

O' in the Oaks '09, Pacheco State Park

Event Director's Notes

By Jeff Lanam

Welcome to *Pacheco State Park*, one of California's newer parks. This land was part of the Mexican land Grant of El Rancho San Luis Gonzaga, settled by Francisco Pacheco in 1843. His great-great granddaughter, Paula Fatjo, donated the land to the state in 1992. The Yokut Indians of the Central Valley lived here before that, escaping the hot summers in the valley to enjoy the fog that rolls over Pacheco Pass from Monterey Bay. A short walk from the parking area takes you to several historic buildings, including the remains of the Pacheco adobe.

The map was completed in April 2009; the mapper was Vladimir Zherdev. It covers the western third of the park. The remainder, which includes the wind farm, is not open to the public. Please do not approach closer than 200 meters to the windmills (except as noted in the [Course Setters' Notes](#) for advanced courses on Day 1). The contour interval is 5 meters. All classes will have 1:10000 maps. See the [Course Setters' Notes](#) for more details about the maps, and much more.

There is no treated drinking water in the Park! There are two water faucets, for livestock and washing. There are three pit toilets, installed in the last year.

The vehicle parking fee is \$5 per day, with a dollar off for those 62 and over. If you are camping at San Luis Creek, your receipt includes parking at Pacheco. We will be using the north parking lot, saving the south lot for horse trailers and other visitors. Please carpool if possible, and follow directions of the parking staff. Overflow parking is available at the reservoir lot, just outside the park.

Please be careful with the turn-off from Highway 152 to the small road leading to the park. Driving west (from Gilroy) it's easy to miss the right turn and get off too early, in an old abandoned turn-out. Driving east (from Los Banos) there is a small left-turn lane for crossing 152. If this turn lane fills with traffic for the event, do not stop further back in the fast-moving lanes of 152. Instead, you can go past, and almost immediately find an additional left turn lane that will let you make a safer turn.

Leaving the event, those drivers turning left turn on 152 (west towards Gilroy) may find it difficult to cross the east-bound traffic. If this proves too difficult, you can make a right turn, proceed 2.5 miles east towards Los Banos, where you will find a left turn that will enable you to change directions on 152.

The nearest **hospital** is *Memorial Hospital* in Los Banos (520 West I Street, (209) 826-0591); east on CA-152 for 22 miles to West I Street, left on I Street 0.6 miles. To the west, *Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital* in Hollister (911 Sunset Drive, (831) 637-5711) is 23.6 miles; west on CA-152 to CA-156 (which goes only south), then left on CA-25.

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Cell phone coverage in the park is surprisingly good. The Event Director's number is (408) 313-3753, for emergencies and other urgent issues.

There may be a **potluck dinner** Saturday evening at the group campsite in San Luis Creek Campground. Ask about it on Saturday. The restaurant at *Casa de Fruta* is open 24 hours; deli sandwiches and burritos are available in the wine shop. *Casa de Fruta* is 12 miles west of the park on CA-152. Produce, snacks, and drinks are also available there. There are many chain restaurants at the junction of CA-33 and I-5, plus the iconic *Anderson's Pea Soup Restaurant*. In Los Banos, *Wool Growers Restaurant* (Basque family-style) and *España's Southwest Bar and Grill* (Mexican) have gotten good reviews. If you head west to Gilroy, you will find a massive shopping area with many restaurants and fast-food places.

For Sunday, Alex Finch has set up a short **Trail Orienteering Training** course, to prepare you for the [U.S. Trail-O Championships](#) at Vasquez Rocks on December 5th. The course will be up until 2:00. Be sure to check it out.

After the meet, there are a few **diversions** you may enjoy. I recommend San Juan Bautista, a small town to the west that features the largest of the California missions, and one of the few still operating as a church. Next to the mission is the San Juan Bautista State Historical Park, with more historical buildings. Take CA-152 west to CA-156, then south past the town of Hollister turn right on The Alameda.

The aforementioned *Casa de Fruta* also has a carousel, playground, and narrow-gauge railroad, all identified as "Casa de whatever". This is targeted at traveling families with small, fidgety children, so I don't know if many orienteers will be interested. The wine tasting and ice cream parlor may be more attractive.

The *Forebay Golf Course* (209-826-3637) is a public 9-hole course in Santa Nella, near I-5 and CA-33.

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