

WILDCAT MARSH & LANDFILL LOOP TRAIL



The story of this portion of the Bay Trail is one based on the very essence of today's meaning of "green." Non-existent until now, the trail incorporates fantastic views of San Pablo Bay, Wildcat and San Pablo Creeks with remarkable examples of industrial water conservation and reuse, resource recovery, electrical generation, recycling and recreation.

Make sure to visit the many interpretive exhibits along the trail which tell the story of this formerly little-known part of Contra Costa County's shoreline.

Map Legend

	Bay Trail suitable for walking, biking, roller skating & wheelchair access
	Bay Trail of compacted aggregate
	Distance markers and mileage between two markers
	Future Bay Trail
	Connector Trail
	Parking
	Drinking Water
	Picnic area
	Restrooms

Who Lives Here?

This new land form has attracted flora and fauna characteristic of the Bay Area shorelines.

Salt tolerant plants as well as marshbirds, shorebirds and raptors co-exist with mammals along the shoreline.



What to bring on the trail:

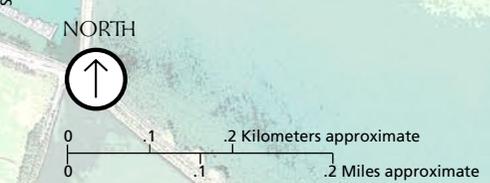
- Water
- Snack or picnic lunch
- Binoculars
- Birding book
- Camera

For school tour information call recyclemore 510-215-3125.



Mount Tamalpais West Ridge (11.45 miles)
Point San Pablo (1.82 miles)

San Pablo Ridge (1.5 miles)



THE WILDCAT CREEK MARSH AND LANDFILL LOOP TRAIL

This trail system combines visits to both Wildcat Creek and San Pablo Creek marshes as well as the circumnavigation of a man-made landfill “mountain” which offers magnificent views across San Pablo Bay to landmarks in Marin, Sonoma and Western Contra Costa Counties. There are three trailheads and the trail can be done in segments or in its entirety.

The major portion of the trail, a 2.8 mile loop, encircles Republic Services’ “Garbage Mountain,” a 350-acre landfill dominated by a 158-foot tall hill covering rubbish and industrial wastes brought from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area . This loop trail has lower and upper branches and a small spur trail.

Entering the lower main trail from the San Pablo Creek side ❸, the creek is seen running down into the large, biologically productive tidal marsh at its mouth. This tidal marsh is characterized by salt-tolerant plants such as the pickleweed and, depending on the time of the year, large growths of orange-colored dodder, a harmless parasite plant that grows on pickleweed and other plants. These tidelands provide resting and feeding habitat for shorebirds and large wading birds such as egrets and great blue heron. The trail continues to a juncture with the upper trail that crosses the western face of Garbage Mountain and leads to a small picnic area before it descends, rejoining the main lower trail.

After taking the landfill’s left side ❷ trail head, immediately seen is the West County Wastewater District’s (WCWD) modern treatment facility complete with its 89 giant *solar panels* which provide electrical power to run treatment equipment. Treated water is sent to Republic Services for its needs at Garbage Mountain as well as to the nearby Chevron Refinery to be used in cooling towers and to the Richmond Country Club to irrigate its 150 acres. The trail leads a short distance to Republic’s own *Power Generating Plant* which uses methane gas from Garbage Mountain’s decomposing wastes to create electricity to supply the landfill’s power needs as well as being sold into PG&E’s power grid providing power sufficient for 1,500 homes.

The trail continues to a large retention pond on the right, partially covered with pickleweed. This 40-acre site provides forage and cover for many bird species. The water is brackish and consists of natural runoff and effluent from the nearby treatment plant. On the left is a large area that is open to tidal flow from the bay. Both aquatic environments provide habitat for waterbirds such as canvasback, scaup, bufflehead, avocet, sandpipers, pelicans and geese. A small spur trail at this point extends for .2 miles along a breakwater affording a closer look at any waterbirds present.

The Wildcat Creek trail head ❶ can be accessed from the East Bay Regional Park District’s Wildcat Creek turn off, on the Richmond Parkway, southbound, just after Pittsburg Ave. There is a parking lot, restroom, drinking water and a picnic area at this location. This trailhead leading to the landfill trail is scheduled to open in fall 2011. It will pass along the southern edge of Wildcat Marsh in front of WCWD treatment plant and link with the Landfill Loop trailheads. (Unfortunately, at this time, there is no access from Wildcat Creek Marsh trailhead to the inland portion of Wildcat Creek Trail.)

WHAT EXACTLY IS “GARBAGE MOUNTAIN?”

This landfill was begun in 1953 on farmland on the San Pablo Bay shoreline. It was operated for many years by the Richmond Sanitary Service and then acquired by Republic Services that operated the facility until it stopped accepting wastes and was sealed in October 2010.

The “mountain” contains many materials now settling and decomposing. They produce gases (methane) and leachates (liquids) that must be kept from entering the outside environment. This is done through a series of capping layers of various materials that serve as barriers to prevent escape. The many pipes and tubes placed along the contours of the mountain are monitoring wells, which permit sampling to determine how well the capping measures are performing.

