

Old Haul Road (10 miles roundtrip, bicycle friendly)

Description: Except for the short and steep service road leading to the trailhead, this is a relatively flat, scenic walk or ride to Memorial County Park.

This is the ONLY trail at Portola Redwoods State Park that allows bicycles.

Why you will enjoy this hike: Old Haul Road is an unpaved, five-mile fire road that links Portola with adjacent county parks. For cyclists, it is noted as one of the most scenic beginner rides in the Bay Area and offers a gentle alternative outlet from the park. Hikers might enjoy pairing Old Haul Road with Pomponio Trail to make a 10-mile loop through the Pescadero Creek watershed.

Access: From the Visitor's Center cross the bridge to the campground and bear right. Continue on this service road past the Iverson Cabin Site and turn right on Old Haul Road. After 5 miles Old Haul Road ends at the Hoffman Creek Trailhead on Wurr Rd. Memorial County Park is across the street. To return to Portola, backtrack on Old Haul Rd and either stay on the trail or watch for signs to Pomponio Trail to make a loop.

NOTE: Old Haul Road connects many trails, providing hikers with access to Big Basin and Butano State Parks via the Butano Ridge Trail. Please thoroughly examine a map before straying from Old Haul Road.



Poison Oak

Hike Smart!

Please keep the following tips in mind while enjoying the trails:

- Always carry water and a map, even if you don't expect to be gone long. These hikes are part of a large trail system spanning many miles of parks and open space preserves.
- The weather can change quickly. Be prepared with proper layers. Keep in mind that cotton will keep you cold if it gets wet from sweat or rain, but wool and synthetic fabrics will help you retain body heat wet or dry.
- It is safest to hike with others, especially at dawn and dusk. If you hike by yourself, make sure someone knows where you are going and when to expect you back.
- Mountain lions inhabit the area around Portola Redwoods State Park. In the rare case that you encounter one, back away slowly while facing the animal and making yourself look big. Do not run.
- Footbridges across Pescadero Creek are removed for the winter. Do not attempt to ford a creek if the water comes above your shins.
- Be aware of poison oak. Its leaves may be red or green.
- All natural resources within the park are protected by the State of California. Please do not collect plants or fungi and respect the wildlife that makes this forest its home.



Brochure updated August 2011

Hiking Guide to Portola Redwoods State Park



Moderate to Strenuous Hikes plus bicycle-friendly Old Haul Rd Guide 5 to 13+ miles

It is recommended that you use either the \$2 Portola Redwoods State Park Map or the \$5 Pescadero Creek County Park Map along with this guide.

Upper Coyote Ridge & West Tarwater (6.2 miles)

Description: A loop hike that spans riparian, oak woodland, meadow, and eucalyptus grove habitats.

Why you will enjoy this hike: Coyote Ridge offers westward-facing views of the Pescadero watershed. The west part of the Tarwater Loop follows Tarwater Creek, named for the crude oil that occasionally bubbles up from underground. The trail ventures through an open area good for birdwatching and goes by an abandoned cabin in a eucalyptus grove.

Access: From the road north of the Visitor's Center follow the signs to Coyote Ridge Trail. Bear left at the junction with Upper Coyote Ridge Trail. Enter Pescadero Creek County Park. Cross the next paved road to access the west side of Tarwater Loop. At the next junction, turn left on Pomponio Trail and follow it back into the park. Turn right on the Iverson Trail and left on the Sequoia Nature Trail to return to the Visitor's Center.

Upper Coyote Ridge & East Tarwater (6.4 miles)

Description: A loop that pairs the views of Coyote Ridge with a walk through the second-growth redwood groves of the eastern Tarwater Loop trail.

Why you will enjoy this hike: This hike includes more heavily forested scenery than the western Tarwater Loop. It also passes by an old shingle mill site near the junction with Pomponio Trail.

Access: From the road north of the Visitor's Center follow the signs to Coyote Ridge Trail. Bear left at the junction with Upper Coyote Ridge Trail. Enter Pescadero Creek County Park. At the parking lot just before Camp Pomponio Road, turn left on Tarwater Loop. At the next junction, turn left on Pomponio Trail and follow it back into the park. Take the Iverson Trail to the Sequoia Nature Trail to return to the Visitor's Center.

