

## WELCOME TO BRIONES . . .

Most of Briones Regional Park was once part of *Rancho Boca de la Canada del Pinole* (rancho at the mouth of Pinole Canyon), popularly known as Rancho San Felipe. In 1829, Felipe Briones built a home near what is now the Bear Creek entrance to the park, cultivating the land and raising cattle. Briones was killed in 1840, and in 1842 his widow, Maria Manuela Valencia Briones, petitioned Governor Alvarado for a grant to the land the family had occupied. The grant, covering three square leagues, was issued in June 1842.

The title was contested when California achieved statehood, but was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1860. After that, much of the rancho was purchased by Simon and Elias Blum. Challenges to the boundary survey continued and it was not until 1878 that a patent to the 13,316.26-acre rancho was issued.

In addition to Rancho San Felipe, the park includes small portions of *Rancho Canada del Hambre y las Bolsas*, and *Rancho Acalanes*.

In the 1850s and 1860s, the Alhambra Valley was developed into rich orchards and vineyards. It became Contra Costa County's most important fruit growing area. The remains of many of these old orchards are still noticeable. Cattle grazing has been the major land use in the Bear Creek watershed and the ridges since the Briones family first settled there. Hay and grain have been produced in the valleys intermittently for some years, as well as truck crops.

In 1906, the People's Water Company began purchasing land in San Pablo and Bear Creek for watershed lands. This included the Blum property and the Brown Ranch, which made up much of the former Rancho San Felipe. The East Bay Municipal Utility District, which acquired People's Water Company in 1916, constructed San Pablo Dam in 1923.

In 1957 Contra Costa County and EBMUD agreed to a land conveyance that established a large open space park in the Bear Creek watershed to be called Briones. Later, in 1964, when portions of Contra Costa County were annexed to the East Bay Regional Park District, the County and the Park District agreed to a transfer of county land to the Park District, with the District to carry out further acquisition of lands. Since 1966, watershed lands and other acquisitions have combined to total nearly 6,117 acres of parkland.

**THE PARK TODAY** Minor staging area facilities were constructed by the Park District, and Briones Regional Park opened on October 22, 1967. Today there are five staging areas allowing access to all sides of the park. Predominant uses include hiking and horseback riding over the park's scenic trails; picnicking, birdwatching, and similar activities; and informal recreation such as kite flying, photography, and nature study.

**GROUP CAMPING** Briones Regional Park's three group camping areas—Wee-Ta-Chi, Maud Whalen, and Homestead Valley—may be reserved by calling EBRPD Reservations at (510) 562-2267, or by writing to EBRPD Reservations, 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, P.O. Box 5381, Oakland, CA 94605-0381.

Reservations must be made at least 7 days in advance.

**ARCHERY RANGE** The Briones Archers archery range is accessible off the Crescent Ridge Trail from Briones' west-side Bear Creek Road entrance. For information, visit [www.archeryweb.com/briones](http://www.archeryweb.com/briones).

**PICNICKING** Briones Regional Park offers a number of first-come, first-served picnic sites with tables and barbecue stands at the Bear Creek Staging Area and the Alhambra Creek Staging Area. The park also has two larger, reservable group picnic areas at the Bear Creek Staging Area: Oak Grove, which can accommodate 50 people, and Newt Hollow, which holds 150. For information or to make a reservation, call Reservations at (510) 562-2267.

**TO REACH THE PARK** (see area map on reverse): From Highway 24, take the Camino Pablo/Moraga Way exit on the east side of the Caldecott Tunnel to Orinda/Orinda Village. Go north on Camino Pablo about 2.5 miles to Bear Creek Road and turn right. The Bear Creek Staging Area is about five miles ahead, on the right. Several staging areas on the park's east side are accessible from Reliez Valley Road in Martinez and Pleasant Hill, and on the north from Alhambra Valley Road in Martinez.

### FEES

There is a fee for parking and dogs.

**POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL EMERGENCY.. 9-1-1**  
**EBRPD HEADQUARTERS .....** (510) 562-PARK  
**GROUP RESERVATIONS .....** (510) 562-2267  
**PARK OFFICE.....** (925) 370-3020  
**WEB SITE.....**[www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)



**East Bay Regional Park District**  
 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, P.O. Box 5381  
 Oakland, CA 94605-0381 (510) 562-PARK  
<http://www.ebparks.org>

## PARKLAND RULES

Welcome to your Regional Parklands. Help protect park resources and ensure an enjoyable visit for everyone by complying with these rules and any posted regulations. Violators will be subject to citation or arrest. For more information, ask a Park Ranger, Public Safety Officer, or telephone (510) 881-1833.

**PARK GATES ARE OPEN** to the public during hours posted at the park entrance. Unless otherwise posted, CURFEW is between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., except for persons possessing a permit to remain on parklands.

**MOTOR VEHICLES** are restricted to paved public roads and designated parking areas only. Vehicles must exit at posted gate closure hours. **BICYCLES** may be ridden on designated bicycle trails, and on fire or service roads, unless otherwise posted. Bicycles are not permitted, either ridden, walked or carried, in areas posted "No Bicycles," or on narrow hiking or narrow equestrian trails. State law requires that all bicyclists under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadways. Riders should call out or sound a warning when overtaking other trail users.

**DOGS** must be leashed (six-foot maximum) and under control at any posted area, parking lot, picnic site, lawn or developed area. No dogs or other animals are permitted at any swimming pool, beach, wetland, or marsh. Owners must always carry a leash (six-foot maximum). Dogs may be off-leash in open space and undeveloped areas of parklands, provided they are under control at all times. Dangerous animals are not allowed in the parks. Please dispose of your dog's waste by placing it in a garbage can. Persons who walk more than three dogs at a time on Regional Parks trails must obtain a permit; commercial dog walkers are required to obtain a permit regardless of how many dogs they walk at one time (limit of six). Please call (510) 544-3009 for information.

**SWIMMING, WADING** and other water contact activities are permitted only in designated areas. **DIVING** is permitted only from designated diving boards and swim platforms. **SCUBA diving** is prohibited in any District lake or inl and waters unless authorized by the District. **PLANTS, ANIMALS, GEOLOGIC, ARCHAEOLOGIC OR HISTORIC OBJECTS** are protected by law. Please do not disturb or remove any of these features.

**HELP PROTECT OUR PARK WILDLIFE** by not releasing or feeding ducks, cats or other animals. Do not feed wild park animals; enjoy them from a distance.

**FIREWORKS** are not permitted in any regional park.

**FIRES** are permitted in barbecue pits or personal cooking equipment in designated picnic areas or irrigated turf areas only, placed at least 30 feet from flammable materials. Please do not place hot coals on the ground or in a garbage can. Dispose of hot coals or other burned fuel in barbecue pits or in designated hot coal disposal receptacles.

**CAMPING** is not permitted within District parklands without a permit. **FISHING** requires a state fishing license, and a District Daily Fishing Access Permit is required when posted.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are not permitted at pools, swim beaches or within 50 feet of paved roads or parking lots, or in posted areas. Otherwise, beer and wine are permitted at picnic areas and elsewhere on parklands.

**GAMES and ACTIVITIES**, including model rockets, model airplanes, hang gliding, golf and other activities with potential risk to property or park visitors are permitted only in designated areas. **ASSEMBLIES, PERFORMANCES, SPECIAL EVENTS** or similar gatherings require a permit.

Please be considerate of other park visitors if you use a **RADIO**. A permit is required for **AMPLIFICATION** of voice, music or other sounds.

**FIREARMS or BOWS AND ARROWS** are not permitted on Regional Parklands except at established ranges. Crossbows, spears, slingshots, air pistols or rifles, and other dangerous weapons are prohibited anywhere on Regional Parklands.

**PARK VISITORS** are responsible for knowing and following park rules.

# BRIONES REGIONAL PARK

