to get a historical overview.

Because of its steep terrain, much of the island is accessible only to birds and wildlife. The parade grounds and Agave Trail are open only from September through February to protect the western gulls and black-crowned night herons during their breeding seasons. A flat but short section of the Agave Trail leading from the dock to a stairway to the parade grounds is accessible except when it is wet and muddy. The parade grounds are also accessible and can be reached via the trail leading off from the second switchback on the road up to the cellhouse.

For most visitors the cellhouse is the island's main attraction. Because the approximately .25-mile road leading to it is very steep and bumpy, I recommend that you take the free electric SEAT (sustainable easy-access transport) tram, which can hold two people in wheelchairs or one scooter at a time, as well as numerous seated passengers. Look for a small sign directly across from the dock. The tram meets every other ferry and is first-come first-served; reservations are not accepted.

Except for the hospital section and recreation yard, the cellhouse is mostly accessible. An audio tour, available for purchase inside the entrance to your right, is narrated by an ex-inmate. His chilling account of life on the island set the mood for my overall experience.

Outdoor tours are accessible and are offered throughout the day by National Park Service rangers and volunteers. Different tours cover topics such as military history, infamous inmates, escapes, natural history, and the



Native American occupation. Look for program titles and locations posted on the dock and in the cellhouse. You might also consider a visit to the cellhouse basement, where inmates were first brought in and given showers and uniforms. To reach the basement, skip the last switchback to the cellhouse and instead follow the road to the right, toward the water tower.

There are a few picnic tables where the Agave Trail heads off left from the dock. No food is allowed on the island past the dock.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Metered street parking near Pier 41 is plentiful, and all nearby public parking lots have blue spaces. Because the ferry restrooms are marginally accessible (they only have grab bars and wide doors), it's best to use the accessible restrooms behind the Blue and Gold ticket office at Pier 41. On the island, both the dock and cellhouse restrooms have good access.

## *Fisherman's Wharf*

**T**HIS MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTION,

with its street performers, steaming crab pots, and souvenir shops, is a lot of fun even if you're a local. The crowds can be dense, and along Jefferson St. you may need to weave your way through people, tables, chairs, and merchant displays on sidewalks. Access improvements, including new curb cuts and sidewalk repairs,

are planned. Look for panels that relate bits of local history in words and images. Pier 45, at the end of Taylor Street, houses the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society exhibit, "Amusing America," as well as the Musée

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**415/346-2000**

📍 *"Amusing America" exhibit  
and Musée Mécanique:*  
Mon.–Fri., 10 am–7 pm;  
Sat.–Sun. and holidays,  
10 am–8 pm

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Mécanique, a working collection of 170 antique coin-operated mechanical musical instruments and game machines. Neither museum charges admission.



SAN FRANCISCO CONVENTION AND VISITORS  
BUREAU PHOTO BY JACK HOLLINGSWORTH

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** There are numerous fee parking lots, all of which have blue zones. An accessible unisex pay toilet is at Jefferson and Powell, and accessible men's and women's restrooms are in the octagonal building on Taylor just before Pier 45.

## *Aquatic Park*

**T**AKING JEFFERSON ST. west from Fisherman's Wharf brings you to the open spaces of Aquatic Park and its small beach. As you look out over the bay, you'll see antique boats moored at the Hyde Street Pier to your right. These are part of the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, as are the nearby Maritime Museum and bookstore. The visitor center in the Argonaut Hotel building, at the intersection of Jefferson and Hyde Streets, displays a Fresnel lens once used at the lighthouse on one of the Farallon Islands, 30 miles outside the Golden Gate.

The first deck of the 1890 steam ferryboat *Eureka* and the main deck of the 1886 clipper ship *Balclutha* are wheelchair accessible, as is the Maritime Museum's first floor. Computer kiosks on the *Eureka*'s deck and in the visitor center and museum provide a virtual tour of inaccessible places in the park.

Several ramped walkways lead up the slope through Aquatic Park to Ghirardelli Square, with its shops and restaurants, and to the Maritime Museum on Beach Street. The westernmost walkway has the most gradual slope. There are accessible entrances to Ghirardelli Square on Beach Street and on Larkin Street, which is up a very steep hill between Beach and North Point Streets. Ramps and elevators allow you to navigate the interior.

From Aquatic Park, a level concrete walkway leads to the 40-foot-wide, curved Municipal Fishing Pier. Two concrete curbs eight feet from each edge run the length of the pier and divide it into three lanes, one wide and two narrow. Because people tie their fishing lines to the curbs, it's best to use the center lane for traveling to the end of the pier. There you will find the single opening in the curbs that allows a wheelchair to move from the center section to the edge. The pier has solid concrete walls rather than railings, which prevent downward views and are too high for fishing from a wheelchair. The Van Ness Pier to the west was still closed in early 2006 due to damage from the 1989 earthquake.

The 3.5-mile Golden Gate Promenade, part of the Bay Trail, begins at the foot of the Municipal Pier and leads through Fort Mason, the Marina Green, and Crissy Field to Fort Point. It's very steep at the outset, however, so I recommend picking it up west of Fort Mason.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** There are two blue spaces on Jefferson St. opposite the Hyde St. Pier, five above Aquatic Park on Beach St. at the entrance to the Maritime Museum, and two at the foot of Van Ness Ave. across from the roundhouse building. The accessible roundhouse restroom building at the end of Jefferson St. has a tight 90-degree turn at the entrance. Only the women's restroom in the roundhouse at the foot of Van Ness Ave. is accessible. At Van Ness Ave. the men's restroom has a level entry but no other access features. Accessible restrooms are in the Maritime Museum and the visitor center, and on Hyde Street Pier.

*Maritime visitor center:*

**415/447-5000**

*Museum:* **415/561-7100**

🕒 *Museum:* 10 am–5 pm;  
closed major holidays

*Maritime visitor center:*

Oct. 17–Memorial Day,  
9:30 am–5 pm;

Memorial Day–Oct. 16,  
9:30 am–7 pm

*Hyde St. Pier:*

Oct. 17–Memorial Day,  
9:30 am–4:30 pm (last entry);

Memorial Day–Oct. 16,  
9:30 am–5 pm (last entry);

closed major holidays

**FEES** *Hyde Street Pier ships:*

Disabled and assistants free,  
adults (over 17), \$5

Museum and visitor center  
are free

**NOTE** Golden Access Passports—free, lifetime passes to National Park sites for people with disabilities—are available at the Hyde Street Pier ticket booth.

SAN FRANCISCO CONVENTION AND  
VISITORS BUREAU PHOTO BY TRISH FOXWELL



*Aquatic Park*

## Fort Mason

**F**ROM THE MUNICIPAL PIER, it's best to approach Fort Mason in a car or wheelchair by taking Van Ness Avenue uphill to Bay Street, where you turn right. At Franklin Street, turn right into the main entrance.

Fort Mason has been converted from an Army base to a unique cultural complex within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). It has two parts, upper and lower Fort Mason. In the upper part, on a blufftop, you can stroll through the Great Meadow and visit a community garden, the Fisherman's Wharf Hostel (Building 240), and GGNRA headquarters (Building 201), where you can pick up maps and brochures. Some of the other old military buildings are now used by community groups. In the Great Meadow stands a statue of Congressman Phillip Burton, whose visionary bill led Congress to create the GGNRA in 1972.

Lower Fort Mason, on the waterfront, is home to the Fort Mason Center. The piers and buildings house a thriving cultural and educational complex with theaters, galleries, studios, a gourmet vegetarian restaurant, classrooms,

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**415/345-3400;**

[www.fortmason.org](http://www.fortmason.org)

*J. Porter Shaw Library:*

**415/561-7080, 415/561-7030;**

[www.nps.gov/safr/local/lib/libtop.html](http://www.nps.gov/safr/local/lib/libtop.html)

📍 *GGNRA Headquarters:*

Mon.–Fri., 9 am–5 pm

*Fort Mason Center:* 8 am–11 pm

*J. Porter Shaw Library:*

Tue., 1–8 pm; Wed.–Fri.,

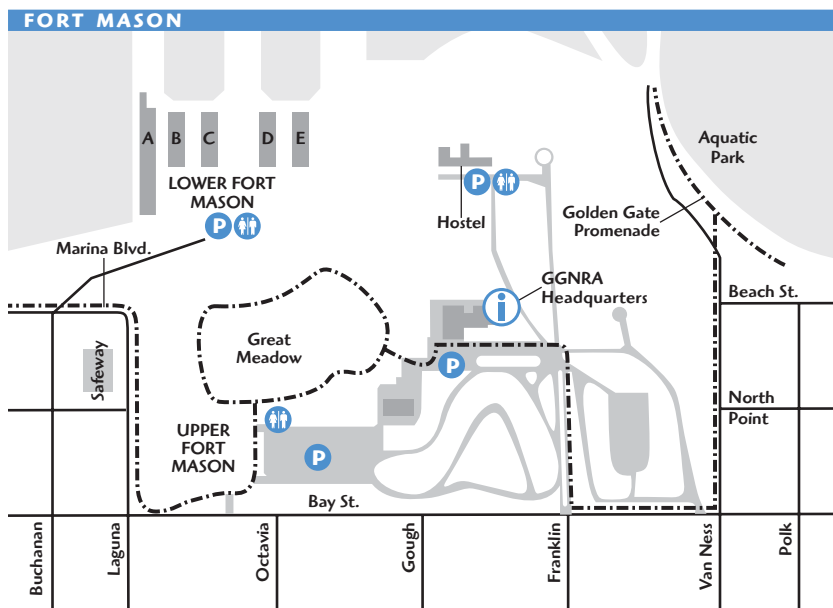
1–5 pm; Sat., 10 am–5 pm

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BILL PROCHNOW,  
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVANCY

*Statue of Congressman  
Phillip Burton at Fort Mason*





and exhibition spaces. More than 40 nonprofit organizations have quarters here. On the third floor of Building E, the easternmost warehouse, is the J. Porter Shaw Library of the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, a historical document collection open to the public.

To get from upper to lower Fort Mason, take the path leading south from the Great Meadow to the intersection of Octavia and Bay Sts. Turn right on Bay, then right on Laguna, which meets with Marina at the pedestrian entrance. The vehicle entrance is at Buchanan Street, across from Safeway.

► **PARKING** Upper Fort Mason: From Franklin St., turn left on MacArthur Avenue. The second and larger lot at the end of MacArthur has an accessible entrance to the Great Meadow. Lower Fort Mason: Fort Mason Center's parking areas are just past the entry. Several blue spaces are scattered throughout, including two by the GGNRA building. Beginning in May 2006, you will be charged a fee to park in the Fort Mason Center lots.

► **RESTROOMS** In upper Fort Mason, the accessible restrooms are on the south side of the Great Meadow, near the parking lot at the end of MacArthur Ave. Lower Fort Mason has accessible restrooms in Buildings B, C, and D, as well as in the exhibition halls.

## *Fisherman's Wharf Hostel*

**D**ESPITE ITS NAME, THIS HOSTEL—formerly known as San Francisco International Hostel—is not on Fisherman's Wharf, it's in upper Fort Mason near the bluffs, in a building that was constructed in the 1860s. Operated by Hosteling International, it's a great place to meet travelers. The upper floor is fully accessible and has great bay views. It has a kitchen with a roll-under sink and stove, private bathroom with roll-in

shower, living room, two bedrooms that can sleep up to three people, and a dormitory where some of the lower beds are accessible. You get to the upper floor via a wooden ramp at the south entrance.

The basement-level kitchen and dining room are inaccessible, but wheelchair riders can arrange to use the refrigerator and sink in the café on this floor. The café serves complimentary breakfast and reasonably priced dinner, and offers live music and entertainment. To reach the hostel, take the road to the left of the chapel to Building 240.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is in front of the hostel. The communal restrooms have roll-in showers, large stalls with grab bars, and roll-under sinks. Plastic shower benches are available.

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**415/771-7277;**

[www.norcalhostels.org](http://www.norcalhostels.org)

🕒 Open 24 hours

**RESERVATIONS 415/771-7277,**

**800/909-4776;**

[www.SFHostels.com](http://www.SFHostels.com)

**FEES** Vary seasonally.

Dorm bed, \$15–30 adults;  
children under 12, \$15–30;  
private rooms, \$65–85

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## *Marina Green and the Wave Organ*

MARINA BOULEVARD BETWEEN FORT MASON AND CRISSY FIELD

**A**S THE GOLDEN GATE PROMENADE travels from Fort Mason Center westward along the shore, parallel to Beach Street and Marina Boulevard, you pass rows of yachts moored in the San Francisco Marina Yacht Harbor (East Harbor) and soon come to the large, flat lawn known as the Marina Green. It's especially popular on weekends for kite flying, picnicking, basking in the sun, or just sitting and enjoying the view.

At the harbormaster's office on the west end of the Green, the Promenade turns left, then right, following the contours of West Harbor along Marina Boulevard, then right again where Baker Street ends at Marina Boulevard. An accessible boardwalk here offers the opportunity to get to a sandy beach where you can observe the ebb and flow of the tides. At the parking lot for the St. Francis Yacht Club you can veer left across the lot and continue on the Promenade to Crissy Field. A right turn at the parking lot will take you past a small lighthouse and the Golden Gate Yacht Club, onto the jetty to visit the Wave Organ, a unique treat.

The jetty path is rough but manageable. The Wave Organ is a stone "sound sculpture" built with chunks of old monuments and buildings from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. If you are with ambulatory friends, at high tide they can take the steps down to the organ to hear the gurgling tones of the pipes. But the sound is not as interesting as the place itself. I sat on the jetty shrouded in fog, my view across the water obscured except for glimpses of Alcatraz Island across the water, and had a wonderfully eerie sensation of being at sea.

► **PARKING** Blue spaces are scattered throughout the parking lot at the eastern end of the Marina Green, and three are in the parking lot near the harbormaster's office at the western end. To be close to the jetty, from Marina Blvd. heading west from Fort Mason, turn right on Yacht Road. One blue space is on your right soon after you turn in, four are near the St. Francis Yacht Club, and four more are near the lighthouse.

► **RESTROOMS** An accessible restroom is at the Green's eastern edge, but the curb cut from the parking lot is steep. An accessible portable restroom is near the parking lot for the harbormaster's office. An accessible restroom building is on the right side of Yacht Rd. shortly after making the turn from Marina Boulevard.

## *Crissy Field*

 **NCE AN ARMY AIRFIELD** built on a filled tidal marsh, Crissy Field has been transformed into a shoreline park with a newly created tidal marsh and spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and the bay. With 100 acres of bayside open space, this park is a delight for strollers, jog-

gers, windsurfers, bicyclists, dog walkers, and people looking for native plants, birds, and even seals or sea lions. You can mosey along the Golden Gate Promenade, picnic, check out the marsh and dune scrub, sunbathe at the beach, or take a class at the Crissy Field Center.

In my exploration, I followed the Golden Gate Promenade along the shore and took some of the smaller trails, making a loop that easily covered three miles. All the trails are level decomposed granite or pavement. Numerous interpretive panels tell about the area's history and ecology. One, for example, points out that traces of a native Yelamu shell mound were found during the 1990s excavation

of the landfill to create the new marsh. From the Promenade, a number of wooden boardwalks extend toward the beach, with benches and space for several wheelchairs alongside. These spots gave me the sense of being on the beach, without worrying about getting stuck in the sand. You can, however, borrow a balloon-tired beach wheelchair at the Crissy Field Center and go onto the beach.

From the west end of the East Beach parking lot, I followed a small trail that leads away from the bay and across the marsh on a wooden boardwalk. This protected wildlife area has easy-to-operate gates at both ends of the boardwalk, and conveniently placed signs identifying native plants. Continuing on the paved path at the other end of the boardwalk, I arrived at the Crissy Field Center, a large beige building on the corner of Mason and Halleck Streets. It houses a cafe, a bookstore, classrooms, and a second-floor observation deck. Using the lowered telescope on the deck, I could almost see the bolts that hold together the Golden Gate Bridge.

Near the entrance to the Crissy Field Center, across Halleck Street and under the highway overpass, you can catch PresidiGo, an accessible free shuttle bus that runs through the Presidio, making several stops (not all

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*Crissy Field hotline:*

**415/427-4779**

*Crissy Field Center:*

**415/561-7690**

*Farallones Marine Sanctuary*

*visitor center:* **415/561-6625**

*PresidiGo shuttle:* **415/561-5300**

📍 *Crissy Field Center and Café:*

Wed.–Sun., 9 am–5 pm

*Farallones Marine Sanctuary*

*visitor center:* Wed.–Sun.,

10 am–4 pm; Memorial Day to Labor Day, 10 am–5 pm

**RESERVATIONS** Groups of

50 or more must reserve

picnic areas: **415/561-4300**

Beach wheelchair:

**415/561-7752**

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*On the Golden Gate Promenade near the Warming Hut*

EILEEN ECKLUND

accessible). The bus has space for two people in wheelchairs.

From the Center, I followed the wide sidewalk that parallels Mason Street. Several paths diverge toward the bay and link to the Promenade. To avoid steps, don't take the path across from Stillwell Hall. Shortly after reconnecting to the Promenade, moving westward, you pass a set of buildings, the first of which is the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center. Follow the side-

walk to the main entrance, then wrap around the building to reach the ramp. If that entrance is locked, ring the buzzer (54 inches high). The amount of educational information stored in such a small space surprised me, and I especially enjoyed feeling the pelts of some of the marine mammals.

After the visitor center, you come to the West Bluffs picnic area, with several picnic tables and barbecue grills on concrete pads. The nearby Warming Hut is a small café and shop selling books, handcrafts, and educational items. Due west from the hut is an unmarked rectangular building where you will find a drinking fountain accessible to people and pets. Turn toward the bay and you can roll out onto Torpedo Wharf, built in 1907 and rebuilt for use during World War II. The trail from here to Fort Point is less appealing, as it becomes a sidewalk with a cross slope and then continues through a parking lot with no safe path of travel to the fort. Fortunately, cars tend to move slowly there.

► **PARKING** Among the several parking lots, the one near the East Beach entrance off Mason St., with eight blue spaces, has the best access. If you drive to the Crissy Field Center, two blue spaces are next to the center's ramp on Vallejo Street.

► **RESTROOMS** The accessible restrooms at the west end of the East Beach parking lot are near an outdoor shower. The Crissy Field Center restrooms

have good access but are only open during Center hours. The Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center restroom is accessible except that the doors have knobs rather than levers. Just west of the Warming Hut are two accessible restrooms.

## Fort Point

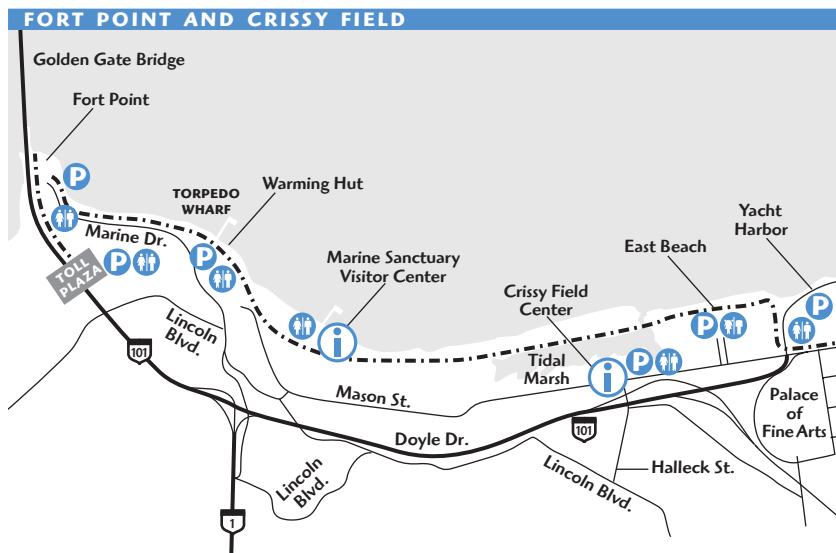
THROUGH THE PRESIDIO TO THE NORTHWEST END OF MARINE DRIVE

**S**TANDING ON A PROMONTORY near the base of the Golden Gate Bridge's south tower, this classic 19th-century fort was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1853 and 1861 to protect the harbor. It was abandoned five years later after newer rifled cannons made its muzzle-loading cannons obsolete.

You enter the fort on a short, rather steep concrete ramp. A docent is usually waiting nearby to answer questions, and a bulletin board lists the day's tours and activities. Constructed around a courtyard, the fort contains living quarters, a powder magazine, a kitchen, storerooms, and a lighthouse. In the courtyard, which is often extremely

**415/556-0505**

**P** Fri.–Sun., 10 am–5 pm,  
closed on major holidays  
*Fort Point video:* Fri.–Sun.  
on the hour, 11 am–4 pm  
*Golden Gate Bridge*  
*video:* on the half-hour,  
10:30 am–3:30 pm





*Fort Point and the Golden Gate Bridge*

windy, cannons and other military equipment are on display. If you look up, you will see the intricate rust-red ironwork on the underside of the Golden Gate Bridge. The sound of cars crossing high above you mingles with the howling wind and the surf crashing against the rocks below.

Only the ground floor rooms are accessible, and doorway openings are 28 to 30 inches wide. Each of the rooms has historical displays. Near the visitor center is a small auditorium where videos about the fort and construction of the Golden Gate Bridge are shown regularly. The video about the fort gives wheelchair users a virtual tour of the inaccessible upper floors.

From Fort Point you can survey the Golden Gate. Northwest are the Marin Headlands, protected within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, as is Fort Baker, visible just on the other side of the bridge. To the northeast are Alcatraz and Angel Islands and, across the bay, the town of Tiburon. As the tide rushes in through the Golden Gate, you may see seals, sea lions, and various birds bobbing in the water, looking toward the ocean for an incoming meal. This is also a favorite spot for skilled surfers and sailboarders. Late in the day, if you look southeast toward downtown San Francisco, you might find its white and pastel buildings aglow with reddening light from the setting sun. This is also an excellent spot from which to view the rising moon.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The parking lot near the fort's entrance has two blue spaces. Accessible restrooms are 100 yards south of the fort, near the hillside.



## *San Francisco Southern Bay Waterfront*

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**THE STRETCH OF WATERFRONT** from China Basin to Candlestick Point is in transition, with remnants of maritime industry yielding to new enterprises, housing developments, and parks. Short sections of the Bay Trail are in place. Driving south from the Embarcadero you may encounter road detours as you navigate this isolated part of the city.

### *Islais Creek*

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**ARTHUR STREET, NEAR THIRD STREET AND CARGO WAY**

**ISLAIS CREEK IS** one of the many streams that used to flow through the great salt marshes that once fringed the bay shoreline. Most of it is now buried under concrete, except for a stretch upstream, in Glen Canyon Park, and another at its outlet into the bay. It emerges from underground west of the Third Street drawbridge, at Arthur Street, and flows into a channeled tidal inlet. On the south bank, native chokecherries have been planted and interpretive panels erected, telling about transformations of the area as San Francisco grew. An accessible ramp leads down to a launching dock for kayaks and canoes, but the ramp's gate is usually locked. Looking across the creek, you may see skateboarders on a paved promenade, and you will definitely see an old crane, once used for unloading dried coconut, looming over the water. To explore more of the changing waterfront, drive next to Heron's Head Park.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-280 or I-101 at César Chávez Street. Take Chávez east to Third St., turn right, cross the Islais Creek bridge, and make an immediate right on Arthur Street, which ends at the park's parking area, at Quint St. Throughout 2006, construction may force closures of the Islais Creek bridge; an alternate route is to take Chávez to Evans Ave., then left on Quint to Arthur.

► **PARKING** Two blue spaces are on Arthur St. at Quint St., in front of the interpretive panels.

## *Heron's Head Park*

### END OF CARGO WAY

**Y**OU CAN'T TELL from the ground, but from the air or a map it's easy to see why this 25-acre landfill jetty was named Heron's Head when the Port of San Fran-

cisco created a park here—the resemblance is startling. The jetty, formerly known as Pier 98, was built in the 1970s to serve as a shipping terminal, then later proposed as the footing for a “southern crossing” bridge to the East Bay. That project was defeated by voters, and during subsequent years the “pier” became a popular fishing spot for people living nearby. The park was created in 1999, with a trail and a small salt marsh.

The park's entrance is beside a shipping container with shorebirds painted on it, which sits in the parking area at the end of Cargo Way. Enter through the gateway; it requires a 90-degree turn that most wheelchair riders can negotiate. A wide, decomposed-granite trail leads out to the tip of the jetty. To your right is the marsh. From the accessible picnic tables (with accessible grills) you will see the Pier 96 container terminal to the north and a power plant to the south. Fifty feet from the park entrance, a narrower trail

🕒 One hour before  
sunrise to one hour after sunset

branches off the main trail to the right and leads to PG&E's Hunters Point power plant. Cross a bridge and follow the plant's fence line to arrive at India Basin Shoreline Park. Sections of this trail are sandy, and rains can cause ruts and potholes, but I found the adjacent firm ground manageable in my power wheelchair. The waters around the plant attract birds, fish, and fishermen.

RASA GUSTATIS



*Heron's Head Park*

► **GETTING THERE** From Third St. take either Cargo Way or Evans Ave. east toward the bay. Cargo Way ends at the trailhead parking area. From Evans, turn left on Jennings to Cargo Way to reach the trailhead.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are at the trailhead entrance. An accessible portable restroom is across from the picnic grounds.

## *India Basin Shoreline Park*

OFF HUNTERS POINT BOULEVARD

**F**ROM THIS PARK, nestled into the hillside that overlooks India Basin, you can see Heron's Head Park, Pier 96, and Oakland across the bay. To the south is a small cove and remnants of a pier. Immediately north is the Hunters Point power plant. Signs along the paved paths mark the accessible route. This park was built with kids in mind. Colorful marine designs, such as an anchor and a whale fluke made of rubber, are inlaid in concrete around several benches, and play structures are set on an easily accessible rubberized surface. An accessible picnic area is uphill from the lower parking lot, and at the very top of the hill is a basketball court.

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🕒 Sunrise to sunset

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### **Getting There**

From Cargo Way, turn right onto Jennings, left onto Evans Ave., which becomes Hunters Point Blvd., and then left into the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The lower lot has one faded blue space. An accessible portable restroom is near the lower parking lot. (A permanent, accessible restroom is planned.)

## *Candlestick Point State Recreation Area*

HIGHWAY 101 MONSTER PARK EXIT

**W**HILE THE 49ERS' football stadium at Candlestick Point is notorious for blustery winds that chill the fans, the adjacent 252-acre state park is kinder to its visitors. You can wander along two miles of trails, work out on an exercise course, picnic, watch birds in the mud flats, and fish. San



DAVID SCHOLEY

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**415/671-0145**

 **8 am–7 pm**

**RESERVATIONS** Picnic areas:

**415/671-0145**

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Bruno Mountain dominates the view to the southwest, the AAA shipyard lies to the north, and the windsurfers zipping about keep pulling your attention to the waters of the bay. From the park entrance on Hunters Point Expressway, follow the road as it curves right and park in the first parking lot. From here several trails—paved, decomposed granite, and hard-packed dirt—lead to a decomposed-granite trail that follows the shoreline, and a wide, paved path leads to Sunrise Point. Picnic tables on concrete pads are plentiful.

En route to the fishing pier at Sunrise Point, next to the Plover picnic area, look for the metal drums sculpture that you can actually play, if following a dirt path and crossing a lawn are not too difficult for you. The approach to the Sunrise Point pier is steep, and broken asphalt makes for a bumpy ride. I needed some help from a friend to navigate it in my power wheelchair. From the restrooms at the main parking lot you can head south along the shoreline, past the Windsurf Circle—the cul-de-sac where windsurfers gather with their rigs—toward the Old Pier. Before you reach the pier, however, the trail becomes narrow and sandy. If you want to go out on the pier or fish from it (42-inch railings), it's best to drive to the pier entrance on Jamestown Avenue.

For a little side trip, drive to the Last Port parking lot on the park's southern end. From here, decomposed-granite trails, worn in places, lead to a multicolored paved section of the Bay Trail. The trail runs .25 mile south and ends at a concrete pad overlooking a salt marsh. The trail entrance at the east end of the lot has better access than the west end, where the path around the gate is uneven because of tree roots.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 South, take the Monster Park exit. Turn right on Alana Way, left onto Harney Way, and veer right at the stadium. You are now on Jamestown Ave., which becomes Hunters Point Expressway and leads to the main entrance. Consider that traffic will be heavy on football game Sundays.

► **PARKING** From the park's main entrance, turn right. One blue space is near the middle of the first lot and four are near the restroom in the main lot. Park on Jamestown Ave. to access the Old Pier. The Last Port lot on Harney Way is hard-packed gravel and has no striping.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible restrooms are at the Plover and Jackrabbit picnic areas, the Old Pier, and the end of the main parking lot—all in the main section of the park. The approach to the restroom serving the Jackrabbit site is sandy and may be problematic for manual chairs. Of the two restrooms at the Last Port picnic area, one is accessible with grab bars.



## *South San Francisco and Northern San Mateo County*

**SOUTH OF CANDLESTICK POINT**, marshes along the shoreline have been filled to create real estate for industrial and commercial uses. Today, with further fill outlawed, you will find parks, marinas, and fishing piers along this stretch of shore, along with some remnants of the natural landscape. You can travel about four miles from Sierra Point south to San Bruno Point on the smooth Bay Trail, visiting one little park after another. You can view airplanes landing and taking off at San Francisco International Airport from Bayfront Park, skirt Anza and Burlingame Lagoons, visit 670-acre Coyote Point Recreation Area and its outstanding nature museum, then take the Bay Trail another 2.5 miles south to the San Mateo Bridge.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL PROJECT



*Along the Bay Trail in Burlingame*



## *Brisbane Marina*

OFF HIGHWAY 101 ON SIERRA POINT PARKWAY

**I STARTED MY OUTING** at the immaculate and peaceful Brisbane Marina. San Bruno Mountain is the western backdrop, and the San Mateo Bridge spans the southern view. From the parcourse stations B and C in the south parking lot (on the right at the end of the main access road off Sierra Point Parkway) the paved Bay Trail runs parallel to the shoreline and then turns south alongside Shoreline Court. If you continue south past office buildings, you will come to a pedestrian bridge spanning an inlet next to several hotels. This bridge has a three-inch drop as you cross at its southern end. You'll pass another business complex before reaching Oyster Cove Marina, where the trail continues to Oyster Point Marina and Park.

