

## Sam McDonald County Park Pescadero Creek County Park

Entrance: 13435 Pescadero Creek Rd., Loma Mar, CA 94021

Headquarters at Memorial Park: 650-879-0238

9500 Pescadero Creek Road, Loma Mar, CA 94021

Police, Fire, or Medical Emergency 911

### San Mateo County Parks

Reservations 650-363-4021

General information 650-363-4020

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

The Department manages parks, trails, and historic sites to preserve public lands and provide opportunities for education and recreation. The system's properties include parks, preserves, trails, and historic sites located throughout the County and encompassing more than 17,000 acres.

The parks represent our region's wondrously diverse natural settings, from rugged tidepools, lush mountain forests, and remote campsites to Bayfront shoreline, sunny picnic areas, and popular playgrounds.

The Department sells annual passes, offering unlimited entrances to all County Parks for a year.

### Support your parks

You can volunteer to help rangers protect and improve parklands and serve park visitors.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation raises funds to improve the quality of County Parks for our community. For information, visit [www.SupportParks.org](http://www.SupportParks.org).

The Volunteer Horse Patrol ([smcvhp.org](http://smcvhp.org)) promotes protection and enjoyment of these parks.

San Mateo County Parks  
Wild places & friendly spaces

# Sam McDonald Pescadero Creek

San Mateo County Parks



Jack Yaco



Wild places & friendly spaces

## Sam McDonald County Park Pescadero Creek County Park

Sam McDonald and Pescadero Creek County Parks, together with Memorial County Park and Heritage Grove, make up the 8,020-acre Pescadero Creek Park Complex in southern San Mateo County. The ranger station at Memorial Park serves as headquarters for all four parks.

These parks include some of the Santa Cruz Mountain's most stunning redwood forests. The parks offer plenty of campsites and an extensive trail network, and are favorites with campers, backpackers, hikers, cyclists, and equestrians.

The complex is contiguous with Portola Redwoods State Park, and easily accessible from Highways 1 or 84.



Jack Yaco



### Park hours and use

**Hours** The parks open at 8am. Closing time changes seasonally, and is posted.

**Pets** Pets are not allowed in the parks.

**Fires** **Sam McDonald:** Charcoal barbecues are allowed only in barbecue pits; no portable barbecues. Campfires are allowed only in designated pits or rings, and are subject to fire risk conditions. **Pescadero Creek:** No campfires or portable barbecues are allowed. At trail camps, camp stoves are allowed; campfires are allowed depending on conditions.

**Smoking** No smoking in County Parks, on trails, or at historical sites.

Please protect the parks' natural environment and do not disturb or remove any plants or animals.

### Trail use

- Hikers, runners, bicyclists, and equestrians share these trails. Please be alert and courteous to all trail users.
- Always yield to equestrians by stepping to the edge of the path.
- Bicyclists always yield to other trail users.
- Weather conditions may cause seasonal trail closures.



For more trail information and routes, visit [www.SMCoParks.org](http://www.SMCoParks.org).



## Sam McDonald County Park

Sam McDonald County Park offers magnificent redwood forests and a ridge with vistas of the Pacific Ocean. The Park, some 850 acres, includes youth camps, an equestrian camp, and a hiker's hut.

Adjacent to McDonald, Heritage Grove is a stunning 37-acre preserve of old-growth redwood forest.

### Natural features

Much of Sam McDonald Park is very steep. Ferns and other shade-loving plants are found in lower elevations; the higher-elevation knolls are covered each spring with colorful wildflowers such as sticky monkeyflower, wood rose, and sun cup.

The forests, dominated by coast redwood, also include Douglas-fir, madrone, California laurel, buckeye, big leaf maple, and oak trees.

Common wildlife in Sam McDonald includes black-tailed deer, raccoons, opossums, foxes, bobcats, woodpeckers, Steller's jays, garter and gopher snakes, and banana slugs.

