



John Nicolas Trail with Madrones  
Photo taken by Ron Hori

## Accessibility

In compliance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its programs, services, or activities. The Department will make reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy our programs, services, facilities, and activities. If you need assistance with an ADA request, please contact our ADA Coordinator at: ADACoordinator@prk.sccgov.org.



Park Charter  
Funds at Work...  
Thank You!

## Welcome

This lushly wooded park of 3,453 acres, is nestled in the Santa Cruz Mountains between Saratoga and Skyline Boulevard. This mountain park of redwoods and tanoak offers hiking, camping, RV camping and picnicking opportunities year-round. Enjoy your visit today and return often to experience the many features of Sanborn County Park.

## How to Get There

Sanborn County Park is located on Sanborn Road. From Saratoga, proceed 2 miles west on Highway 9 to Sanborn Road. Turn left onto Sanborn Road, traveling 1 mile to the park entrance.

## Activities

Hikers, picnickers, and campers will find Sanborn Park has much to offer. For experienced hikers, Sanborn Park has over 22 miles of trails that showcase the geographic features of the park. The John Nicholas Trail offers a shaded, easy hike between Lake Ranch and Black Road.

Picnic tables are available year-round in the forty-acre, grass covered, day use area. For large gatherings, there are three group areas available by reservation. For reservations, please call (408) 355-2201. During the summer months the park is home to the only outdoor Shakespearean company in Silicon Valley. Silicon Valley Shakespeare has been delighting audiences with outstanding productions of the works of William Shakespeare. For more information about Silicon Valley Shakespeare, visit their website at [www.svshakespeare.org](http://www.svshakespeare.org).

An RV campground, open year-round, offers electric and water hook-ups and a dump station. Vehicle length limit is 30 feet. Reservations can be made for RV camping by calling (408) 355-2201. Tent group camping is available by reservation at the walk-in campground.

## Hours and Fees

The park is open year round from 8:00 a.m. to sunset. Vehicle entry fees are collected year round. Fees are also required for RV camping, walk-in camping and group picnic areas.



Lake Ranch Reservoir

## Camping

- Gate closes at sunset. Re-entry is allowed for campers. Campers must ask park staff for the current gate combination at the park.
- Quiet hours are from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. Please respect your neighbors.
- Check out time is 1:00 p.m.
- Two vehicles allowed per campsite, additional vehicles permitted at \$10 per vehicle.
- Maximum capacity per site: RV site - 8 persons. Walk-in sites - 6 persons.
- Sanborn Road is limited to two axle vehicles with a maximum weight of 5 tons, and a maximum length of 25 feet. The road is single lane in a couple of areas due to the past storms.
- Two campsites maximum allowed per person/household.
- Camping length of stay limit:  
Memorial Day through Labor Day - 14 days maximum  
Remainder of year - 14 days within a 45 day period
- Tent camps closed from the 3rd Sunday in October to the 3rd Friday of March.
- Persons under 18 years of age may not camp without an adult.
- Pets may not be unattended or left in vehicle and must be confined at night.
- Bicycles allowed in RV and picnic sites only. No riding in walk-in campground.
- Fires are permitted in designated fire rings only. Do not gather wood.
- Extinguish fires when unattended. When posted "NO FIRES", only camp stoves or gas grills are permitted.
- Camp in designated sites only.
- Tents are allowed in the walk-in sites only; no tents in the RV sites.
- Do not dig or level the ground around tents or campsites.
- Garbage must be disposed of immediately. Keep your site clean.
- Do not damage any park property or vegetation.

## Natural Diversity

The main geologic feature of Sanborn park is the San Andreas Fault which cuts diagonally through the park along Lyndon Canyon, Lake Ranch and Sanborn Road. It is said during the 1906 earthquake, the Lake Ranch Reservoir "shook like a horse trough and emptied much of its water" and that some streams changed their courses.

The ecosystem of the park is influenced by coastal summer fog and accompanying breezes off the summit. The park has predominantly north facing slopes. This exposure supports a mixed evergreen forest of oak, madrone, Douglas fir, tanoak and redwood. Understory plant species include poison oak, toyon, ceanothus and manzanita.