You can also head north from parcourse stations B and C, taking the shoreline trail past a sloping grassy picnic area and a popular fishing pier, and then behind office buildings to end up near Highway 101.

In the Brisbane Marina's large north parking lot, on the left at the end of the main access road from Sierra Point Pkwy., I came across people racing miniature radio-controlled vehicles. With my power wheelchair I tried unsuccessfully to beat a miniature truck. The owner offered to reconfigure my electronics so I could go faster, but I declined.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The south lot has four blue spaces by the parcourse station, and the north lot has ten. Four blue public spaces are at the private yacht club, and two are at the Brisbane Marina office. Two restrooms, one on either side of the Brisbane Marina office, have good access, but no stall doors. The women's restroom has privacy curtains.

## *Oyster Point Marina and Park*

HIGHWAY 101 SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO EXIT

**I N THE LATE 1800S**, the Oyster Point area was a calm inlet where an oyster farm thrived. By the early 1900s, Bay Area residents began to worry that bay pollution was making shellfish unsafe to

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**650/952-0808**

**FEES** Boat launch: \$5

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eat, and the oyster industry collapsed. The inlet was subsequently filled in to create Oyster Point, where shipbuilding and pipe-manufacturing companies operated until 1983. Now only a few old piers hint at that history.

Tree-shaded lawns and vegetation line both sides of the Bay Trail as you approach Oyster Point Marina and Park from the west, passing the private Oyster Cove Marina. Between Oyster Point and the Oyster Point Marina, you'll need to take Oyster Point Boulevard a short distance to get around the small and inaccessible Oyster Point Beach.

The Oyster Point Marina's bait-and-tackle shop doubles as a mini-mart and deli, and has a deck with tables near the water. Due east of the shop and near the restrooms is an accessible picnic spot. More accessible waterside picnic tables are south of the restroom, just past the accessible fishing pier. From the pier you can continue south on the Bay Trail to San Bruno Point Park.

► **GETTING THERE** From the Highway 101 South San Francisco/Oyster Point Blvd. exit, take Oyster Point Blvd. east. Turn right on Marina Blvd. and drive to the end.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Several blue spaces adjoin the marina area. Another is on the north side of the pier, two are on the south side, and two are in the trailer lot, where you can park your trailer up to 72 hours. The restrooms east of the bait shop have partially accessible stalls with grab bars on both sides, a wide stall door, and a roll-under sink, but a low toilet, no room for lateral transfer, and a high paper dispenser. Similar restrooms are located by marina docks 5 and 6 and the northernmost trailer parking lot.

## *San Bruno Point Park*

**S**AN BRUNO POINT PARK, south of Oyster Point Marina and Park, is a popular jogging and picnic area for employees of nearby businesses. From this park you can take the Bay Trail north toward the Genentech complex or south to San Bruno Point. Before landfill created San Bruno Point in the early 1900s, the spot near the southern end of the park was a large Chinese fishing camp.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 on Grand Ave. and take Forbes Blvd. to its end.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** If you want to follow the Bay Trail from Oyster Point Marina and Park, use the blue spaces on the southern side of the Oyster Point pier. If you drive to San Bruno Point Park, you will find two public lots with several blue spaces. The first is off DNA Way and can be reached by taking Forbes Blvd. to the water. The second is at the trail's end at San Bruno Point. The closest accessible restrooms are at Oyster Point Marina and Park to the north.

## *Bayfront Park*

**HIGHWAY 101 MILLBRAE EXIT**

**P**EOPLE OF ALL AGES come to Bayfront Park in Millbrae to watch planes land and take off from nearby San Francisco International Airport. A small sloping lawn and benches provide good observation spots. At low tide, shorebirds gather at the park's north end where a flap gate allows water to flow out of Millbrae Canal into the bay. Starting from the flap gate, the paved Bay Trail meanders south, crosses two wooden bridges and continues for one mile, passing behind several large hotels and restaurants. The trail is mainly wide and level, but in several spots it buckles and undulates (common for trails built on landfill), and in a few areas it narrows a bit.

The trail turns west for a short distance at the Burlingame Shoreline Bird and Plant Sanctuary. Numerous benches and an accessible picnic table south of Benihana Restaurant provide a good spot to stop and gaze out at the bay. Just beyond the picnic table, a short but steep and cross-sloping section of the trail might pose a challenge for manual wheelchair users. The trail then runs into a parking lot and resumes at the junction of Airport Boulevard and Bayshore Highway. Unfortunately, the sidewalk that takes you past the gap is inaccessible because mailboxes and electrical poles are in the middle of it. If you're determined to cover every inch of this section of the Bay Trail, drive down to Bayside Park, where you can approach from the south.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101, exit at Millbrae Ave. and follow it east to Bayshore Highway. Turn right on Bayshore Highway to the Westin Hotel lot on your right or the Cowan Rd. lot on your left.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Five public spaces (no blue) are in the Westin Hotel lot across from Bayfront Park. A small public lot with a two-hour limit and no blue spaces is on Cowan Rd. next to the Marriott Hotel's parking lot. Six blue spaces in a lot just north of Benihana Restaurant offer good access to the southern end of the trail. There are no public restrooms for the park. All nearby hotels have accessible restrooms.

RON KUKULKA



*Millbrae's Bayfront Park*

## *Bayside Park and Burlingame Lagoon*

**HIGHWAY 101 BROADWAY EXIT, BURLINGAME**

**W**ITH ITS THREE BASEBALL diamonds, soccer field, and fenced dog park—plus the Burlingame Golf Center just next door—Bayside Park is popular with families and sports fans. A trail along a marsh connects this park to Burlingame Lagoon, providing ample opportunities for bird-watching.

Wanting to be truly at the side of the bay, I started my trip at the park's entrance, then crossed Airport Blvd. to the Bay Trail. There is no crosswalk, but traffic was light. You get unobstructed views of the water from accessible benches and tables on large concrete pads. You can follow this waterside segment of the trail for .5 mile to Robert E. Wooley Peninsula Park (see next entry).

To explore inland, through Bayside Park and around Burlingame Lagoon, cross back over Airport Boulevard and begin your trip from the entrance to Bayside Park. Head southwest toward the baseball field with a small outbuilding signed "Ballfield #2." Go left on a paved trail that skirts the ball field; soon you'll come to a fenced-in dog park on the left. The trail curves to the right, then left again as it runs along Sanchez Marsh. Interpretive signs tell about the marsh ecosystem and wildlife.

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🕒 **Bayside Park:** 6 am–9 pm  
**Burlingame Golf Center:**  
Wed.–Mon., 7 am–9 pm;  
Tues., 10 am–9 pm

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Soon you approach the Anza Boulevard bridge over the marsh where it meets Burlingame Lagoon. Before reaching the bridge you'll see a trail to the left that leads to one of the Burlingame Golf Center's parking lots. Public parking is available here if you want to begin your trip at Burlingame Lagoon. Continue on the main trail, which runs under the Anza Boulevard bridge and then curves left and uphill to a junction. Turn right and follow the trail as it travels south, skirting the eastern edge of the lagoon.

You pass hotels and office complexes lining the east side of the trail, but they are mostly obscured by tall hedges. Looking out over the lagoon, you may see long-legged egrets poking in the mudflats or a family of ducks paddling by, depending on the tide. On the far side of the lagoon, traffic streams by on Highway 101, its noise muffled by distance. The trail ends at a small shady park where a bridge crosses the lagoon's inlet from the bay. Looking east from the bridge you see the docked *General Frank M. Coxe*, a former military transport steamer that was later converted to a cruise ship that worked the bay until 1962.


► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 at Broadway in Burlingame. Follow the signs to Airport Blvd. and go south one block to the park entrance on your right (the sign is set back slightly from the road). To park at the Burlingame Golf Center, take Airport Blvd. past Bayside Park and turn right on Anza Blvd, then look for the signed entrance to the golf center on the right, shortly before the bridge that crosses the lagoon. Be aware that if you miss the turn, the bridge will take you directly onto Highway 101 north.

► **PARKING** One on-street blue space is just inside the park entrance, two are in the lot near the southern ball field, one is near the northern ball field and one is on Airport Blvd. across from the wastewater treatment facility. For the Golf Center on Anza Blvd., one blue space is in the lower lot and seven are up the hill in front of the golf center.

► **RESTROOMS** A restroom next to the northern ball field is accessible, except the grab bars have wide gaps, there's only room for a frontal transfer, and the stalls are shallow. Accessible restrooms are outside and inside the golf center building.

## *Anza Lagoon and Robert E. Wooley Peninsula Park*

**T**HE TRAIL ENCIRCLING this landscaped lagoon is often shared by waterfowl and local office workers. Weeping willow trees grace the large lawn of the adjacent 4.5-acre Robert E. Wooley Peninsula Park.

 **Robert E. Wooley Park:**  
6 am–9 pm

An accessible fishing pier arcs out in a half-circle from the lagoon's northern peninsula. From here you can head north on the Bay Trail, passing the Embassy Suites Hotel. Along the shore you'll see concrete and rebar, remnants of the old San Mateo Bridge, serving as shoreline fortification. South of the fishing pier, travel on the Bay Trail becomes more difficult. At the far end of the wooden bridge, bollards narrow the walkway to 28 inches and the trail soon becomes hard-packed dirt and gravel.

- ▶ **GETTING THERE** From Airport Blvd., go east on Anza Blvd. to the end.
- ▶ **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The shared public and private lot at the end of Anza Blvd. has two blue spaces bayside. Restrooms at the southern end of the parking lot, adjacent to the shoreline, have good access but lack stall doors and seemed to be poorly maintained when I visited.



RON KUKULA

*Anza Lagoon*

## *Coyote Point Recreation Area*

HIGHWAY 101 POPLAR OR DORE AVENUE EXIT, SAN MATEO

**O**NCE AN ISLAND, now linked to the mainland by fill, this 670-acre park has an outstanding nature museum, several playgrounds, eight picnic areas in eucalyptus groves, a beach, large lawns, a marina and yacht club, and a fishing jetty. A network of paved accessible trails, bike paths, and roads lets you roam fairly easily. The Bay Trail runs from Fisherman's Park, just north of Coyote Point, to the park's marina, then south another 2.5 miles to the San Mateo Bridge.

The nature museum is on the eastern side of a tree-shaded knoll near the water at the park's east side. Among the exhibits are interactive displays, computer activities, videos, and films on Bay Area ecosystems. Next to the museum, the Wildlife Habitats Center houses various reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and birds. You can see 50 species of California birds in the aviary. Don't miss the butterfly and hummingbird gardens. There is a two-inch drop into the picnic area inside the museum gates, and the tables have no place for a wheelchair to roll under. Barbecue grills and some accessible picnic tables are scattered on the hilltop behind the museum.

If you take the trail that leads northward from the museum, you will come to a platform with viewing scopes that are not at wheelchair height. However, the view through the trees to the bay is beautiful. You can also see all kinds of winged activity: birds skimming the water's surface, jets landing at San Francisco Airport, and windsurfers racing with the wind. If you

continue southwest along the shoreline, you come to a memorial dedicated to cadet midshipmen and graduates of a Merchant Marine cadet school located here during World War II, and an accessible picnic table overlooking the bay. The trail narrows and leads steeply downhill toward the beach, past the parking lot for the Captain's



RON KUKUKA

House Conference Center. There is no curb cut at the end of the trail, but with assistance you can jump the curb, cross the road, and arrive at the beach. Or, where the trail meets the conference center lot, take the road down to the beach. This route is also steep and may be busy with automobile traffic on weekends.

A level paved path takes you to two distinct beach areas. Swimmers use the one to the east, and windsurfers tend to monopolize the area to the west. Inland are playing fields, playgrounds, and picnic areas. Those playgrounds are accessible, but the accessible one at the eastern end of the park has a rubberized surface. From the west end of the beach, the Bay Trail (rough in spots) travels north alongside Airport Boulevard to Fisherman's Park, a

small, rocky fishing spot. If you take the Bay Trail south and inland from this park, you will come to Coyote Point Drive, which then leads east beyond and below the nature museum to the marina. The distance is 1.5 miles.

Near the marina is a breakwater with a flat paved path that has benches and fishing spots alongside it. Fishing from a wheelchair requires casting over the riprap. The shoreline trail between the foot of the marina and the back of the yacht club leads north on hard-packed gravel to the end of a jetty and south to connect with the Bay Trail, which continues another 2.5 miles to the San Mateo Bridge. Another connection to the Bay Trail is near the big anchor along Coyote Point Drive before you reach the yacht club.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 South, exit at Poplar Avenue. Turn right onto Humboldt St., then right onto Peninsula Avenue. At the stop sign immediately after the freeway overpass, turn left, then left again into the park on Coyote Point Drive. From Highway 101 North, take the Dore Ave. exit. Turn left immediately onto North Bayshore Blvd., then right onto Coyote Point Dr., and left into the park.

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*Recreation area:* **650/573-2592**;  
[www.co.sanmateo.ca.us](http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us)

*Museum:* **650/342-7755**;  
[www.coyoteptmuseum.org](http://www.coyoteptmuseum.org)

*Marina:* **650/573-2594**

🕒 *Museum:* Tues.–Sat.,  
10 am–5 pm; Sun., noon–5 pm  
Park hours vary with the season  
but generally the parking lots  
close at 8 pm.

**FEES** *Parking:* \$5 when  
staffed, free with disabled  
parking placard  
*Museum:* adults, \$6; seniors  
and students ages 13–17, \$4;  
children ages 3–12, \$2.  
Free first Wed. each month

**RESERVATIONS** *Picnic areas:*  
**650/363-4021**

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► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Blue spaces are plentiful throughout the park. The museum has two restrooms; the one outside, in the Wildlife Habitats Center, is more accessible. The inside restroom's stalls are front-approach only, are too shallow to close the door, and have no grab bars on the back wall. At the far end of the marina parking lot, an accessible portable toilet stands against the hillside. Other accessible restrooms are near the picnic areas. The beach restroom has a roll-in shower and an easy-to-use side-access sink.

## *Coyote Point to the San Mateo Bridge*

**F**ROM COYOTE POINT PARK, the next few miles southward on the Bay Trail provide all sorts of sights—from 747s coming in over the bay to land, to birds diving for prey, to scores of sailboats and windsurfers skimming the waves. The bay is just to your left nearly all the way, and to your right, or right beneath you, is one little park after another.

A half-mile out from Coyote Point, you will see a very steep path running inland to small Harbor View Park, which people use mainly for baseball and picnics. A half-mile farther is Ryder Park, with an accessible playground, group picnic area, outdoor classrooms, and restored wetlands. A large, tiered, concrete “water art” piece, the “Shell Mound Gurgle,” demonstrates how tidal action works.

Next, take the pedestrian bridge over San Mateo Creek and follow the levee trail as it enters the new 50-acre Seal Point Park, built on a former dump. Here you will find a dog park, restrooms, paved and dirt trails, a paved windsurfing launch (with a level platform that's accessible at low tide), and an outdoor classroom facing the wetland on the park's south side.

From Seal Point Park, the trail runs along J. Hart Clinton Drive for approximately .5 mile. Where Clinton Drive turns into East Third Avenue, the trail turns slightly inland alongside Bay Marshes Open Space, also known as Seal Marsh, with mudflats, rocks, and an open field on the bay side. You then cross Marina Lagoon on a pedestrian bridge. Less than .5 mile further, the trail turns sharply toward the bay and travels behind Mariners Point Golf Links, a driving range. Tall net fences protect passersby from stray golf balls. Next is a series of small inaccessible sandy beaches.

Off to the right and a little ways from the trail is Bayside/Joinville Park. Situated at the mouth of Marina Lagoon, this park has a swim center, ten-



*The bridge over San Mateo Creek*

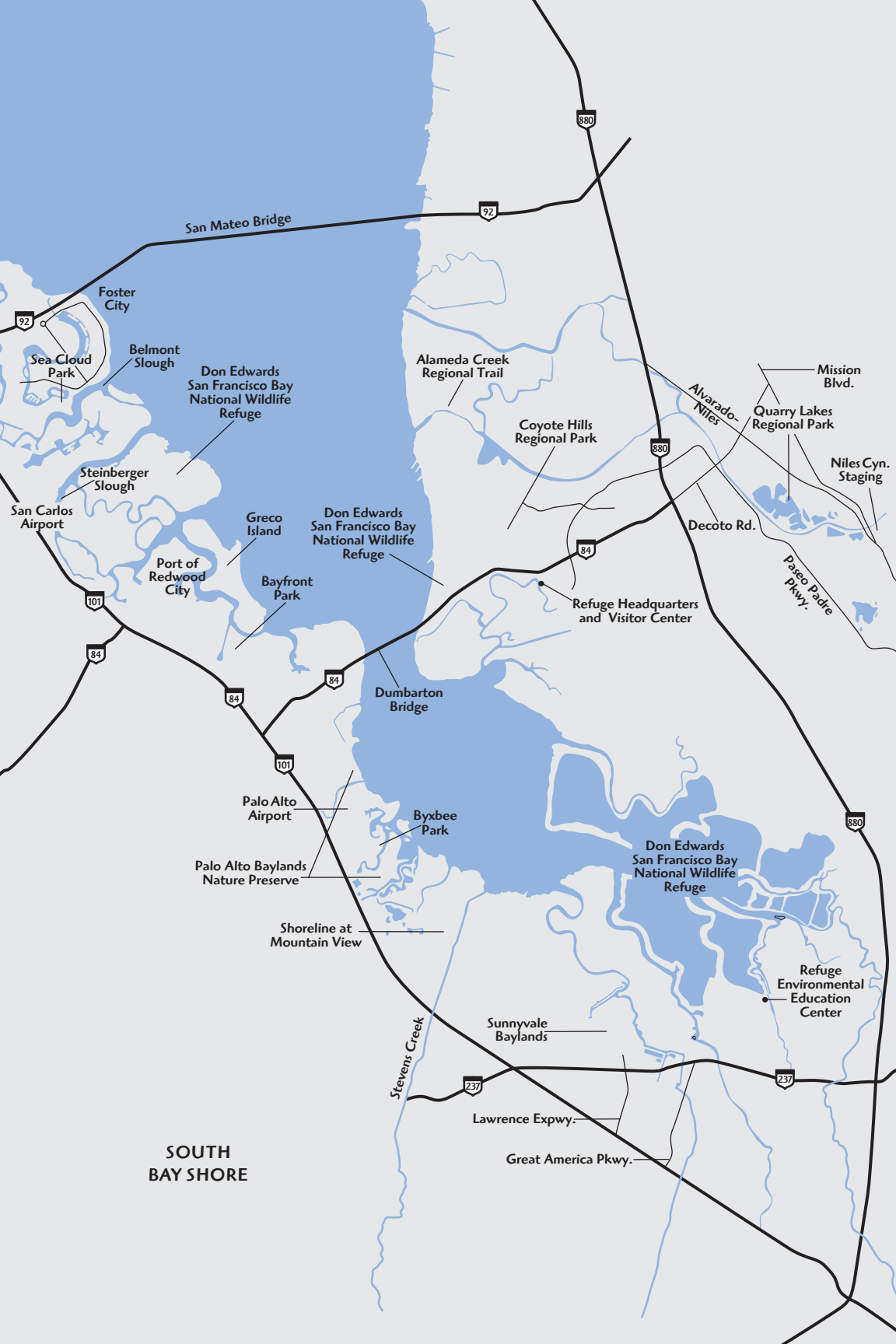
nis courts, a baseball field, a large lawn, picnic tables, and a playground. The playground is laid out on a thick layer of Fibar, a wood-composite material that is considered accessible, but if not properly maintained, can be difficult for wheelchair users to navigate.

To reach Bayside/Joinville Park, leave the Bay Trail at the parking lot at the south end of the pedestrian bridge over Marina Lagoon. Go through the lot to the intersection of J. Hart Clinton Drive and Anchor Road. Follow Anchor inland ten feet, turn right at the sign for the park, and continue to another bridge that leads to the park's back entrance.

I finished my trip by returning to the Bay Trail from Bayside/Joinville Park and following it another .5 mile along East Third Avenue, past a municipal maintenance yard and an office complex and under the San Mateo Bridge. Being beneath the bridge is an unusual experience. Amid the whirl of auto and truck traffic, the bridge vibrates and creaks. Nearby you can see a section of the old bridge that was turned into the 4,000-foot San Mateo County Fishing Pier, closed indefinitely as of 2006.

► **PARKING** See the Coyote Point entry for parking at the northern end of this Bay Trail section. The Ryder Park lot has three blue spaces; the Seal Point Park lots have seven: one on the deck (upper level), two next to the dog park, and four near the restrooms by the windsurf access area. For Bayside/Joinville Park, four blue spaces are in the lot off Kehoe Ave., and street parking is on Anchor Road. Three blue spaces are in the trailside lot adjacent to Anchor Rd. (at the intersection of J. Hart Clinton Dr.); three are at the end of Lakeside Dr., by the golf links; one is at the east side of the office complex off Lincoln Center Dr.; and one is among the public shoreline spaces in the office complex at the end of East Third Avenue.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible restrooms are at Ryder Park, Seal Point Park, the trailside south of Seal Point Park, and Bayside/Joinville Park.



## SOUTH BAY SHORE



## South Bay Shore

**T**HE SLOUGHS AND MARSHES of southern San Francisco Bay are vital to the survival of many species of animals and plants, including countless birds that reside here or stop to rest and feed along their migratory routes. Most of these wetlands, however, were systematically destroyed for other uses during the past century. They were diked and dried out, converted to salt ponds, or filled and built over. Freeways and buildings were constructed on fill, cities and industry dumped their garbage and waste into the bay, and residential communities turned their backs on their shoreline.

LAWRENCE ROBBIN



*Permanente Creek, Shoreline at Mountain View*

Then came the Save the Bay movement, launched in 1961 by three women from Berkeley, and with it the beginning of shoreline restoration around the bay. Today, visitors to the southern bay reaches from the San Mateo Bridge to Alviso will find parks created on former dumps, and plenty of recreational opportunities. Miles of accessible trails take you through parklands and around sloughs and marshes that have been restored. Work is under way to restore 15,100 more wetland acres. For those who want to learn more about the natural history and ecology of this remarkable area, a trip to the 30,000-acre Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is a must.



## *San Mateo Bridge to Southern Baylands*

FROM THE SAN MATEO BRIDGE, the paved Bay Trail travels south through Foster City and Redwood Shores, along the shoreline and past city parks and man-made lagoons. South of the Port of Redwood City, the once abused and neglected shoreline is being transformed. Two parks near the southernmost tip of the bay, Shoreline at Mountain View and Sunnyvale Baylands, offer miles of trails through landscaped parkland and around sloughs and wetlands. Kite-flying is a popular activity in these breezy parks with broad, grassy meadows, and at Shoreline you can also sail or paddle on a saltwater lake or attend a concert at the amphitheater.

### *Foster City*

HIGHWAY 101 HILLSDALE BOULEVARD EXIT

**B**UILT LARGELY ON LANDFILL in the late 1950s and early '60s, Foster City embodies what was then considered to be the ideal planned community, with many parks and waterfront access for its single-family




EILEEN ECKLUND

*A park along the Bay Trail in Foster City*

homes. You can get to the Bay Trail via any one of several ramps along Beach Park Boulevard. I started my trip near Hillside Boulevard, where you can see

the San Mateo Bridge to the north and the Dumbarton Bridge in the distance to the south. As you travel south, the bay is on your left and Beach Park Boulevard on your right. As the trail curves toward the mouth of Belmont Slough, look for shorebirds. Continuing south and inland, you see small islands where the slough widens. The trail splits off from Beach Park Boulevard, traveling alongside Belmont Slough past residential neighborhoods. At a flood-control gate a connector path leads a short distance to 24-acre Sea Cloud Park, with baseball diamonds, soccer and football fields, a large lawn, and picnic tables. Accessible parking and an accessible restroom make this park a good alternative starting place.

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 **All parks:** sunrise to sunset  
**Foster City Pedway:** 6 am–10 pm

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Returning to the Bay Trail from Sea Cloud Park, go south along a fenced, shallow arm of Belmont Slough. At Baffin Street, a path slopes down to a small park shaded by willows, with a lawn, picnic tables, tennis courts, and a playground surrounded by sand. Next is another small rectangular park. Exercise stations start here, and you can see a big office complex across the slough.

Just past an electrical tower and trail-information board, the trail forks. Bear right here to take the paved Foster City “pedway” to Port Royal Park, with

## FOSTER CITY



its soccer field, basketball hoop, picnic tables, and play area surrounded by a thick layer of wood chips. From here the pedway leads west and then north about four miles along Marina Lagoon, ending just north of Highway 92 at Fashion Island Boulevard. To stay on the Bay Trail, retrace your steps to the fork and go left along Belmont Slough. In a few hundred yards you come to a gate; go around it on either side and continue through the Oracle Corporation office complex, where you will see a bridge over Belmont Slough to your left. You can cross the bridge to follow the Bay Trail another four miles as it winds

around Redwood Shores, or continue approximately .5 mile to Island Park, a sports center with numerous playing fields and a few picnic tables.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 at Hillsdale Blvd. and follow it east toward the bay, where the road curves to the right and becomes Beach Park Boulevard. For Sea Cloud Park, exit Highway 101 at Hillsdale Blvd., turn right on Edgewater Blvd., left at Pitcairn Dr., and right on Sea Cloud Dr. into the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** On-street parking is along Beach Park Boulevard. Four blue spaces are at Sea Cloud Park, one with no access aisle is in a small lot off Baffin St., two are in the lot serving Port Royal Park off Port Royal Ave., four are at Island Park, and one is at the end of Concourse Place just before the Oracle complex. Accessible restrooms are at Port Royal Park, Sea Cloud Park, and Island Park. Sinks at Island Park have 25-inch knee clearance.

## *Redwood Shores*

### HIGHWAY 101 RALSTON EXIT, REDWOOD CITY

**A** PLANNED COMMUNITY MODELED after Foster City and built alongside man-made lagoons in the 1970s, Redwood Shores borders the northern reaches of the

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge. A six-mile paved and gravel stretch of the Bay Trail runs through here, from Oracle Parkway along Belmont Slough and the northern edge of Steinberger Slough to San Carlos Airport. Traveling this route you can view marshlands, the Bair Islands, and the Coast Range. At low tide crowds of shorebirds come to feed in the mudflats.

A good place to access the trail from the north is a small park at Oracle Parkway and Island Parkway, across from high-rise office buildings. From the parking lot, travel up a gradual incline to reach the paved trail. It follows Belmont Slough east toward the bay and around the Oracle complex. Geese often feed on the lawn, and parcourse exercise stations dot the trail. You soon reach a junction by a sunken grassy area; stay left to follow the south shore of Belmont Slough. The trail turns toward the bay at Marine (formerly Marine World) Parkway and continues east for about one mile past office buildings

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📍 *Shore Dogs Park:*  
Dawn to dusk

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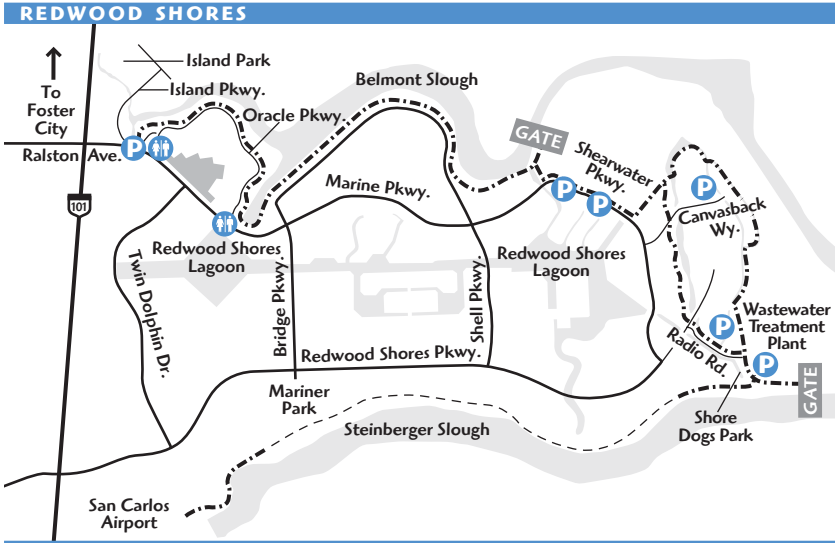
JAY JONES

*Levee trail along Steinberger Slough*

on Bridge Parkway. At the next fork a rocky, hard-packed-dirt levee trail lead-left offers a route away from the road, but has one steep section.

The paved trail continues along Bridge Parkway for another .5 mile. A small marsh lies between the two trails. Where Bridge runs into Shell Parkway, just before Marina Parkway, veer left through a small private parking lot that interrupts the paved trail. Navigate through the lot and wind around and up a slight rise to return to the main trail, here constructed of decomposed granite. Immediately past a brown-shingled apartment complex, a slight downhill brings you to hard-packed dirt for several hundred yards. Pass through an old gate onto pavement and the next fork, where you follow the main trail to the right (the branch that leads straight ahead ends in .25 mile at a marsh overlook).

Now the traffic noise drops off and marsh views expand. Just past the first parking lot on Shearwater Parkway, a dirt trail leads straight ahead; bear left to stay on the paved trail. Beyond the second lot is another fork. Stay on the paved trail as it dips. You will see the San Mateo Bridge, and on a clear day Mount Tamalpais, to the north. Farther on, descend a small hill to reach the next fork by a little park. Stay left, following the Bay Trail sign, to cross over a channel on a berm. Traveling through a residential development, a lagoon is on your left; you are likely to see egrets and great blue herons along this stretch. A high berm beyond the lagoon cuts off the view, but several ramps lead to platforms overlooking Bay Slough, Bird Island, and the bay beyond, and interpretive panels explain the salt-marsh food chain. Turn left to cross a wooden bridge.



