Henry W. Coe State Park

Backcountry Weekend

April 24 – 26, 2026

Attendee Information

Please read this entire information sheet carefully.

Registration Permits & Passes

Print this information sheet, vehicle pass, and, if you are a backpacker, your camping permit and bring it with you to the event.

Bring a printed copy of your vehicle pass and, if you are a backpacker, your camping permit.

Tape your vehicle pass to the left inside of your windshield to show at the Bell's Station entrance and keep it there during your entire stay at the event.

You will only be allowed to enter the park on the first day on which your pass is valid.

No Vehicles will not be allowed entry into the park on Sunday.

What you will find in this document

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Cancellation Policy

General Cancellation

You can cancel your reservation for Backcountry Weekend no later than Monday, April 6, 2026 to receive a full refund. After this date, no refunds will be issued.

To cancel your reservation, send an email to bcw@coepark.net with your name as shown in your reservation and arrival date.

Weather Cancellation

It is too early to predict what the weather will be in late April. Let's hope for mild days and clear blue skies. However, if there is significant rain within 2 or 3 days of the event, the Backcountry Weekend will be canceled and full refunds will be issued.

Gate Hours and Access

All Registered Attendees must arrive and depart when the gate is open.

Gate Hours

Date	Times	Access
Friday, April 24	8:00AM - 6:00PM	Entry ONLY
Saturday, April 25	8:00AM - 6:00PM	Entry & Exit
Sunday, April 26	8:00AM - 6:00PM	Exit ONLY

No vehicle access will be allowed outside of these hours and the gate will be closed and locked.

Day Use Visitors

ALL day-use visitors must exit the park at the Bell Station gate by 6:00PM on Saturday, April 25.

Car-Campers & Backpackers

All overnight visitors exit the park at the Bell Station gate between 8:00AM. and 6:00PM on Sunday, April 26.

All Visitors

Due to the road conditions and slow speed of travel, all visitors must be in their vehicles and driving out from the Orestimba Corral or County Line Road areas by **4:30PM** on their departure date to make it to the Bell Station gate by 6PM.

Getting to the Park 🔝

Bell Station Entrance

Bell's Station is located 6.5 miles east of the Highway 152/Highway 156 junction.

Due to commuter traffic, it can take more than **3 hours** on a typical Friday afternoon to reach the Bell's Station gate from South San Jose. Allow ample time to arrive BEFORE 6PM. **The gate will close at 6PM!**

Directions to Bell Station

Coming From the East (Highway 101/Gilroy)

Take Highway 101 towards Gilroy and take the Highway 152 exit. Bell Station is approximately 18 miles from the Highway 101 exit. Look for the left turn lane and indicate your intention to turn left well in advance. As you approach Bell's Station, move into the left turn lane, and turn very carefully across oncoming westbound traffic.

Coming From the West (I-5/Los Baños)

Traveling from Interstate 5, the Bell's Station turnoff is approximately 22 miles from Interstate 5. Look for the old white Bell's Station building on the north side of Highway 152 and turn right at Bell Station. If you miss the turn into Henry Coe Park at Bell Station traveling from either direction, proceed to the next safe place to turn around, which might be several miles.

For Driving Directions on your phone or car navigation, use either Bell Station or Dowdy Visitor Center as your destination.

Bell Station to the Dowdy Visitor Center

The distance from Bell Station to the Dowdy Ranch visitor center is approximately 7 miles and it will take about 30 minutes to reach the visitor center. The road is unpaved, quite rough in some areas, a somewhat steep climb in the lower reaches, and has many turns and bends.

Dowdy Visitor Center to Orestimba Corral

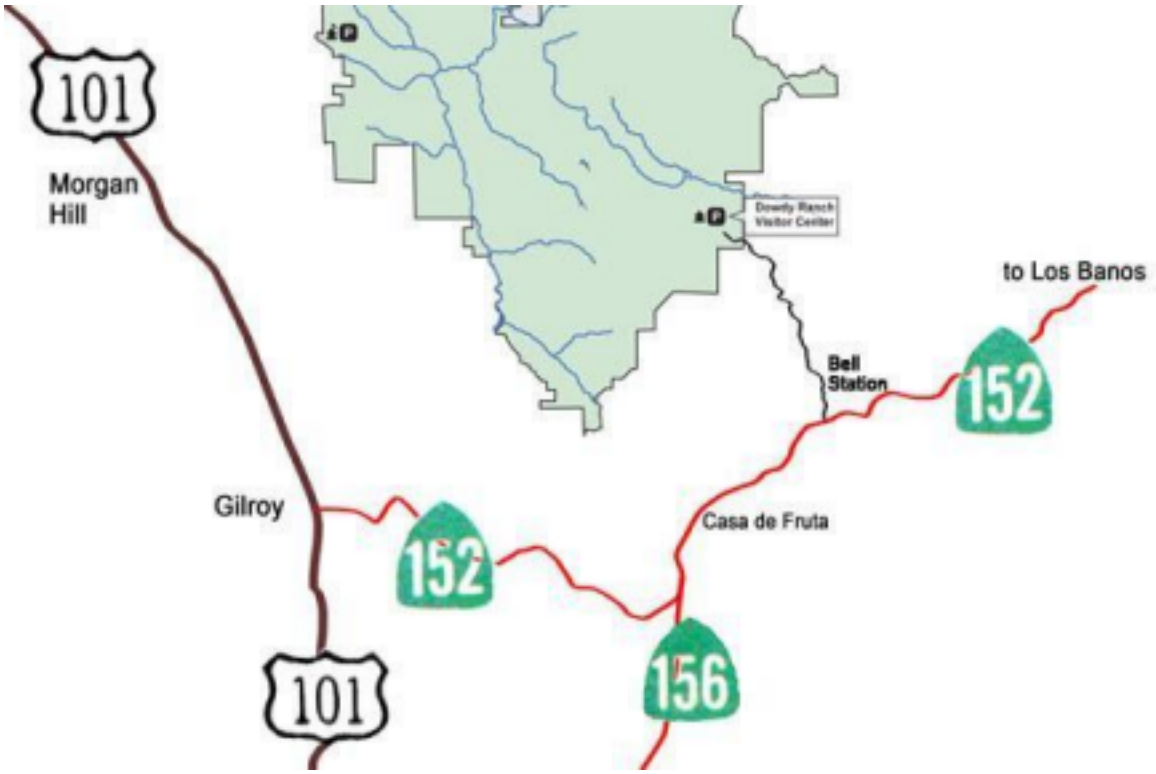
The distance from Dowdy Ranch Visitor Center to Orestimba Corral is approximately 6 miles and it will take about 45 minutes to reach Orestimba Corral. The road is unpaved, quite rough in some areas, a somewhat steep climb in the lower reaches, and has many turns and bends.