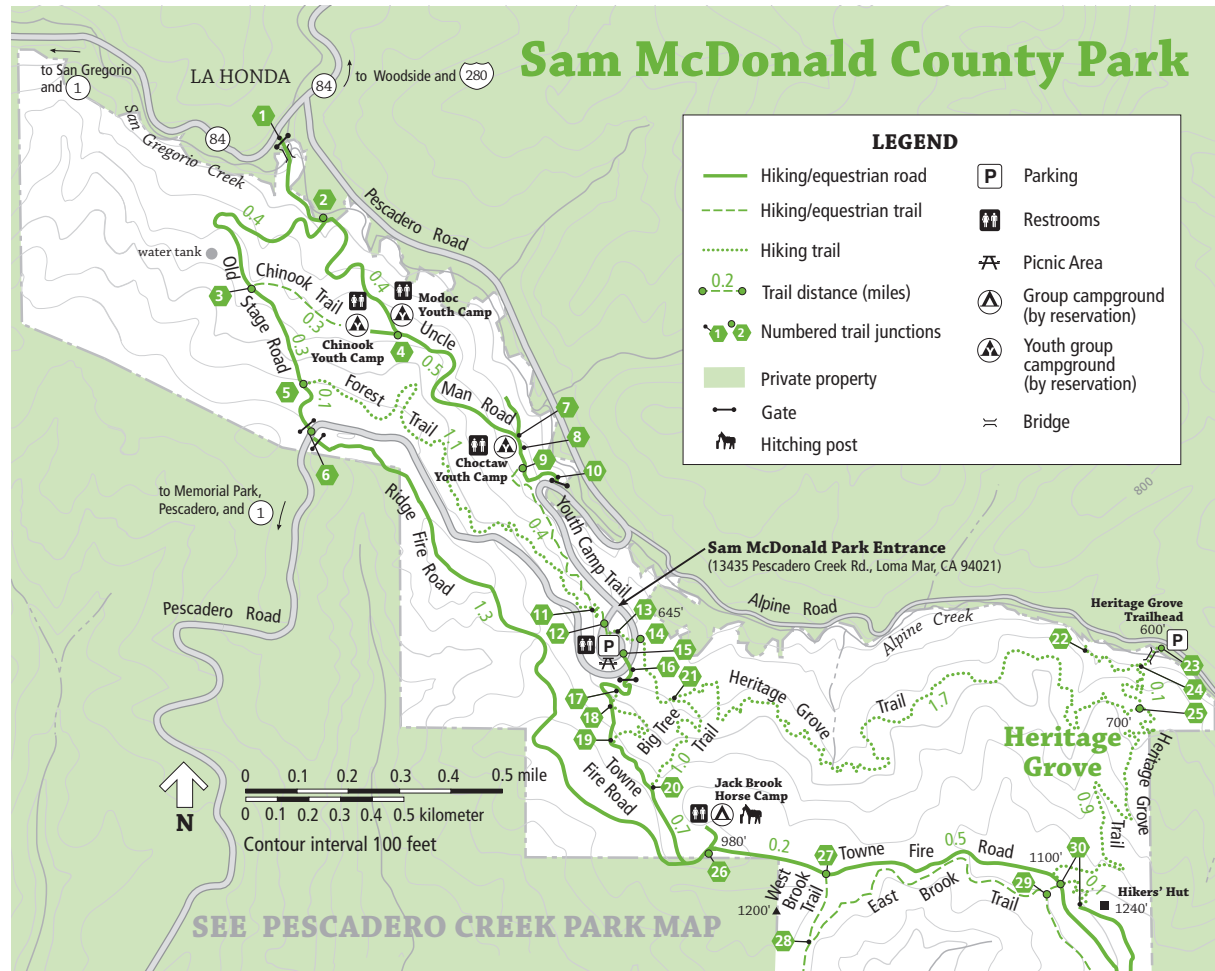
Heritage Grove offers visitors an opportunity to experience the stunning beauty of old-growth coast redwoods. Located on Alpine Creek, the grove includes what are considered to be among the Santa Cruz Mountain's largest redwoods.

### Activities and facilities

Several miles of **trails** for hikers, cyclists, and equestrians include connections to adjacent parks.

Trails in **Heritage Grove** wind through the redwoods. Heritage Grove Trail, open only to hikers, connects with other trails in the complex. The Grove can also be admired from the parking lot off Alpine Road, accessible from Pescadero Road.

