Backcountry Weekend April 25-27, 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

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Event Information:

What are the Arrival and Departure Logistics?

- **Prior to departing for the event:** Print and review the **Visitor Information Sheet** sent in your confirmation registration email and print your vehicle pass. **Backpackers**, also print your camping permit, bring it with you to the event. ***You will not be permitted to enter without a printed copy of your vehicle pass and, if you are a backpacker, your camping permit.***
- **Before you arrive at Bell Station:** Tape your vehicle pass to the left inside of your windshield to show at Bell's Station entrance and keep it there your entire stay.

- **Event Entry:** Please enter the park on the first day on which your pass is valid.
- **Can I enter on Sunday?** Vehicles will not be allowed entry into the park on Sunday.
- **Arrival and Departure Times:** The Bell's Station Gate will open on Friday no later than 10 a.m. and Saturday at 8 a.m. for registered attendees. The gate will close at 6 p.m. on both days. The gate will be open on Sunday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. for event attendees to exit. Event attendees will **NOT** be allowed to enter the park on Sunday, **only exit**. No vehicle access will be allowed outside of these hours and the gate will be closed and locked.
- **What time should I begin my drive down the hill to avoid getting locked in?** Begin you journey down the hill by 4p.m. to make it out of the gate by 6 p.m.
- **I'm a Day-use visitor, what time do I have to leave the park?** ALL day-use visitors must leave the park by 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 26. Begin your drive down the hill by 4 p.m.
- **What time must overnight visitors leave?** Overnight visitors must leave the park between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Everyone must be in their vehicles and on their way out from the Orestimba Corral or County Line Road areas by 4 p.m. on their departure date to make it to the Bell Station gate by 6 p.m.

Planning Your Trip (Water Resources, Trail Conditions and Weather)

- **Where can I find more resources for planning my trip?** Our coepark.net website is a great resource for Planning your trip
- **Where can I find information on water resources?** Day hikers and backpackers can look at the Water Resources page for the most updated information on water conditions. All water in the backcountry must be purified before consumption so bring your water filter or preferred chemical treatment method.
- **Where can I find information on trail conditions?** Day hikers and backpackers can look at the Trail Conditions site for the most current trail information.
- **Where can I find information about the weather expected during BCW?** Please look at Weather for the last weather report.

Will there be a Shuttle Service for BCW?

- **Shuttle Service Information**
    - Shuttle SUV's have a "Shuttle" sign in the window
    - Shuttles will be running continuously between County Line Road and the Orestimba Corral:
        - Friday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

        - Saturday 8 a.m. until after the Orestimba Corral campfire
        - Sunday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
        - Wait at the shuttle stops
    - 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.

Where will I find a Camp Host in case I need one?

- Camp hosts are located at the following locations:
    - Kaiser Aetna Road – Pacheco Ridge Road Junction
    - Mississippi Lake North and Mississippi Lake South
    - Horse Camp
    - Kingbird Pond
    - Mustang Pond
    - Jackrabbit Lake

Waste Disposal

- Bury human waste and wash dishes at least 100 feet from streams, lakes, and springs.

Park Maps

- **Park Maps** 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.

Rules and General Information

Gate times, rules and commuter traffic congestion reminder

- **Friday Commute Warning:** 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 6 p.m. The gate will close at 6 p.m.!

Not Allowed (Dogs, non-class 1 eBikes, Open Flames, Weapons)

- No dogs allowed in any State Park. The only exception is certified and trained service animals will be permitted.

- **Are electric bikes allowed?** Only class 1 eBikes are allowed in the park, for more information see District Superintendent Orders.
- **What kind of open flames are allowed?**
    - No open fires, barbecues, or hibachis are allowed.
    - **Use backpacking or camp stoves only**.
- Weapons, including firearms, are not allowed.

Wildflower and Fishing Rules

- **Can I pick wildflowers?**
    - No. All plants, animals, and features of the park are protected.
- **Can I Fish in the park?**
    - Yes. 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.