Turning inland, you see two bridges and a radio tower. One bridge crosses the lagoon again to residences and a small park. Instead, turn left to stay on the main trail, crossing the other bridge to reach yet another trail junction. Here a left turn takes you toward the bay a few hundred yards, where the trail ends at a ramped overlook. The main trail leads right and continues along the bay side of the channel, passing a radio station and the Fully Alive Community Church. Buckled pavement here makes for a bumpy ride.

Passing behind businesses, the trail meets a sidewalk at Radio Road. To the left is the South Bayside System Authority Wastewater Treatment Works, and across the road is Shore Dogs dog park. There are no curb cuts; to get to the park, follow the sidewalk to the first driveway and head into the street, where a bike lane travels along the road and around the corner to the park entrance. There is little automobile traffic here. At the park's southern end, pick up the trail between a fence and the parking lot (ignore the sign that says there is no through access), and travel uphill to a junction on a levee. The branch that heads east toward the bay ends at an overlook; the main trail continues west, passing a large pickleweed marsh dominated by a long line of electrical towers. The Dumbarton Bridge is on the horizon looking south.

Less than .5 mile from the junction, the trail surface changes to hard-packed dirt and gravel. Continue another 1.5 miles inland along the north shore of Steinberger Slough, passing several residential areas and Mariner Park. Across the slough are the currently inaccessible Bair Islands (Inner, Middle, and Outer), part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Just beyond a large pond, the trail changes to pavement as it curves behind a daycare center and a hotel toward the San Carlos County Airport, where it ends. You can connect to the sidewalk to follow Twin Dolphin Dr. for about a mile to reach Marine World Parkway and then Oracle Parkway, or retrace your steps.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 South, exit at Ralston Avenue. Stay left to exit onto Marine Parkway and follow the curve, merging into the left lane. Go left at Oracle Parkway and left at Island Parkway, then take an immediate right into the small park.

► **PARKING** Most of the accessible parking is in small lots along the first four miles of trail. Four blue spaces are at the park on Island Parkway; on Shearwater Parkway, one is near Monaco and one near Salt Court; one is on Canvasback Way; two are on Radio Rd. by the Fully Alive Community Church; and one serves Shore Dogs Park.

► **RESTROOMS** Only two accessible restrooms serve the entire length of the trail, both within the first mile. One is at the park on Island Parkway, the other at the southeastern end of Oracle Parkway, close to Marine Parkway.

## *Bayfront Park*

HIGHWAY 101 MARSH ROAD EXIT, MENLO PARK

**T**HIS PARK OFFERS a long ride with broad vistas of marshlands and the bay. You will almost surely see shorebirds, and may even glimpse a burrowing owl. The grass-covered hills are crisscrossed by

dirt-and-gravel trails and paved roads, but the best route for wheelchair riders is the paved and hard-packed dirt road that loops around the park's perimeter for two miles and is closed to motorized vehicles.

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**650/330-2200**

🕒 7 am to a half-hour after sunset

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The perimeter road starts at the farthest end of the second parking lot. Flood Slough is on your left and the Port of Redwood City is visible beyond it. Straight ahead are the marshes of Greco Island, part of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. As the road curves right it passes a decommissioned sewage treatment plant that is now a methane recovery plant. This park, like several others along the bay, was built on a former garbage dump. Methane is extracted through an underground network of pipes, and used to generate electricity. Veer left at the fork. The road—worn in places and requiring careful navigation—follows the gentle arc of Westpoint Slough eastward. At several points dirt trails lead into the park's hilly interior. As you head inland, you will see salt ponds on your left.

About 1.5 miles out from the parking lot, past the point where another major trail heads right, stay on the road as it becomes a levee trail. A salt pond is to the south and a tidal pond with three islands is to the north. You will probably see shorebirds. A half-mile farther, the road curves right along the park's southern border for less than .5 mile to an old pumphouse (once part of the salt ponds operation but no longer functioning) at the corner of Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway. From the roadside parking area here you can ride along the park entry road to return to your starting point.



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*Bayfront Park*

I managed to navigate a few of the park's interior trails in my power wheelchair, but most are steep and rough, and many are unpaved. Wooden gates at several trail entrances are only 27 or 29 inches wide.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 at Marsh Rd. in Menlo Park and go east toward the bay. Keep left, and where the road curves sharply right at the junction of Marsh and Bayfront Expressway, continue straight on Marsh into the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** On-street parking with no blue spaces is at the park's entrance. Farther in are two lots with blue spaces. Accessible restrooms are in the first parking lot.

## *Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve*

HIGHWAY 101 EMBARCADERO ROAD EXIT, PALO ALTO

**T**HIS CITY PRESERVE, encompassing nearly 2,000 acres, includes a duck pond, tidal and freshwater marshes, and a sailing station for windsurfers and hand-carried, non-motorized boats. Although there is no easy access to the water for wheelchair riders, the preserve is well worth visiting, with its fine nature center, an 850-foot boardwalk over a marsh, and reasonably accessible trails.

On entering the preserve on Embarcadero Road, turn left to the Palo Alto Duck Pond, a bird refuge built from a former public swimming pool. You can watch the ducks and geese from the benches along the water's edge and from the .7-mile paved and hard-packed dirt Duck Pond Loop Trail. At the ranger station, where you can pick up a map from a mailbox on the fence, the trail connects to a short loop surfaced with crushed shells that leads to an accessible picnic area.

Another .25 mile down the road from the pond is the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center. Inside are displays about the wildlife you might see at the preserve, and an ecology laboratory where visitors can prepare their own slides and examine them under microscopes. The micro-

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**650/329-2506**

🕒 **Park:** 8 am to sunset

**Nature center:** Tues.–Fri.,  
2–5 pm; Sat.–Sun., 1–5 pm;  
hours may be expanded  
during the school year

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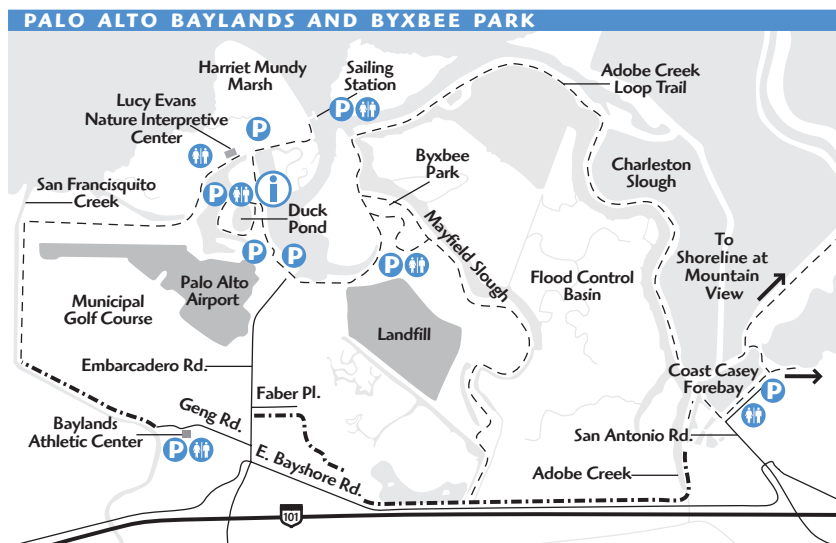
scopes are on a 25-inch-high shelf, but a video microscope that projects slides onto a monitor permits easier viewing. The center also offers videos, nature walks, and a variety of natural history programs for children and adults.

On the wooden deck surrounding the nature center, use the low-mounted telescope to zoom in on shorebirds and waterfowl. Informational panels fixed to the rail tell you what you are seeing and what to look for. A four-foot-wide boardwalk with benches and wide turnaround areas leads through Harriet Mundy Marsh to an observation platform. The handrail, however, is at a seated person's eye level, forcing you to strain over it or scrunch down to see much. The deck and boardwalk are open even when the nature center is closed.

From the nature center you can take a 3.2-mile loop beginning on the San Francisquito Creek Trail, which leads out along a levee toward the Palo Alto Airport and the Municipal Golf Course. The crushed-rock surface is dusty but firm in dry weather; during the rainy season parts of the trail may become impassable. About .25 mile out, the surface becomes rough, and small rocks slow your travel. Three-quarters of a mile farther, near the north end of the airport runway, the air traffic overhead can be startling. The trail has a short, moderate incline just before turning inland along San Francisquito Creek. Past the airport, it intersects with the paved Baylands Bike Trail (still referred to as San Francisquito Creek Trail). Turn left and continue past the golf course for .5 mile to the Baylands Athletic Center.



LAWRENCE ROBBIN



To return to the nature center without doubling back, roll through the athletic center parking lot and pick up the bike trail that runs alongside Geng Road to Embarcadero Road. Cross Embarcadero and turn left to take the bike path to the preserve entrance road, where you can connect to the Marsh Front Trail, turning left to the nature center or right to Byxbee Park and the Adobe Creek Trail system (see Byxbee Park, below).

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 on Embarcadero Rd. and take it east toward the bay. Follow Embarcadero past the golf course to its end, and turn left for the nature center or right for Byxbee Park.

► **PARKING** The first lot on the entrance road has two blue spaces. Two lots serving the Duck Pond have a total of three blue spaces. There are two more blue spaces by the nature center and four at the end of the entrance road near the sailing station.

► **RESTROOMS** The restrooms in the nature center allow a frontal transfer only, and the stall is not deep enough to close the door. Opening the door to the women's room might require assistance. The restrooms at the Baylands Athletic Center have good access. Accessible portable toilets are at the southwest corner of the parking lot near the sailing station and between the two lots at the Duck Pond.

## *Byxbee Park and Adobe Creek Trail*

HIGHWAY 101 EMBARCADERO ROAD EXIT, PALO ALTO

**I**F YOU'RE UP FOR a 5.6-mile trip you might try the Adobe Creek Trail, which starts in 34-acre Byxbee Park and is almost all hard-packed dirt and gravel. It loops around the large municipal flood control basin and several marshes, running alongside Mayfield and Charleston Sloughs, and skirts the edge of Shoreline at Mountain View. From there you return to Byxbee Park via the bike path next to East Bayshore Road, rejoining the Adobe Creek Trail just past Matadero Creek.

Built on part of Palo Alto's still-operating landfill, Byxbee Park features a site sculpture, "Pole Field," and small mounds on the park's grassy hilltop are meant to symbolize Ohlone shellmounds while also providing some wildlife habitat. Paths surfaced with crushed shells wind up and along the hilltop. Some of these are accessible and others are too steep. From the hilltop you can watch planes on their approach to the Palo Alto Airport and look over Charleston Slough and acres of marshland. Further south you see Shoreline Amphitheatre and the hangars at Moffett Field.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is in the Byxbee Park lot. The lot on Terminal Blvd. at the south end of the Adobe Creek Trail has two blue spaces next to the trail entrance and three at the opposite end by Shoreline at Mountain View. Accessible restrooms are at Byxbee Park and the trailhead on Terminal Boulevard.

## *Shoreline at Mountain View*

HIGHWAY 101 TERMINAL ROAD AND MOUNTAIN VIEW EXITS, MOUNTAIN VIEW

**I**N THIS 750-ACRE recreation area you can travel nearly eight miles of trails, many of them along sloughs and marshes. You can also golf, boat on the 50-acre saltwater lake, fly a kite, and eat at the restaurant or lakeside café. At the restored, accessible Rengstorff House (ca. 1876), you can take a free docent-led tour of one of the finest examples of Victorian Italianate architecture remaining on the West Coast. The huge white tent of Shoreline Amphitheatre, just outside the park, is visible from many parts of the park.





LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*The boathouse and saltwater lake at Shoreline at Mountain View*

Three locations with parking offer good starting points for short strolls around the lake or longer outings along the salt ponds and marshes: Terminal Boulevard on the northern boundary, Shoreline Boathouse in the middle of the park, and the lot at the kite-flying area in the park's southern section. I chose a long route starting at the kite-flying lot.

Near the entrance to the lot, a paved trail connects to a service road that leads southeast for about .25 mile past a gravel-surfaced overflow lot for the amphitheater, passing a dog park on the right. At the first fork, stay right to wind around the Crittenden Pump Station, where the trail dips and then climbs to a fork. Turn left toward the bay and follow along the western side of Stevens Creek Tidal Marsh, where egrets, herons, sandpipers, and other shorebirds feed. After a few hundred feet you come to a bridge to the paved Stevens Creek Trail. Here a right turn will take you south for more than three miles along the creek and through marshlands to Yuba Drive near El Camino Real and Highway 85. If you turn left toward the bay, you

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**650/903-6392**

*Shoreline Boathouse:*

**650/965-7474**

*Rengstorff House:* **650/903-6392**

🕒 Dawn to dusk

*Rengstorff House tours:*

Tues., Wed., and Sun.,  
11 am–5 pm

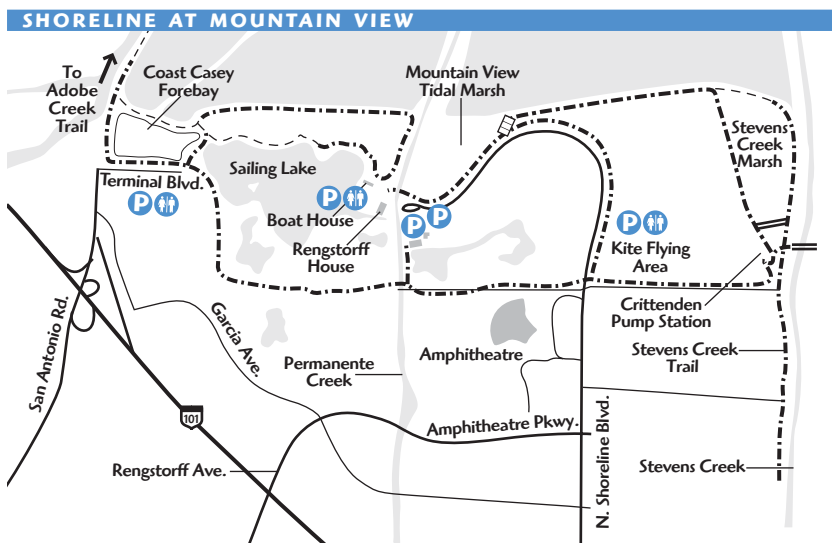
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travel for .5 mile to the paved trail's end at a fenced levee and a large salt pond. From here, go left on the wide dirt trail (impassable in wet weather) that leads west along the shoreline to an intersection where you rejoin the paved trail. A salt pond is on your right, while to the left are the undulating human-built hills of a large former landfill, Meadowland, now habitat for burrowing owls and other wildlife. Benches are along the trail.

The Shoreline Golf Links come into view as you near the restored Mountain View Tidal Marsh. Veer left at the marsh to a viewing platform (steep approach), where you can look for egrets and herons. You can then continue around the marsh, traveling north toward the lake, or return to the kite-flying lot via a trail alongside the park's main entrance road. I chose to continue, crossing Permanente Creek near its inlet into the marsh, and soon arrived in the parking lot that serves the boathouse and lakeside café. The man-made lake attracts small-boat sailors and windsurfers (rentals and classes available), and plenty of birds. Both the dock and the beach launching area are accessible. Lawns shaded by pine and willow slope down to the shore.

A paved trail leads north from the boathouse. Where it splits, stay left to travel along the lakeshore. Past the sailing scow play structure, the trail surface changes to decomposed granite. The trail ends on the lake's northeastern side. If you go right instead of left at the split, you travel toward the bay alongside Mountain View Tidal Marsh. This trail veers left at the bay, leading more than .5 mile along the shore of another large salt pond to the Coast Casey Forebay, a flood control basin, and Charleston Slough. The accessible viewing platform extending over the slough provides excellent birding opportunities. From the platform you can extend your trip several miles on the hard-packed dirt-and-gravel Adobe Creek Trail winding through Palo Alto Baylands.

Continuing past the viewing platform, you arrive at the Terminal Boulevard entrance to the park. I returned to the boathouse lot via the paved service road that leads to the right out of this entrance. It cuts through the middle of the golf course and crosses Permanente Creek after .8 mile. On the other side of the bridge I turned left onto the Permanente Creek Trail, which winds .25 mile back to the boathouse, running through the parking lots for Michael's Restaurant and the Rengstorff House. To



return to the kite-flying lot, stay on the service road after Permanente Creek, past Vista Slope, a hilly open space with dirt-and-gravel trails, and Shoreline Amphitheatre, both on your right.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 South, exit at Shoreline Blvd. and turn left to cross the freeway to the park's main entrance. From Highway 101 North, exit at Amphitheatre Parkway and turn left at Shoreline Boulevard. For the Terminal Blvd. entrance, exit Highway 101 North at San Antonio Rd., or Highway 101 South at the second San Antonio Rd. exit, take San Antonio toward the bay to Terminal Blvd., and turn right.

► **PARKING** Two blue spaces are in the lot serving the kite-flying area, six are in the boathouse lot, eight are at both Michael's Restaurant and the Golf Links lot, two are at the Rengstorff House, and three are at the Terminal Blvd. entrance.

► **RESTROOMS** An accessible portable toilet is in the kite-flying lot, and accessible restrooms are at the boathouse and near the Terminal Blvd. entrance.



EILEEN ECKLUND

*Sunnyvale Baylands*

## *Sunnyvale Baylands Park*

CARIBBEAN DRIVE OFF HIGHWAY 237

**T**HIS BREEZY PARK at the southern-most end of the bay is a good place to fly a kite, picnic, or look out over wetlands where, depending on the season, you may see hundreds of waterfowl and shorebirds.

The park's easy one-mile perimeter trail links four accessible children's play areas, accessible group and individual picnic areas, a large grass field, and a 100-foot-long wetland observation boardwalk. The 1.5-mile San Tomas Aquino Trail takes off along the creek at the park's eastern end, and seven miles of Bay Trail on rough dirt levees let the adventurous wheelchair rider explore the sloughs and former salt ponds of the South Bay.

You can access all trails from the roadside parking area at the park's east end, which you reach by following the park entry road to the right and continuing to its end. The entrance to the level, smooth, decomposed-granite perimeter trail is between the restroom and the one blue parking space. You soon come to the Great Meadow, a large grass field on the left, which draws kite flyers taking advantage of the frequently strong bay breezes. Stay right at the fork to reach a viewing platform overlooking a 3.6-acre freshwater wetland and then a long boardwalk that leads out into seasonal wetlands. Here the cheers from crowds at the private baseball and softball complex on the park's western edge mingle with bird songs.

To reach both the Bay Trail and San Tomas Aquino Trail, take the paved pedestrian/bicycle road that begins beyond a gate at the end of the same

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**408/730-7751**

**6 am–9 pm**

**FEES** \$5 per vehicle,  
May 1–Oct. 31

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parking area. After about .25 mile you come to Calabazas Creek, where the Bay Trail leads left; paved for a short distance out to a pump station, it becomes hard-packed dirt and gravel and continues on dirt levees into the bay's sloughs. Go beyond Calabazas Creek on the pedestrian/bicycle road to reach the paved San Tomas Aquino Trail, which leads about 2.75 miles south along San Tomas Aquino Creek, passing under Highway 237 and Great America Parkway and ending at Agnew Road; future construction will extend the trail even further. The retaining walls of each of the four underpasses along this section of trail feature concrete relief panels depicting local nature scenes.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-880, take Highway 237 westbound; from Highway 101 take 237 east. Exit at Lawrence Expressway/Caribbean Dr., then turn right into the park on Moffett Park Drive.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** As you enter the park, four blue spaces are in the lots to your right or left, and three more are along the road to the parking area on the park's far eastern end, which has one blue space. One accessible restroom is by the Discovery Play Area and one is in the group picnic area next to the Great Meadow.



## *Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge*

**THE FIRST AND LARGEST** urban national wildlife refuge in the United States, the 30,000-acre Don Edwards refuge, not far from San Jose, provides protection for a wide range of native birds and animals, including the salt marsh harvest mouse and other endangered species. It's also a safe haven for vast numbers of birds traveling the Pacific Flyway. Trails lead along sloughs and past salt ponds on San Francisco Bay that are being restored to a mix of habitats. Visitor and education centers provide information about the refuge and how to explore it.

## *Environmental Education Center and Mallard Slough Loop Trail*

OFF HIGHWAY 237, ALVISO

**A**LTHOUGH SMALLER than the refuge's main visitor center in Fremont, the Environmental Education Center at the end of Grand Blvd. in Alviso has excellent displays on the South Bay's ecology and history. From here you can take a boardwalk to the 5.5-mile Mallard Slough Loop Trail, which begins as a fairly wide and level dirt levee path. Following the loop clockwise from the boardwalk, the going gets tough about two miles out, where the dirt surface changes to loosely packed gravel and plants crowd the trail. If you can make it, though, the scenery is rewarding. Water is on both sides of the trail, a fresh northwest wind skips off the bay, and the sounds of birds fill the air. You are likely to see pintail ducks, whistling swans, American avocets, hummingbirds, black-necked stilts, red-tailed hawks, and more.

As you round the halfway point on this trail and head back, traveling should become a little easier, since the wind is typically at your back. The salt ponds that shimmer on both sides of you provide habitat for a variety of bird species. The Mallard Slough Loop is closed during hunting season, late October to late January. If you want to do the loop in its entirety, be pre-

LAWRENCE ROBBIN



*Environmental Education  
Center: 408/262-5513*

• The refuge gate on Grand Blvd. is open daily, 9 am–3 pm (longer hours as staffing allows)  
*Environmental Education  
Center: Sat.–Sun., 10 am–5 pm; Mon.–Fri. open only to school groups by reservation  
Trails: Sunrise to sunset*

**NOTE** During rainy season, trails in the refuge may be impassable. Call ahead for conditions.

pared for a day-long outing and for the many types of weather that can develop in this exposed part of the bay.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-880 or Highway 101, exit on Highway 237 toward Alviso. Turn north onto Zanker Road. Continue on Zanker to the Environmental Education Center entrance road (a sharp right turn at Grand Blvd.). It is 2.1 miles from Highway 237 to the entrance road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The center's parking lot has four blue spaces. An accessible portable toilet is in the parking lot. Restrooms inside the center are accessible, but the doors into both the center and the restrooms are very heavy.

## *Visitor Center, Tidelands Loop Trail, and Newark Slough Trail*

HIGHWAY 84 THORNTON AVENUE EXIT, FREMONT

**H**IGH ABOVE THE MARSH on one of two small hills near the Dumbarton Bridge toll plaza in Fremont, the refuge's visitor center offers exhibits about endangered species and salt marshes, the area's ecology and history, and a salt pond scene with animal specimens. Outside, across the service road, a viewing platform provides wide views of marshlands, salt ponds, sloughs, and the bay. Depending on the season and the stage of salt development, the water color ranges from green to mauve. West of the visitor center, at the end of Marshlands Road, is an accessible fishing pier. The Bay Trail runs nearby, crossing the approximately 1.5-mile Dumbarton Bridge to San Mateo County.

The upper Tidelands Loop Trail (dirt and gravel) begins uphill from the visitor center, but only a few hundred yards are accessible even to motorized wheelchairs. At the first fork, follow the trail to the right around the hill's perimeter to a spur trail that leads left to a level, grassy viewing spot on the hill's east side, protected by a fence at the edge of a cliff. Here you can look east to the Diablo Range and down on LaRiviere Marsh, with civilization lapping at its shores. Retrace your path to the visitor center to avoid an extremely steep downhill with rough trail conditions.

Downhill from the visitor center are trailheads for the Newark Slough Trail and the lower section of the Tidelands Trail. Park in the main lot below





*Newark Slough*

the visitor center to avoid a steep service road. Follow the sidewalk from the parking lot and cross the service road. The gravel and hard-packed dirt trail travels a few hundred feet downhill to a trail junction and an accessible picnic area overlooking the marsh. Traffic noise from Highway 84 disturbs this otherwise peaceful setting.

For the most accessible route, take the Tidelands Trail to the right. Soon you pass a side trail to the Newark Slough Learning Center, then cross an accessible, long, wooden bridge over Newark Slough to the junction with the Newark Slough Trail, and another picnic area with accessible tables. Traveling in either direction, this 5.2-mile dirt levee trail follows the curving path of Newark Slough around salt ponds and tidal marshes. I followed the trail to the right, where muddy conditions limited me to approximately two miles round-trip. Refuge staff advised me that overgrown vegetation and narrow dirt passages prevent making the full loop. If you take the Newark Slough Trail to the left .25 mile from the junction, you come to another accessible wooden bridge; cross it and travel uphill to connect with the lower Tidelands Trail.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 84, exit at Thornton Avenue. Go south on Thornton and turn right on Marshlands Road. For the visitor center and Newark Slough and Tidelands trails, turn left into the main parking lot, or continue to the end to reach the fishing pier.

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**510/792-0222**

🕒 Tue.–Sun., 10 am–5 pm

*Trails:* Daily spring through fall, 7 am–8 pm; winter, 7 am–6 pm

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► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are in the parking lot on Marshlands Rd., three are in the main lot below the visitor center, one is up the service road next to the visitor center, and three are on Marshlands Rd. by the fishing pier. The restrooms in the visitor center have some accessible features, including wide stalls, raised toilets, roll-under sink, and grab bars that have a large gap between the wall and bar. There are no lever handles on the door or faucets, the stall is not deep enough to close the door, and the towel dispenser is high. There is an accessible portable toilet halfway out the fishing pier and another by the picnic tables and overlook at the start of the lower Tidelands Trail.



## *Coyote Hills Regional Park and Alameda Creek Trail*

AT COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK you can learn more about the early inhabitants of the Bay at a reconstructed Ohlone village and shellmound, or cruise several miles of paved trail with spectacular views of the South Bay salt ponds, East Bay hills, and Alameda Creek. Two trails, one paved, follow the banks of Alameda Creek for 12 miles from Niles Canyon to the Bay, with opportunities for fishing and picnicking along the way.

### *Coyote Hills Regional Park*

HIGHWAY 84 PASEO PADRE PARKWAY EXIT, NEWARK

**A**MONG THE MEADOWS, marshes, and rocky hills, and along miles of trails in this nearly 1,000-acre bayside park, you can get a sense of how people lived on the eastern shore of the bay before Europeans arrived and changed the landscape. At the visitor center (end of Patterson Ranch Road), you will see a tule boat built by park staff and volunteers using traditional native methods. Exhibits portray aspects of Ohlone life. Guided tours are available to a shellmound and a reconstructed tule house, shade



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*The Main Marsh, Coyote Hills Regional Park*

shelter, dance circle, and sweat lodge. Pick up a schedule for tours and a trail map.

Flower gardens surrounding the visitor center attract hummingbirds, and off to one side is a fenced butterfly garden, open the second Saturday of each month. Accessible picnic tables are nearby. From the visitor center you can explore the park's fresh and saltwater marshes by following the accessible boardwalk across Patterson Ranch Road.

For a longer outing, turn left after exiting the visitor center and roll to the end of Patterson Ranch Road to reach the paved Bayview Trail. This exhilarating three-mile paved loop has several steep ups and downs—challenging for manual wheelchair riders—as it traverses the park's hills, offering spectacular views of the South Bay's diked salt ponds, Alameda Creek, and the East Bay hills. At the first trail junction, .25 mile from the visitor center, the hard-packed-dirt and gravel Lizard Rock Trail leads inland about .25 mile to the network of marsh trails. At the second junction, another .5 mile along at the northern tip of the Bayview loop, you can follow the paved side trail down the hill to the Alameda Creek Trail, which leads 1.37 miles toward the bay or inland 10.5 miles along Alameda Creek (see Alameda Creek Trail, below). If you choose to go toward the bay, you'll see up close the salt ponds and marshes, now all part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, currently under way, aims to restore 15,100 acres of salt ponds to natural wetlands. Watch out for goose droppings on the last .5 mile of the Alameda Creek Trail as you roll toward the bay.



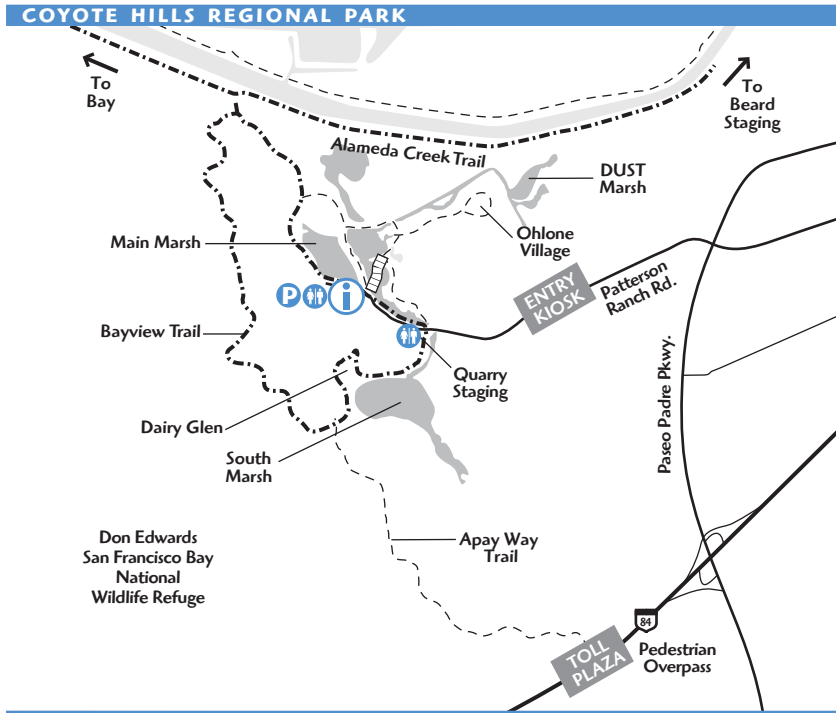
DAN HILL

*Looking south on the Bayview Trail*

Returning to the Bayview Trail, I continued south. This stretch of trail was my favorite; it hugs the hillside 100 feet above the bay, and I felt closer to the landscape and the elements here. There is no guardrail along this section with a cross slope, but it's a comfortable five feet wide. For the next 1.5 miles, layered outcroppings of reddish rock tell of geologic upheaval, grasses rustle in the wind, and hikers climbing the park's interior hills appear as tiny moving specks.

