Camping at Poverty Flat

There are five designated sites at Poverty Flat.

Sites 1-4 are north bank of the Middle Fork Coyote Creek and site #5 on the south.

#1: spacious site along Middle Ridge Trail, few hundred feet east of creek crossing. The pool near this site lasts through the summer except dry years

#2: small site in a secluded location along the creek. A short side trail from Poverty Flat Road leads to the site.

#3 (has picnic table) and #4 are along Poverty Flat Road. Can be combined for a larger group (9-16 people)

Site #5 could be hard to find. From Poverty Flat Road east of the vault toilet, look for an opening on the other side of the creek. Cross the creek and follow a narrow trail to the right, to the small clearing marked with the post.

Vault toilet is located near site #4

Side trip - China Hole

With your camp set up, try a short side trip to the China Hole. Shady and scenic Creekside Trail follows the Middle Fork Coyote Creek for 0.6.miles along its south bank, past huge boulders, sycamore trees, deep pools of water. The trail is heavily eroded and may be impassable in high water. Watch out for encroaching poison oak.

Side trip - The Narrows

Once at China Hole, you may want to explore The Narrows, 1-mile long stretch of East Fork Coyote Creek between China Hole and Los Cruzeros without an established trail.

You will find picturesque large rocks, spectacular wildflowers display in spring and summer, may encounter frogs, garter snakes, turtles and killdeer.

Trip highlights

- Camping by Coyote Creek at well established campsites with a vault toilet in the area.
- Diverse environments - riparian, grassland, woodland, chaparral
- Great views from Middle Ridge
- Less than a mile walk to China Hole, a popular swimming hole and to the Narrows, a scenic rocky canyon

- **The Park is open 7/24 year round. The Visitor Center is open 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. on weekends.**
- **In summer, temperatures above 90 degrees between 11 a.m. and 7:30-8 p.m. are not unusual. Hike early in the morning and late in the evening and plan shorter trips when necessary to prevent heat exhaustion.**
- **In winter, expect cold nights - mid-30s or below.**
- **In winter and spring, many creeks may be impassable after heavy rain.**

Pine Ridge Association

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Rev. 1.2 02/23/2019

Henry W. Coe State Park

Backpacking Trips - Park Headquarters

Poverty Flat

Poverty Flat Site #1 - September 3, 2017

Duration: 2 days

Difficulty: moderate

Distance, elevation gain/loss:

round trip: 9.5 miles, +/-2000 feet

one way, via Corral, Fish and Middle Ridge trails: 4.8 miles, +500/-2000 feet

Trailhead: Park Headquarters, at the end of East Dunne Avenue

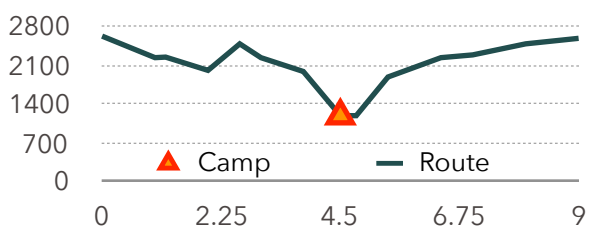
Permits/fees: Backpacking permit and parking fees required; register at visitor center when open or self-register for PovertyFlat

Key Points - round trip

0.0		Corral Trail
0.6		Fish Trail
	W*	Cross Little Fork Coyote Creek, continue on Fish Trail
2.5		Middle Ridge Trail, turn right
4.7	W*	Cross Middle Fork Coyote Creek, CAMP #1
4.8	W*	Poverty Flat Road, CAMPS #2-4
5.1	W*	Cougar trail - cross the creek, follow the trail uphill
5.9		China hole trail, turn right
7.0		Manzanita Point Road, turn right
7.7		Forest Trail, turn right
8.9		Corral Trail
9.5		Headquarters

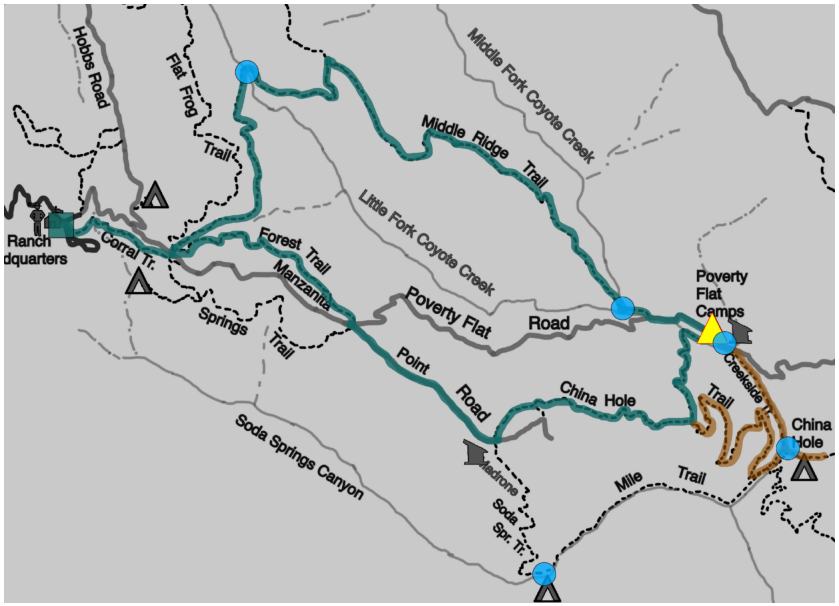
Distance and elevation approximate.
W/W* - water/seasonal water source. Check water source conditions with park staff or at coepark.net/water

Elevation - round trip



Route

Start on Corral Trail. In 0.6 miles, across Manzanita Point Road, at the junction of three single track trails, take the middle (Fish) trail.



Trailhead
Main route
Alternative route/side trip
Designated camp site
Recommended camp location
Water/seasonal water

This map is for reference only. Use the detailed Henry W. Coe State Park Trail and Camping Map for hiking. Check trail conditions at coepark.net/trails

Fish trail descends towards Little Fork Coyote creek, through a forest of Bay Laurel and Oak trees. After crossing the creek (dry in summer, easy rock-hopping most of the year), ascend at moderate grade to Middle Ridge Trail. Turn right at the junction and continue mostly downhill. In early spring look for lovely Checker Lilies. As the grade becomes steeper, open groves of blue oaks and manzanitas replaced with live oaks and bay trees. Soon you will reach the canyon bottom at the confluence of Little and Middle Forks. The site #1 is just ahead and the rest are only few hundred yards down the road.

Alternatively, camping area can be reached by Poverty Flat Road - less scenic, very steep, and likely dusty in summer and fall.

Return route

East of the site #4, before Poverty Flat Road veers away from the creek towards Jackass Peak, look for the sign pointing to the Cougar Trail across the creek.

Watch out for poison oak as you hike up at a steep grade through the shady oak, pine and bay laurel forest, adorned with wildflowers in spring.

Mixed woodland changes to chaparral and the grade eases as you approach well-maintained China Hole Trail. Turn right towards Manzanita Point Road. At the junction by a picnic table and vault toilet, continue west for another 0.7 miles. At the junction with Poverty Flat Road, you have three options. Manzanita Point Road is the shortest but exposed, going straight up over another ridge. Springs Trail (on your left) skirts the south side of the ridge, offering great views of Soda Springs Canyon and Cordoza Ridge but very little shade. Forest Trail (on the right) is shady and pleasant in any season.

Alternative route

Take Creekside Trail to China Hole and then China Hole Trail west. Note that heavily eroded Creekside Trail may be difficult to negotiate with a heavy pack.