

Henry W. Coe State Park

Dowdy Ranch Visitor Center

Coit Lake, Pacheco Creek Crossing 2 Night Trip (Featuring Pacheco Falls)

Moderate to Strenuous Backpack trip 16.5 miles Round Trip

2 nights, 3 travel days

Day 1 – 7.8 miles, Center Flats Road-Wagon Road-Coit Road
1426' of climbing, 1026' of decent

Be sure to have plenty of water for this trip (we recommend 4 Liters per person) as you will not encounter any water sources until you get to Coit Lake. After Coit your water sources are Pacheco Falls and Hole in the Rock (Pacheco Creek pool).

Starting at the gate on Kaiser-Aetna road descend for 0.6 miles until you junction with Center Flats Road. This is your first turn. Start your up and down climb in partial shade on Center Flats Road. Continue westward among the oak trees and Grey Pines. Once you climb most of the northern flank of Burra Burra Peak you will see extensive views looking to the north. Many peaks are visible including Tie Down Peak to the North East, Walsh Peak to the North, as well as Mount Stakes near the northern border of the park. Continue climbing steeply past Burra Burra Trail and follow the road past Walsh & Vasquez Trails. Past Vasquez you will travel nearly 2 miles mostly in the sun among Chaparral plant communities with little to no shade. Near the junction with Wagon Road you will see an unmarked split in the road. Take the right fork that goes steeply uphill. You will junction with Wagon Road. Turn right on Wagon Road and travel northbound about 1.8 miles until you reach the end of Wagon Road where it junctions with Coit Road. You need to turn left on Coit Road and the lake is about a mile from this junction. You can camp anywhere around the lake, but the most popular spots are near the bathroom on the South West side, or on the East side of the dam. There is one spot on the North West inlet of the lake that can fit one small tent.

Day 2 – 6.0 miles, Coit Dam Trail - Wagon Road – Live Oak Spring – Pacheco Falls Trail – Off Trail – Pacheco Ridge Road – Kaiser Aetna Road – North Fork Trail – Mack's Corral Trail
1800' of climbing, 2200' of decent

Start by walking over to the North East side of the Dam and find Coit Dam Trail. Take Coit Dam trail steeply uphill for 240' of elevation to the top of the ridge and turn right to continue 0.7 miles to the Junction of Coit Road. Turn right on Coit Road and travel 0.2 miles on Coit Road to the junction with Wagon Road. Stay straight to go onto Wagon Road. Go 0.2 miles until you reach the Live Oak Spring Trail Junction. Turn left on Live Oak Spring Road and begin descending over 1000' feet to Pacheco Falls. Stay right on Live Oak Springs Road until you junction with Pacheco Falls Trail. Turn right and follow the road all the way to the bottom of the canyon. Before you get to the bottom, don't miss a faint trail that take you to an overlook of Pacheco Falls. The drop is quite steep, keep an eye on young kids on that edge. After seeing the view, continue downhill and watch out for poison oak. The bottom of the falls has a lovely shaded pool which is great for a dip. After enjoying the falls, your route will take you steeply uphill to the top of Pacheco Ridge. There is no trail, just find the best way you can. I recommend avoiding Chaparral patches as they can be difficult to go through. Carefully find your way to the top of the ridge. At the top of the ridge you will encounter Pacheco Ridge Road. Turn right and begin your decent to Pacheco Creek. You will travel about a mile until you see the junction with Walsh Trail.

Continue past Walsh Trail and descend all the way till you encounter Pacheco Creek. This creek dries out in the summer, but there is one spot that has water all year. Hole in the Rock swim hole is located halfway between Kaiser Aetna Road and where Pacheco Ridge Road meets Pacheco Creek. Find the swim hole if needed for water and a dip, otherwise continue by hiking eastward on North Fork Trail which follows Pacheco Creek downstream. The trail is not maintained so do your best to follow it for .3 miles where you junction with Tie Down Trail. Continue along the creek for another 1.2 miles where the trail begins to go uphill. Once you leave the creek you will be on Mack's Corral Trail which will take you uphill steeply back to the Dowdy Day Use Entrance. You will travel 1.2 miles after leaving the creek and climb 920'.

