

Discover

the story behind each trail name

Windmill Trail

The old windmill at Fernandez Ranch is a reminder of the property's ranching and farming heritage. The Windmill Trail follows the route of an old ranch road past the remnants of a dairy farm that operated during the mid-20th century. At its peak, the farm included a house, dairy barn and five other buildings. The remaining building foundations can be found at the Homestead Picnic Area. While the dairy operation ended by 1960, cattle continue to graze the land today.

The Windmill Trail crosses Fern Creek, passes the windmill, and climbs to the ridge. From the ridge, hikers and equestrians with a permit can continue on the Bay Area Ridge Trail into the East Bay Municipal Utility District's Pinole Valley Watershed.



Black Phoebe Trail

Black phoebes are small, black flycatchers with white bellies that feed on insects along Rodeo Creek and above the grasslands of Fernandez Ranch. Look for songbirds wearing tuxedos and wagging their tails while perched on fence posts. If you are lucky, you will see one fly from its perch to catch a passing insect on the wing.

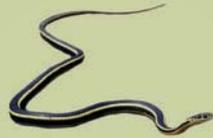
The ADA-accessible Black Phoebe Trail leads to benches and picnic areas along the edge of the South Meadow. On this meadow, you may find western fence lizards, California meadow voles, coyotes, and other species that prefer open grasslands. At the far end of the meadow, the Black Phoebe Trail connects to the Trailside Gathering Area and the Whipsnake Trail.



Whipsnake Trail

Alameda whipsnakes, or striped racers, have two lateral yellow stripes set against a black or dark brown back. Though they can grow to more than three feet long, the elusive animals are difficult to spot. Whipsnakes are fast, efficient hunters who capture and swallow lizards and small mammals whole. Fernandez Ranch provides valuable habitat for these threatened snakes, found only in Contra Costa, Alameda, and Santa Clara counties.

The Whipsnake Trail travels through oak woodlands and open grasslands, which are among the whipsnake's preferred habitats. The trail winds high into the property, offering breathtaking views before descending into oak woodland and pockets of bay forest. Of all the trails on Fernandez Ranch, the Whipsnake Trail traverses the greatest variety of habitats.



Woodrat Trail

San Francisco dusky-footed woodrats live in the bay forests of Fernandez Ranch. They build large nests, some several feet tall, out of twigs and branches. Inside their nests, woodrats store nuts, leaves, food, and man-made objects. These avid collectors are also known as pack rats. Newts and other small animals often move in to share the woodrat nests.

The Woodrat Trail travels through a dense bay forest as it winds up to the ridge that separates the Pinole Creek and Rodeo Creek watersheds. While in the forest, keep an eye out for California newts on the trail. Also look for piles of twigs and branches on the ground and low in the trees; these are likely the nests of dusky-footed woodrats.



Fernandez Ranch

Purchased by the Muir Heritage Land Trust in 2005, Fernandez Ranch is protected open space providing habitat for a variety of native wildlife. Restoration of creek areas and the creation of trails and other visitor amenities were completed before this historic, 702-acre ranch was opened to the public in June 2010.



Getting to Fernandez Ranch

1075 Christie Road, Martinez

From I-80: Head east on Highway 4. Take the first exit after the Franklin Canyon Golf Course onto Christie Road. Use caution; Christie Road is a minor exit off of Highway 4. Fernandez Ranch is .7 miles down Christie Road on your right.

From Martinez: Head west on Highway 4. Take the Franklin Canyon Exit. Turn left and merge onto Highway 4 eastbound. Take the first exit after the Franklin Canyon Golf Course onto Christie Road. Use caution; Christie Road is a minor exit off of Highway 4. Fernandez Ranch is .7 miles down Christie Road on your right.



PO Box 2452 / Martinez, CA 94553 / (925) 228-5460

Muir Heritage Land Trust welcomes your donations.

Find out more on our web site:

www.muirheritagelandtrust.org

Fernandez Ranch

LEGEND

- MULTI-USE TRAIL
- ACCESSIBLE MULTI-USE TRAIL
- BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL (MULTI-USE)
- EBMUD BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL (EQUESTRIANS AND HIKERS WITH PERMIT)
- CREEK
- PAVED ROAD
- MILEAGE BETWEEN POINTS
- GATE
- PARKING
- ACCESSIBLE AREA
- PICNIC AREA
- SITE FEATURE