As you round the southern end of the loop, you pass junctions for the No Name Trail, which quickly becomes inaccessible, and the Apay Way Trail, which becomes very steep about 1.25 miles out. I stayed on the Bayview Trail, which climbs a short, moderately steep hill, passes a junction with more inaccessible side trails, then curves north and runs along the eastern side of the hills, where California sagebrush is the dominant shrub. The Dairy Glen campground, on your right, is dirt, with accessible picnic tables but inaccessible restrooms. A quarter-mile past the campground is the Quarry Staging Area. Continue past the parking lot, cross Patterson Ranch Road, and turn left, returning to the visitor center on the paved .25-mile path that parallels the road.

Across Patterson Ranch Road from the visitor center is the 800-foot boardwalk that passes through the Main Marsh and becomes the dirt-and-gravel Chochenyo Trail, which leads out to the Ohlone Village and then loops back around the main marsh to Patterson Ranch Road. Some manual wheelchair users may require assistance with a short slope onto the boardwalk that takes you around ponds that are busy with waterfowl. Tules and cattails grow tall and thick, turning from green to gold with the seasons. Being so close to the water, with the grasses obscuring everything except the sky, gave me the sensation of floating along with the many white pelicans I saw.



On the north end of the boardwalk, at the first junction, where the Muskrat Trail leads right, veer left to continue toward the Ohlone Village. At the next junction stay right to roll .25 mile to the Ohlone Village. You can catch glimpses of the village through the fence; for a closer view, you can join a docent-led tour. Built on a shell-mound—a large pile of shells found near villages where shellfish were a staple—the village structures include a hut made of tule, a sweathouse, a shaded arbor for cooking, a dance circle, and a pit house dug into the earth. Return to the visitor center via the boardwalk (.5 mile) or loop back around the Main Marsh on the Chochenyo Trail (.7 mile), which intersects Patterson Ranch Road near the boardwalk. A gate on the trail before the road allowed just enough space on either side for me to maneuver around in my power wheelchair.

#### 510/795-9385

🕒 April–Oct., 8 am–8 pm;  
Oct.–April, 8 am–6 pm,  
unless posted otherwise

**FEES** \$5 per vehicle, \$2 per dog  
Ticket machine at the entrance  
requires manual dexterity.

► **GETTING THERE** Take I-880 to Newark and exit at Highway 84, heading west toward the Dumbarton Bridge. Exit at Paseo Padre Parkway, turn right, then left onto Patterson Ranch Road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** There are two blue spaces at the visitor center, none at the Quarry Staging Area. Accessible portable toilets are in the visitor center parking lot and the Quarry Staging Area. The restrooms in the visitor center are accessible except that the short stall size doesn't allow the door to be closed behind a wheelchair and requires a frontal transfer, the towel dispensers are high, and there's a tight entry turn into the men's room.

## *Alameda Creek Trail*

OFF OLD CANYON ROAD, FREMONT

**T**HIS 12-MILE TRAIL along Alameda Creek from Niles Canyon to the bay attracts bicyclists, skaters, runners, and equestrians. Floods in 1955 and 1958

prompted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to redirect and widen the creek as a channel to the bay; the trail, on levees along both banks, was completed in 1973. The trail on the creek's southern bank is paved; the one on the northern bank is hard-packed gravel and is intended for horses as well as bicycles and pedestrians.

The trails begin in the east at Niles Staging Area, where the creek runs over a rocky bed and people picnic or fish from willow-shaded banks. (Note that fishing on Alameda Creek is prohibited west of here. A state fishing license is required to fish in all East Bay Regional Parks, and in posted areas a special permit is also required.) Following the creek downstream on the southern trail, you pass under Mission Blvd. and, .75 mile further, pass the Alameda County Water District's three rubber cofferdams. Inflated year-round except during storms, these dams transform the creek into a series of long ponds. In the dry season, they reduce the creek's flow to a trickle, leaving the exposed streambed covered with cattails. A little farther on, the trail is partially shaded by locust, pepper, pine, and eucalyptus trees, and a few coast live oaks, sycamores, and

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**510/790-2612; [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)**

🕒 5 am–10 pm

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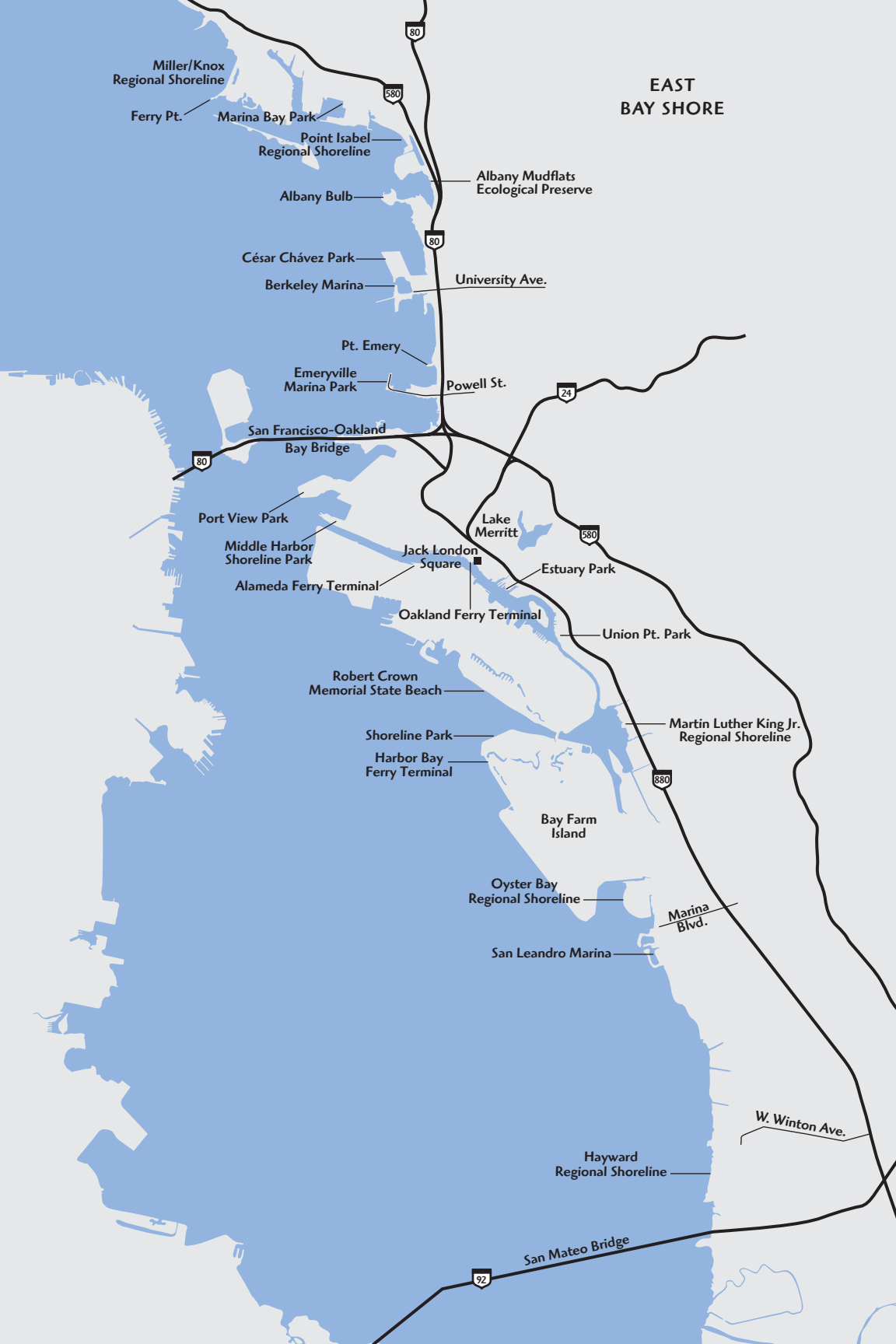
cottonwoods. Wherever the trail passes under a road you will encounter steep slopes that may be challenging for manual wheelchair users.

Sequoia Bridge spans the creek 2.25 miles from Niles Staging Area, providing access to the northern trail and Isherwood Staging Area. If you choose to start your trip from this staging area, it's best to head upstream to Sequoia Bridge and cross to the southern trail before heading west. The automobile bridge on Isherwood Way has no curb cuts, and the surface of the northern trail makes for a very bumpy wheelchair ride. Continuing on the southern trail, you pass residential backyards for the next two miles before coming to the Beard Staging Area, the last stopping place with amenities before you reach Coyote Hills Regional Park, another four miles down the trail. This staging area has picnic grounds and a shaded lawn. If you look across the channel you will see the floodgate that leads to the former natural creek. The channel widens here, and the trail passes through farmland and alongside the marshes of Coyote Hills Regional Park. The junction leading to Coyote Hills is less than 1.5 miles from the bay.

► **GETTING THERE** For Niles Staging Area, exit I-880 South at Decoto Rd. in Fremont. Go east about one mile on Decoto, turn right onto Paseo Padre Parkway, follow it for 1.2 miles, and turn left onto Peralta Blvd. (Highway 84), which becomes Mowry Ave., which you follow for 1.8 miles. Turn left onto Mission Blvd., right at the first signal on Niles Canyon Rd., and right to cross the bridge on Old Canyon Rd. Niles Staging Area is down a steep driveway on the left.

► **PARKING** Three staging areas for the southern trail—Isherwood, Niles, and Beard—have two, one, and one blue spaces, respectively.

► **RESTROOMS** Niles and Isherwood Staging Area parking lots each have one accessible portable toilet. At Beard, the accessible portable toilet's concrete pad has a four-inch lip. An accessible portable restroom is near the Model Mariners boat club, 1.25 miles west of Niles Staging Area on the southern trail.



## EAST BAY SHORE

Miller/Knox  
Regional Shoreline

Ferry Pt.

Marina Bay Park

Point Isabel  
Regional Shoreline

Albany Bulb

Albany Mudflats  
Ecological Preserve

César Chávez Park

Berkeley Marina

University Ave.

Pt. Emery

Emeryville  
Marina Park

Powell St.

San Francisco-Oakland  
Bay Bridge

Port View Park

Middle Harbor  
Shoreline Park

Alameda Ferry Terminal

Jack London  
Square

Oakland Ferry Terminal

Lake  
Merritt

Estuary Park

Union Pt. Park

Robert Crown  
Memorial State Beach

Shoreline Park

Harbor Bay  
Ferry Terminal

Martin Luther King Jr.  
Regional Shoreline

Bay Farm  
Island

Oyster Bay  
Regional Shoreline

San Leandro Marina

Marina  
Blvd.

W. Winton Ave.

Hayward  
Regional Shoreline

San Mateo Bridge



# East Bay Shore

**N**ORTH OF DUMBARTON BRIDGE, the eastern edge of the Bay presents many different faces to the visitor. Near Hayward, the Bay Trail winds on dirt levees through a narrow band of restored marshlands, formerly salt ponds. Further north, marinas and parks are interspersed among industrial areas, the airport and port of Oakland, and commercial and residential neighborhoods. Past the Bay Bridge, the new Eastshore State Park is emerging along the waterfronts of Emeryville, Berkeley, and Richmond. You will also find several marinas and dozens of smaller parks in these three cities.

The East Bay shoreline is undergoing a renaissance: marshes are being restored and former landfills are being shaped into new parks. In Oakland, Albany, and elsewhere, a fierce struggle is under way among those who want public open space and parks and those who favor residential and commercial development.

LAWRENCE ROBBIN



*Hayward Regional Shoreline is home to hundreds of species of birds and other wildlife.*





## *Hayward and San Leandro*

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**ALONG THIS STRETCH OF SHORELINE**, the Bay Trail extends for seven miles from the marshes and creeks of Hayward Regional Shoreline, habitat to hundreds of species of birds and other wildlife, to the San Leandro Marina, with its popular park and jogging course. There is no shade along the way, so bring a hat. The shoreline trail is accessible with a power wheelchair, but some gravelled areas may be problematic with a manual wheelchair. The trail has four entry points.

### *Hayward Regional Shoreline Interpretive Center to West Winton Avenue*

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**OFF HIGHWAY 92 NEAR THE EAST END OF THE SAN MATEO BRIDGE**

**J**UST NORTH OF the San Mateo Bridge, a wooden building on stilts houses the Shoreline Interpretive Center (open weekends only), a good place to start your trip. You can get a sense of the natural environment by studying a large map and exploring exhibits and materials there; interactive exhibits accommodate both seated and standing users. Local fish and invertebrates are displayed in several aquaria. You can also borrow binoculars here to take out on the trail.

From the interpretive center, a wide wooden ramp leads to a hard-packed dirt trail heading north. The next access point to this trail is at West Winton Avenue, 2.5 miles away; the others are at Grant Avenue and the San Leandro Marina. You travel on a levee through mud flats and cross several wooden bridges. The one near Johnson's Landing has a short, steep approach that might be difficult for someone in a manual wheelchair without assistance. It was no problem for me in my power wheelchair.

Changes in the weather can alter this shoreline dramatically. Sometimes cold, fierce winds blow and the water is gray; at other times it ripples and



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center***510/783-1066***Interpretive center:***510/670-7270**🕒 *Shoreline: 5 am–10 pm,  
gates 8 am–5 pm**Interpretive center:  
Sat.–Sun., 10 am–5 pm*

glints in the sun. You can take a long ride, watching the light change the look of the Oakland and San Francisco skylines.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 92 East just east of the San Mateo Bridge, exit at Clawiter Road. At the foot of the ramp, turn left onto Clawiter, cross over the freeway, then turn left on Breakwater Avenue. Follow signs along Breakwater to the Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center. From Highway 92 West, exit at Clawiter, then go straight across Clawiter to Breakwater and turn left. See below for other entrances to the shoreline.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Three blue spaces are in front of the interpretive center. The restrooms in the center (available only when it is open) are spacious and accessible. An accessible portable toilet at the trail's start on Breakwater Ave. has a gravel approach that is difficult to negotiate. The next accessible public restrooms on the shoreline are seven miles away at the San Leandro Marina.

## *West Winton Avenue to Grant Avenue*

**I-880 WEST WINTON AVENUE EXIT**

**A**T THE WEST WINTON AVENUE ENTRY, two paths, one on each side of a flood-control channel, lead .5 mile west to the shoreline levee trail and Hayward's Landing, a former docking area for ships transporting salt from the nearby evaporation ponds. The entrance gates for both paths require a tight 90-degree turn that may be difficult for some wheelchair riders to negotiate. The trailhead for the paved northern path is just outside the park entrance; the southern trail, which leaves from the parking lot, is dirt and has a short



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

### *Hayward Regional Shoreline*

downhill run. Grasses along these trails are tall and thick in spring, and at the shoreline green and red pickleweed tangles with orange marsh dodder.

Heading north from Hayward's Landing on the shoreline trail, a small hill demands some effort, and sections with thick gravel may be impassable in a manual wheelchair without assistance—even my power chair had some difficulty. It's 2.25 miles from Hayward's Landing to Grant Avenue.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-880 at West Winton Ave. and go west to the parking lot at the end.

► **PARKING** No blue spaces are available at the West Winton Ave. southern trail entrance, but plenty of paved spaces are in the lot. On-street parking at the northern trail entrance just outside the park's gate is limited.

## *Grant Avenue to San Leandro Marina*

### **I-880 WASHINGTON AVENUE EXIT**

**A**CCESS THE TRAIL at the Grant Avenue entry by following a paved path from the parking lot around a locked service gate and parallel to San Lorenzo Creek to connect to the paved trail leading to the San Leandro Marina. On the far side of the pedestrian bridge over the creek, a tight 90-degree turn around a gate may be difficult to negotiate. Turn right to head inland on the other side of the creek, then left alongside a condominium development. The next .5 mile, called the Heron Bay Trail, passes a 406-acre restored salt marsh at Roberts Landing, once a major shipping point for Alameda County. Interpretive panels describe local plants and wildlife. You cross one more pedestrian bridge as the trail heads west again to skirt the shoreline. Approaching Marina Park from the south, the bay is on your left, its waves lapping against riprap; on your right is the Tony Lema Golf Course.

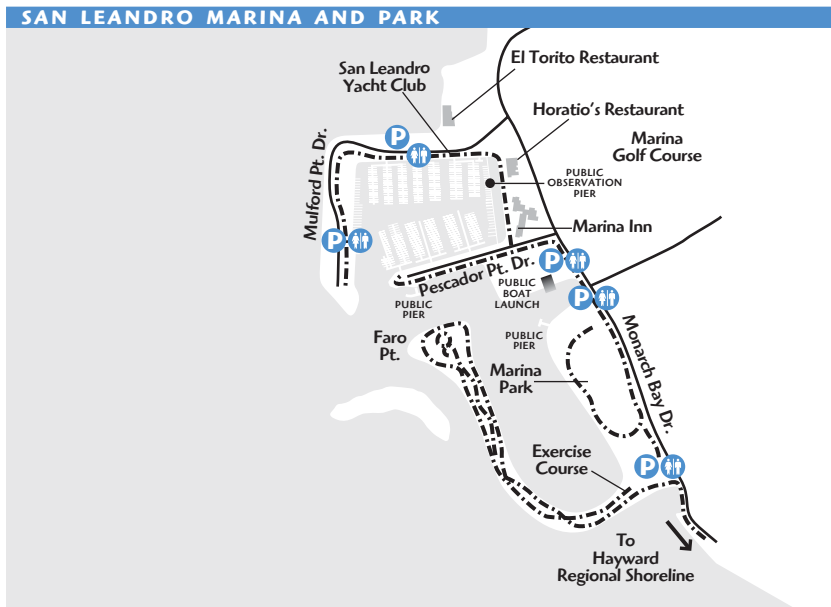
- **GETTING THERE** Exit I-880 at Washington Ave. and go southwest to Grant Avenue. Turn right and follow Grant to the parking lot, on the right side of the road just before it deadends.
- **PARKING** The parking lot has two blue spaces.

## *San Leandro Marina and Park*

### I-880 MARINA BOULEVARD WEST EXIT

**I**N CONTRAST TO the solitude I experienced on the shoreline trail from Hayward, I found hordes of pedestrians, windsurfers, and fishers at the San Leandro Marina's park and picnic areas. Marina Park, the large recreation area south of the marina, has a smooth 1.5-mile paved loop trail and parcourse—with exercises for wheelchair riders—that starts near the southern parking lot and leads out on a peninsula to Faro Point. On the inland side, people fish from the pier and throw Frisbees, play ball, and fly kites on the large grass field. A paved path connects paved picnic table and barbecue areas and children's playgrounds.

To reach the marina from the park, follow the sidewalk northward along Monarch Bay Drive to a parking lot at the beginning of Pescador Point Drive.



There a small-craft launching dock with a steep wooden ramp leads down to a floating pier. Although more than an eight-degree (1:12) slope, the ramp is usable, with nearly flat transitions to the path and pier; it's the best spot in the area

to get close to the water. A sidewalk near the restrooms in the boat launch parking lot leads out along Pescador Point Drive toward the point, to a small picnic area with barbecue grills and tables encircled by a paved path with benches. Thick grass around the picnic table pads makes traveling to them a challenge.

Heading inland again along Pescador Point Drive, you come to a paved path that leads north behind the Marina Inn to Mulford Point Drive, then west along the drive, traveling between boat slips and parking areas and ending in a small park on Mulford Point, the marina's other peninsula. Facing the parking lot, a tiled mosaic wall depicts the oystermen who once operated here.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-880, take Marina Blvd. West to Monarch Bay Dr. and follow it to the left. Turn right into the Marina or stay straight to enter Marina Park.

► **PARKING** Marina Park's south lot has four blue spaces and the north has three. The lot by the boat launch has two blue spaces for boats. The parking areas along Pescador Point Dr. have ten spaces (most with no side aisles) and those along Mulford Point Dr. have 13.

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**Marina Park: 510/577-3462**

**Marina: 510/357-7447**

🕒 **Marina Park:** Dawn to dusk;  
**restrooms, 9 am–8 pm**

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LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*San Leandro Marina*

► **RESTROOMS** Two good accessible restrooms are near each of the playgrounds at the north and south ends of Marina Park. One accessible restroom—no stall doors and narrow sink aisle—is in the boat launch parking lot and two are on Mulford Point Dr., one near Berth F-E and the other west of the peninsula’s bend, near Berth A.

## *Oyster Bay Regional Shoreline*

I-880 MARINA BOULEVARD WEST EXIT

**T**HIS 196-ACRE BAYSIDE PARK is peaceful, despite the proximity of Oakland International Airport. As you travel along the paved 1.5-mile shoreline trail, birdsong and the sound of water lapping against riprap draw your attention. In late spring, painted lady and swallowtail butterflies frequent the mustard and fennel growing on the hillsides. Across the bay is San Bruno Mountain; to the south you see the Coyote Hills and the San Mateo Bridge.

From the trailhead at Neptune Drive, the trail leads left and climbs a long, gentle hill. To reach the picnic areas, take the side trail at the first fork. Check out Roger Berry’s metal sculpture “Rising Wave” at the end of this side trail. Continuing on the main shoreline trail, you will see the San Leandro Marina and the airport’s control tower. The trail runs along a wire fence and curves inland toward a small bay separating the park peninsula from the airport, and ends shortly at a gravel road. You will need to return the way you came.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-880, exit at Marina Blvd. West. Turn right on Neptune Dr. a few hundred feet before the San Leandro Marina.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Street parking is on Neptune Drive. One accessible portable toilet without a sink is in the first picnic area.

LAWRENCE ROBBIN



*Oyster Bay Regional Shoreline*



## *Alameda and Oakland*

FEW LONGTIME BAY AREA RESIDENTS know much about the Alameda and Oakland shorelines and not many visitors explore them, yet there is much to discover. In Alameda you will find stately Victorian houses and the Bay Area's largest beach, while in Oakland, the 19-mile stretch of waterfront between the airport and the foot of the Bay Bridge offers surprising vistas and includes several parks, marinas, industry, and the fourth-busiest port in the United States. At the foot of Broadway, looking out on Alameda, is Jack London Square, with restaurants, shops, nightclubs, and historic attractions. Wetlands are being restored on the north and south ends of the city's waterfronts, new parks are planned, and work is under way to provide continuous shoreline pedestrian access from Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline to Jack London Square.



EILEEN ECKLUND

*Lake Merritt*

## *Bay Farm Island to Crown Beach*

**B**AY FARM ISLAND is actually part of a peninsula shared by Oakland International Airport and the Harbor Bay Island development, which includes luxury homes and a business district.

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*Ferry service between San Francisco and Bay Farm Island during commute hours only: 510/769-5172*

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Shoreline Park lies along the northern waterfront. The former island, which once was farmed, has been expanded and linked to the mainland by fill. A six-mile loop trail, part of the Bay Trail, offers views of San Francisco and Mount Tamalpais. The 2.5-mile paved stretch through Shoreline Park from the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal to Bill Osborne Model Airplane Field, with picnic areas along the way, is popular with joggers, cyclists, and rollerbladers.

Starting at the ferry terminal and facing the bay, turn right to travel northwest. Rounding the peninsula's northern tip, you can look across San Leandro Bay to some of Alameda's older neighborhoods, with streets shaded by tall sycamores. Farther east is a small lawn with picnic tables. At the Harbor Bay Club you can take a side trip, following the sidewalk inland to a neighborhood where paved paths run alongside canals. Back on the main trail, you pass under the Bay Farm Island Bridge and head up a steep incline. From here you can either continue .5 mile to the model airplane field or turn left to cross San Leandro Bay on the Bay Farm Island Bicycle Bridge. It leads to Alameda's Towata Park. From there, follow the sidewalk for a short distance to the Tiny Tots Preschool, then pick up a paved path leading left to the paved shoreline trail. Where it ends, follow Bayview Drive, go left on Broadway, then right on Shoreline Drive for less than one-eighth of a mile to reach the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary in Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-80 at High Street. Take High St. west across the bridge over the Oakland Estuary to Alameda. Turn left on Otis Drive. After crossing the Bay Farm Island Bridge, stay right onto Island Drive. Turn right on Mecartney Road. The ferry terminal is at the intersection of Mecartney and Harbor Bay Parkway.

► **PARKING** The Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal has six blue spaces. On-street parking is at Shoreline Park's Veterans Court entrance on the northwestern



side of the Bay Farm Island Bridge, as well as along the length of the trail. One blue space on Bridgeview Isle serves Towata Park. One blue space is in the model airplane field lot off Doolittle Drive.

► **RESTROOMS** Four accessible restrooms are along the trail north of the ferry terminal, two are on Sea View Parkway, one is at Brunswick Way, and one is at Old Castle Lane. The accessible restroom at the ferry terminal has no stall doors.

## *Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach*

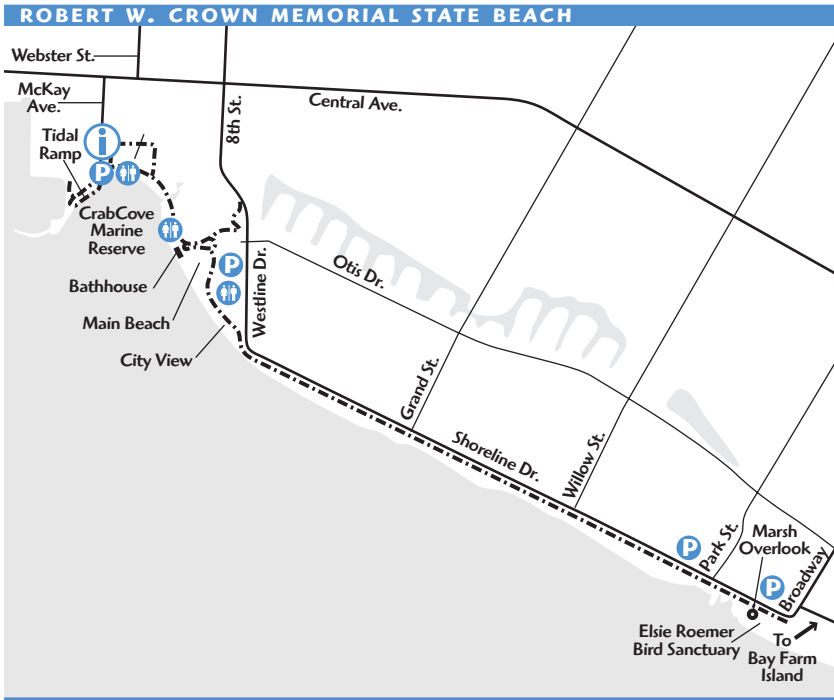
CENTRAL AVENUE OR SHORELINE DRIVE, ALAMEDA

**T**HE ISLAND OF ALAMEDA has the bay's largest and warmest beach, with shallow water and tiny waves. Crown Memorial, also known locally as Alameda Beach, is a wonderful place for strolling or picnics, with easy wheelchair access along its entire length. Many families come here. The park's many programs for the public include nature walks, free evening concerts, and an annual sandcastle contest.

The beach has three contiguous areas with a flat, paved 2.5-mile trail running the entire length. One area is Crab Cove, at the northwestern end. Here at low tide you can use a concrete ramp to take you in close to tidepools. You may find yourself at touching distance from limpets and barnacles. The base of the ramp is submerged at high tide. At low tide shorebirds feed in the exposed mudflats; at high tide look for grebes and pelicans on the



DAN ROBBIN



water or above. The visitor center has a 700-gallon tank exhibiting local marine life and other displays related to the local ecology. Crab Cove also has an accessible overlook at the freshwater lagoon and large grassy picnic grounds with barbecue grills.

From Crab Cove it's an easy .25 mile to the main beach and 2.5 miles to the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary on the paved shoreline trail. There are plenty of picnic areas on the grass near the beach. No accessible trails lead to the water, but the park may have a beach wheelchair available; check with staff. The bird sanctuary is at the east end of the beach, on Shoreline Drive, between Park Street and Broadway. You can cruise there from the main beach or drive down and park on the street. Watch the avian action from the paved trails and boardwalk overlook.

► **GETTING THERE** On Webster St. in downtown Oakland, take the Oakland/Alameda Tube running under the Oakland Estuary. Continue through Alameda on Webster St. until it dead-ends at Central Avenue. For Crab Cove, turn right onto Central, then left into the park just after the Fosters



*Tidepool ramp at Crown Beach*

**510/521-6887; [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)**

**🕒 Beach gates:**

March–Oct., 8 am–8 pm;

Nov.–Feb., 8 am–6 pm;

*Crab Cove visitor center:*

Wed.–Sun., 10 am–4:30 pm

**FEES** *Main beach parking:*

\$5 when kiosk is attended

*Dogs:* \$2 each (not allowed on beach)

**RESERVATIONS** *Group picnic:*

**510/636-1684**

Freeze. For the main beach and bird sanctuary, turn left on Central and right on Eighth St., which first becomes Westline Dr. and then Shoreline Drive.

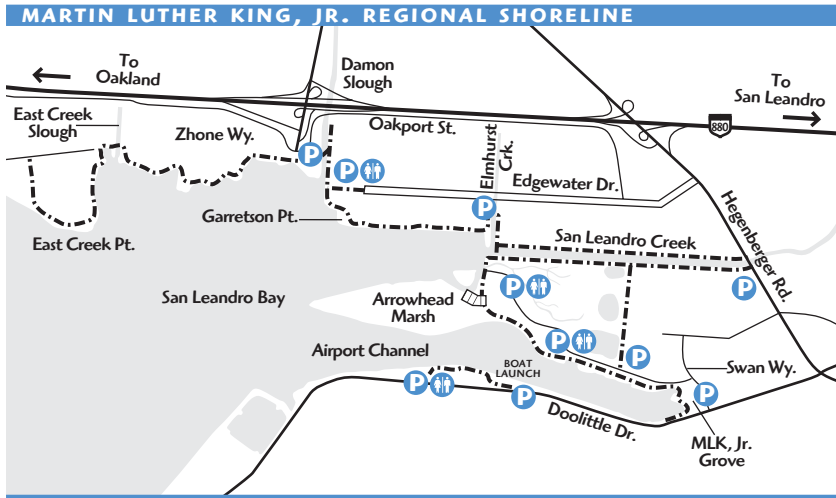
► **PARKING** Three lots at the park entrance at Otis Dr. and Westline Dr. serve the beach. The lot closest to the entrance has seven blue spaces, none with access aisles. The other two lots each have two blue spaces next to the restrooms. Two blue spaces are next to the Crab Cove Visitor Center. For the bird sanctuary, four blue spaces are in front of the Sushi House where Park St. intersects with Shoreline Dr., and two on-street blue spaces are at the southern end of Shoreline Dr.