The ultimate “cap” is vegetation produced from green waste brought to the landfill by Republic’s trucks, ground up and spread on the mountain’s surface. Depending on the season, the mountain may display flowers, cactus, berries, corn, pumpkins, squashes and many other plants, all by-products of things people have put into their green waste cans. Depending on the wind and heat, the fragrance of the composting material may be noted. Deep-rooted plants, such as trees, are not allowed to grow as their roots might penetrate the cap.

This new mountain has become a habitat for birds, mammals and reptiles not common to the low farmland it has replaced. Species of raptors include the red-tailed hawk, northern harrier and American kestrel. These birds prey on mammals such as rabbits, ground squirrels, mice and voles. Deer, fox and harmless snakes have been seen on the slopes.

RECYCLING REPLACES BURIAL, THIS IS A VERY BUSY SITE

While not accepting wastes for burial now, the Republic Services landfill is very much alive with recycling programs. The *Power Generation Plant* uses methane gas to create electricity; a *concrete crushing plant* is creating aggregate for construction and recovery of rebar scrap iron; a *green waste grinder* is reducing residential vegetation and turning it into *compost* that is sold as a commercial product; and a *construction and demolition* debris recycling facility is converting that material for new uses. Additionally, Republic operates a *Transfer Station* here where residential and commercial rubbish is sorted and then transferred to other regional landfills.

As a working industry, Republic Services has established regulations that will assure continued public enjoyment of this unique portion of the Bay Trail that is located on private landfill property. Visitors use the trail at their own risk.

NOT ALLOWED: No dogs (excepting seeing eye dogs) or horses. No fishing or swimming, fires, fireworks or firearms, smoking, camping, motorized vehicles, boating, alcoholic beverages, straying off trail, climbing fences or on shoreline riprap, or feeding of wildlife. Bicycles are not allowed on the upper trail.

Trail Etiquette

As more of us enjoy the Bay Trail - walkers, joggers, bicyclists, skaters, wheelchair users, and families with strollers – please show courtesy and be safe by following these few simple guidelines.

Keep to the right of the trail and save the left side for passing.

Observe posted bike speeds. Adjust your riding speed. Call out or ring your bell when approaching other trail users, especially from behind.

Stay on the trail. Please don’t litter. Keep your trail clean and beautiful.

Enjoy watching wildlife from a respectful distance, and please don’t feed the animals.

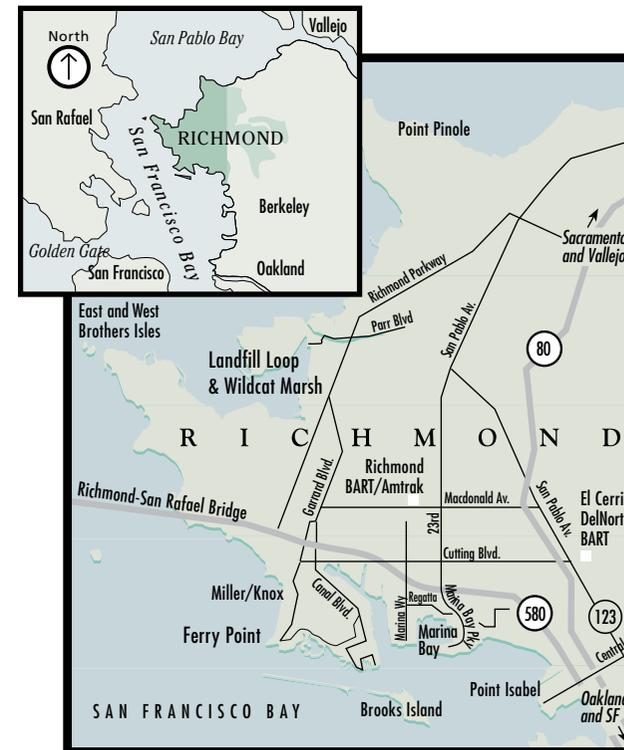
Dogs are not permitted on the Landfill Loop Trail. On other trails, keep your dog on a leash and pick up after your pet – rainwater washes waste into the bay.

HOURS: The Landfill Loop Trail is generally open 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week. The gates are locked at 5 p.m. The trail will be closed on the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Easter, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Some trail sections may be closed for routine maintenance. Call 510-262-1660 for trail information. Wildcat Creek Trail Head and Wildcat Marsh Trail are open dawn to dusk.

Directions to Landfill Loop Trail/Sanitary Landfill 1 Parr Blvd, Richmond, CA 94801

From South: Take I-580/80 E toward Richmond. Take I-580 toward Pt. Richmond / San Rafael Bridge. Take Canal Blvd ramp toward Pt. Richmond/Richmond Parkway. Turn right onto Canal Blvd. Canal Blvd becomes Garrard Blvd which becomes Richmond Parkway. Turn left onto Parr Blvd and follow road to parking area.

From North: Take I-80 W. Take Fitzgerald Drive exit, EXIT 20 toward I-580/ San Rafael. Turn Right onto Richmond Parkway. Turn Right onto Parr Blvd and follow road to parking area.



This guide produced with support from East Bay Regional Park District, Republic Services, Richmond Convention & Visitors Bureau; Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC); and the West County Wastewater District.

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San Francisco Bay Trail
Richmond, California

Front Cover photo courtesy of East Bay Regional Park District. Photo credits on trail guide map: Pickleweed illustration by Rachel Diaz-Bastin; Lagoon photo by Donald Bastin; Ruddy Duck by Ken Phelan; Snowy Egret by Indrani Sircar. Graphic design by Spokevise.

