

ENJOY FLORA & FAUNA

This Sonoma hillside is home to many native California plants and animals.

Lower parts of the trail pass through mixed evergreens, with bay and coast live oak predominating. Madrone, manzanita, toyon, buckeye—and the ubiquitous poison oak—border the trail as it gradually ascends, skirting grassy meadows dotted with wildflowers in the spring. One treasured feature of the property is its oak woodlands. Black, Oregon, blue and valley oak provide a crucial source of food and habitat for a wide variety of creatures.

Wildflower season opens with milkmaids and buttercups, followed by blue-eyed grass, lupines, blue larkspur, yellow mariposa lily, brodiaea, soaproot, yarrow, clarkia, and California fuschia, to name but a few. Several species of ferns grow on the shadier slopes, including polypody, goldback, maidenhair, and coastal wood fern.

While most of the animals that make their home here are nocturnal and unlikely to be seen, look for signs such as tracks and scat that indicate the presence of coyote, fox, raccoons, opossums, wild turkeys, deer, and bobcat. Bird watchers will find numerous species.

Depending on the season, you may encounter hermit thrushes, Pacific slope flycatchers, or fox sparrows near the trailhead. Birds such as the oak titmouse, California towhee, and western scrub jay can be heard and seen along the trail. Open meadows at higher elevations are frequented by American kestrels, acorn woodpeckers, and western bluebirds. At the top, you may see a red-tailed or Cooper's hawk circling.

ENJOY OUR HERITAGE

Originally hunting territory for Native Americans, the area over which Sonoma Overlook Trail lies has served many other purposes. Arrowheads found here indicate the presence of its first residents: the Muchi tribe, a sub-branch of the Coastal Miwoks. By the mid-19th century, the property had become part of General Mariano Vallejo's estate, who gave a portion of what was then called Battery Hill to the Pueblo de Sonoma for use as a community cemetery, a purpose it serves to this day.

In the 1890's, Solomon Schocken purchased the upper portion of the hill to the east of the Overlook and established a successful stone quarry. He provided stone used in the construction of several Sonoma buildings and in the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake. From plentiful basalt at the site, Schocken also fashioned cobblestones and paving blocks used throughout the Bay Area. By the early 1920's, however, the popularity of the automobile had so decreased the demand for such materials that the quarry was closed. In following years, the abandoned hillside served as a garbage dump, a practice abandoned in the 1950's. The city-owned property remained undeveloped and rather neglected for decades.

In the 1990's, a developer became interested in the area. A vote of the citizenry strongly rejected any commercial development and revealed strong support to limit access to the property. Sonoma Ecology Center and the City of Sonoma became involved and made Sonoma Overlook Trail is now a reality. The trail was financed by individuals, civic groups, and local businesses; it was built largely by volunteers.

Directions: The main trailhead is located at 198 1st St. West, 0.4 miles north of the Plaza, at the entrance to the Mountain Cemetery. Find other trailheads at the top of 2nd St. East and within the cemetery on Toyon Road. There is a connecting trail to/from Montini Open Space Preserve. Find more info at the main trailhead.

Sonoma Overlook Trail Stewards maintain the trail, educate the public about its history, flora, and fauna, and raise funds for these services.

Restrooms are a five minute walk south in Depot Park on 1st St. West.

Join us! For further information about the Stewards, contact us at OverlookMontini@gmail.com

Support Sonoma Overlook Trail
We need your help! To be a part of keeping SOT healthy and accessible, use the QR code below, or mail a check to:

Sonoma Overlook Trail Fund
c/o Sonoma Ecology Center
PO Box 1486
Eldridge, CA 95431