► **RESTROOMS** Spacious, accessible restrooms are in the parking lots at the park entrance and at the main beach bathhouse. Old, undersized accessible restrooms are at Crab Cove Visitor Center.

## *Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline*

**I-880 HEGENBERGER ROAD EXIT, OAKLAND**

**D**ESPITE ITS PROXIMITY to industry and a major airport, this 1,200-acre waterfront park has lots of wildlife. Cruising along miles of level, paved trails, you have a good chance of seeing egrets, black-bellied plovers, mallards, and hawks. Large lawns and several picnic areas invite you to



pause and take in views of Oakland and Alameda, and San Francisco across the water.

Of the several entry points, the main one, off Swan Way, offers the easiest access to most of the park's features. The parking area on your right has blue spaces only. Start here and travel northeast .5 mile on a wide, paved trail, traversing open grasslands to Arrowhead Marsh, a 50-acre salt marsh that is a stopover for migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway. You may also drive farther into the park and start your excursion from the lot next to Arrowhead Marsh. Roll up the long and gradual ramp to a wooden building that has a viewing deck overlooking the marsh. Interpretive panels tell of the bay's shrinking wetlands and efforts to restore them. Nearby is a large lawn with group picnic areas, two fiberglass whale sculptures, and Roger Berry's "Duplex Cone" sculpture, which shows the sun's high summer path and low winter path.

On the shoreline just west of the observation building is a short boardwalk with four-inch protective ledges. Only slightly elevated above the cordgrass and pickleweed, it provides close views of the marsh. You might see American avocets, black-necked stilts, pintail and cinnamon teal ducks, and perhaps even an endangered California clapper rail. A three-inch lip onto the boardwalk may be problematic for some wheelchair riders.

From the boardwalk you can travel south for about a mile along Airport Channel, an arm of San Leandro Bay, on the paved Arrowhead Marsh Trail.

This trail ends at Doolittle Drive, where the lack of sidewalks prevents you from traveling .5 mile more to the park's smaller western side. You will need a car if you want to visit that area, which has a boat launch, a fishing pier with one step, a


small sandy beach, three group picnic areas, and the accessible Shoreline Conference Center and Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center.

The Arrowhead Marsh Trail also runs east from the boardwalk to San Leandro Creek. From here you can follow a 1.75-mile paved loop along parallel paths on each side of the creek, crossing over the creek on Hegenberger Road, or you can skip the loop and turn left at the mouth of the creek to cross the bridge there. Along the San Leandro Creek loop trail, I was mystified by shell fragments covering the ground until I saw a seagull drop a mussel onto the pavement from 15 feet above. The shell shattered on impact, and the gull descended to pick up its meal. Sharp shell fragments on the trail could present a problem for pneumatic tires in these areas.

From the mouth of San Leandro Creek, roll northeast, alongside Elmhurst Creek, for less than .25 mile and turn left across another bridge near the Elmhurst Creek staging area. This is the beginning of the paved Garretson Point Trail, which leads .75 mile along the shoreline and is lined with exercise stations, picnic tables, and benches. You might see some trash and debris in the mudflats of San Leandro Bay at low tide, but that does not mean they are forgotten. Extensive salt marsh restoration work is under way in this area. By late 2005, 71 acres near Arrowhead Marsh had already been restored. North of Garretson Point, the trail crosses Damon Slough. Now called the Damon Marsh Trail, it passes through a wildlife sanctuary and then hugs the shoreline, crossing East Creek Slough after about .75 mile. The trail enters an industrial area as it curves toward East Creek Point. Stacks of empty cargo containers tower above you. Benches await you on the point. The trail ends less than .25 mile away at Tidewater Avenue.

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**510/562-1373**; [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)

 5 am–10 pm

**RESERVATIONS** Group picnic:  
**510/636-1684**

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► **GETTING THERE** From I-880 in Oakland, take Hegenberger Rd. west toward the airport. Turn right on Doolittle Dr. (Highway 61), right on Swan Way, then left into the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** All of the park's lots have blue spaces. Accessible restrooms are between the King Fisher and Plover picnic areas on the entrance road and at the Arrowhead Marsh lot, but the latter have no stall doors. The restrooms at Garretson Point have grab bars only on the sides, the toilet height is 15 inches, and the women's stall allows only a frontal transfer. The men's has a lowered urinal and no stall door. A good accessible restroom is between the Blue Heron and Rail picnic areas at the park's western side, off Doolittle Drive.

## *Union Point Park to Jack London Square*

**U**NION POINT PARK, opened in September 2005, is a nine-acre waterfront park in an industrial area just south of Dennison Street on Embarcadero East. The Bay Trail runs along the

park's entire waterfront as a 1,500-foot promenade, with views of Alameda across the Oakland Estuary, as well as of downtown Oakland. For even more expansive views, follow the spiral path to the top of the man-made hill. The park also has an accessible playground and picnic areas.

From the northern end of Union Point Park to Estuary Park is about 1.5 miles. You can take the shoreline path part of the way, winding through industrial and commercial areas as well as hotels and residential complexes, but along busy Embarcadero you must take the sidewalk in some stretches. Perhaps the most interesting spot before you reach Estuary Park is Embarcadero Cove, a small complex of Victorian buildings (with steps), gardens, shops, a marina, and a former lighthouse, which once stood at the Oakland harbor entrance and is now Quinn's Lighthouse restaurant. A wheelchair lift will take you to the second floor for views of Alameda. Also along this stretch, between two hotels north of Embarcadero Cove, is the wooden San Antonio Fishing Pier.

Five blocks southeast of Jack London Square is Estuary Park, a pleasant place where Lake Merritt flows out and the tide flows in. Easily missed because it's not visible from the Embarcadero, the park has a fishing pier with a steep ramp, a large grass field, a group picnic area sheltered under

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**RESERVATIONS** Estuary  
Park group picnic area:  
**510/238-3187**

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EILEEN ECKLUND

*The Bay Trail along Oakland Estuary*

an arbor, and a concrete shoreline terrace close to the water. An accessible public boat launch is next to the Jack London Aquatic Center, which has a dock that is also wheelchair-accessible except at very low tide. The Bay Trail (partly asphalt, partly decomposed granite) runs along the shore to Jack London Square, passing two private marinas, an office-and-condominium complex, a restaurant, and a fishing pier. Benches are scattered alongside the trail. The decomposed-granite section may have puddles during the wet season.

► **GETTING THERE** Union Point Park: From I-880 South, exit at 16th Avenue. Turn left on Embarcadero and continue to the park entrance. From I-880 North, exit at 23rd Ave. and turn left at the bottom of the ramp, following the sign toward Alameda. Stay in the right lane as you cross over the freeway and take the first right (following the sign toward 880), onto East Seventh St.; stay straight to avoid entering the freeway. East Seventh soon becomes Embarcadero East and continues to the park entrance.

Estuary Park: From I-980 West, exit at Jackson St. and continue straight along Fifth Street. Turn right onto Oak St. for four blocks, where it runs into Embarcadero, stay left and take Embarcadero to the park entrance. From I-880 North, take the Fifth Ave. exit. Go under the freeway, turn right on Embarcadero, and continue to the park entrance.

► **PARKING** Several blue spaces are at both ends of Union Point Park and in hotel lots to the north of it. Angled street parking is along Embarcadero East. Two blue spaces with no access aisle are next to Quinn's. Two blue spaces are

next to the Aquatic Center in the Estuary Park lot and one is in a public/private lot on the western side of the park. A paid public lot with several blue spaces is at Embarcadero West between Harrison and Webster Streets.

► **RESTROOMS** The accessible restroom at Estuary Park has a steep curb cut onto the sidewalk in front of it. Accessible restrooms are in the harbormaster building adjacent to the Jack London Marina (open weekdays 7 am–9 pm, weekends 10 am–9 pm).

## *Jack London Square*

EMBARCADERO BETWEEN ALICE AND CLAY STREETS, OAKLAND

**J**ACK LONDON SQUARE isn't really a square—it's a six-block area defined by shops, restaurants, a hotel, marinas, and open space along the Oakland Estuary. At its center at the foot of Broadway is a plaza where crowds gather for evening concerts, the twice-weekly farmers market, and other events. Alameda is across the water; to your right as you face the water is a ferry landing serving San Francisco, Alameda, the Giants' ballpark, and Angel Island; and, just beyond, the *USS Potomac*, Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential yacht, is docked. The Bay Trail runs along the water within Jack London Square and for about a mile east to Estuary Park. In 2006 the Square was being redeveloped to include new housing, stores, hotels, restaurants, and office space. Brick paving stones throughout the square can be bumpy in a manual wheelchair.

Jack London's waterfront haunt, Heinhold's First and Last Chance Saloon, at the corner of Webster and Water Streets, has accessible outdoor tables.

### *General information:*

<http://jacklondonsquare.com/>

*Event hotline:* **866/295-9853**

*Alameda/Oakland Ferry:*

**510/522-3300**

*USS Potomac:* **510/627-1215**

*Farmers market:* **800/949-FARM**

### 🕒 *USS Potomac tours:*

Wed., 10:30 am–3:30 pm;

Fri. and Sun., noon–3:30 pm

*Farmers market:* Sun.

year-round, 10 am–2 pm;

Wed. May–Oct, 10 am–2 pm

### **FEES** *USS Potomac tours:* \$7;

seniors 60 and above, \$5;

under 13, free.

**NOTE** To get to the Square without crossing the railroad tracks, use the pedestrian bridge across the Embarcadero from the fourth floor of the Washington St. parking garage.





*Farmers market at Jack London Square*

Nearby is the log cabin London lived in during the Klondike gold rush, which was replicated using some of the original logs and moved here from the Yukon Territory in the late 1960s. Diamond-shaped plaques in the pavement and on facades highlight historical facts about London, the waterfront, and Oakland and its port. An accessible public boat ramp where you can rent canoes and kayaks is at the foot of Franklin Street.

Taking one of the regular tours of the *Potomac*, known as the “floating White House” in FDR’s time, poses an access challenge but is worth the effort. A short, steep ramp with a tight 90-degree turn leads to the main deck, and the various rooms are connected by a 27-inch passageway. With assistance, I managed in my motorized wheelchair. Although a threshold prevents wheelchair access into the dining area and bedroom, I could still get a good view, and was thrilled to be aboard this historic vessel. You can also view photos and a 12-minute film about the yacht in the visitor center.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Several blue spaces are in pay lots at Washington St. between Second St. and Embarcadero, at Webster St. and Embarcadero West, and at the foot of Broadway. Valet parking is available just within the main entry to the square on Broadway and near the foot of Franklin St. on Water Street. Accessible restrooms are on the ground floor of the Washington St. parking garage and adjacent to both ends of the Broadway garage.

## Lake Merritt

I-580 GRAND AVENUE OR LAKESHORE AVENUE EXIT

**L**AKE MERRITT, with its surrounding 3.4 miles of trail and 75-acre Lakeside Park, is to Oakland what Central Park is to New York—an oasis in the heart of the city. People stroll or jog along the shore, children watch the ducks and geese, climb and slide on play structures, and visit Children’s Fairyland. You can listen to concerts in the summer, wander through an impressive garden center, learn to sail, or just linger on lawns shaded by oaks and a variety of other trees. At night, the trailside “Necklace of Lights” glitters on the water.

The lake was created in 1869 when a dam was built across a tidal estuary. Its water is a mix of salt and fresh because a channel, at 12th Street, connects the lake to the Oakland Estuary, allowing for tidal flushing. Thousands of waterfowl and shorebirds stop by during their migrations along the Pacific Flyway, and many birds reside year-round. In 2006, the City was getting ready to restore some salt marsh at the 12th Street Channel, thereby improving water quality in the lake and restoring some wetland habitat. This was one of several major projects, including new accessible pathways or other wheelchair access improvements, that were getting underway at Lake Merritt.

Until these projects are completed, if you want to circle the lake by wheelchair you will have to switch back and forth from sidewalks to dirt paths to paved trails. Be alert. There is no protective curb where the trail is close to the water, and bird droppings can make the ground slippery. The most heavily

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*Oakland Parks and Recreation:* **510/238-7275**;  
[www.Oaklandnet.com/parks/facilities/points\\_lakemerritt.asp](http://www.Oaklandnet.com/parks/facilities/points_lakemerritt.asp)

*Lake Merritt Boating Center (Sailboat House):* **510/238-2196**

*Rotary Nature Center:*

**510/238-3739**

*Garden Center:* **510/238-3208**

*Bonsai Garden:* **510/763-8409**

*Junior Center of Art and*

*Science:* **510/839-5777**

*Camron-Stanford House:*

**510/444-1876**

*Children’s Fairyland:*

**510/452-225, 910/452-2259**

🕒 *Lakeside Park:* 6 am–10 pm;  
 call individual facilities for hours

**FEES** *Parking:* \$2 per vehicle on weekends and holidays  
*Children’s Fairyland:* \$6 per person (includes unlimited rides); under 1 year free;  
 Magic Keys, \$2  
*Camron-Stanford House:* \$5; seniors, \$4; ages 12–18, \$3; under 12, free

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EILEEN ECKLUND

used area, and the trickiest to navigate, is where most of the attractions are—the wildlife refuge, Boating Center/Sailboat House, Rotary Nature Center, Garden Center, and Fairyland.

I started my trip around the lake at Euclid and Grand Aves. in Lakeside Park, taking the trail that leads to the right as you face the lake. Five small man-made islands, just offshore, soon come into view. Depending on the season, they are home to coots, cor-

morants, egrets, herons, gulls, grebes, ducks, geese, and other birds. There are picnic tables along the shore on sloping lawns, but they lack accessible paths. A small play area off the trail has ramps for access to play structures, but sand on the path makes travel a bit difficult.

The Rotary Nature Center offers displays and environmental programs related to the surrounding area and its wild inhabitants, plus an aviary for injured birds and a pen for freshwater turtles rescued from the lake's brackish waters. An accessible picnic table is next to the turtle pen. Just beyond the Nature Center is the Junior Center of Art and Science, offering classes, workshops, exhibits, and events for children. Across Bellevue Avenue, the park's main drive, a sloping lawn is the site of summer theater productions.

The most accessible route leading west from the Junior Center is Bellevue Avenue, which is wide enough for cars to share the road with wheelchairs and bicyclists. An alternate route, starting just past the Junior Center, leads left down the steep driveway to the Boating Center, through the parking lot, and up the driveway on the other side to a service road alongside the lake. The Boating Center rents various non-motorized boats and offers sailing, rowing, kayaking, and canoeing classes. Although no adapted boats are available, the Oakland Park and Recreation's accessibility specialist works to accommodate people with disabilities.

Beyond the boathouse and across Bellevue Avenue is an entrance to the Garden Center, which has an array of theme and vegetable-demonstration

gardens, and a Bonsai Garden tucked in behind beautifully fitted wooden doors. Docent-led tours are available.

Crossing back over Bellevue Avenue and continuing on the paved trail, you come to a junction. Take the trail straight and then bear left to arrive at Children's Fairyland, a ten-acre fairytale theme park more than 50 years old and best suited for children still young enough to delight in turning a "magic key" to activate a talking storybook. The park admits adults only if they are accompanied by a child. Wheelchair access throughout is pretty good and continues to be improved.

A left turn back at the trail junction leads down a moderately steep hill to the shoreline trail and an old-fashioned bandstand, where the municipal band plays on many summer Sundays. The trail continues past a small beach that has a concrete climbing structure for children, then travels along the shore toward Grand Avenue; the asphalt was broken and bumpy when I was here. At Grand Avenue, roll on the sidewalk a short distance to Harrison Street, where you turn left and connect again to the paved shoreline trail. After .5 mile, you pass an accessible public pier. When the trail ends at Lakeside Dr. and 17th Street, take the sidewalk along Lakeside. You soon pass the old Municipal Boathouse, and a little farther, at 14th Street and Lakeside, the historic Camron-Stanford House. Built in 1876 and the first of many stately homes that once stood on the lakeshore, it is now a museum, with exhibits detailing domestic life in the years 1875 to 1885. Only the ground floor is wheelchair-accessible.

Skirting the lake's southern shore, you pass the Alameda County Courthouse and the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, then cross the viaduct over the Lake Merritt channel. A very steep concrete ramp heading down to the water's edge offers no accessible path of travel, so stick to the sidewalk, which leads to another section of shoreline trail along the east shore. At the foot of East 18th Street, travel around a small platform on the sidewalk to reach the shoreline trail, here hard-packed dirt. The shoreline trail and the sidewalk both allow you to complete the loop around the lake.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-580 East in central Oakland, exit at Grand Ave., turn right on Grand, then left on Bellevue Avenue. From I-580 West, exit at Lakeshore Ave., go straight one block to Grand Ave., and then left on Grand and left on Bellevue.

► **PARKING** Most of the accessible parking is at the entrance to Lakeside Park on Bellevue Ave.; elsewhere there is only on-street parking. Four blue spaces are at Fairyland, two are at the lawn bowling entrance, two are by the crosswalk just past the lawn bowling entrance, five are by the Garden Center, and five are at the boating center. There is one blue space each in the lots north and south of the Municipal Boathouse.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible restrooms are at the Nature Center and Boating Center (the men's toilet is 15 inches high), and near the Garden Center on the service road between the lawn bowling area and the center's main entrance. Fairyland has two accessible restrooms for customers. The accessible public restroom at the old Municipal Boathouse is on the north side of the building.

## *Middle Harbor Shoreline Park*

**D**RIVING AMID the countless trailer trucks that barrel around Oakland's busy port and its giant steel-limbed gantry cranes, I was convinced I would never find Middle Harbor Shoreline Park. Just as I was about to give up, the salvaged mast of the *USS Oakland*, an anti-aircraft cruiser decommissioned in 1949, welcomed me to the park's east entrance.

This 38-acre landscaped green space in the midst of the vast industrial landscape of the working port is unique and well worth the effort it takes to find. Opened in 2003, it was the site of the Navy's Pacific Fleet supply center from World War II until 1998. The *Oakland*'s mast heralds the park's many historical maritime features, including bollards for tying up ships, pier remnants, and the outlined footprint of the Navy's four-acre warehouse. Other features include a sandy beach, an amphitheater, and nearly three miles of wide, level trails that weave through the park. From the .75-mile shoreline promenade that links the park's center to its southern end you can see wildlife, broad sunsets, container ships being loaded and unloaded, and a large salt marsh being restored (2007 is the estimated completion year).

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**510/272-4810**

🕒 Dawn to dusk

### **RESERVATIONS**

*Picnic areas:* **510/636-1684**

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At the park's center, near the two parking lots, is Point Arnold, a 16-acre grassy peninsula with a wharf (44-inch railings), accessible viewing telescopes, and several picnic sites. Several interpretive panels make this area something of an outdoor museum.

Trails and habitat overlooks are on the park's southern end, a scenic 10-acre peninsula that was the site of the Western Pacific Mole, an early 20th-century railroad terminal that provided both a shipping connection for local and international freight and a ferry station to take railroad passengers to and from San Francisco. Trails throughout have eroded and are rough in places, but the Port is working to repair them. At the handsome observation tower, both elevators were out of service when I visited and were scheduled to be repaired sometime in 2006. The elevators are locked when park staff is not on duty (staff hours are 7 am–4:30 pm in winter, longer in other seasons); you may want to call ahead to ask if they're working and open. An alternate paved trail near the parking area that serves the Mole leads to the first level of the observation tower.

Returning to Point Arnold on the promenade, head west from the wharf on a .5-mile cement-treated sand trail paralleling Seventh Street and the railroad tracks to reach Port View Park. You will find benches and an overlook along the trail.

LAWRENCE ROBBIN



*Middle Harbor Shoreline Park*

► **GETTING THERE** From San Francisco, take I-80 East to I-880 South to the West Grand Ave./Maritime St. exit. Continue straight, then turn right on Maritime St. Turn right onto Seventh St., follow it to the intersection with Middle Harbor Rd., continue straight through the intersection, then take the first right into the park. From the northern East Bay, take Highway 24 West to I-980 west. Exit at 11th/12th Sts. onto Brush Street. Continue straight, turn right onto Seventh St., follow it to the intersection with Middle Harbor Rd., continue straight through the intersection, then take the first right into the park. From the South Bay, take I-880 North and exit at Seventh St. toward W. Grand Avenue. Turn left onto Seventh St., follow it to the intersection with Middle Harbor Rd., continue straight through the intersection, then take the first right into the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The lot off Middle Harbor Rd. has three blue spaces at its north end. At its southern end is a road serving the Mole. Four blue spaces are at the start of the road and eight blue spaces are at the end. The lot off Seventh St. has three blue spaces. Accessible restrooms (open during staff hours) are west of the *Oakland's* mast near the east parking lot and on the ground floor of the Mole's observation tower.

## *Port View Park*

**J**UTTING OUT INTO San Francisco Bay on a man-made peninsula, this little park, once a railway terminus, offers great views of operations at the nearby

Port of Oakland Seventh Street Terminal. It is also a popular fishing spot. During the week, the diesel trucks coming and going at the port are a constant reminder that you are on a working waterfront, the heart of Oakland's commerce. Weekends tend to be more tranquil. The octagonal-shaped fishing pier's 44-inch high railings are easy to look under but may impede fishing from a wheelchair. The paved junction between the path from the parking lot and the pier has a slight grade difference that manual wheelchair users may need help with.

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📌 **Room With A View:**  
Mon.–Fri., 10 am–3 pm

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The park's other main attraction, just west of the parking lot, is the "Room With a View" exhibit in the Train Tower, where railway personnel directed traffic. A wheelchair lift takes you up to the second story, affording fantastic views of the port, the Bay Bridge, and both downtown Oakland and San Francisco, which are about equidistant from the pier. Take a look at the exhibit, too, where you will learn about Oakland's role in the development of the Bay Area.

► **GETTING THERE** See directions for Middle Harbor Shoreline Park. At the stoplight at Middle Harbor Rd., turn right onto Seventh Street. Turn left into the park before reaching the Ben Nutter Terminal, where Seventh St. ends.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Four blue spaces are in the lot near the park's entrance. Accessible restrooms are at the west end of the Train Tower and at the end of the trail across from the fishing pier (no stall doors).



## *Emeryville and Berkeley*

**THE MILE-LONG** Emeryville Peninsula, a curling finger jutting out into the bay, was one of the last major landfill projects on the bay. Its two marinas and three small parks are connected by two miles of paved Bay Trail. High-rise apartment and office buildings and restaurants overlook the wildlife-rich mudflats and marshes on both sides of the peninsula. The Bay Trail, paved (with a parallel dirt lane) runs two miles alongshore from Emeryville to Berkeley. On the Berkeley waterfront, there is almost always a lot going on at the marina and César Chávez Park. People fly kites, play with dogs, fish from the 3,000-foot Berkeley pier, boat and windsurf, and bring children to a nature center and Adventure Playground.



## Emeryville Marina Park and Bay Trail Loop

I-80 POWELL STREET EXIT, EMERYVILLE

**P**OWELL STREET LEADS to the Emeryville peninsula's tip, where the small lawns of Marina Park—screened

by cypress and pine trees—face the bay. From the paved Bay Trail on the bay side of the lawns, a visitor's view sweeps counterclockwise from the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge and Mount Tamalpais to Sausalito and the Marin Headlands to the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco and then to the Bay Bridge. You can enter the trail at the Emeryville Pier, near the parking lot at the end of Powell Street. The 750-foot pier—less crowded and windy than the Berkeley Pier—stretches east toward the East Bay hills. From the foot of the pier, facing the parking lot, a right turn takes you to the park.

A left turn on the trail at the foot of the pier will take you .25 mile along the docks of Emeryville City and Emery Cove Marinas to the small lawn at Davenport Mini Park, where you can watch people working on their boats and other boats coming and going. From here the paved trail continues east to Trader Vic's restaurant. A .3-mile boardwalk takes off on the eastern side of Trader Vic's and travels along the bay side of the Watergate condominiums, where a large sheltered deck provides a view of the Berkeley Marina to the north. The trail continues inland, ending at a small lawn just west of Chevy's restaurant.

To make the full two-mile loop of the peninsula, continue inland on the sidewalk. At Frontage Road, small, concrete-terraced Shorebird Park is on your left, with madrone trees, an arbor, a short accessible pier, and wood sculptures on abandoned pilings in the water. If you turn left here, a .3-mile

🕒 *Marina Park: 7 am–10 pm*

paved section of Bay Trail takes you along Frontage to Point Emery, a popular trailhead for walkers, runners, and rollerbladers heading north toward



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

*Hot dog stand at the foot of the Berkeley Pier*

the Berkeley Marina on the Bay Trail. To continue the loop, turn right instead and take the sidewalk along Frontage south one block, then turn right again on Powell Street. Follow Powell until the stoplight at the Watergate office towers entrance. Cross Powell here, and return to Marina Park on the paved and level .5-mile trail that hugs the shoreline. The Emeryville Crescent, one of the largest marshes in Eastshore State Park, is on your left.

► **PARKING** All the paved lots at the end of Powell St. have at least one blue space. Lots 3 and 6 have no accessible path to the trail. Emery Cove has two blue spaces, one with no access aisle. Point Emery has one blue space. On-street parking only for Shorebird Park.

► **RESTROOMS** The public restroom at Emeryville City Marina's Pier #1 has no accessible features. The best alternatives are at Trader Vic's and Chevy's restaurants, about one mile east.

## *César Chávez Park*

I-80 UNIVERSITY AVENUE EXIT, BERKELEY

**W**HEN YOU VISIT THIS 90-ACRE peninsular park, it's hard to believe that in the 1950s and '60s the city of Berkeley operated a garbage dump here and was planning to extend the city two miles into the bay by filling in 2,000 acres of water. So, say a word of thanks for the three women who formed Save the Bay in 1961 and launched a movement that eventually led to the creation of many parks and trails where buildings and roads had been planned. Their names are Kay Kerr, Esther Gulick, and Sylvia McLaughlin.

The park, now an urban wonder, bears only one obvious sign of its former use as a dump: a fenced-in chimney that vents methane gas from the still-decomposing stuff below. People come here to watch the sunset, fly kites, and in many other ways enjoy the place. Acrobatic kite flying is a common, year-round attraction at this park. To see something truly dazzling, check out the Berkeley Kite Festival and West Coast Kite Championship, the largest kite flying festival in the United States, held here every July. Walkers and wheelchair riders, children learning to ride bikes, and joggers use the 1.25-mile paved trail that runs along the water, circling the hill where kites fly. West of the off-leash dog area in the park's center, a rough dirt trail leads to the highest point of



DAN ROBIN

*Bonnie Lewkowicz at the Berkeley Kite Festival, César Chávez Park*

another hill and my favorite destination: a solar calendar. Rocks have been placed in a circle to indicate the sun's location on the horizon at sunrise and sunset through the seasons. I managed to weave my way around the ruts near the calendar in my power wheelchair, but those in manual wheelchairs may need assistance, as on the other dirt trails that crisscross the hill.

South from the cul-de-sac at the end of Spinnaker Way, the shoreline trail winds through the northern end of the Berkeley Marina, passing the Olympic Circle Sailing Club and traveling through two boat launch areas and the Double Tree Hotel complex. Turning south, it follows Marina Boulevard to University Avenue and a large deck overlooking houseboats, then leads west through the southern end of the marina, toward the Berkeley Pier.

### ***Berkeley Marina, Pier, Shorebird Park, and Nature Center***

**U**NIVERSITY AVENUE ENDS in the southern half of the marina near the foot of the Berkeley Pier (44-inch railings), likely the most visited pier in the East Bay, despite generally breezy conditions. This 3,000-foot pier is all that remains in usable condition of what once was a 3.5-mile pier serving car ferries; if you take the bumpy ride to the end, you'll see remnants of the rest of it.

From the pier you can follow the shoreline north, past Skates-on-the-Bay restaurant to the Berkeley Yacht Club, then loop back along the harbor. Beyond the yacht club is tiny Horseshoe Park, a quiet retreat near the docked boats. The marina office and nearby Marina Sports Center, also known as the bait shop, are farther east. Here you can charter a boat or buy snacks, bait, and tackle.

South of the pier, in the northeast corner of the large parking lot across Seawall Drive, is the entrance to Shorebird Park. Sheltered by trees on the west and north, this park has flat grassy areas, picnic tables at water's edge, and a small, inaccessible, rocky beach. At low tide you are likely to see many shorebirds; south across the water you see Emeryville's office towers. Nearby are the Shorebird Park Nature Center, a straw-bale structure, and the Adventure Playground, where children can experiment with building materials and climb structures designed by children. Heading east, the trail skirts the South Sailing Basin, passing the Cal Sailing Club and Cal Adventures. The public small-craft boat launch here has a very steep ramp. (Note that neither the Cal Sailing Club nor Cal Adventures offers adapted boats. You can find some in San Francisco through the Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors.) Beyond the launch, the paved trail turns north before ending at University Avenue. Plans call for a paved trail that will continue east from here, connecting to the new Eastshore State Park.



