

The Middle Trail

Granite Bay area, Folsom Lake SRA
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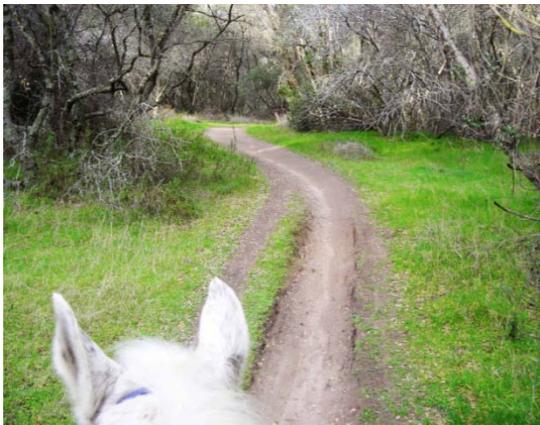
The Middle Trail is a delightful trail that undulates, ascends and descends, for a splendid workout for your horse. The Middle Trail is located between the Granite Bay Equestrian Assembly Area and Doton's Point, and it is less than two miles in length. It is an interconnected multi-use trail in conjunction with the Center Trail and the (main) Pioneer Express Trail. The western trailhead begins about a hundred yards south of the corner of Twin Rocks Road and Boulder Road in Granite Bay. Refer to attached sketch map.



The Middle Trail has many inflections (reversing S-shaped curves) and is heavily used by both equestrians and mountain bikers. It does not have the scenic vistas of the Center Trail because it is continually on the flank (or "middle") of the east-west ridge line. The trail bed is moderately-drained colluvial soil derived from the underlying granitic bedrock (= quartz diorite of the Penryn Pluton of Cretaceous age). In the winter months, there are a few muddy spots along the trail bed; and in the dry summer months the trail bed can be dusty. There are no seeps or springs along the trail, and no water for a horse. The vegetation is a well-drained oak savannah with California buckeye, poison oak, ceanothus (=white buckthorn), and a few pine trees. From February through April, there is abundant grass and a variety of wildflowers.



There are three lateral cross-over points between the Middle Trail and the Center Trail. The first lateral trail is where the two trails are only 60 feet apart (shown at left). The second lateral trail is shown at right (above); it ascends the flank of the ridge with a smooth-track trail (=not one rock!) that is high enjoyable for our horses.



A typical view along the Middle trail is shown at upper left. There are few rocks and almost no remount boulders along the Middle Trail because of the thick colluvial soils. At upper right is the "Wind-Chime Tree" that is silent most of the time...until a steady wind causes the wind-chimes to tinkle gently. Many years ago an enterprising person hung some domestic wind-chimes high in this valley oak.



The Middle Trail merges into the Center Trail near Beeks Bight. The 600-foot elevation hilltop has a splendid 270-degree panoramic view of Folsom Lake and Doton's Point to the East, Southeast, and South. The photographs shown above show the two heavy log benches that are a great place for a Spring picnic. Bring your lunch in your saddlebags and enjoy the panoramic view while seated on the rustic log benches. Meanwhile, your horse can enjoy some green grass.