MAP • INFORMATION



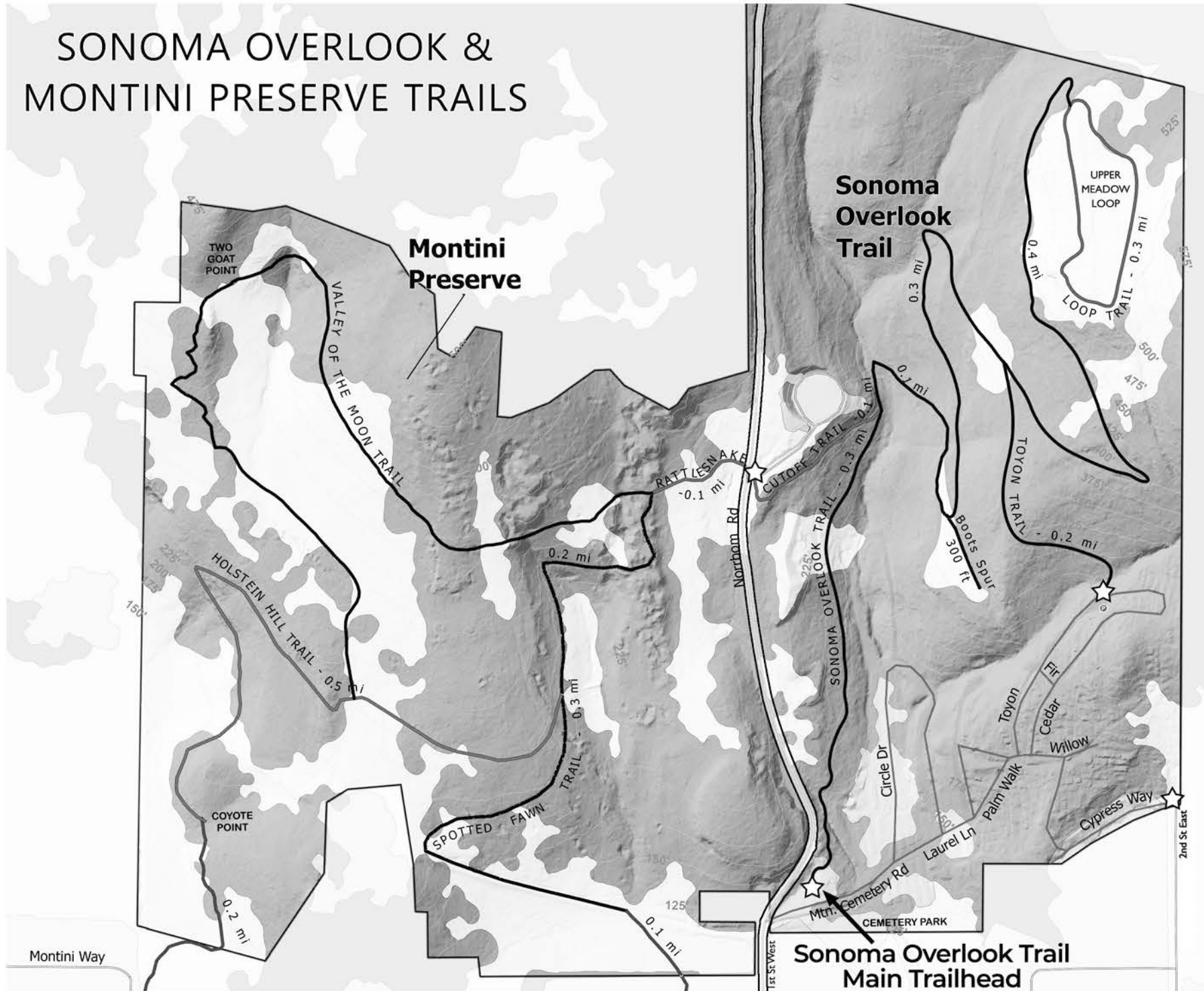
SONOMA OVERLOOK TRAIL

Managed by
Sonoma Overlook Trail Stewards
in partnership with the City of Sonoma
and Sonoma Ecology Center



Walk the gently graded trail 2.4 miles round trip. Enjoy panoramic views of Sonoma Valley, the Bay and beyond from the loop at the top.

SONOMA OVERLOOK & MONTINI PRESERVE TRAILS



ENJOY THE TRAIL...SAFELY!

As you wander through this beautiful pocket of nature, please respect the land, fellow hikers and local inhabitants. Observe a few simple rules and have a great experience.

Stay on the trail. Going off trail can cause erosion and other damage. Hiking on the established trail is safer for you, too. You are less likely to encounter poison oak, ticks, and rattlesnakes.

Leave dogs, bicycles & horses at home. Local plants and animals will be healthier, safer and more visible when you treat this protected habitat with care. ADA protected service dogs are welcome, however, emotional support, therapy, or comfort animals are not considered service animals under the ADA.

Watch your step. Ours is a rocky trail in some areas. Hiking poles are encouraged for a steadier walk. Wear sturdy shoes and comfortable clothing—preferably layered—for changing weather conditions. Wear a hat, sunscreen, and ALWAYS carry water!

Wildfire danger is high here. Smoking and fires are strictly prohibited.

Leave wildflowers untouched for others to enjoy and to allow them to produce seeds for the seasons ahead.

Pack out *all* of your trash. Please leave this hillside as beautiful and pristine as you can.