The Sierra Club **Hiker's Hut** may be reserved by calling the Sierra Club at 650-390-8411 x393. Groups may reserve any of several **youth camps** or the **Jack Brook Horse Camp** (seasonally). **Make reservations** for these camps at [www.SMCoParks.org](http://www.SMCoParks.org) or 650-363-4021.



Jack Yaco

### Trails

- Big Tree Trail** 1.2 miles
- Ranger station to Hiker's Hut** 1.5 miles one-way
- Heritage Grove Trail** 3.2 miles
- Towne Fire Road** 5.0 miles

- Hikers, runners, bicyclists, and equestrians share these trails. Please be alert and courteous to all trail users.
- Always yield to equestrians by stepping to the edge of the path.
- Bicyclists always yield to other trail users.
- Weather conditions may cause seasonal trail closures.

For more trail information and routes, visit [www.SMCoParks.org](http://www.SMCoParks.org).

## Pescadero Creek County Park

With 5,860 acres, Pescadero is by far the County's largest park. Its wilderness includes miles of trails for hikers and equestrians. Pescadero Creek Park shares its eastern boundary and a number of trails with Portola Redwoods State Park. The trail network also connects to Big Basin Redwoods State Park, offering the opportunity for long hikes through multiple parks.

### Natural features

Pescadero Creek County Park includes a diversity of trees including coast redwood, Douglas-fir, Santa Cruz cypress, California wax myrtle, tanoak, madrone, California laurel, big leaf maple, canyon live oak, coast live oak, and knobcone pine.

The Park sits atop a deposit of oil and natural gas. Crude oil pools up in Tarwater Creek and seeps into Jones Gulch Creek, staining the rocks.

Pescadero and Alpine Creeks both provide spawning habitat for endangered steelhead; Pescadero Creek also has a small run of endangered Coho salmon.

The endangered marbled murrelet, a small and secretive seabird, nests in the Park. More easily seen are black-tailed deer, raccoons, western gray squirrels, and the occasional coyote and mountain lion.

