



News

East Bay's Park It: In Martinez, Bay Trail section being dedicated to Rep. Miller



By NED MACKAY | East Bay Regional Park District

PUBLISHED: November 5, 2014 at 3:58 p.m. | UPDATED: August 15, 2016 at 10:23 a.m.

Get Morning Report and other email newsletters

A key segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail will open to the public with a dedication ceremony Saturday on Carquinez Scenic Drive in Martinez.

Connecting Martinez to Port Costa and Crockett, the trail will be named in honor of retiring U.S. Rep. George Miller in recognition for his many years of exceptional public service. Miller has been a member of Congress since 1975.

The public ceremony will be from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Martinez entrance to the trail. To get there, drive 2 miles west on Carquinez Scenic Drive from Talbart Street in Martinez and follow the signs to event parking. Carquinez Scenic Drive was a county road until its closure in 1983 due to landslide damage. Repair and improvement of the 1.7-mile closed section included stabilizing embankments, building retaining walls, and improving drainage.

Funding for the \$5.5 million project came from the U.S. Transportation Department, Federal Highway Administration, Contra Costa County Transportation Authority's Measure J, the State Coastal Conservancy and East Bay Regional Park District's Measure WW.

The new trail is multiuse for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. No motorized vehicles will be allowed except for service and emergency vehicles. It's a great addition to the Bay Trail, with sweeping views of Carquinez Straits and the town of Benicia across the water.

Diablo Foothills: Aside from the dedication, other activities in the area this weekend will include a hike from 10 a.m. to noon Sunday through Diablo Foothills Regional Park and into Mount Diablo State Park. Attractions along the route will include views of the spectacular Castle Rocks and possible sightings of the birds of prey that inhabit them seasonally.

Naturalist Ashley Elliott will lead the way. Meet her at the Orchard staging area near the end of Castle Rock Road in Walnut Creek. And at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve in Antioch, naturalist Kevin Dixon will lead a hike from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday to the Stewartville town site via the Miner's Trail.

The group will explore the Prospect Tunnel, climb some steep hills and get lots of exercise. This is a strenuous hike, intended for ages 10 and older. Bring water, lunch and a flashlight for the tunnel; wear sturdy shoes. Meet Kevin in the parking lot at the end of Somersville Road, 5 miles south of Highway 4 in Antioch. For more information on either Ashley's or Kevin's hike, call 888-327-2757, ext. 2750.

Oakley: Meanwhile, over at Big Break Regional Shoreline in Oakley, owl adventures are on the agenda from 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday. The naturalists will lead a search for barn owls and help visitors pluck apart owl pellets to see what the birds eat. Big Break is at 69 Big Break Road off Main Street. For information, call 888-327-2757, ext. 3050.

BERKELEY: There's always something interesting going on at Tilden Nature Area near Berkeley. This Sunday, there are two programs from which to choose, or you can attend both. Naturalist "Trail Gail" Broesder will lead a nature ramble from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. from Tilden's Environmental Education Center to Jewel Lake in search of newts and other seasonal wildlife.

And Gail will preside at a tule boat float at the center from 1:30 to 3 p.m. the same day. Native Americans used boats made out of tule reeds to navigate San Francisco Bay and other area waterways. Gail's group will learn the history of the plant, then make a miniature tule boat and test its buoyancy. Both programs are free. The center is located at the north end of Tilden's Central Park Drive. For information, call 510-544-2233.

Orinda: The East Bay's backyard volcano is the destination for a Sunday Stroll from 10 a.m. to noon Sunday.

The group will explore Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve on a moderate, naturalist-guided, 3-mile hike. Attractions include a pond, beautiful views and volcanic geology. Meet at the park's Old Tunnel Road staging area. It's off Highway 24 on the Orinda side of the Caldecott Tunnel. For information and directions, call 510-544-3187 or check the Sibley map at www.ebparks.org/parks.

Alameda: Sharks are on the menu during Family Nature Fun Hour from 2 to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday at Crab Cove Visitor Center in Alameda. Not to eat, but to learn about the several varieties that live in San Francisco Bay. Then it's fish feeding time from 3 to 3:30 p.m. both days at the center's large aquarium. Crab Cove is at 1252 McKay Ave. off Central Avenue in Alameda. For information, call 510-544-3187.

Fremont: There's also lots to see and do this weekend at Coyote Hills Regional Park in Fremont. There are tours of the park's reconstructed 2,000-year-old Ohlone village site from 10 a.m. to noon and again from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, led by naturalists Kristina Parkison and Francis Mendoza.

Then from 10 a.m. to noon Sunday, Francis will host a program about the different traditional roles of men and women within the village. Francis will lead some kids' games and discuss the importance of elders in Ohlone society. This program is for ages 8 and older. For all these activities, meet at the village, which is about a 10-minute walk from the park visitor center.

Coyote Hills has a family fun hour too. From 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, the theme is mud exploration. Meet at the visitor center. The park is located at 8000 Patterson Ranch Road off Paseo Padre Parkway in Fremont. The programs are free; there's a parking fee of \$5 per vehicle. For information, call 510-544-3220.

Ned MacKay writes a regular column about East Bay Regional Park District sites and activities. Email him at nedmackay@comcast.net.