



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Cross Marin
Trail**
California



Cross Marin Trail

California

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The spectacular Cross Marin Trail (previously known as the Sir Francis Drake Bikeway) follows the route of the former North Pacific Coast Railroad and roughly parallels the sinuous Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. The family-friendly, partly paved rail-trail makes up a segment of Northern California's Bay Area Ridge Trail.

On its southern end, the trail begins as a gravel-and-dirt path in the dense woodlands of Lagunitas. While small footbridges ensure users have a safe path over culvert overflows, this unpaved section of trail is likely not suitable for wheelchair use. On your left are thick redwood stands cushioned by sorrel and ferns, as is the lovely Lagunitas Creek (closed from December to mid-June for salmon protection). At mile 1.5, you arrive at a bridge carrying trail traffic over both Sir Francis Drake

Boulevard and Lagunitas Creek. A cheeky red salmon crossing sign alerts trailgoers to threatened populations of silver (or coho) salmon and steelhead trout that migrate up the creek to spawn during the winter. This is the first of several spots along the trail where you can view them (and possibly, beavers that sometimes work in the area).

Just past the bridge is an unmarked and easy to miss intersection with the 1.6-mile Pioneer Tree Trail, a hiking and equestrian path that rejoins our trail at mile 2. Here, you'll go through a gate that leads to the paved and lightly trafficked on-road section of the trail as it goes through Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Samuel Taylor was an entrepreneur who struck it rich during the California gold rush and created Camp Taylor, one of the first sites in the country to offer camping as a recreational activity. In the 1870s and 1880s, it was common for families to take the railroad out to the camp for the weekend.

You'll pass the Redwood Grove Group Picnic Area, followed by several campsites that, while frequently full, do not detract from the area's natural beauty. Oak, tanoak, madrone, live oak, laurel, and Douglas-fir are all visible along the path, which is lined with California native buttercups, Indian paintbrush, and milkmaids. Black-tailed deer, the most common animal in the state park, can often be spotted from the trail.

The final section is shaded by cool redwood groves. For a quick detour and dip in the creek, veer right at mile 3.1 to the popular Swimming Hole Bridge. Another 0.8 mile north of the swimming hole, you'll intersect the Jewell Trail, a 1-mile connector to the 11-mile Bolinas Ridge Trail. From here, the remainder of the Cross Marin Trail is located in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

To extend your day, try exploring the numerous other trails in Samuel P. Taylor State Park (day-use fees apply year-round). Horseback riding is allowed on the entirety of the trail. Public



Cross Marin Trail

California

States: California

Counties: Marin

Length: 5.3miles

Trail end points: Platform Bridge Rd, just north of Sir Francis Drake Blvd (Tocaloma) to Sir Francis Drake Blvd, 0.3 mile west of Park Rd (Lagunitas)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt,Dirt,Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline Skating,Wheelchair Accessible,Horseback

Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at a number of locations along the trail. View the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.

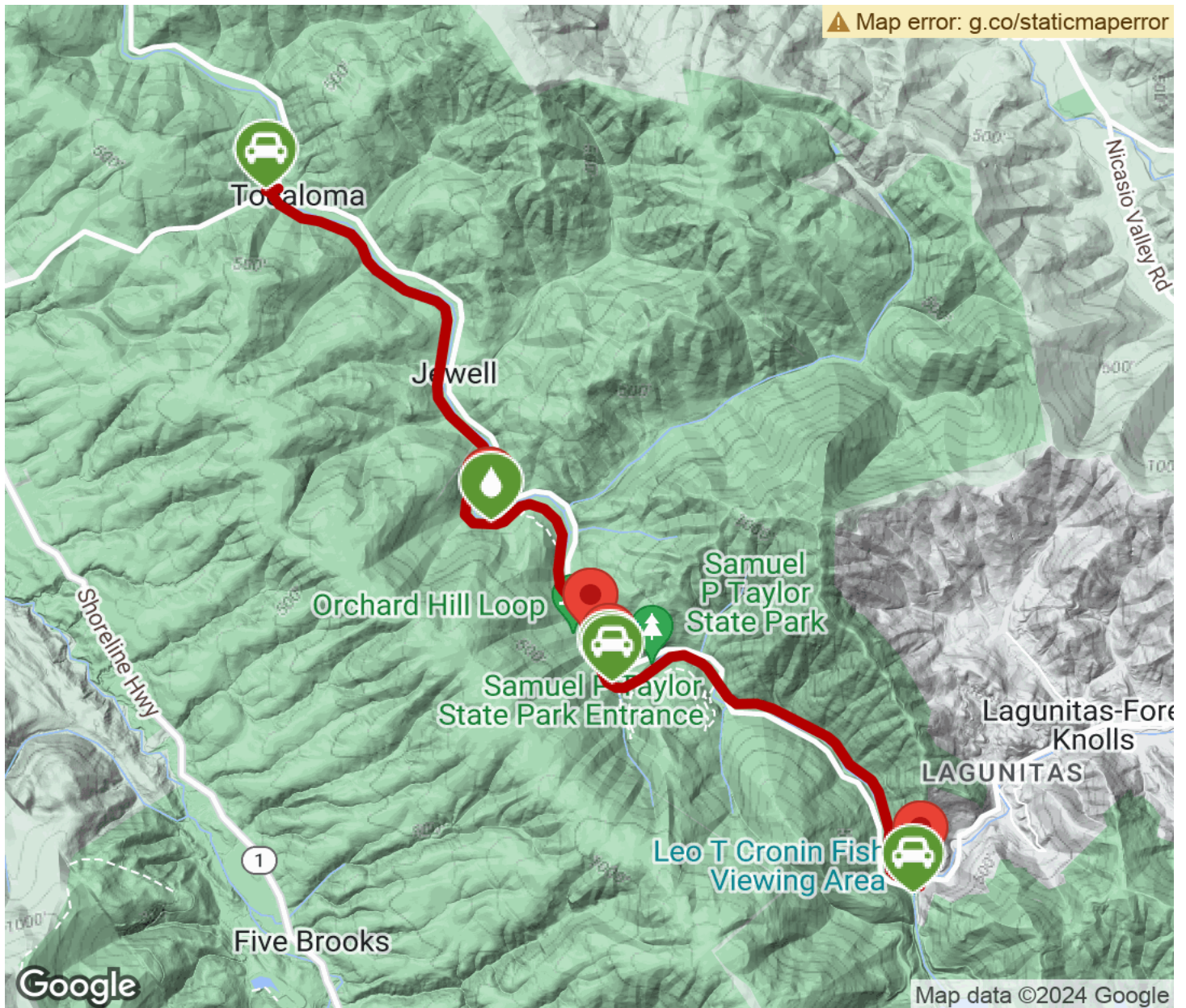
To reach the northern trailhead, drive past the intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Platform Bridge Road, crossing over a concrete bridge. Shortly after crossing the bridge you see an unmarked road on your right. Turn right on this road then turn left and park on an abandoned concrete street. Walk toward an old bridge. The trail entrance is marked with a large sign that says CROSS MARIN TRAIL.

The southern trailhead is at the end of the short metal bridge on your right. On the left is a small parking lot with a one-hour limit. There are various places to pull off and park along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard without time limits.



Cross Marin Trail

California



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
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