Wildlife benefits by the complex and complimentary habitats and plant communities. Common animals include rabbits, raccoons, coyote, black tailed deer, bobcat, kestrel, red tailed hawk, hummingbird, jays and wrens. Please visit the Youth Science Institute to discover more about the natural diversity of Sanborn Park and Santa Clara County.

## Cultural History

Sanborn County Park area has a rich history ranging from the Ohlone Indian culture, through the homesteading era of the 1850's to the present day. For over 3,000 years before the Spanish expeditions arrived, the Guemelento Ohlone tribe visited the Sanborn Park area to hunt, fish and gather food. A number of bedrock mortars and associated settlement sites are scattered throughout the park.

The Sanborn Park area was not a part of any of the Spanish Ranchos. At the end of the Mexican American War in 1848, these unclaimed lands became the property of the U.S. Government. The first settlers acquired land under the Homestead Act of 1862, which granted up to 160 acres. The lands were initially cleared for lumber and tan bark and later for farming, orcharding and vineyards.

The abundant timber stands attracted many to the area. Supplies were carried up to lumber camps by mules over pack trails, some of which are used as hiking trails today. Some of the typical crops included grapes, prunes, olives, apricots and walnuts. Many of the early settlers were French, Italian and German, and many of the creeks, roads and landmarks carry the names of these early settlers.

By the 1870's there were a number of farms along Sanborn Road, then known as Lake Ranch Road. Kendall Clark Sandborn, a native of Maine, owned a small piece of property in the Sanborn Park area in 1871.



Baille barn circa 1912. Mrs. Dyer (far left), Baille family and friends.

Photo: H.P. Dyer, courtesy of Saratoga Historical Foundation.

His name appears at the top of an 1875 petition to the County for construction of a bridge over Saratoga Creek. The Lake Ranch Road would later be named after Sanborn.

The Lake Ranch area was a natural basin separating the Lyndon Canyon and Sanborn Creek watersheds. In 1871, Celestin Bernard, a native of the French Alps, purchased the property from Samuel Young. The Bernards eventually owned 400 acres and harvested wood and grew grapes and hay. Bernard sold the lake to the San Jose Water Company (SJWC) in 1873. The lake was renamed Mackenzie Lake in honor of one of the co-founders of the company. Between 1876 and 1883, SJWC built roads and constructed the dams. In 1922, the Bernards sold the remaining property to SJWC who, in 1981, sold the property to the County to be included in Sanborn Park.

In the 1870's, Leon Baille, also from the French Alps, arrived in the area and lived with his brother-in-law Celestin Bernard until he acquired his own 160 acre parcel in what is today's visitor center area. Leon and Marie Baille built a house near Peterson Grove. The Bailles raised prunes, wine grapes and livestock. In 1912, the Bailles sold their property to Harold P. Dyer, an engineer and sugar industry executive. French stonemasons built the Dyer house out of locally collected sandstone around 1914. The house still stands, located near the ranger station. H.P. Dyer built a water powered generator in the basement that provided electricity to the grounds and house. Dyer also purchased part of the Taudt (Todd) and Pourroy lands to create a 500-acre estate known as Star of the Hill. H.P. Dyer died in 1928 and the property was sold by his daughter in 1950 to George and Ethna Peterson (Peterson Grove). A portion of the property was sold to the County in 1962, and the park was opened for the first time on a limited basis.

In 1902, Judge James R. Welch created an 800-acre estate on lands purchased from McElroy, Bonjetti and Pourroy. The Welch Hurst House was built in 1908 as a vacation home for Judge Welch who was a State Superior Court Judge from 1904 to 1931. Welch is credited as a major advocate in the creation of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic route which opened in 1929. Welch died in 1931, and his daughter sold the property in 1955 to Vernon Pick, a successful Uranium prospector. Pick renamed the property Walden West. The property was eventually sold to the County in 1977. The house was saved from demolition by the American Youth Hostel, which repaired and maintained the building in order to operate it as a hostel.

In 1977, the 1,653 acre Sanborn County Park was dedicated and officially opened. An additional 1,809 acres have been added since 1977, making it the seventh largest of Santa Clara County's 28 parks.