

All kinds of trails for all levels of cycling

## **Biking in California State Parks**

Enjoy bicycling through a California State Park. Many parks offer all kinds of trails for all levels of cycling.

It's always a good idea to keep in mind these bicycling safety tips: Always wear a helmet. Keep to the right and always ride with traffic. Only ride on designated bike trails and obey all posted bicycle speeds as well as state laws. Ride a well-equipped bike. Look back before you pass or merge. Yield to pedestrians and other cyclists when appropriate. Be alert. Carry food, water, tools, patch kit, first aid kit and bike lock. Never travel alone in remote areas. And, of course, have fun and enjoy the sights that California State Parks have to offer.

Here's a sample of great state park bicycling opportunities:

### CALAVERAS and TUOLUMNE COUNTIES

**Calaveras Big Trees State Park** has fire roads that are accessible for mountain biking. There are lots of great rides in the park for all ability levels – especially if you like hills. Biking is only allowed on paved roads and designated fire (dirt) roads. Riders who chose to ride in other areas are subject to citation. Visitors are advised to have landowners' permissions and a current map of the area if they choose to ride in non-park areas. Maps and information are available at the United States Forest Service office in Hathaway Pines, Bear Valley Cross County in Bear Valley and the Mountain Pedaler Bicycle Shop in Angels Camp. Mountain bikes can be rented from mid-June to early September at Bear Valley Cross Country. The park is northeast of Stockton and four miles northeast of Arnold on Highway Four. For more information, call the park at (209) 795-2334.

### MERCED COUNTY

**San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area**, 12 miles west of Los Banos on Highway 152, has biking on the California Aqueduct roads. Cyclists are able to bike (on graded dirt) for approximately 70 miles - and it's flat. Visitors are advised to bring water and to know that the area can be very windy. Cyclists can enjoy views of the Diablo mountain range to the west and the San Joaquin Valley to the east. The starting point is at O'Neill Forebay. For more information call the park at (209) 826-1196 or the Department of Water Resources Visitor Center at (209) 827-5353.

### MERCED and SANTA CLARA COUNTIES

**Pacheco State Park's** trails for hiking are graded dirt roads that are fine for mountain biking. A word of caution for cyclists – the trails are all up and down.

Visitors are advised to bring water as there is no drinking water at the park. The park is on Highway 152 twenty miles east of Gilroy. For more information, call the park at (209) 826-6283.

### MONTEREY COUNTY

**Andrew Molera State Park** has miles of trails that wind through meadows, beaches and hilltops. A primitive walk-in trail camp, popular with hikers and bikers, is located approximately one third mile from the parking area. The park is 21 miles south of Carmel on Highway One. For more information, call the park at (831) 667-2315.

### ORANGE COUNTY

**Crystal Cove State Park** has 18 miles of multi-use trails in the El Moro backcountry. The park is extremely popular for mountain biking. The park is located off Pacific Coast Highway between Corona del Mar and Laguna Beach. For more information, call the park at (949) 494-3539.

### SACRAMENTO COUNTY

**Brannan Island State Park** has a new three-mile loop multi-use trail that is popular with cyclists. There are many starting points at or near all the major use areas of the park including the campground, boat launch, marina, day use area, and visitor center and park entrance. Part of the trail takes visitors near undeveloped area of the park where an assortment of animals can be seen. The park is three miles south of Rio Vista on Highway 160. For more information, call (916) 777-6671.

### SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

**El Capitan State Beach** has a 2.5 mile bike trail between the park and Refugio State Beach that is a great ride. During the summer, there is a ranger-led interpretive bike ride along the trail. The park is 17 miles northwest of Santa Barbara on Highway 101. For more information, call the park at (805) 965-1033.

**Gaviota State Park** has miles of bike/trail/fire road for cyclists. The park is 33 miles west of Santa Barbara on Highway 101. For more information, call the park at (805)968-1033.

**Refugio State Beach** has a 2.5 mile bike trail between the park and El Capitan State Beach that is a great ride. During the summer, there is a ranger-led interpretive bike ride along the trail. The park is 23 miles northwest of Santa Barbara on Highway 101. For more information, call the park at (805) 965-1033.

### SANTA CLARA and STANISLAUS COUNTIES

**Henry W. Coe State Park** has more than 100 miles of roads and trails that are open to mountain bikes. The park's rugged terrain offers a variety of riding options, ranging from moderately difficult to extremely difficult. (There are practically no easy trails for bikes.) The park's entrance is 14 miles east of Morgan Hill. For more information, call the park at (408) 779-2728. Also, visit the website:

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

## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

**Wilder Ranch State Park**, north of Santa Cruz and immediately west of Highway One is very mountain bike friendly and popular with local riders. There are 35 miles of trails, both dirt roads and single-track, open to bikes. Besides fun riding, cyclists are treated to a mix of coastal prairie, riparian woodland and redwood forest scenery as well as spectacular views of Monterey Bay. Most of the terrain is best suited to intermediate or better riders. The park does have a couple of trails that are great for family rides in the park, and there is one that adjoins the park. The two park trails along the coastal bluffs, Old Cove Landing Trail and Ohlone Bluff Trail, are flat and wide. The coastal trails total a little over four miles. Riders can make a two-mile loop on the Old Cove Landing Trail or continue on the Ohlone Bluff trail another two+ miles. (The Ohlone Bluff trail does not loop back.) There is also a 1 1/2 mile paved bike trail that starts in northern Santa Cruz and ends at Wilder. Several restored buildings once belonging to the Wilder family are preserved in the park. The site was originally the main rancho supplying Santa Cruz Mission. It later became a successful and innovative dairy ranch. Surrounding grounds include Victorian homes, gardens, and an historic adobe. For more information, call the park at (831) 423-9703.

## VENTURA COUNTY

**San Buenaventura State Beach** and **Emma Wood State Beach** in are connected by the Omer Rains Bike Trail. This eight-mile urban trail is a level paved trail excellent for cyclists of all skill levels and ages. It offers exceptional views of the Pacific Ocean as it winds past sand dunes sprinkled with wildflowers and ducks under the second oldest pier in California. The trail continues along a wide promenade bordered by beachside restaurants and shops. Traveling along this popular trail, cyclists can enjoy watching windsurfers or spectacular sunsets over the Channel Islands. Public restrooms are located along the trail as are numerous places to stop and rest. For cyclists who have the time and stamina, the trail connects with the Ventura River Trail that runs for 17 miles from Ventura and Ojai, following the route of the old Ventura County Railroad along the Ventura River. For more information, call (805) 585-1850.

Visit California State Parks on line at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

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