LAWRENCE ROBBIN

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*Berkeley Parks and Recreation, Marina Division:*

**510/981-6740**

*Nature center and playground:*

**510/981-6720**

🕒 *Parks:* 6 am–10 pm

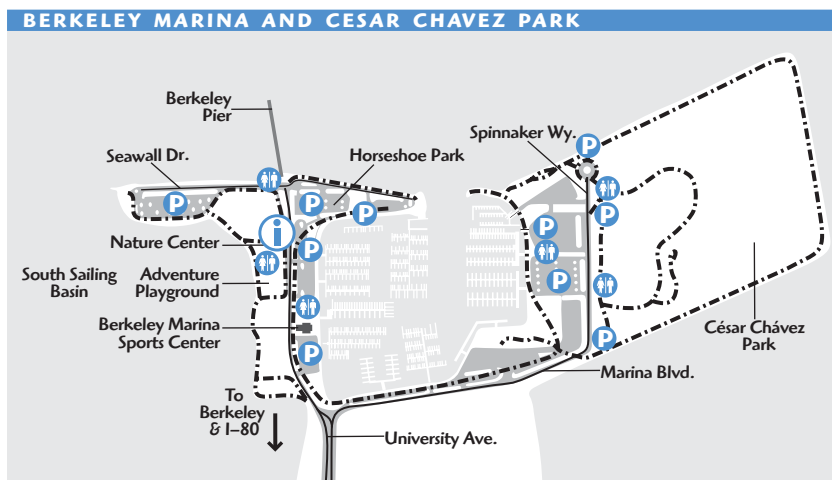
*Pier:* 24 hours daily

*Nature center:* Tues.–Sat.,  
9 am–5 pm

*Playground:* School season,  
weekends 11 am–4 pm;  
summer, weekdays 9 am–5 pm,  
weekends 11 am–5 pm

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*Berkeley Marina*



► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Blue spaces are plentiful. For César Chávez Park and the marina's northern area, accessible portable toilets are on Spinnaker Ave. before the cul-de-sac and near the dog area. More restrooms are under construction between the public boat launch and the lot serving berths A–E. For the southern area, accessible restrooms are on the east side of the marina office (locked 5 pm–4:30 am), the foot of the pier (no stall doors), and between the nature center and the playground (locked 5 pm–6 am).



## *Albany and Richmond*

**FOR MANY YEARS** this stretch of East Bay shoreline was used primarily for industry—including, during World War II, the Kaiser shipyards—as well as for railroad transport and garbage dumps. Now you can spin along it for more than five miles on the Bay Trail, passing wetlands, parks, new housing complexes, and historical sites along the way.

## *Albany Waterfront Trail*

I-80 BUCHANAN STREET EXIT, ALBANY

**T**O CATCH A SUNSET without the crowds of the nearby Berkeley Marina, visit the Albany Waterfront Trail at the foot of the Albany Bulb, an old overgrown landfill that is slated to become a park. The Bulb itself is not wheelchair-accessible, but from an accessible trail entrance in the middle of the parking area you can take the mostly level Waterfront Trail to the left and up a short, steep incline to a viewing area with benches, perched above the bay. From here you can see the San Francisco skyline and watch dogs frolicking on the small beach below. If you can handle a rocky ride, you may want to continue on the hard-packed dirt-and-rock trail that follows the south side of the Bulb. Rebar and other rusty metal poking out from the berm on the landward side are remnants of the old dump, which was covered with soil and, over time, changed into a rough, brushy and grassy wildland. Homeless people improvised homes in the brush and were eventually evicted. Artists came to create sculptures from debris washed ashore by winter storms. But most of the Bulb is not wheelchair accessible.

If you take the Waterfront Trail in the other direction from the parking area, it can be the starting point for a long spin—more than five miles one way—to the north on the Bay Trail, past a marsh and a slough and through several Richmond shoreline parks. The route begins with a flat, paved .5-mile trail alongside the mudflats. More than 90 species of birds, both resident and migratory, have been spotted here. There are two ramped viewing decks and several interpretive panels. Farther on, the trail runs parallel to I-580 for about a mile, and the oncoming traffic can be intimidating despite a concrete barrier. Someone intent on exercise or in training for a race may, however, appreciate this long uninterrupted ride. A stop sign helps you cross the busy intersection at Central Avenue and Rydin Road, after which you can travel along the shore on the Bay Trail to Richmond for another three-plus miles.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-80, take the Buchanan St. exit and turn toward the bay. The road dead-ends in a cul-de-sac at the Waterfront Trail and East-shore State Park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** There are no accessible parking spaces, but a space midway along the fence, next to a street lamp and close to the trail's accessible entrance, may have enough extra room to deploy a lift. There are no restrooms or water.

## *Point Isabel Regional Shoreline to Shimada Friendship Park*

I-80 OR I-580 CENTRAL AVENUE EXIT, RICHMOND

**I**F YOU HAVE A DOG or simply like dogs, check out Point Isabel Regional Shoreline, a 23-acre park where dogs are allowed off leash, as long as owners watch them closely and pick up after them. A self-serve/full-service pet grooming business, Mudpuppy's, is in a small building off the Isabel Street parking lot, and a refreshment stand, the Sit and Stay Café, is nearby. At Mudpuppy's you can pull a wheelchair up alongside a low tub to wash your pet before returning home. Dogs often get muddy here by romping in the marsh—where they are not supposed to go.

There are two entrances to Point Isabel. From the Isabel Street lot, a .5-mile trail, with uneven asphalt in places, leads to a wooden bridge over Hoffman Channel. Along the way are numerous places to picnic or fish (state fishing license required). From the second park entrance, off Rydin Road just south of the Hoffman Channel bridge, you can also connect to the paved Bay Trail, which runs outside the dog park fence and extends west for 2.5 miles to Shimada Friendship Park and Marina Bay Park, then continues .75 mile more to Lucretia Edwards Park. The breezy, level stretch of trail along Hoffman Marsh and Meeker Slough is a good place to look for shorebirds. The route is popular with cyclists, joggers, and (on-leash) dog walkers. Don't go right and over the bridge at the first intersection you come to, or you'll end up on 51st Street

Just past Meeker Slough, the Bay Trail forks. The branch leading away from the bay is a tree-lined path between the slough and an apartment complex that takes you to Marina Bay Parkway and Marina Bay Park. The

**510/235-1631**

🕒 *Point Isabel:* 5 am–10 pm  
*Shimada Friendship Park:*  
sunrise to sunset



*Mudpuppy's, Point Isabel Regional Shoreline*

branch leading toward the bay also takes you to Marina Bay, but it's a longer and more scenic shoreline ride with access to two small parks and views of nearby Brooks Island. First the trail winds around a housing development to Shimada Friendship Park, named for Richmond's sister city in Japan. One of the picnic tables scattered on the grass has a concrete path to it, but the fixed seating makes it difficult to pull up close to the table. Past the park a little way along the trail, concrete ramps lead to sandy spots where you can get closer to the rocky shoreline and hang out with people fishing. Concrete spaces next to the bayside benches allow a wheelchair to pull in. From the Shimada Park parking lot you can take a shortcut to Marina Bay Park by picking up the direct Bay Trail route across the street.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-580 or I-80 in Richmond, exit at Central Ave. and take it west to the U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail Center; turn right onto Rydin Rd. for the Rydin entrance or continue to the Isabel St. entrance at the end of Central. To get to Shimada Park, take I-580 to the Marina Bay Park Parkway exit, and follow Marina Bay Parkway to its end at the bay.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces are in the lot at the end of Rydin Rd., two are at the end of Isabel St., and three are by the restrooms. Shimada Friendship Park has two blue spaces without access aisles. An accessible portable restroom is near the Rydin parking lot. The restrooms near the Isabel entrance have grab bars and a wide door but room for only a frontal transfer, and the stall isn't deep enough to close the door. Shimada Park's accessible restrooms have no stall doors.



## *Vincent Park, Marina Bay Park, and Lucretia Edwards Park*

I-580 MARINA BAY PARKWAY EXIT, RICHMOND

**C**ONTINUING WEST FROM Shimada Friendship Park on the

Bay Trail, you soon come to Vincent Park, where accessibility was a design priority.


The playground, encircled by a firm rub-

berized surface, is accessible, as are the picnic area and a large lawn. Where the trail turns north, a historical panel about the former Kaiser shipyard explains this area's importance as a shipbuilding center during World War II. The wide, level trail continues to the marina harbor (watch for bird droppings). At the Bay Yacht Club you may want to stop and gaze at the boats.

Continuing on the Bay Trail you come to Marina Bay Park, where the Rosie the Riveter Memorial, dedicated in 2000, celebrates the women who worked in the Kaiser shipyards during World War II building Liberty Ships and who constituted up to 27 percent of the workforce at the Richmond yard. The walkway from the memorial toward the water is inscribed with testimonials from some of these women. Of the several picnic areas surrounding the memorial, three (1, 2, and 8) are accessible. To be safe, reserve a table in advance.

If you come here on a Sunday morning, you can end your stroll with a brunch at Salute restaurant, or pick up picnic goodies from the mini-market/deli next to it. Both can be reached from the Bay Trail or from Schooner Drive. Approaching them on the Bay Trail, you need to surmount a two-inch lip and follow the wooden boardwalk to the far end of Salute, then turn right up the steep sidewalk that runs behind the restaurant. Continuing on the Bay Trail past Salute, you come to the harbormaster's office and an accessible boat launch, and then to Lucretia Edwards Park.

Reached from the Bay Trail or Marina Way South, two-acre Lucretia Edwards Park is a tribute to the woman who fought for the protection of this shoreline for many years. You can enjoy the park's great views from accessible picnic tables and benches, and boot prints throughout the park point

 Sunrise to sunset

**RESERVATIONS** Picnic areas:  
**510/620-6793**



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*The Bay Trail near Marina Bay Park*

visitors toward former Bay Area shipyards. On the floor of a plaza near the water, shadowy human figures representing liberty and victory are set in concrete, surrounding a granite map of the Bay Area. Nearby, tiered concrete steps lead down to the water.

► **GETTING THERE** To reach Vincent Park by car, continue past Shimada Park on Peninsula Drive. To Reach Marina Bay Park from I-80 East, exit I-580 toward the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge, then exit at Marina Bay Parkway, turn left onto the parkway, and take it over the freeway to Regatta Blvd. and the park entrance. From I-80 West, exit at Cutting Blvd. and take it west for 1.5 miles. Turn left at South 23rd St./Marina Bay Parkway, cross over I-580, and continue to Regatta Way. For Lucretia Edwards Park, take I-580 to the Marina Way South exit, and follow it to its end.

► **PARKING** Two blue spaces are in Vincent Park. Parking for the Bay Yacht Club is on-street with no blue spaces. Four blue spaces serve both the Rosie the Riveter Memorial and Marina Bay Park—two next to the bay and two at the entrance across from the memorial. Lucretia Edwards Park has two blue spaces. To access the sidewalk, travel through the lot back to the entrance.

► **RESTROOMS** The Vincent Park restrooms are accessible, as is the portable toilet on the inland side of Marina Bay Park's lot. Accessible restrooms in Lucretia Edwards Park are near the parking lot.

## Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline

I-580 CANAL STREET EXIT, RICHMOND

**T**HIS SHORELINE PARK, with adjacent Keller Beach, is a fine place for a family outing. It is mostly flat, open, and easily accessible. Its main features are a shallow saltwater lagoon and the smooth, wide, asphalt path that meanders for a mile around it. The lagoon's shore is dirt and when it's dry, a wheelchair can easily get to the water's edge. Swimming and wading are not allowed. Railroad tracks and a chain-link fence separate the park from the bay. The asphalt path leading south past the Canvasback picnic area takes you to Ferry Point.

Barbecue grills and picnic tables on packed dirt are scattered among clusters of trees in the park, and many are reachable via narrow paved walkways that connect to the main path. Two horseshoe pits and an inaccessible play area are near the south parking lot.

Keller Beach, at the park's north end, is much less accommodating, but it's worth the effort if you want seclusion, greenery, and views. A sidewalk follows Dornan Dr. north from Miller/Knox to the pedestrian entrance to the beach. The asphalt path leads very steeply down from the road to the first of three tree-lined terraces that overlook the beach and the bay.

The accessible upper terrace has picnic tables, grills, and benches, all placed on pavement. Considerably higher than the beach, this terrace offers a good view of Angel Island and San Francisco. From here the path travels steeply down to the sandy beach, beyond which is the third terrace with more picnic tables, benches, and grills. Erick Mikiten, who wrote the first edition of this guide, noted: "The asphalt paths between terraces are some of the steepest paths I've encountered. I had a loaded backpack slung on my chair's push handles and had to lean completely forward to avoid tipping back on the struggle back up the road."

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**510/235-1631**

🕒 5 am–10 pm, gates open  
8 am–8 pm

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► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-580 at Canal St., turn south on Canal, right onto Cutting Blvd., left onto South Garrard, and proceed south through the tun-

nel where the road turns into Dornan Drive. The park is less than .5 mile past the tunnel.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Each of the three Miller/Knox lots has four blue spaces, but only the spaces in the north lot have access aisles. You can park on Dornan Dr. for closer access to Keller Beach. Miller/Knox's four accessible restrooms—two at the north lot, one at the south lot and one at the Pin-tail picnic area by the lagoon—have no sinks. The small Keller beach rest-room is inaccessible.

## *Ferry Point Pier*

**J**UST SOUTH OF Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline, at the end of Dornan Drive, the remnants of a pier and pump house stand against the distant backdrop of ChevronTexaco's storage tanks. From the early 1900s to the late 1960s, this was the western terminus of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. Barges and ferries took railcars, freight, and people from here to ferry slips at San Francisco's China Basin and Pier 43. To see the old pier, take the asphalt trail that leads left from the Ferry Point parking lot and out onto the recently built concrete recreational pier.

Leading right from the parking lot, away from the pier, is a wide, level asphalt path that leads to the lagoon at Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline.

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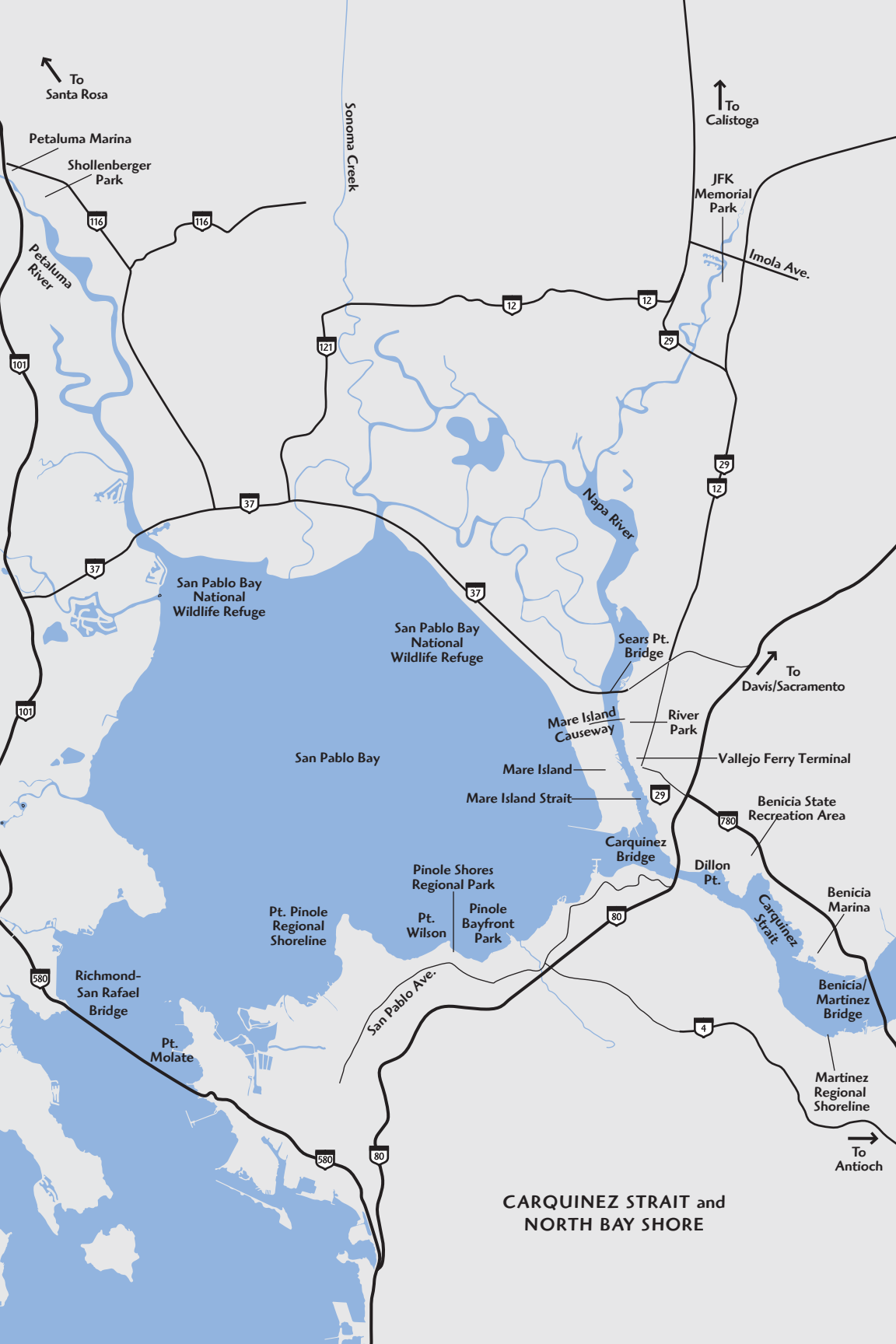
🕒 5 am–10 pm, gates open  
8 am–4 pm

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► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Take the first driveway on your right past Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline. The lot has two blue spaces. Directly in front of the blue parking spaces is an accessible restroom without a sink.



DAN ROBBIN



↖ To  
Santa Rosa

↑ To  
Calistoga

↗ To  
Davis/Sacramento

→ To  
Antioch

# CARQUINEZ STRAIT and NORTH BAY SHORE



# Carquinez Strait and North Bay Shore

**A**T ITS FAR EASTERN REACHES, San Francisco Bay is connected to the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta by six-mile-long Carquinez Strait, once a major shipping channel. No longer centers of industry and commerce, the towns in this region are attracting new residents and businesses from the San Francisco and Sacramento metropolitan areas. Wheelchair riders will find accessible trails in Pinole, Martinez, and Antioch Regional Shorelines and in Benicia State Recreation Area, as well as in several smaller parks around the strait. The small towns along the shore can also be fun to explore.

The shore along San Francisco Bay's northern end, San Pablo Bay, is still a marshy region, although much of it was diked and converted to agricultural uses. Other areas were devoted to military purposes or developed into salt ponds. Now much of the historical wetland expanse is being restored as part of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Sonoma Baylands, and other preserves. Little of this area is accessible to the public, but two shoreline parks, one on the Napa River and one on the Petaluma River, are worth a visit.

EILEEN ECKLUND



*Carquinez Strait*



## Pinole


PINOLE, FORMERLY THE SITE of an explosives plant and with an oil refinery as neighbor, might seem an unlikely place for outdoor excursions. In fact, though, it has one of the larger waterfront parks in the Bay Area, Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, and two smaller parks along the water's edge. Between them you'll find several miles of trails—through meadows, along hillsides, and skirting marshes and mudflats—picnic areas, and a fishing pier, as well as some spectacular views of San Pablo Bay.

### *Point Pinole Regional Shoreline*

I-80 RICHMOND PARKWAY EXIT, RICHMOND

**N**ORTHEAST OF RICHMOND'S industrial tracts, this 2,315-acre regional park has meadows, marshlands, pebbly beaches, and towering eucalyptus trees. Parchester Marsh and Whittell Marsh at Point Pinole are among the bay's few unscathed natural salt marshes.

From the 28-inch-wide pedestrian entry in the main parking lot, the smooth asphalt of Point Pinole Road (part of the Bay Trail and closed to most automobile traffic) leads approximately 1.5 miles out to an accessible fishing pier. Dirt and gravel paths run from the road to beaches and marshes. Some of these are difficult to navigate because of overgrown brush, loose surfaces, and moderately steep grades, but—especially to the east—most trails are nearly level, well-graded gravel, and less heavily used. Accessible picnic tables and barbecue

 5 am–10 pm

**RESERVATIONS** *Group picnic: 510/636-1684*  
*Shuttle escort and shuttle schedule: 510/237-6896*

**FEES** *Parking: \$5 when attendant present*  
*Dogs (except service dogs): \$2*  
*Roundtrip shuttle: \$1; ages 6–11, \$.50; free for seniors 62 and up, the disabled, and children under 6*



DAN ROBBIN

*The fishing pier at Point Pinole*

grills are about .25 mile from the park entrance, near Point Pinole Road, and more are near the pier.

From the parking lot, Point Pinole Road climbs to a railway overpass that may require assistance for a manual wheelchair user, then slopes gently up to the Giant Cluster picnic area. From here on, the road is fairly level except for a downhill stretch just before a pond, until it narrows a little and slopes down for a few hundred yards as it approaches the pier. The journey out is mostly easy, but the return trip

can be long and difficult, especially uphill past the pond. The shuttle, which runs Thursdays through Mondays between the main entrance and the picnic area near the pier, is inaccessible to wheelchair riders. You can phone the park office a day in advance to arrange a “shuttle escort,” so that you can follow the bus in your car to designated parking at the pier. You can also arrange for an escort at the park when the shuttle is running.

Among the fish you might catch from the pier are striped bass, shark, kingfish, and sturgeon. Each person may use up to two rods or lines. Other regulations are posted. Some of the pier’s benches are inaccessible because they are surrounded by windbreak walls on three sides and are too close to the guardrail on the fourth side. The heavy wooden top rail is near eye level for some wheelchair users. To the west across San Pablo Bay is Mount Tamalpais, and to the east multicolored petroleum storage tanks squat in staggered rows on Contra Costa County hillsides.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-80 on Richmond Parkway and take it west toward the bay. Turn right on Atlas Rd., which becomes Giant Highway, and follow the signs to the park entrance on Point Pinole Road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The lot at the main entrance has three blue spaces and the lot before the pier has two. Accessible portable toilets are at the



entrance, the Giant Cluster picnic area, the intersection of the Bay View Trail and Point Pinole Rd., and by the parking area before the pier. An accessible outhouse is at the foot of the pier.

## *Pinole Shores Regional Park*

I-80 APPIAN WAY EXIT, PINOLE

**V**IEWS OF SAN PABLO BAY are magnificent from the paved hillside trail of this park at Point Wilson, just east of Point Pinole. Mount Tamalpais rises in the west, to the east are the oil refinery in

Rodeo and the hills ringing Carquinez Strait, and to the north are the flat baylands of Napa and Petaluma. In spring, the grasses along the trail are tall and green, wildflowers and birds are out in force, and cool breezes swirl off the bay. This stretch of Bay Trail runs upslope between a housing development and the shoreline railroad tracks; you can watch the trains pass below you.

From the parking lot you can take the trail to the left or right. If you're facing the bay, a left turn takes you toward Point Wilson, along the moderate slopes of a grassy hillside from which you can see across the water to the eucalyptus forest at Point Pinole. It's a little over .5 mile out to the end of the trail and a turnaround spot, with benches along the way. A right turn from the parking lot leads you east, briefly along an oak-shaded clifftop section of trail, then down a steep slope into Gately Gulch, a willow-shaded streamside area where I saw many red-winged blackbirds. The trail then climbs steeply to reach the top of an open hillside, where it levels off. This slope and the climb on the return to the parking lot were no problem for me in my power wheelchair but would be quite a workout for a manual wheelchair user. The distance from the parking lot out to the trail's end at a gated turnaround is also about .5 mile.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-80 East on Appian Way. Turn left on Appian Way, left on San Pablo Ave., and right on Pinole Shores Dr., and follow it to the park entrance, at its end.

► **PARKING** The parking area has one blue space.

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🕒 5 am–10 pm

*Parking lot:* 8 am–4 pm;  
till 6 or 7 pm in summer

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## *Pinole Bayfront Park*

TENNENT AVENUE, PINOLE

**T**HE VIEWS FROM THIS SMALL PARK are similar to those from Pinole Shores

🕒 6 am–dusk

Regional Park, just a short distance to the west, but here you can get closer to the shoreline. Next to the parking lot, a lawn bordered by picnic tables and barbecue grills overlooks mudflats and marshes. On the bay side of the lawn, a paved trail with benches along it follows the shoreline, swinging around the Pinole Sewage Treatment Plant, which can emit some strong odors. At the far side of the treatment plant, the trail surface becomes gravel as it turns inland and follows Pinole Creek to a gate. Go around the gate and turn left, crossing the bridge over Pinole Creek, then left again after the bridge, following the trail out onto a small peninsula. Near the tip, the trail forks, leading on the right to a small, accessible wooden observation platform that puts you close to the marsh and on the left to benches overlooking the bay and mudflats.

If you want to take another .5-mile ride on a level, paved stretch of the Bay Trail, drive across the train tracks just outside the park's entrance, turn left on the frontage road (which dead-ends at this point), park in the gravel area near the railroad tracks, and wheel across the road toward another bridge over Pinole Creek. Don't cross the bridge; instead, continue straight on a paved trail that runs inland along the western bank of Pinole Creek to Fernandez Park, just before San Pablo Avenue. This park has a baseball diamond, a basketball court, playground equipment set on sand, accessible picnic areas, and a lawn.

*Pinole Bayfront Park*

DAN ROBBIN



► **GETTING THERE** From Pinole Shores Regional Park, turn left on San Pablo Ave., take it into downtown Pinole, and turn left on Tennent Avenue. Where the road splits, veer left over the railroad tracks just outside the park's entrance.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is in the Bayfront Park lot. Restrooms at Bayfront Park are open 8 am–3:30 pm and have good access, except for a sloped entry with no level platform and door handles and locks that are all 53 inches high. At Fernandez Park, the sink does not have knee clearance and the toilet is 16 inches high.



## *Martinez and Antioch*

**MARTINEZ REGIONAL SHORELINE**, which adjoins historic downtown Martinez, Waterfront Park, and the marina, is a very popular spot for family outings and sporting events. Fishing is the main draw at tiny Antioch/Oakley Regional Shoreline.

### *Martinez Regional Shoreline*

HIGHWAY 4 ALHAMBRA EXIT, MARTINEZ

**F**OR AN ALL-DAY EXCURSION in northern Contra Costa County, combine a visit to the 344-acre Martinez Regional Shoreline with a stop at historic downtown Martinez. The Shoreline's eastern section, off North Court Street, has 1.5 miles of gravel trail that loop around a large meadow with accessible picnic tables and a pond. The pond loop offers excellent birdwatching and connects to paths leading out to the public fishing pier and the Martinez Marina. The pier's 44-inch high railing prevents easy fishing from a wheelchair. This shoreline section is adjacent to Waterfront Park, which has soccer and softball fields, bocce ball courts, a skateboard park, picnic areas, and a playground.



*An old Southern Pacific engine sits near the entrance to Martinez Regional Shoreline.*

To explore the Shoreline's western section, park at the Berrellesa Street staging area, also known as Grangers' Wharf. The trail leading out of the lot joins the Pickleweed Trail, which runs along the water. You might also use this hard-packed dirt

trail to cross over from the park's eastern section, but a short hill, narrow boardwalk, and steep, arched bridge over Alhambra Creek make that a challenging route. About .5 mile from the wharf and heading west, the Pickleweed Trail narrows to 20 inches. I turned back, passing alongside marshes with abundant bird life.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 4 in Martinez at Alhambra Avenue. Go north on Alhambra to Escobar St., turn right on Escobar to Ferry St., left on Ferry, and over the railroad tracks into the park. For the Berrellesa staging area, take Ferry to Marina Vista (just before the railroad tracks into the park), turn left, then right on Berrellesa. Via Amtrak, get off at the Martinez Station and cross the tracks into the park.

► **PARKING** The lot at the main entrance to the park off North Court St. has four blue spaces near the restrooms, the one at the foot of North Court St. has three, and the one off Joe DiMaggio Dr. in Waterfront Park has two. The dirt lot at the Berrellesa St. staging area has an accessible parking sign, but limited street parking on Berrellesa offers better access to the trailhead.

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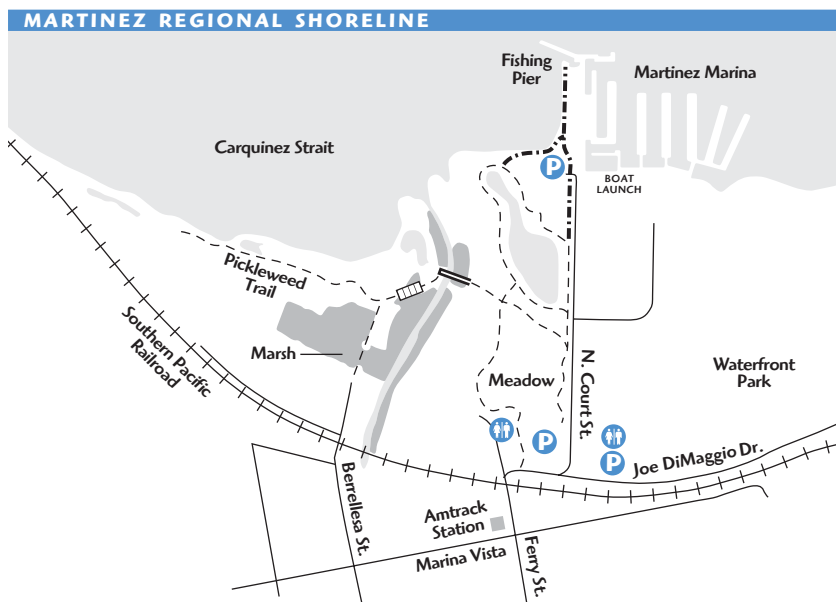
**925/228-0112**

🕒 Dawn to dusk

**RESERVATIONS** Picnic area:

**510/636-1684**

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► **RESTROOMS** The North Court St. entrance has accessible restrooms at the northwest corner of the parking lot. The accessible stall has no doors and room only for a frontal transfer. The restroom in Waterfront Park in the lot off Joe DiMaggio Dr. is the same, except the stall has a door. The portable restroom in the Berrellesa St. lot is inaccessible.