10-FT CONTOUR INTERVAL

0 500 1000 2000 FEET

AMENITIES

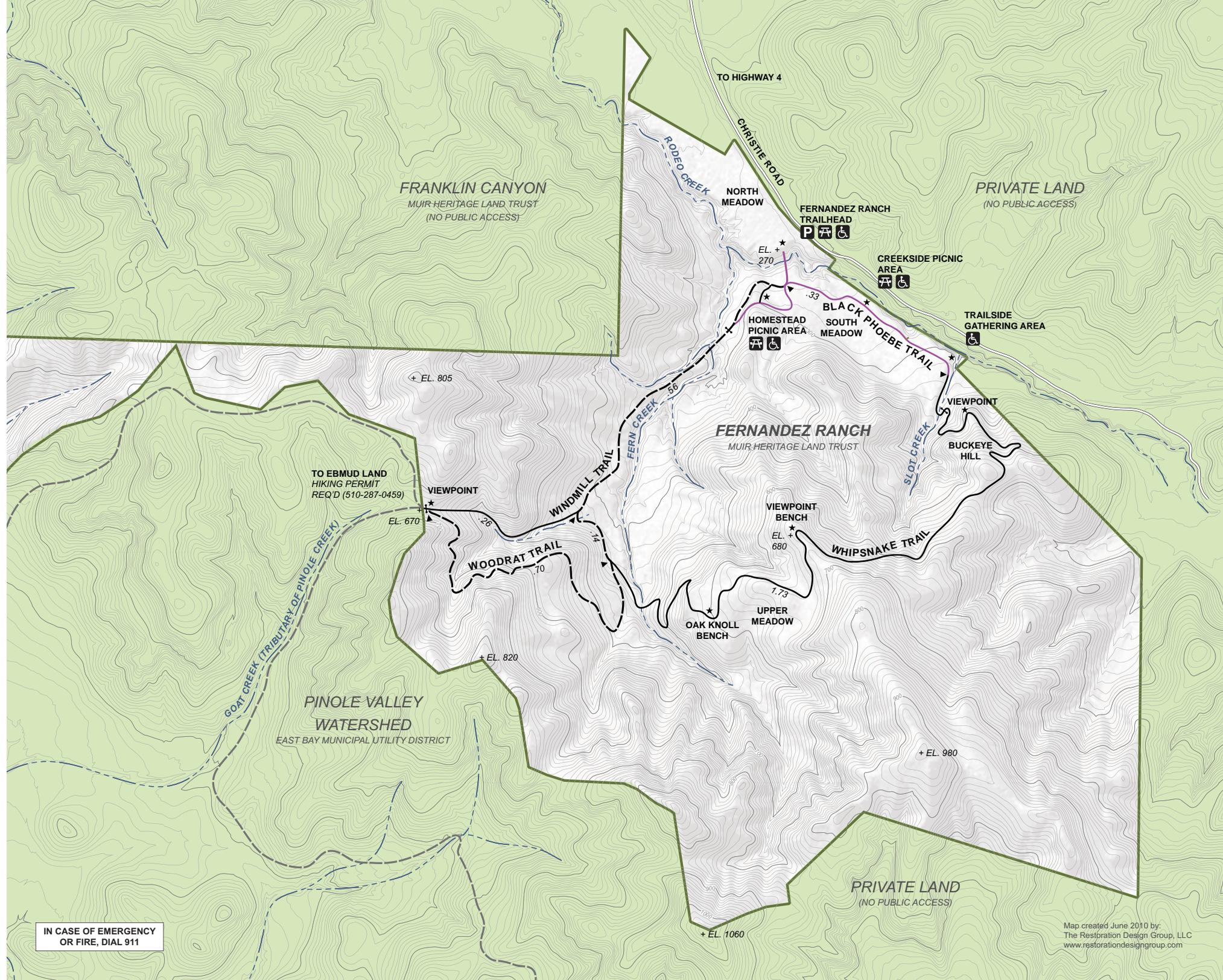
- More than 3.5 miles of multi-use trails, including ADA accessible trails
- Trail connections to adjacent protected lands
- A segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail
- Three accessible picnic areas
- Staging area for horse trailers

INFORMATION

- No potable water or restrooms are available.
- Garbage service is limited. Please assist the Muir Heritage Land Trust by packing out all trash.
- Contact the Muir Heritage Land Trust at 925-228-5460 for trail conditions.

RULES

- Park is open from dawn to dusk.
- All trails are multiple use. Bicyclists yield to hikers. Bicyclists and hikers yield to equestrians.
- Keep dogs on leash near the picnic areas. Dogs may be off leash on the trails provided that they are under control at all times.
- Due to high fire risk, smoking, campfires, barbeques and fireworks are not permitted.
- Camping, fishing and hunting are prohibited.
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- You are entering a cattle-grazing area. Do not attempt to touch cows or calves. Keep your distance and avoid getting between cows and their calves. Keep your dog under control or on leash when cattle are nearby.



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
OR FIRE, DIAL 911

Map created June 2010 by:
The Restoration Design Group, LLC
www.restorationdesigngroup.com