!! Low profile vehicles (less than 8” ground clearance) will **NOT** be permitted in Orestimba Corral.

Proceed with Caution!!

Drive slowly and enjoy the gorgeous views opening up on all sides. Beware of dust and slow down if a vehicle approaches from the opposite direction. The road is safe to drive in 2WD vehicles but carry a spare tire and extra water just in case.

The speed limit is 25 mph except in some areas where it is posted 15 mph. You can be cited for speeding if you exceed the speed limit.



Inside the Park ⬆️ TOP

General Information

- **Quiet Hours** are 9:00PM - 7:00AM
- **No dogs** are allowed. Certified and trained service animals will be permitted.
- **No open fires, barbecues, or hibachis allowed**. Use backpacking or camp stoves only.
- **Weapons, including firearms, are NOT allowed**.

- Please do not pick **wildflowers**. All plants, animals, and features of the park are protected. If you fish, anyone over the age of 16 must have a **fishing license** and everyone fishing must comply with the State Fish and Wildlife regulations. We encourage catch and release with barbless hooks.
- A park map will be essential during your visit to the park. **We strongly suggest that you bring the Henry W Coe State Park Trail and Camping Map, available for purchase at coepark.net. Free downloadable maps are also available at coepark.net.**
- **Merchandise** including maps and books along with a limited supply of snacks and soft drinks will be available for sale at the Dowdy Ranch Visitor Center and the Orestimba Corral.
- Bring **all** the food and beverages you will need.
- Bring **sunscreen and insect repellent** (ticks are very common) and watch out for poison oak.
- **Potable water** will be available at the Orestimba Corral and at the Kaiser-Aetna Road / Pacheco Ridge Road junction. If not camping near these sources, bring a water filter or all the water you will need. **The water tank at the Kaiser-Aetna Road / Pacheco Ridge Road junction may be moved ½ mile north of this junction**.
- All **water** in the backcountry (springs, streams, and lakes) **MUST** be purified by filtering, chemical treatment, or other methods before consumption.
- **Generators** may not be operated between the hours of 6:00PM to 9:00AM. Generators operated outside these hours must not exceed a volume that is, or is likely to be, disturbing to others.

Driving and Parking in the Park

- All vehicle code rules apply within State Park boundaries.
- You are only permitted to drive on Kaiser-Aetna Road. All other roads are closed to vehicle traffic.
- **RVs and trailers are NOT allowed.**
- Once you have parked your vehicle at your campsite or backpacking parking area, you **will not be allowed to move** your vehicle until you leave the park.
- Shuttle service will be available (see below).

Orestimba Corral & Group Camp

Only campers with a permit for the Orestimba Corral or Group Camp will be allowed past the County Line Road Junction.

- This section of road requires a **high clearance vehicle**.
- **No** low profile vehicles **will be allowed**. All small SUVs and pickups MUST have ground clearance of 8” or greater to park in Orestimba Corral or Group Camp.

Backpackers & Kaiser Aetna Road Car-Campers

- Backpackers and campers with a permit for Kaiser-Aetna Road are allowed to park along Kaiser-Aetna Road between Center Flats Road and County Line Road **except designated where NO PARKING.**
- CAMPING is not allowed where designated **NO CAMPING**.
- Your vehicle must stay on the side of the road and cannot block the flow of traffic.
- If you park near the County Line Road junction, please use the designated parking

spaces.

Biking

Only non-electric bicycles and **class 1 eBikes** are permitted in the park, with the following access restrictions. **Bikes are NOT ALLOWED:**

- Anywhere in the Orestimba Wilderness, **including the Alquist Trail**
- Orestimba Creek Rd. north of the Kingbird Pond trailhead
- Mustang Cutoff in the downhill direction
- Orestimba Creek Trail

Shuttle Service

- Shuttles will be running continuously between County Line Road and the Orestimba Corral:
    - Friday 9:00AM–6:00PM;
    - Saturday 8:00AM until after campfire;
    - Sunday 8:00AM-4:00PM.
- Wait at either end or flag one anywhere in between.
- Shuttles are on call for service between the Dowdy Visitor Center and County Line Road.
    - Ask any event volunteer to call for a shuttle OR
    - Flag down a shuttle that may be passing by.
- Look for an SUV with a “Shuttle” sign in the window

Questions TOP

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Backcountry Weekend Event team at bcw@coepark.net