## Antioch/Oakley Regional Shoreline

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER OFF HIGHWAY 160

**A**T THE FOOT OF HIGHWAY 160'S Nejedley Bridge (better known as the Antioch Bridge), on the south side of the San Joaquin River, is a 7.5-acre park that's popular for fishing and waterside

picnics. Tucked in between two marinas, the park has a 550-foot pier from which people catch striped bass, sturgeon, steelhead, salmon, and other fish, depending on the season, though 44-inch-high railings prevent easy casting from a wheelchair. Should you reel in a meal, you can clean it at an accessible cleaning station. Better yet, you can cook it minutes later on one of many

**925/754-8720**

**Park:** 5 am–10 pm

**Pier:** Open 24 hours

barbecue grills set near the picnic tables scattered throughout the park on hard-packed dirt and gravel pads. Catalina ironwood trees provide shade. A paved trail loops around a central meadow, and at the foot of the pier a plaque marks the spot of the 101st campsite of the 1775–76 Juan Bautista de Anza expedition, which established Spanish colonies in California.

► **GETTING THERE** Heading east on Highway 4 from I-80, take Highway 160 where it splits off from 4. Exit at Wilbur Avenue. Turn right on Wilbur and immediately left on Bridgehead Road. The park is at the north end of Bridgehead Road.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two blue spaces in the parking lot are next to the trail entrance. Two accessible restrooms are on the eastern side of the park near the fish-cleaning station.



## *Benicia*

IT'S EASY TO SPEND A DAY or more exploring the area around Benicia, with the quiet, small-town charm of its waterfront parks and historic downtown and the natural beauty of nearby Benicia State Recreation Area. You'll find accessible sections of both the Bay and Ridge Trails here.

### *Benicia Marina*



CITY OF BENICIA

## *Benicia Marina and Pier*

### I-780 EAST FIFTH STREET EXIT

**T**HE FIRST CITY IN CALIFORNIA to be incorporated, in 1847, Benicia briefly served as the state capital in 1853. Today, with a population of 28,000, it's a pleasant old town that invites meandering along the waterfront, in the historic district along First Street, and through several parks.

To begin this trip, head for the Benicia Marina at the foot of East Fifth Street, in the southern part of town. Looking south across Carquinez Strait you see the refinery in Martinez. From the parking area you can pick up a trail of decomposed granite that runs along the shoreline next to the marina entry road, circles tiny William Turnbull park, then loops back along the berths and around the inland shore of the marina to the harbormaster's office at the end of East B Street. You will find benches all along this stretch of Bay Trail. From the harbormaster's office, take the sidewalk along East B Street to First Street. Turn left on First and travel to its end, at the old Southern Pacific (SP) train depot, which now houses a community organization and gift shop. Here you can pick up a free brochure for a self-guided walking tour of historic downtown Benicia; most sites are on First Street or nearby side streets.

Past the SP depot, a small peninsula created from landfill juts out into Carquinez Strait. At the end of the peninsula is the small Benicia Pier, popular with fishermen. It offers great views of the Carquinez Bridge to the west, the hills of Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline across the water, and Mount Diablo to the east. An asphalt path runs around the peninsula's perimeter.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-780, exit at East Fifth St., and take it toward the bay.

► **PARKING** At the Benicia Marina and Yacht Club, one blue space is at both E and F docks and one with no access aisle is in front of the harbormaster's office at the end of East B Street. Four blue spaces (only one with an access aisle) are in the parking area off East B St. near First St., and three are on the peninsula.

► **RESTROOMS** At the marina, across from the boat launch, a public restroom (open 8 am–5 pm) is accessible, but the sink is high and the door is hard to lock. According to city parks staff, accessible restrooms have been constructed on the peninsula since our visit.



SARA POLGAR COURTESY BDC

*West Ninth Street Park*

## *West Ninth Street Park*

I-780 FIFTH STREET EXIT, BENICIA

**O**NE MILE NORTHWEST of First Street, West Ninth Street Park (at West J and I Streets) is in a charming old neighborhood on the city's waterfront. It has a large lawn, playground, boat launch, accessible picnic tables, and sand volleyball court. The small beach is inaccessible, and the ramp to the pier is very steep. The paved shoreline path circles Commodore Jones Point (named for the founder of the U.S. Naval Academy), traveling around a raised circular structure with a ship's mast at its center. Across Southampton Bay you see the hills of Benicia State Recreation Area and the Carquinez Bridge.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Four blue spaces are in the lot at the foot of West Ninth Street. Accessible restrooms are near Commodore Jones Point.

## *Benicia State Recreation Area*

I-780 COLUMBUS PARKWAY EXIT

**T**HIS 720-ACRE PARK LIES along the narrowest stretch of the Carquinez Strait and has four miles of Bay Trail, some of it on a ridgetop overlooking grassy hills and marshes. The 3.5-acre Forrest Deaner Native Plant Botanic Garden displays native trees, perennials, shrubs, and grasses. From well-placed picnic tables and benches, some accessible, you look out at Southampton Cove, Benicia Bridge, and Mount Diablo.



The park road, shared by vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, is the first section of Bay Trail you come to. From one of two parking areas near the park's entrance, you can roll down this road,

skirting salt marsh in a sheltered cove of Southampton Bay and passing wooded picnic sites on the way to the road's end at Dillon Point. Additionally, a wide, level, paved .5-mile section of the Bay Trail with an exercise course leads southeast from the park entrance, past marshes and alongside Military West Road for .5 mile.

For more of an off-road experience and great views, drive or roll 1.5 miles past the entrance on the park road to a parking lot on your right, uphill. From there you can follow a two-mile, gravel and decomposed-granite section of Bay Trail that gently climbs a hillside and levels off as it heads inland, away from Southampton Bay. At the first intersection (shortly after the trailhead), stay left along the ridge. At the second intersection, a steep dirt path turns inland; in my power wheelchair, I was able to take this path to the top of the hill, where I had a 360-degree view, but those with manual wheelchairs will find it challenging. Returning to the Bay Trail, turn left to retrace your path to the parking lot or right to follow the trail around the peninsula to its end at South Regatta Drive.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-780, exit at Columbus Parkway and take an immediate left into the park. To get to the parking lot for the .5-mile trail and exercise course along Military West Rd., take the Military West Rd. exit off I-780, then turn sharply right into the lot.

► **PARKING** Just past the entry station is a parking area where you can parallel park off the sides of the road; there are no blue spaces. The lot at the trailhead 1.5 miles from the entrance has two blue spaces (one with an access aisle); just past it is the lot for the botanic garden, which has five (two with aisles). On the road below the trailhead is one blue space, and two (with no access aisle) are farther down the road. On-street parking is at the trail entrance on South Regatta Drive. The lots clustered near Dillon Point have a total of four blue spaces, and two are in the lot off Military West Road.

► **RESTROOMS** The accessible restrooms at the trailhead 1.5 miles from the entrance are down a gravel path that might be problematic for manual

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**707/648-1911**; [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

🕒 8 am–sunset

**FEES** *Parking:* \$4 per vehicle

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wheelchairs. The stall is not deep enough to close the door, transfer is frontal only, and the sinks are high. Accessible restrooms in the uppermost lot at Dillon Point have no lowered urinals, the stalls are short, and transfer is frontal. An accessible portable toilet is by the lot off Military West Road.



## Vallejo

MANY PEOPLE AROUND THE BAY AREA think of Vallejo only as home to the amusement park Six Flags Marine World, and have never thought to explore the city and its waterfront. That is a shame, because a trip here can combine an exhilarating ferry ride on the bay, a leisurely stroll along the waterfront, and a picnic or dining near the water's edge.

### *Vallejo Marina*

MARE ISLAND WAY, VALLEJO

**M**Y EXCURSION TO the Vallejo waterfront from Berkeley confirmed that public transportation can be a very pleasant option for an outing. I took BART from Berkeley to San Francisco and rolled two blocks from the Embarcadero station to the Ferry Building. There I picked up a delicious lunch and caught the comfortable and accessible BayLink Ferry to Vallejo. The ride's 55 minutes flew by as all the new views of San Francisco Bay cities held me mesmerized.

The ferry dock on Mare Island Way is across the strait from Mare Island and near the Vallejo visitor center. The public buses that leave from here include the #9 for Marine World. The #80 bus from Vallejo to the El Cerrito BART station, which I would take later for my trip home, leaves from York and Marin Sts., a few blocks east. From the dock, a wide, paved promenade

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**Ferry: 707/643-3779 or  
877/643-3779 (toll-free);  
[www.baylinkferry.com](http://www.baylinkferry.com)**

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that is a section of the Bay Trail takes you either north or south along Mare Island Strait. Heading north (to your right as you face the water) will take you to the Vallejo Marina in approximately .25 mile and River Park in another .5 mile. Fishing is permitted along the promenade, which has 42-inch railings. At the Vallejo Yacht Club, a parking lot interrupts the promenade and you must continue a short distance along Mare Island Way. The promenade resumes shortly after you pass the Yacht Club. Just beyond a stretch with restaurants, boat slips, a boatyard, and a Coast Guard station, your path reaches an open gate. Go through it and travel under the Mare Island Causeway, briefly on dirt, then on decomposed granite, to River Park. The dirt section under the bridge requires careful navigation (see River Park, below).

South of the ferry dock is a shorter section of the shoreline promenade. Headed that way you see the Carquinez Bridge in the distance and the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard and other industrial buildings across Mare Island Strait. A quarter-mile before the promenade ends at Brinkman Marine and Norm's Bait Shop, you pass memorials related to and artifacts from the shipyard. A crescent-shaped concrete wall commemorates the decommissioning of the *USS Nautilus*, the nation's first nuclear submarine, at Mare Island in 1980. Other attractions here include a nine-inch cannon from the Civil War-era *USS Hartford* and a "24-pounder" artillery gun from the frigate *Independence*, which served in the Pacific Squadron in the mid-1800s.

► **GETTING THERE** From I-80, take the I-780/Benicia and Martinez/Curtola Parkway exit and take Curtola Parkway toward Vallejo. Curtola Parkway becomes Mare Island Way; as you follow this along Mare Island Strait, you will come to the ferry terminal and marina.

► **PARKING** Along Mare Island Way, seven blue spaces are in the lot by the ferry terminal near Georgia St. and two are in a public boat launch lot south of the ferry landing by



VALLEJO CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

*Mare Island Strait*



VALLEJO CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

*The ferry is a comfortable way to travel between San Francisco and Vallejo.*

Brinkmans Marine. Along Harbor Way in the marina, four are in the first lot just off Mare Island Way, four are in each of the two lots at the marina office, and three are in the lot by Vallejo Boatworks.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible restrooms are in the Ferry Building in San Francisco, aboard the ferry, in the Vallejo visitor center, and in the Vallejo Marina in the first lot off Harbor Way.

## *River Park*

**I-80 TENNESSEE STREET EXIT, VALLEJO**

**L**OCATED ON THE EASTERN SHORE of the Napa River at the end of Mare Island Strait and north of the Vallejo

Marina, 55-acre River Park has 20 acres of restored salt marsh that you can observe from a .5-mile shoreline levee trail. During my June visit, magenta-colored mallow lined the trail and birds were plentiful.

⬇ 6 am—sunset

There are two ways to get to the levee trail. You can start from the paved promenade that leads north .75 mile from the Vallejo ferry dock, or you can drive directly to the park's main entrance on Wilson Avenue. I took the promenade, which turns to dirt and connects to the decomposed-granite levee trail under the Mare Island Causeway. Deep ruts, a short steep hill, and a cross slope required careful navigation. Now inside the park, I continued north another .5 mile to a small pedestrian bridge with a step. This is the

turnaround point for wheelchair riders. If you enter from Wilson Avenue, however, you avoid the difficult section under the bridge. Instead you pick up a short decomposed-granite path that leads from the parking lot to the shoreline levee trail. Looking north from the end of the levee trail at the pedestrian bridge, you see Sears Point Bridge on Highway 37 and Mare Island across the strait.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit I-80 on Tennessee St., go west toward the bay, and turn right on Wilson Avenue. From the Vallejo Marina, continue on Mare Island Way to Wilson Avenue (don't take the Mare Island Causeway or you'll end up on the island).

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Eight blue spaces are at the park entrance off Wilson Avenue. The closest accessible restroom is at the Vallejo Marina .5 mile south.



## *Napa and Petaluma Rivers*

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**THE NORTH SHORE OF** San Pablo Bay is critical wildlife habitat for the bay, and nearly all of it is set aside for that. There are places to explore, though, including two parks along the Napa and Petaluma Rivers, one with multiple sports and recreation facilities, the other a protected wetland.

### *John F. Kennedy Memorial Park*

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**STREBLOW DRIVE OFF HIGHWAY 221, NAPA**

**T**HIS 340-ACRE PARK at the southern end of the city of Napa encompasses the 2.5-mile Napa River Trail, the one-mile paved River to Ridge Trail, several baseball and softball fields, a golf course, volleyball courts, a boat launch, and areas for radio-controlled model airplanes. Lawns shaded

by large trees surround the picnic grounds, where many tables set on decomposed granite have barbecue grills at wheelchair height. The ramps into the playground put you onto fibar, the artificial wood fiber designed to be accessible. Drinking fountains are accessible.

Start your trip from the second parking lot past the duck pond for best access to the trails and boat launch. From here, the Napa River Trail leads north for about a mile and, to the south, forms a 1.25-mile loop. The entire trail is level except for one slight slope at its south end as it leaves the river and heads east toward the hills.

The paved northern River Trail runs on a levee that crosses the Napa River marsh terraces, which were built to protect against floods. Another gravel trail runs along this stretch closer to the river, making a loop, but it is an extremely bumpy ride and challenging for manual wheelchair users. On my visit, both trails ended at a pedestrian bridge that was closed during renovation of the nearby Imola Avenue vehicle bridge over the river. By late 2006, when the bridge work is expected to be completed, the paved trail will continue over the pedestrian bridge and extend another 300 feet to pass under the Imola Avenue bridge. The city plans to extend the trail north .5 mile from Imola in two or three years, and sometime later to run it another two miles to downtown Napa.

From the southern loop of the River Trail, steep, inaccessible dirt paths lead to popular fishing spots. Benches above offer good places for watching birds on the water. Inland from the river, a large meadow with fennel, wild radish, and field mustard lies between the trail and two baseball fields. Butterflies are plentiful here in season, and you may also see radio-controlled planes buzzing around.

The River to Ridge Trail also starts near the boat launch. It passes the picnic grounds and runs parallel to the park's entrance road. It has some moderate slopes after passing the duck pond. The paved section ends at Highway 221, where there are no curb cuts, and resumes across the road as a dirt trail, preventing access from here to Skyline County Park, one mile away.

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*Picnic reservations and general information:* **707/257-9529**

*Model airplane permit:*

**707/257-9529**

🕒 *Park:* 7 am–8 pm

*Napa River Trail:* sunrise to sunset

*Model plane flying area:*

8 am–2 pm

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► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 29 North, turn right on Highway 221 (downtown Napa/Lake Berryessa). After about two miles, turn left on Streblo Dr. and follow it to the end.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The duck pond lot has no blue spaces, but each of the park's three other lots has several. Accessible restrooms are located throughout the park. One by the boat launch has good access but no sink. An accessible portable toilet is by the baseball fields, and the restroom by the volleyball court is accessible except that it has no grab bars.

## *Shollenberger Park*

OFF HIGHWAY 116 (LAKEVILLE HIGHWAY), PETALUMA

**T**UCKED INSIDE AN INDUSTRIAL PARK on the banks of the Petaluma River is Shollenberger Park, a wetland teeming with wildlife and native plants. Soon this area could become one of the most watched and protected wetlands, since the prestigious Point Reyes Bird Observatory Conservation Science, an ornithological research institution with 125 employees, is scheduled to move into a new building on the edge of the park in 2006. The 2.25-mile crushed gravel Shollenberger Loop Trail (a small section at the beginning is paved) encircles the city-owned dredge-spoils ponds, holding silt from recent Petaluma River dredging, and briefly parallels

🕒 6 am–9 pm

**NOTE** Docents lead tours  
Oct.–June, second Sat. of the  
month, 9 am

both the Petaluma River and Adobe Creek. Pick up a self-guided tour brochure at the trail's first interpretive panel, and look for birds and other wildlife. Within the first ten minutes of our hike we saw two king snakes, three western pond turtles, and five lizards.

Trail users include mothers with strollers, business people on lunch break, and



BOB DYER

*Burrowing owl at Shollenberger Park*



BONNIE LEWKOWICZ

*Birdwatching at Shollenberger Park*

birdwatchers. You will see picnic tables and benches here and there. You can add the Petaluma Marina to your journey by crossing the pedestrian bridge over Adobe Creek and taking the one-mile Marina Trail to your left. This quiet path passes behind an office complex, crosses seasonal wetlands via several bridges, and eventually ends at the marina.

The trail is composed of various surfaces, but all are level and firmly packed. If you start from the marina instead and work your way to Shollenberger Park, go right on Baywood Drive past the Sheraton Hotel. The trail entrance is across from the hotel at the southern end of the parking lot.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 North take the Highway 116 (Lakeville Highway) exit in Petaluma and go east about one mile. Turn right on South McDowell Blvd., go .3 mile, and take a right at the driveway opposite Cader Lane, just before a large parking lot.

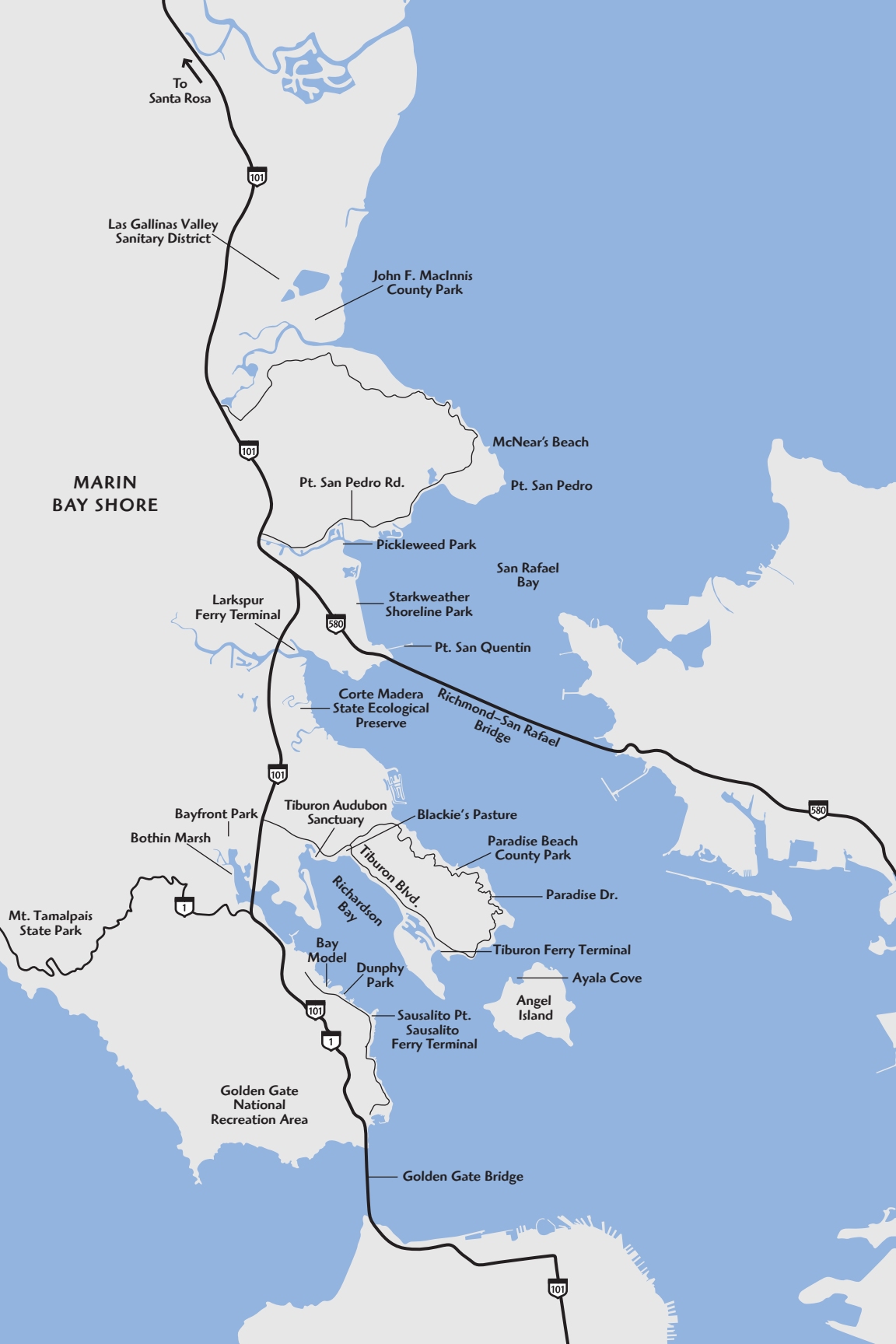
► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** One blue space is at the entrance to Shollenberger Park. No accessible parking is by the trail entrance off Baywood Dr.; the closest is in front of the Sheraton Hotel. An accessible restroom and drinking fountain are across from the blue space at the park entrance.

### *White pelicans*



BOB DYER





To  
Santa Rosa

Las Gallinas Valley  
Sanitary District

John F. MacInnis  
County Park

## MARIN BAY SHORE

Pt. San Pedro Rd.

McNear's Beach

Pt. San Pedro

Pickleweed Park

San Rafael  
Bay

Larkspur  
Ferry Terminal

Starkweather  
Shoreline Park

Pt. San Quentin

Corte Madera  
State Ecological  
Preserve

Richmond-San Rafael  
Bridge

Bayfront Park

Bothin Marsh

Tiburon Audubon  
Sanctuary

Blackie's Pasture

Paradise Beach  
County Park

Paradise Dr.

Richardson  
Bay

Bay Model  
Dunphy Park

Tiburon Ferry Terminal

Angel  
Island

Sausalito Pt.  
Sausalito  
Ferry Terminal

Golden Gate  
National  
Recreation Area

Golden Gate Bridge



# Marin Bay Shore

**M**ARIN COUNTY'S bay shoreline, from Black Point near Sonoma County to the Golden Gate Bridge, is richly varied, with wide marshes, forested hills, wildlife reserves, beaches, coves, and urban areas. North of San Rafael, not much of the shoreline is accessible. From San Rafael south, however, you will find lots to explore. From Larkspur and Sausalito you can catch the ferry to San Francisco, and from Tiburon you can take one to Angel Island State Park.



DAN ROBBIN

*Sausalito waterfront*



## *San Rafael to Corte Madera*

A STRING OF PARKS ALONG this part of the bayshore offers waterfront trails, fishing piers, playgrounds, and outstanding birdwatching, particularly at Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District and Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

### *Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District*

HIGHWAY 101 LUCAS VALLEY ROAD/SMITH RANCH ROAD EXIT, SAN RAFAEL

**J**UST NORTH OF the Marin County Civic Center, bordering McInnis Park on San Pablo Bay, a 3.5-mile level, hard-

**415/472-1734 x10**

packed trail winds around 350 acres of fresh and saltwater marsh, irrigated pasture, and ponds. Don't be discouraged if you detect a smell of sulphur. This is the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District's Wastewater Reclamation Project. The ponds hold treated wastewater. But keep on going and you will find yourself in a truly tranquil place where birdsong fills the air and dried grasses crackle in the wind during the dry seasons. You can see Mount Diablo to the east, Mount Tamalpais to the west, and all sorts of wildlife, including a fantastic array of birds.

*Pond at Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District*



EILEEN ECKLUND

Next to the classroom building by the parking lot, a steep concrete path leads across a bridge to the main trail. Two loop trails soon branch off and circle the storage ponds. On one of those loops I saw white pelicans. The shocks on my power wheelchair absorbed the jostling from riding over rocks on the trail, but someone in a manual wheelchair with small front casters may need to exert extra effort to negotiate the rocks. Although posted signs warn of restricted areas, district personnel have said that only the fenced areas are off limits. I did not travel the entire network of trails but was assured that the main trail is level except for one easy incline at its end.

► **GETTING THERE** Exit Highway 101 at Lucas Valley Rd./Smith Ranch Rd. and take it east toward the bay. Cross the railroad tracks and take the first left. The half-mile driveway leads to the entrance.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The small parking lot has one blue space. The classroom by the parking lot has accessible restrooms open only from 7 am to 2:30 pm. When these are closed, use the accessible restrooms at nearby John F. McInnis County Park.

## *John F. McInnis County Park*

**T**HIS 441-ACRE PARK on the northern bank of Las Gallinas Creek is a popular family destination and sports lover's paradise. It has tennis courts and a soccer field, baseball diamond, nine-hole golf course, driving range, miniature golf course, skate park, and restaurant. Kayaks and canoes can be launched into Las Gallinas Creek from an accessible pier. The lower section of the miniature golf course, near the snack bar, is accessible.

A dirt hiking trail leads out to San Pablo Bay from the south side of the main parking lot by the golf course. At the trail's beginning are several shaded resting spots with benches and views of the creek. While level, this trail has large imbedded rocks that force you to keep zigzagging. Shortly past the golf

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**Park:** 415/499-6387

**Golf course:** 415/492-1800;

[www.mcinnisparkgolfcenter.com](http://www.mcinnisparkgolfcenter.com)

**Batting cages and miniature golf:**  
415/491-5995

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🕒 7 am–10 pm. **Snack bar:**  
Sun.–Thurs., 10 am–7 pm;  
Fri. and Sat., 10 am–8 pm

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course, signs warn of flying golf balls, the trail narrows, and the value of pressing on becomes questionable.

For longer accessible trails in this part of Marin, I recommend the pretty trails at the nearby Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District's Water Reclamation Project.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Six blue spaces are in the corners of the main lot by the golf course, two are at the skate park, two at the tennis courts, and two in the lot at the bottom of the hill. Accessible restrooms are on the northwest side of the main parking lot next to the batting cages and at the skate park.

## *McNears Beach*

### EAST OF DOWNTOWN SAN RAFAEL

 **FTEN BATHED IN SUNLIGHT** when other parts of Marin are fogbound, this popular 52-acre park offers a swimming pool, tennis courts, a fishing pier, group picnic areas, a mile-long beach, and views of rocky islands near the shore.

From the south parking lot you can follow the walkway to the concrete fishing pier. Northward along the walkway is a gently rolling lawn often occupied by sunbathers. Parking at the north lot puts you closer to the pool, beach, tennis courts, and picnic area. Go around the snack bar past the tennis courts to the pool, which is surrounded by ample level deck space and has a portable lift operated by pool staff. Set under palm trees amid bay views are four accessible tennis courts. Behind the pool are group picnic sites, of which four are accessible (#1–3, 6).

Where the lawn meets the sandy beach, a gentle slope prevents direct access to the beach. Traveling along the back side of the lawn, the walkway leads up a steep hill and turns to packed dirt. I easily navigated the first hundred feet of the hill before the path became too narrow to continue. The turnaround spot, however, overlooks the bay and in season is surrounded by wildflowers.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 North, take the Central San Rafael exit and turn right on Second St., which merges into Third Street. Take Third St. east; it becomes Point San Pedro Rd., which you follow northeast for 3.5 miles; then turn right onto Cantera Way.



DAN ROBBIN

🕒 April 3–May 27, 7 am–7 pm;  
May 28–Sept. 5, 7 am–8 pm;  
Sept. 6–Sept. 21, 7 am–6 pm;  
Oct. 31–April 2, 8 am–5 pm  
Pool open Memorial Day to  
Labor Day, 10 am–6 pm

**FEES** \$2 walk-in

*Parking:* Summer, \$8 per vehicle  
weekends, \$7 weekdays;  
winter, \$5.

Pay at accessible machine in  
north parking lot.

*Pool:* \$4

**RESERVATIONS** *Group picnic  
areas:* 415/499-6387

Reserve tennis courts at the park.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The north lot has three blue spaces and the south lot has one. The restroom serving the pool and tennis courts is moderately accessible. Only frontal transfers at the toilet. The women's has grab bars on both sides, while the men's has them on one side. Neither has accessible dressing rooms, but there is a large open space that could work. At the beginning of the pier are an accessible portable restroom and drinking fountain.

## *Pickleweed Park*

CANAL STREET, SAN RAFAEL

**I**N THIS TEN-ACRE PARK, wide paved paths lead to a picnic area and a playground, both with stable, firm surfaces. Some of the play equipment is accessible.

There is a children's center in the park, and a community center that was being renovated in 2006 and scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. A loop trail of less than .5 mile encircles a grass baseball field and follows the southern shore of San Rafael Creek near

🕒 Sunrise to sunset

**RESERVATIONS** *Picnic areas  
and ballfield:* 415/485-3077

its outlet into San Rafael Bay. Leading east from the playground along the creek, the trail is paved for a stretch, then hard-packed dirt for a few hundred yards, then paved again by the ballfield. During my visit in late summer, the air was fragrant with fennel as I neared the end of the trail.

You can extend your trip from the southeastern edge of Pickleweed Park another two miles round-trip by taking the rough bayside trail that leads from behind the community center through Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park (see below). Shortly after passing tiny Schoen Park, the trail links up with a paved trail. A sign further inland by the road tells you when you've arrived in Shoreline Park. To reach Shoreline without going through Pickleweed you can ride on the sidewalk leading east from the children's center to the park entrance.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 North, take the Central San Rafael exit. Turn right on Second St., right on Grand Ave., which turns into East Francisco Blvd., and left on Medway Rd., which runs into Canal Street. Take Canal St. to the right and follow it to the park. From Highway 580 West, merge onto Highway 101 North and take the Central San Rafael exit, then follow the directions above.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Two parking lots (no blue spaces) off Canal St. at either end of the park serve both the park and the community and children's centers. When the community center reopens, another lot will be available next to it. An accessible restroom is between the picnic area and playground.