Tarwater Loop (8 miles)

Description: The east side of this loop parallels Shingle Mill Creek and ventures through redwoods. The west side follows Tarwater Creek through meadows.

Why you will enjoy this hike: The trail traverses a variety of ecosystems and offers good wildflower viewing and birdwatching. Points of interest include a hollow old-growth redwood, a shingle mill site, and an abandoned cabin in a eucalyptus grove.

Access: From Portola Redwoods State Park Visitor's Center, follow Iverson Trail from just north of the building to Pomponio Trail. Bear right onto Bridge Trail and right again shortly after on Tarwater Loop. Stay on the loop beyond the intersection with Camp Pomponio Road. At the end of the loop turn left on Camp Pomponio Road, right on the Bridge Trail, and left again on Pomponio Trail.

NOTE: The bulk of this hike is in Pescadero Creek County Park. You may access the loop from the parking area on Camp Pomponio Road within the county park; this shortens the hike to 5 1/2 miles.

Peter's Creek (13 miles)

Description: This lengthy hike passes the Slate Creek trail camp and travels through second- and old-growth redwood stands. Some areas are steep.

Why you will enjoy this hike: Peter's Creek Loop passes through a seldom-seen area of the park that is home to some of the region's oldest redwood trees. The length of the hike and availability of a trail camp make it an excellent overnight backpacking destination.

Access: From the Visitor's Center cross the bridge to the campground and take the first right. The trailhead is on your left. Follow signs for Slate Creek Trail. The trail camp is 2 1/2 miles from the trailhead. At the trail camp, turn left on Bear Creek Trail and continue either clockwise or counterclockwise on Peter's Creek Loop. To return, backtrack on Bear Creek Trail.

NOTE: If you plan to stay at the trail camp please reserve it by calling Big Basin State Park at (831) 338-8861.

"Bay Area Hiker" Hike (5 miles)

Description: This moderate hike makes a loop on the south side of Pescadero Creek.

Why you will like this hike: This loop passes by some of Portola's landmarks including the Shell Tree and Tiptoe Falls. The grade is not too steep and there are several opportunities for wading.

Access: Start on the Sequoia Nature Trail behind the Visitor's Center. Cross the creek and bear right to circle around the Shell Tree. Continue to bear right on the Iverson Trail. Watch for a sign for Pomponio Trail on the left; take this trail until you can turn left on the Bridge Trail. Turn left again on Old Haul Road. Watch for cyclists and horses. Turn left again to pick up the Iverson Trail. Follow signs to Tiptoe Falls and the Visitor's Center.

NOTE: Some bridges across Pescadero Creek are removed in the winter. For a winter hike of similar length try the Coyote Ridge/Summit Trail described in the blue brochure.

"As See On Our Website" Hike (6 miles)

Description: This moderate hike includes the landmarks mentioned above, along with a steeper grade and more diverse habitat.

Why you will like this hike: This loop passes by many of Portola's famous sights: the Shell Tree, Tiptoe Falls, the Iverson Cabin Site, the Summit, and Old Tree. The scenery is comprised of mostly redwoods but includes riparian zones along the Iverson Trail and hardwoods on the Summit Trail.

Access: To climb first and wade last, begin at the Old Tree Trail (from Visitor's Center, cross the bridge to the campground, take the first right, and watch for the trailhead on the left). After viewing the Old Tree, backtrack slightly and turn right on the Slate Creek Trail. Follow this trail to the junction with Summit. Turn right and follow Summit down to the service road. If you are tired, you may turn right and follow the service road back to the campground. To continue hiking, turn left, pass the Iverson Cabin Site, and turn right on the Iverson trail. Tiptoe Falls is down a short spur to the left. Return to the Iverson Trail and bear right at the junction with Sequoia Nature Trail. This takes you on a quick loop around the Shell Tree and back across Pescadero Creek to the Visitor's Center.

NOTE: Footbridges are removed in the winter. For a hike of similar length in the winter, continue on Slate Creek to the Page Mill Site, then backtrack and take Summit Trail to the Service Road and turn right to go back to the campground.