



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Hammond  
Trail**  
*California*



## Hammond Trail

California

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The Hammond Trail pays homage to the Redwood Coast's timber industry. Named for a major local lumber company, the asphalt, gravel, and dirt trail follows the route of a former railroad that hauled timber out of the expansive Humboldt County redwood forests to the Hammond Redwood Co. in Samoa on Humboldt Bay, a few miles south of where the trail ends today.

Along the 5.5-mile route, you'll pass through farmland and forested bluffs overlooking the Mad River, as well as beach-access points. The trail is a segment of the California Coastal Trail, a network of bicycling and hiking trails that, when complete, will stretch along the coastline for 1,230 miles from Oregon to the Mexican border.

Hammond Lumber Company got its start in 1863 and

eventually gained control of the Humboldt Northern Railroad, which ran between Humboldt Bay in the south and the company town of Crannell in the north. The company stopped operating the railroad in the 1950s, and the first segment of the Hammond Trail opened in 1983.

The trail starts in the south at a trestle crossing over the Mad River. According to local lore, the river earned its name during an 1849 expedition when a surveyor launched into a memorable and expletive-filled tirade when his fellow explorers began crossing the river in their canoes without him.

The trestle itself is due for replacement. The original span, a covered bridge built in 1905, was replaced in 1941 by a bridge relocated from Washington state and reassembled here. Today the bridge provides a scenic overlook of the area and the opportunity to see marine mammals, such as seals and sea otters. Many bird species, including cormorants, grebes, herons, ducks, and Aleutian geese, endangered until recently, also frequent the area.

Crossing the bridge, you'll share the road with lightly used Fischer Avenue for about a half mile to a short climb into the community of McKinleyville. You'll find a grocery at School Road, where a 0.3-mile spur trail to the left leads you to within sight of the Mad River. Continuing north on the Hammond Trail, you'll arrive at Hiller Park in 0.7 mile. Here, about 1.5 miles of paths meander through native coastal trees to a bluff overlooking the Mad River and a long sand spit separating it from the ocean beyond.

Leaving the parking lot at Hiller Park, the trail follows a woody corridor north 0.9 mile to a trail split. The Hammond Trail, which travels the paved right fork—traces Murray Road east on a 0.3-mile bike lane, then heads north alongside US 101/Redwood Highway. The gravel left fork overlooks the Mad River and ocean along a wooded bluff before turning inland back to the Hammond Trail via the hiker-only Widow White



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**States:** California

**Counties:** Humboldt

Length: 5.5miles

**Trail end points:** Clam Beach State Park at Clam Beach Dr to Mad River Bridge on Mad River Rd (McKinleyville)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt,Dirt,Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike,Wheelchair

Accessible,Horseback Riding,Mountain Biking,Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

In Arcata, parking is available at Hammond Trail Trailhead (789 Mad River Rd).

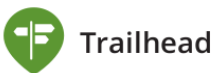
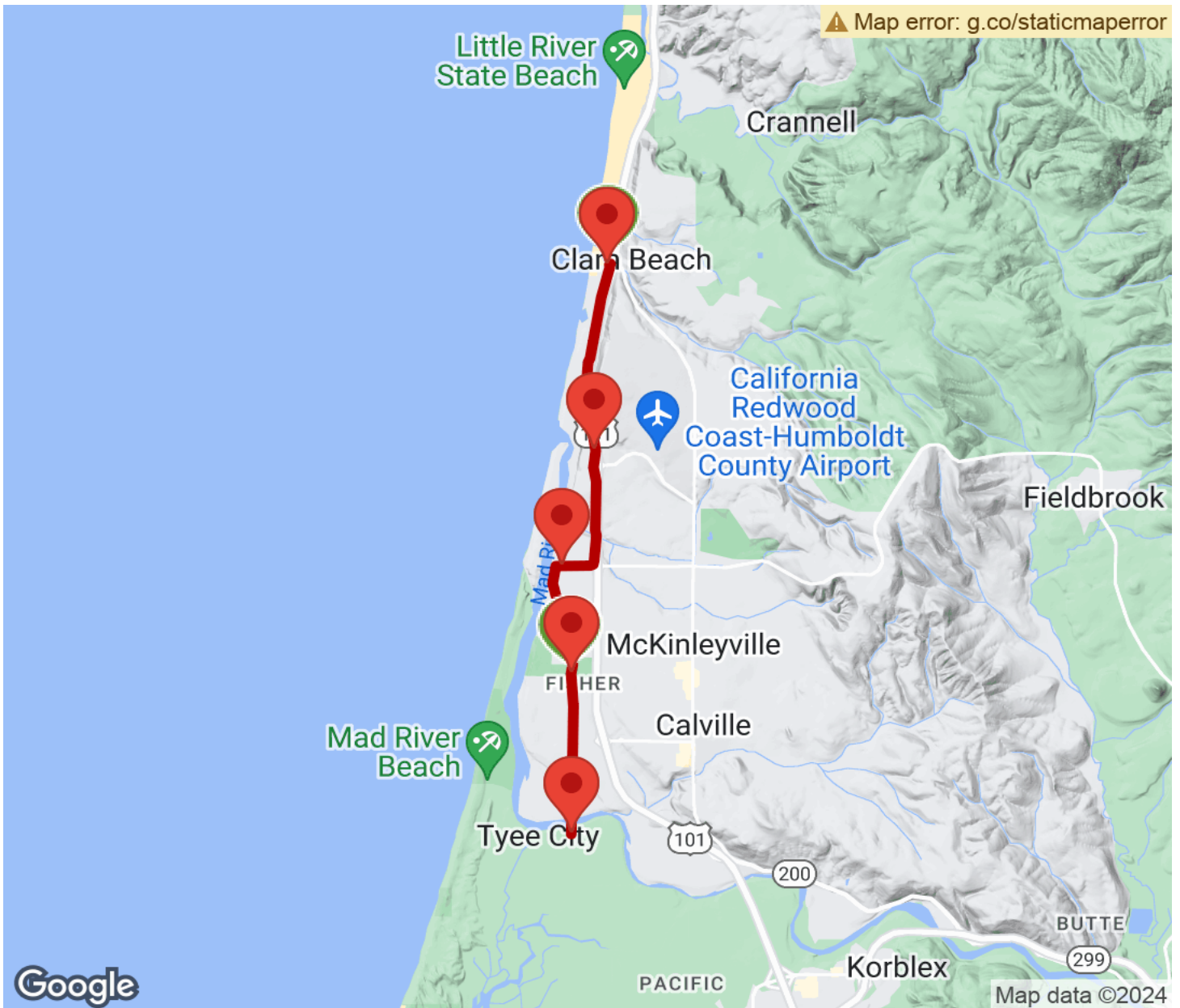
In McKinleyville, parking is available at Hiller Park (300 feet north of the intersection of Hiller Rd & Fischer Ave), at Clam Beach County Park (1100 Clam Beach Dr), at 3451 Letz Avenue, and at the intersection of Murray Road and Kelly Avenue.

Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



# Hammond Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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