Generator Usage Rules

- **Generators** may not be operated between the hours of 8 pm and 10 am. Generators operated outside these hours must not exceed a volume that is, or is likely to be, disturbing to others.

Driving Around in the Park is NOT allowed

- **Can I drive around in the park?** You are only allowed to drive to your parking destination and then you must remain parked until your departure date, begin driving out of the park by 4 p.m.

Merchandise and Snacks

- **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.
- **Will there be any food for sale?** No, there will be some *snacks and drinks* for sale at the Dowdy Ranch Visitor Center and the Orestimba Corral. Please bring all the food and beverages you will need.

Protecting Yourself from the Sun and Insects and Poison Oak

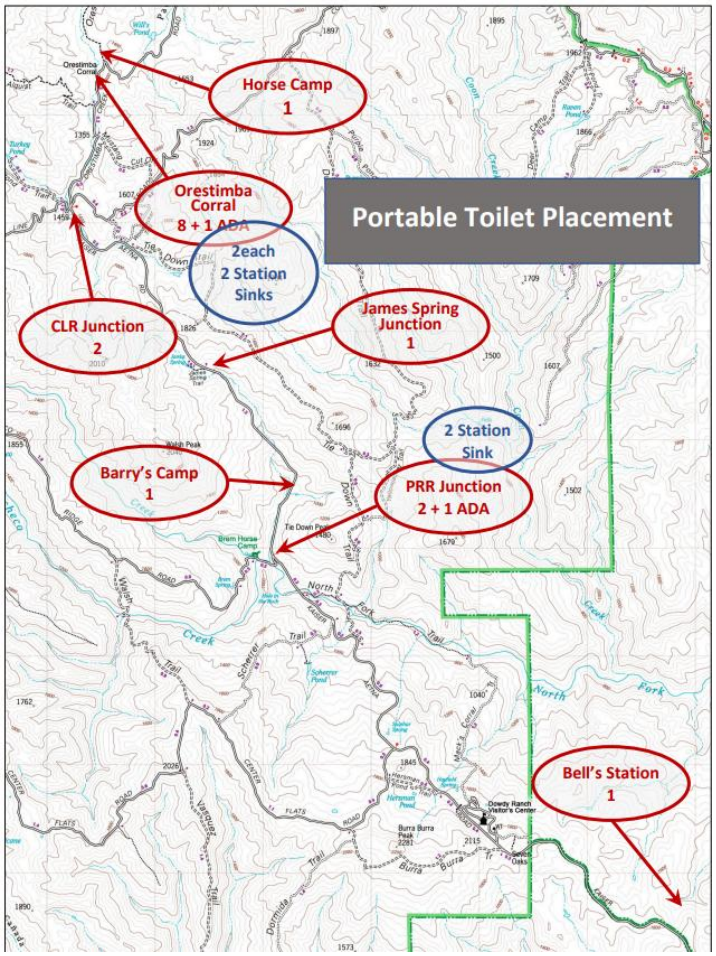
- **Will I need protection from the Sun and Insects?** Bring sunscreen and insect repellent (ticks are very common) and watch out for poison oak.
- **Is there Poison Oak in the park?** Yes. Poison Oak is beginning to become more prominent. Learn what it looks like and avoid it.

Where are the water tanks located?

- **Where will I find water tank resources:** Potable water will be available at the Orestimba Corral and at the Kaiser-Aetna Road / Pacheco Ridge Road junction. If you are 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 1⁄2 mile north of this junction. All water in springs, streams, and lakes should be purified by filtering, chemical treatment, or other methods before consumption.

Where will restroom facilities be located?

- **Where will Porta Potties be located?** Porta potties will be located along Kaiser Aetna Road to Orestimba Corral. Please see the map for locations.



You can find a comprehensive list of FAQs about visiting Henry W. Coe State Park here