*San Rafael Creek runs past Pickleweed Park.*



EILEEN ECKLUND

## *Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park*

NORTH OF POINT SAN QUENTIN, SAN RAFAEL

**T**HE BAY TRAIL LEADS south on a paved and dirt levee from Pickleweed

☛ Sunrise to sunset

Park to Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park, a narrow strip of parkland that stretches for three miles along the bayshore, past residences and a marsh. Alongside the trail at one of two wooden platforms with benches you can watch shorebirds, or further along take a ramp to the water's edge and listen to small waves lap against rocks.

In Shoreline Park, the trail runs parallel to the bay for about .25 mile, with unobstructed views of the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge and West and East Marin Islands, then turns inland and leads to a junction offering three options. The first is a concrete ramp leading down to a small rocky inlet, the second is a hard-packed dirt and paved levee trail that travels south along the bay for one mile toward Point San Quentin, and the third is the paved trail you have been following, which now leads west from the junction, wraps around a housing development and past a marsh, and ends at a sidewalk that travels into the same housing development. The levee trail toward Point San Quentin is the longer and more interesting trip. Its approach, however, is a short but steep paved hill that may be problematic for manual wheelchair users, especially on the return uphill. To avoid this hill and the dirt section of the trail, drive to Pelican Way, off East Francisco Boulevard, and pick up the trail there; it continues for less than .25 mile. Fewer people travel this section.

► **GETTING THERE** Follow the directions to Pickleweed Park, then continue past the park on Canal St. to the Spinnaker Point housing development, where Shoreline Park begins. To park at Pelican Way, follow the directions to Pickleweed but stay on East Francisco Blvd. to Pelican Way, then turn left and follow it to the end.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Parking (no blue spaces) is on the street by the trail entrance on Spinnaker Point Dr. and in the lot at the end of Pelican Way. Accessible restrooms are at Pickleweed Park.



## *Corte Madera Ecological Reserve*

HIGHWAY 101 TAMALPAIS DRIVE EXIT, CORTE MADERA

**W**ITH SOME FOUR MILES of trails weaving through a 125-acre restored salt marsh, this reserve is a great place for bird-watching. A paved sidewalk on its western edge near Highway 101 allows for a smooth ride, but the noise of traffic detracts from the natural sounds. Far more interesting are the hard-packed gravel and dirt levee trails, which offer vistas of the marsh, open water, and views of the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge and San Quentin State Prison. However, these trails may be difficult to navigate. They are narrow in some places and may be impassible during the rainy season. To reach the levee trails, start at the intersection of San Clemente Drive and Tamalpais Drive. I needed assistance in my power wheelchair for the steep inclines leading from the lower levee trail to the upper trails, so those will be especially tough for manual wheelchair users.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** The large gravel lot on Tamalpais Dr. has ten blue spaces. Several more are in the Village at Corte Madera mall, across the road from the reserve; use crosswalks with traffic lights. The closest accessible restrooms are at the mall.



## *Tiburon Peninsula and Angel Island*

**THE SMALL, EXCLUSIVE TOWN** of Tiburon began in the 1880s as a hamlet at a Northwestern Pacific Railroad terminus. Today, the town's shops and restaurants draw many visitors. The 2.5-mile Tiburon Peninsula Historic Trail runs along the waterfront from the peninsula's eastern shore to downtown. Ferries departing from docks off Main Street serve San Francisco and Angel Island State Park, where you can visit old military buildings and a former immigration station. Visits to scenic Paradise Beach County Park on the

eastern shore of the peninsula and the Tiburon Audubon Sanctuary on the western shore can also be worthwhile.

## *Paradise Beach County Park*

PARADISE DRIVE, TIBURON

**T**HIS PRETTY 19-ACRE PARK on the east shore of the Tiburon Peninsula is set on a steep hillside overlooking the bay, with the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge in the distance. On a sunny day you’ll see sailboats and yachts skimming the waves. Lawns are shaded by trees and several picnic areas with barbecue grills are set on hard-packed gravel and decomposed granite. Because of the hilly terrain, access around the park is limited. The lawn overlooking the tiny inaccessible beach is popular for picnicking. The fishing pier is level (46-inch railings), but the paved path from the parking lot to the pier is very steep. Other paths might be challenging for manual wheelchair users, but I had no problems in my power wheelchair.

🕒 Spring/fall, 7 am–7 pm;  
summer, 7 am–8 pm;  
winter, 8 am–5 pm

**FEES** \$7 per vehicle, \$2 walk-in

**RESERVATIONS** *Group picnic areas:* 415/499-6387

*Paradise Beach pier and picnic area*



EILEEN ECKLUND

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101, go east on Tiburon Blvd., left on Trestle Glen Blvd., and right on Paradise Drive. Proceed two miles to the park entrance.

► **PARKING/RESTROOMS** Five blue spaces are in the lower lot. The restroom near the pier has an accessible stall with a wide door, grab bars, a tight entry turn, and room for only a frontal transfer. Accessible portable toilets are next to the picnic areas.

## *Tiburon Peninsula Historic Trail*

**TIBURON BOULEVARD OFF HIGHWAY 101 TIBURON/MILL VALLEY EXIT**

**O**N THE EASTERN SHORE of Richardson Bay, at the intersection of Tiburon Boulevard and Trestle Glen Boulevard, is a 12-acre public open space called Blackie's Pasture, dedicated to a horse named Blackie who grazed here for 28 years. This is where people park to begin hiking the wide, paved, and mostly level

Tiburon Peninsula Historic Trail, which runs 2.5 miles along the water through Richardson Bay Park to downtown Tiburon. This trail was once part of a train route bringing food and supplies to Tiburon, as you can learn from photographs mounted on plaques along the trail. On weekends this scenic trail is heavily used by joggers, hikers, skaters, and cyclists.

Near the trail's beginning, several paths lead off toward Richardson Bay. The first, a short hard-packed dirt trail, ends at a lovely shady spot with

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*Donohue Depot:* **415/435-1853**

🕒 *Donohue Depot:* April–Oct., Sun. and Wed., 1–4 pm

**RESERVATIONS** *Permits for organized sports at McKegney Green:* **415/435-4355**

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CALIEB HUGHES

benches where you can look out at Sausalito and San Francisco; the second, with hard-packed gravel, takes off just past a restroom at the southern side of a bridge over a creek bed. It hugs the shoreline and winds around grassy hills, con-



CALEB HUGHES

necting back, on a very steep incline, to the main trail. The children's play area, tucked against the hillside, is most easily reached by continuing on the main trail past a portable restroom. Beyond a group of picnic tables, one of which is accessible, a path leads downhill to a swing set and a ramped play structure. A sandbox surrounds the play structure, so the ramp is not very useful.

Next on the trail is McKegney Green, a large grass playing field that is a good place to stop and enjoy the scenery. From here you travel alongside multimillion-dollar homes perched on the hillside. The bay view starts to disappear as trees enclose the trail, providing shade and obscuring nearby residences. Two miles later the trail ends at Mar West Street and continues on sidewalks to downtown Tiburon.

Across Main Street the Historic Trail continues to Elephant Rock on a .25-mile exposed-aggregate concrete path along the water. Grassy areas with benches give you reason to stop and admire Angel Island, which looms large across the water. Donohue Depot, a small building housing the Tiburon Rail Ferry Museum, is farther up the trail. The last stop, Elephant Rock, sits a few feet offshore and is reached by a ramp. The wooden deck surrounding the rock has small gaps through which you can see the water below.

► **GETTING THERE** From Highway 101 take the Mill Valley/Tiburon exit, heading east on Tiburon Blvd. approximately two miles to Blackie's Pasture (before Trestle Glen Drive).

► **PARKING** Two blue spaces are at Blackie's Pasture and one is at the small lot at Donohue Depot on Paradise Drive. For parking in downtown Tiburon, see "Angel Island," below.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible restrooms are a few hundred feet past the bridge at Blackie's Pasture. One accessible portable restroom is across from the children's play area. An accessible restroom is on the first level of the ferry landing in Tiburon.

## Angel Island State Park

OFF TIBURON IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY VIA FERRY OR PRIVATE BOAT

**A**CCESSIBLE BY FERRIES from San Francisco, Tiburon, and Oakland/Alameda, this forested 740-acre island has a network of trails that offer panoramic views of the bay, San Francisco, and Marin County. You can picnic near the ferry dock in Ayala Cove and visit three old garrison buildings. Many people bring bicycles. Although the island's difficult terrain and historical buildings pose many challenges to the wheelchair rider, the park has put great effort into making the overall experience more accessible. An accessible campsite is available by reservation. Environmental Traveling Companions, a nonprofit outdoor adventure-guide company specializing in disability access, offers day-long and overnight kayaking trips to the island. The air can be quite cool on the ferry and on the island. Layered clothing is advisable.

The ramp at the Tiburon ferry landing is steep, the one at Ayala Cove less so. When you arrive on the island, check the dockside information board to see which tours are being offered, and make sure you have a map and know the return ferry schedule. A short asphalt road from the ferry landing to the ramp-equipped visitor center passes a small gift shop and a large lawn with



LYNN EICHINGER, ANGEL ISLAND ASSOCIATION

*Ayala Cove*

many picnic tables and barbecue grills. The visitor center's historical displays and dioramas of native plants and animals are complemented by two short self-start videos, one chronicling the island's history from the last ice age up through its use by the Miwok Indians and the U.S. military, the other focusing on the years between 1910 and 1940, when Chinese immigrants were detained and interrogated on the island. A scale model of the island is mounted too high for easy viewing from a wheelchair.

The Cove Café deli near the visitor center has patio seating. From there you can board an accessible tram (room for two wheelchairs only) for a one-hour tour that circles the island on Perimeter Road, making brief stops at Camp Reynolds and the Immigration Station. You can explore the island on your own by following the Perimeter Road loop, a paved—and often steep—five-mile-long fire road. The path from the visitor center to Perimeter Road begins with a long up-hill stretch that is a challenge even for a strong manual wheelchair rider. The slope of this hill is matched by three other steep climbs and one steeper hill along the loop. If you're using a manual wheelchair, wear gloves to protect your hands on the way down. Where smaller trails cross the road, there is usually a picnic table or bench.

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**Park:** **415/435-1915**,  
parks.ca.gov  
**Angel Island Association:**  
**415/435-3522**; angelisland.org  
**Environmental Traveling**  
**Companions:** **415/474-7662**;  
etctrips.org

**FERRIES** *From Tiburon*  
(daily May–Oct., call for rest  
of year): **415/435-2131**,  
angelislandferry.com  
*From San Francisco (daily) and*  
*Oakland/Alameda (summer*  
*weekends only):* **415/705-5555**;  
blueandgoldfleet.com

🕒 **Park:** 8 am–sunset  
**Ayala Cove visitor center:**  
10 am–5 pm  
**Docent-led tours at historic sites:**  
weekends, April–Oct.  
**Cove Café, tram tours,**  
**and bicycle rentals:** call  
**415/897-0715** or visit  
www.angelisland.com

**RESERVATIONS**  
**Ferries:** Tiburon ferry takes  
group reservations only;  
\$2.25 surcharge for phone  
reservations for Blue  
& Gold Fleet  
**Group and docent-led tours:**  
Angel Island Association,  
**415/435-3522**  
**Tram tours:** Angel Island  
Company, **415/897-0715**  
If you need assistance, call  
ranger station, **415/435-5390**  
**Campsite:** Reserve  
America, **800/444-7275**;  
reserveamerica.com

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When you turn right from the Ayala Cove path onto Perimeter Road, you first come to Camp Reynolds, also known as West Garrison, about one mile down the road. One of three garrisons on the island (access to all of which involves steeply sloping roads), this is the easiest to enter. A campground here has one level and accessible campsite and accessible pathways to the restroom.

The old Immigration Station, which was also North Garrison, is about one mile in the other direction from the intersection of the Ayala Cove path and Perimeter Road. That includes a .5-mile climb at first, and then a level stretch. The entrance road down to the station is extremely steep, but well worth the challenge for those who want a close look. A lift to a side door provides wheelchair access to the station building. From 1910 to 1940, Chinese and other Asian immigrants were interrogated here and detained in cramped quarters under the provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which barred most Chinese citizens from immigrating to the United States. Some poems carved into the walls by detainees tell of their sadness and frustration. In early 2006, the Immigration Station was closed for extensive restoration; it was scheduled to reopen at the end of the year.

About .5 mile beyond the Immigration Station is the entrance to Fort McDowell, the East Garrison. The path leading down to it is shorter and nearly as steep as the one from Ayala Cove, but there is a flat resting place midway. If you are not with a ranger guide who can open the accessible side entrance to the garrison's guardhouse, you will need to send someone up the front entrance steps to have it opened. The entry had a dip in the floor, requiring me to back in to avoid bottoming out my footplate. Immediately I found myself in a chilly, ominous place, surrounded by prison cells. The guardhouse was used by the military for troops who misbehaved. From this

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*(continued from previous page)*

**FEES** *Ferries* (includes state park fee): *Tiburon*: age 12 and up, \$10; age 5–11, \$8; age 4 and under, free (limit 1 free fare per paying adult); bicycle, \$1  
*Blue & Gold Fleet*: age 13 and up, \$13.50; age 6–12, \$8; age 5 and under, free  
*Tram Tour*: adults, \$12.50; seniors 62 and up, \$10.50; children 6–12, \$8.50; under age 6, free if seated on lap; call for group rates  
*Campsite*: \$15–20 per night

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room you can access the main floor via a lift. A display of interpretive panels explains the military's presence on the island from 1863 to 1963.

► **GETTING THERE** Scheduled passenger ferries (no cars) depart to Ayala Cove from San Francisco, Tiburon, and Oakland/Alameda (weekends only), with connections from Vallejo. Tiburon offers the most daily trips, with two boats serving the island. In Tiburon I found it easier to board the smaller *Bonita* because the larger *Angel Island* required that my chair be lifted over a three-and-a-half-inch step at the top of the ramp. There is no set schedule for when either boat is used. You can also sail or kayak to the island on your own or arrange to charter a boat and moor at Ayala Cove.

► **PARKING** Three blue spaces are alongside the shops on Tiburon Blvd., near the ferry terminal on Main Street. The other option is a paid lot, several of which are nearby; see [angelislandferry.com](http://angelislandferry.com) for locations and rates.

► **RESTROOMS** In the accessible restroom on the first level of the ferry landing in Tiburon, look for the widest door (no sign). Two accessible restrooms are at the ferry dock at Ayala Cove and a third is near the platform picnic site. Each of the three garrisons has clean, accessible restrooms. The Immigration Station's two accessible restrooms are in a building along the switchback sidewalk from the entrance road.



## *Sausalito and Mill Valley*

**A TRIP ALONG THE SAUSALITO** waterfront leads you through a picturesque downtown often crowded with tourists and past a yacht harbor. On the north side, a 2.5-mile pedestrian-and-bicycle path leads from Harbor Drive to Mill Valley's Bayfront Park, crossing Bothin Marsh on a boardwalk.



## Sausalito Waterfront

**M**Y EXCURSION BEGAN on the sidewalk along Bridgeway, the waterfront street that begins at Richardson Street, near Sausalito's southeastern edge, and runs by Yee Tock Chee Park and through downtown. Benches along the way invite you to linger, enjoying views of San Francisco, Angel Island, and the waterfront scene as you listen to the water lap against the shoreline riprap.

Yee Tock Chee Park, small and on the shoreline, is an intriguing sculptural exercise in concrete and geometry. A ramp leads in from Bridgeway, but then the park has three levels, mostly created by fan-shaped steps that vary from one to six inches in height, making wedge-shaped platforms. A short stairway leads up to a lookout platform at water's edge. There is no wheelchair access to these platforms, but any other place in the park has a good view of the bay and the hillsides above Sausalito.

From the park, continue through downtown on Bridgeway's sidewalk past Plaza Viña del Mar. To explore the waterfront, turn right on El Portal, which leads to the ferry-landing plaza, with benches and more bay views. Triangular Gabrielson Memorial Park nearby also has several benches and a path near the water. That path continues on to the Spinnaker Restaurant

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**Bay Model: 415/332-3870**

📍 **Bay Model:** Tues.–Sat.,  
9 am–4 pm; **Earl F. Dunphy  
Park:** 5 am–11 pm

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*Along Sausalito's waterfront*



DAN ROBIN

and the Sausalito Yacht Harbor, where a boardwalk runs along the water from Bay Street to Johnson Street, offering close-up views of grand yachts. Other public shoreline access points include a small dock and benches overlooking Pelican Harbor at the end of Johnson Street, and a public pier on the bayside of Turney Street that wraps around a restaurant and continues north to Locust Street.

North of downtown, back on Bridgeway at Napa Street, is the mostly inaccessible Earl F. Dunphy Park. Bordered by trees, it has a gazebo, sand volleyball court, and small sandy beach. If you don't mind traveling across grass, this is a spot where you can enjoy a quiet break from downtown. Instead of returning to the sidewalk and the din of traffic on Bridgeway, cross Napa Street at the Dunphy Park parking lot to connect to a pedestrian path that leads through the Marinship area, where Liberty Ships were built during World War II. The path becomes dirt and gravel for 100 feet as it winds slightly uphill behind an office complex. There is a three-inch curb where it reconnects to an asphalt trail. This path then leads to Marinship Way, where you'll find the Bay Model Visitor Center. Built in 1957 and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a scientific research center, the sprawling building is now a public education center. It features a massive hydraulic model of San Francisco Bay—built at floor level—that can simulate currents, tidal action, sediment movement, and the mixing of fresh and salt water. Interpretive panels and hands-on exhibits offer opportunities to learn about the bay's history and ecosystem.

Heading north from the Bay Model, to avoid negotiating a 24-inch passage around a pole on Bridgeway's sidewalk, stay on Marinship Way until Harbor Drive, then turn left to return to Bridgeway and the end of your downtown waterfront tour. The paved pedestrian-and-bicycle Sausalito–Mill Valley Trail begins here and leads 1.5 miles north to Bothin Marsh, and from Bothin, one mile further to Bayfront Park in Mill Valley.

► **PARKING** Downtown has no streetside blue spaces. Blue spaces are in lots near the ferry landing and at the Sausalito Yacht Harbor off Johnson Street. One blue space is behind the public restroom on Bridgeway at Anchor St., two are in the lot on Locust St., one is on the southern side of Dunphy Park, and four are at the Bay Model.

► **RESTROOMS** The stalls in the small public restroom at the corner of Bridgeway and Anchor St. only allow for a frontal transfer, the men's room's lowered urinal is too close to the wall for an easy approach, and there is limited space for opening the door to the women's restroom. Restrooms inside and outside the Bay Model are open only when the building is open. The outside restroom has good access. Those indoors have stalls too shallow to close the door, and only allow for a frontal transfer.

## *Bothin Marsh and Bayfront Park*

HIGHWAY 101 STINSON BEACH EXIT, MILL VALLEY

**T**HE BIKE LANE and sidewalk along Bridgeway in downtown Sausalito connect with the Sausalito–Mill Valley Trail at Harbor Drive. This wide level asphalt section of the Bay Trail, popular with cyclists, runners, and rollerbladers, leads 1.5 miles north and under the Richardson Bay Bridge to Bothin Marsh. The trails in its 112 acres of open space and restored salt marsh are dirt and can be accessible during the dry season. From the south, the Sausalito–Mill Valley Trail follows the edge of the marsh for one mile to Bayfront Park. Along the way, the trail crosses four small wooden bridges that rise over creeks and channels. When bicycle traffic is light, these are great places to watch for marine life as the tide surges in or out. Shorebirds abound and interpretive panels give historical and ecological information about Richardson Bay.

Fourteen-acre Bayfront Park, which surrounds a quiet inlet at the northernmost tip of Richardson Bay, offers on its western side a large dog run, soccer fields, a skateboard park, picnic tables, and a pier for launching small boats. The pier has one step and is steep at low tide. A bridge with a two-inch ledge at both ends leads to the park's eastern side, with a playground, softball field, and more soccer fields. From the east-side parking lot, a paved trail leads south a few hundred yards. At the "Public Shoreline" sign, follow the decomposed-granite trail uphill for a view of the lagoon below. In my power wheelchair I safely climbed a steep section with a cross slope, but people in manual wheelchairs may need assistance. Steps lead down from the crest of the hill to a .25-mile trail that hugs the shoreline, traveling behind a landscaped condominium complex. To reach this section by wheel-



*The Sausalito–Mill Valley Trail*

**Bayfront Park: 415/383-1370**

🕒 Dawn to dusk

chair you need to backtrack to the shoreline sign and continue on the sidewalk, turning onto Shelter Bay Avenue where it dead-ends at the trail.

► **GETTING THERE** To reach Bothin Marsh from Highway 101 North, take the Highway 1/Mill Valley/Stinson Beach exit, then veer right. Turn right at Mt. Tam junction, then left at Pohono Street. To reach Bayfront Park from Highway 101 South, exit at Tiburon/East Blithedale Avenue. For the park's west side, turn right on East Blithedale, left at Camino Alto, and left at Sycamore. For the east side, from East Blithedale turn left at Roque Moraes Dr. and right on Hamilton Drive.

► **PARKING** Bothin Marsh parking is off Pohono St. in the Shoreline Office Center's parking lot. You will see Bay Trail spaces, but none are designated blue. You can park legally in one of several blue spaces associated with the office complex. Two lots serve Bayfront Park. Six blue spaces are in the Mill Valley Middle School lot off Sycamore Ave. on the park's western side. On the park's east side, approaching from Hamilton Dr., you will find one blue space in the northern lot and one at the trail entrance across the road from the public safety building.

► **RESTROOMS** Accessible public restrooms are in the Sewerage Agency building on the west side of Bayfront Park. Take Sycamore Ave. and cross the agency parking lot. The bathrooms do not have raised toilets, and the entry door is heavy. Good accessible restrooms are in the northern parking lot on Hamilton Drive.



# Resources

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## More Guides to Trails and Parks

Few printed guides to wheelchair-accessible outings in the Bay Area exist, and none we know of is up to date. You might check out some of the websites listed below, but keep in mind—as you also should with this book—that park and trail conditions keep changing. It's wise to contact the relevant park or agency to make sure you have current information.

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL** Maps and descriptions of places along the trail, with information on how to get there: [www.baytrail.org](http://www.baytrail.org)

**BAY AREA HIKER** All-access and easy trails in the San Francisco Bay Area: [www.bahiker.com/extras/allaccess.html](http://www.bahiker.com/extras/allaccess.html)

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY SHORELINE ACCESS WEB GUIDE** A GIS-based guide intended to integrate a variety of information about public access and recreation around the bay shoreline. It is a work in progress: <http://gis.abag.ca.gov/website/ShorelineAccess/index.htm>

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT** The District's most accessible trails: [www.openspace.org/activities/accessible\\_trails.asp](http://www.openspace.org/activities/accessible_trails.asp)

**TRAIL CENTER** Disabilities-accessible trails and parks on the San Francisco Peninsula and in the South Bay: [www.trailcenter.org/guides/disabilities/disabilities.htm](http://www.trailcenter.org/guides/disabilities/disabilities.htm)

**TRAILHEAD: TRAILS OF THE DIABLO VALLEY** Paved multi-use trails: [www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/6016/paved.html](http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/6016/paved.html)

**CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS** Accessible features in California State Parks: <http://access.parks.ca.gov>

**TRAIL EXPLORER** This site invites you to search for trails with specific accessibility features. The vast majority of the trails listed are outside the Bay Area: [www.traiexplorer.org](http://www.traiexplorer.org)

#### **SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TRAILS**

Wheelchair rider Ann Sieck reviews some trails she has hiked:  
<http://dann.netwiz.net/trails.htm>

#### **ACCESS SAN FRANCISCO**

Produced by Access Northern California ([www.accessnca.com](http://www.accessnca.com)) and distributed by the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau, this guide contains information about accessible transportation, hotels and restaurants, museums, parks, tours, and visitor attractions. Call 415/391-2000 (TDD/TTY 415/392-0328) for a free copy. The guide can be downloaded in PDF format from [www.sfvisitor.org](http://www.sfvisitor.org) and is also available on tape or in large-print format from the Mayor's Office on Disability, 415/554-6789 (TTY 415/554-6799).

#### **THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY SHORELINE GUIDE**

This lively Coastal Conservancy guide, published in 1995 by the University of California Press, is still the most comprehensive guide to the bay shoreline, although some parks and trails have changed dramatically and some access information is outdated. It not only describes trails but also includes much natural and human history, all in a concise and user-friendly format. You can order a copy from the University of California Press, at your local bookstore, or from the Bay Trail Project.

### **Guided Hikes and Outings for People with Disabilities**

**BAY AREA ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED SAILORS:** 415/281-0212;  
[www.baads.org](http://www.baads.org)

**BAY AREA OUTREACH AND RECREATION PROGRAM (BORP):** 510/849-4663;  
[www.borp.org](http://www.borp.org)

**ENVIRONMENTAL TRAVELING COMPANIONS (ETC):** 415/474-7662;  
[www.etctrips.org](http://www.etctrips.org)

**ON THE LEVEL TOURS:** 415/921-1382; [www.onthelevelsf.com](http://www.onthelevelsf.com)

**RIDE A WAVE:** 831/239-3672; [www.rideawave.org](http://www.rideawave.org)

**SHARED ADVENTURES:** 831/459-7210; [www.sharedadventures.com](http://www.sharedadventures.com)

## Public Transportation

Many parks, reserves, and trails can be reached by public transit. People with disabilities may be eligible for discount fares. All Bay Area transit agencies also offer paratransit service, typically a shared ride in a small bus, van, or taxi, for people unable to use regularly scheduled public transit. Visit <http://transit.511.org/disabled/index.asp> or contact the transit agency serving the area where you live or are staying.

### **PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES:**

<http://maps.openspacecouncil.org/Outdoors/>

### **REGIONAL TRANSIT INFORMATION AND TRIP PLANNING ASSISTANCE:**

call 511 or 711 (TDD) or visit [www.511.org](http://www.511.org). This website also provides links to local and regional transit operators, including ferries.

### **LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRANSIT OPERATORS:**

**AC TRANSIT:** 510/891-4777; [www.actransit.org](http://www.actransit.org); serves Alameda County and parts of Contra Costa County

**AMTRAK:** 877/974-3322; [www.amtrakcapitols.com](http://www.amtrakcapitols.com); train and bus connections between San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento

**BART:** 510/465-2278; [www.bart.gov](http://www.bart.gov); serves San Francisco, Alameda, and parts of San Mateo and Contra Costa Counties

**GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT:** 415/455-2000; [www.goldengate.org](http://www.goldengate.org); serves Marin, Sonoma, and San Francisco Counties

**SAMTRANS:** 800/660-4287; [www.samtrans.com](http://www.samtrans.com); serves San Mateo County and parts of San Francisco and Palo Alto

**SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL RAILWAY (MUNI):** 415/673-6864;

*www.sfmuni.com*; serves San Francisco

**WESTCAT:** 510/724-7993; *www.westcat.org*; serves west Contra Costa County

#### **FERRIES:**

**ALAMEDA HARBOR BAY FERRY:** 510/769-5500; *www.harborbayferry.com*; service between Bay Farm Island (Alameda) and San Francisco

**ALAMEDA/OAKLAND FERRY:** 510/749-5837; *www.eastbayferry.com*; service between Oakland, Alameda, San Francisco, and Angel Island

**ANGEL ISLAND–TIBURON FERRY:** 415/435-2131; *angelislandferry.com*; service between Tiburon and Angel Island

**BLUE AND GOLD FLEET:** 415/705-5555; *blueandgoldfleet.com*; service between San Francisco, Oakland/Alameda, Vallejo, Angel Island, Alcatraz, Sausalito, and Tiburon

**GOLDEN GATE FERRY:** 511 or 711 (TDD); *www.goldengate.org*; service between Larkspur, Sausalito, and San Francisco

**VALLEJO BAYLINK FERRY:** 707/643-3779 or 877/643-3779 (toll-free); *www.baylinkferry.com*; service between Vallejo and San Francisco

### **Parking Permits**

Parking spaces are scarce in some urban areas, especially San Francisco. Disabled visitors can get a temporary disabled parking placard (\$6) from the Department of Motor Vehicles by downloading an application at *www.dmv.ca.gov/forms/reg/reg195.pdf*. A doctor's signature is required. Out-of-state and -country disabled parking permits and placards are valid in California.



## **Information about San Francisco Bay Issues**

Do you want to know more about the natural features and parks on the bay and nearby coast? Here are a few resources to start with. There are many more.

**SAVE THE BAY:** 510/452-9261; [www.savesfbay.org](http://www.savesfbay.org)

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL PROJECT:** 510/464-7900; [www.baytrail.org](http://www.baytrail.org)

**DON EDWARDS SAN FRANCISCO BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE:**  
510/792-0222; [www.fws.gov/desfbay](http://www.fws.gov/desfbay)

**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT:** 510/562-7275; [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)

**GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA:** 415/561-4700;  
[www.nps.gov/goga](http://www.nps.gov/goga)

**LITERACY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:** 415/282-6840; [www.lejyouth.org](http://www.lejyouth.org)

**URBAN CREEKS COUNCIL:** 510/540-6669; [www.urban creeks.org](http://www.urban creeks.org)

**CALIFORNIA COAST & OCEAN MAGAZINE:** 510/286-0934  
[www.coastandocean.org](http://www.coastandocean.org)

## **CREDITS**

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# M

ANY NATURAL

areas, parks, urban water-

fronts, and hundreds of miles of trails

along the California coast and on San Francisco Bay are now accessible to

wheelchair riders and others with limited mobility. This book describes

more than a hundred beautiful and interesting sites around the entire bay and on the ocean between Point Reyes and Santa Cruz. You will find opportunities to watch birds and other wildlife, picnic on bluffs and on shaded lawns by the water, camp on an island, fish off piers, watch sunsets over the surf, learn about the region's natural and human history, and enjoy yourself in

many other ways.

Too often, wheelchair riders hesitate to explore far from home because they don't know about barrier-free routes and the availability of restrooms and other facilities. The Coastal Conservancy funded this guide as part of its public access program, to encourage greater enjoyment of the natural riches we all hold in common.