### Activities and facilities

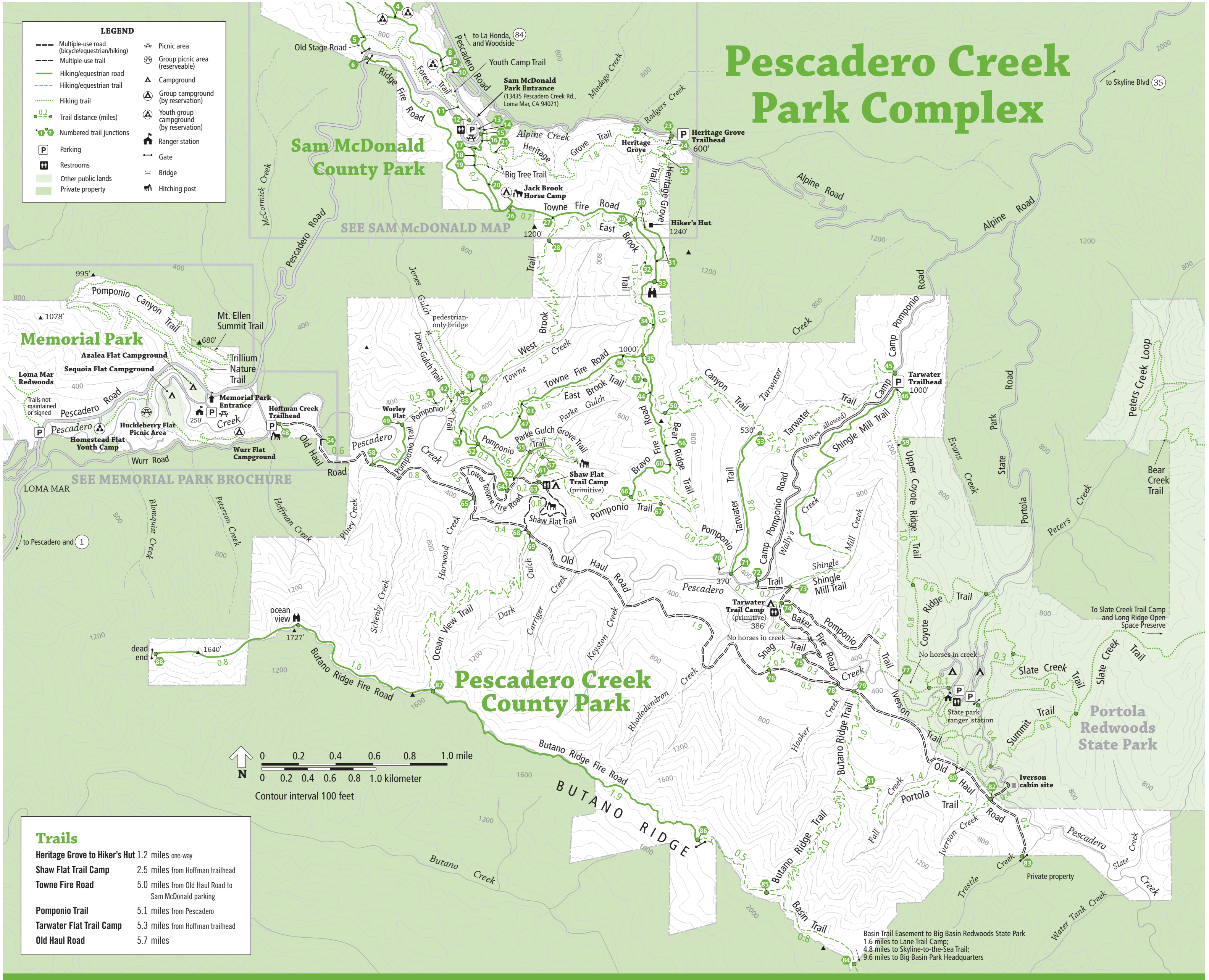
This park is largely undeveloped wilderness. Hikers, cyclists, and equestrians can access an extensive **inter-park trail network** from the Sam McDonald Ranger Station, Portola Trailhead, Portola Redwoods State Park, and at the Old Haul Road and Tarwater Trailheads. Cyclists may use a service road, Old Haul Road, which crosses the Park.

**Trail camps** at Shaw Flat and Tarwater Flat are available for a fee on a drop-in basis for backpackers and cyclists who register with the ranger at Memorial Park. No water is available at trail camps. Backpack stoves are permitted in trail camps.

# Pescadero Creek Park Complex

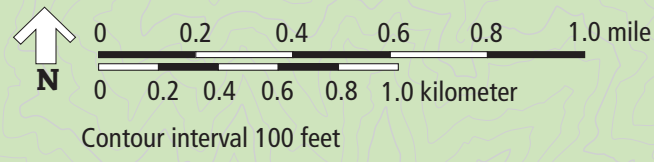
**LEGEND**

- === Multiple-use road (bicycle/equestrian/hiking)
- Multiple-use trail
- Hiking/equestrian road
- - - Hiking/equestrian trail
- ..... Hiking trail
- 0.2 Trail distance (miles)
- 1 2 3 Numbered trail junctions
- P Parking
- Restrooms
- Other public lands
- Private property
- ⛶ Picnic area
- ⛶ Group picnic area (reserveable)
- ⛶ Campground
- ⛶ Group campground (by reservation)
- ⛶ Youth group campground (by reservation)
- 🏠 Ranger station
- Gate
- ≡ Bridge
- 🚶 Hitching post



SEE SAM McDONALD MAP

SEE MEMORIAL PARK BROCHURE



**Trails**

Heritage Grove to Hiker's Hut	1.2 miles one-way
Shaw Flat Trail Camp	2.5 miles from Hoffman trailhead
Towne Fire Road	5.0 miles from Old Haul Road to Sam McDonald parking
Pomponio Trail	5.1 miles from Pescadero
Tarwater Flat Trail Camp	5.3 miles from Hoffman trailhead
Old Haul Road	5.7 miles

Basin Trail Easement to Big Basin Redwoods State Park  
 1.6 miles to Lane Trail Camp;  
 4.8 miles to Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail;  
 9.6 miles to Big Basin Park Headquarters