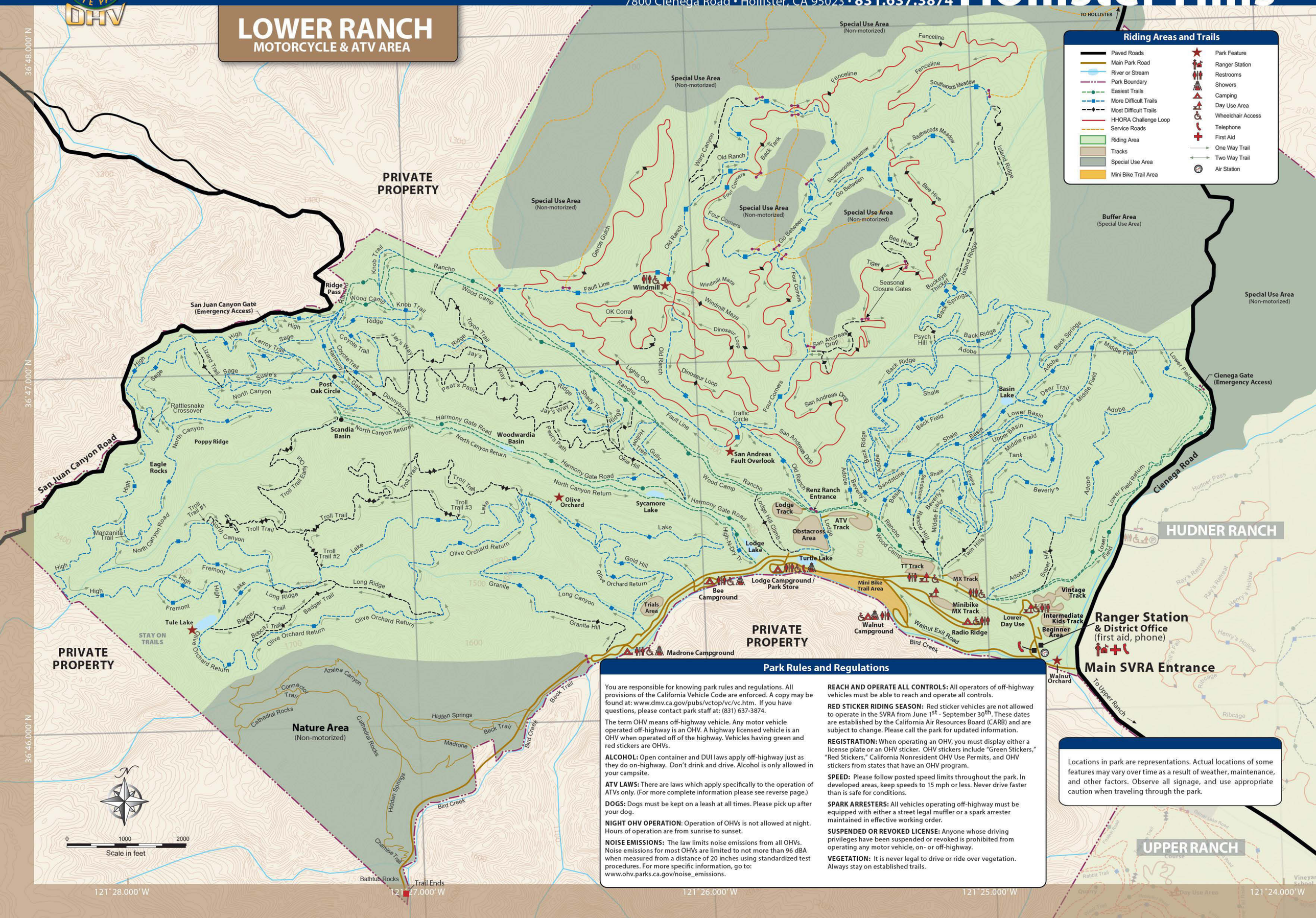
State Vehicular Recreation Area

Hollister Hills

7800 Cienega Road • Hollister, CA 95023 • **831.637.3874**



Park Rules and Regulations

You are responsible for knowing park rules and regulations. All provisions of the California Vehicle Code are enforced. A copy may be found at: www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/vctop/vc/vc.htm. If you have questions, please contact park staff at: (831) 637-3874.

The term OHV means off-highway vehicle. Any motor vehicle operated off-highway is an OHV. A highway licensed vehicle is an OHV when operated off of the highway. Vehicles having green and red stickers are OHVs.

ALCOHOL: Open container and DUI laws apply off-highway just as they do on-highway. Don't drink and drive. Alcohol is only allowed in your campsite.

ATV LAWS: There are laws which apply specifically to the operation of ATVs only. (For more complete information please see reverse page.)

DOGS: Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times. Please pick up after your dog.

NIGHT OHV OPERATION: Operation of OHVs is not allowed at night. Hours of operation are from sunrise to sunset.

NOISE EMISSIONS: The law limits noise emissions from all OHVs. Noise emissions for most OHVs are limited to not more than 96 dBA when measured from a distance of 20 inches using standardized test procedures. For more specific information, go to: www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/noise_emissions.

REACH AND OPERATE ALL CONTROLS: All operators of off-highway vehicles must be able to reach and operate all controls.

RED STICKER RIDING SEASON: Red sticker vehicles are not allowed to operate in the SVRA from June 1st - September 30th. These dates are established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and are subject to change. Please call the park for updated information.

REGISTRATION: When operating an OHV, you must display either a license plate or an OHV sticker. OHV stickers include "Green Stickers," "Red Stickers," California Nonresident OHV Use Permits, and OHV stickers from states that have an OHV program.

SPEED: Please follow posted speed limits throughout the park. In developed areas, keep speeds to 15 mph or less. Never drive faster than is safe for conditions.

SPARK ARRESTERS: All vehicles operating off-highway must be equipped with either a street legal muffler or a spark arrester maintained in effective working order.

SUSPENDED OR REVOKED LICENSE: Anyone whose driving privileges have been suspended or revoked is prohibited from operating any motor vehicle, on- or off-highway.

VEGETATION: It is never legal to drive or ride over vegetation. Always stay on established trails.

Locations in park are representations. Actual locations of some features may vary over time as a result of weather, maintenance, and other factors. Observe all signage, and use appropriate caution when traveling through the park.

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LOWER RANCH
MOTORCYCLE & ATV AREA

Welcome to Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) - California State Parks' first SVRA. Located in the Gabilan Mountains, just an hour's drive from San Jose, this unique SVRA features over 6,800 acres of scenic and varied terrain. Visitors are drawn to the natural beauty of the park's oak woodlands, rolling hills, lush canyons, seasonal creeks and the many miles of OHV trails for all vehicle types and skill levels.

Elevations in the park range from 660 to 2,425 feet. The average monthly temperature varies from the low-to-mid 90s in summer, to the low 30s to upper 50s in winter. The park is open year-round and offers day use and overnight camping opportunities. OHV recreation is permitted from sunrise to sunset.

This map focuses on the Lower Ranch and the Renz Ranch of Hollister Hills SVRA, which is set aside for motorcycles and ATVs. A separate map is available that includes the Upper Ranch and the Hudner Ranch, where opportunities are provided for four-wheeled vehicles.

Recreational Opportunities

OHV

Lower Ranch: This 3,300-acre area has a network of motorized routes set aside for motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Additional OHV opportunities include a vintage track, two practice motocross tracks, ATV track, TT track, intermediate kids track, beginner area, and a track for bikes and ATVs with an engine size of 90cc or less. Next to Walnut and Lodge Camps there are two children's areas set aside for smaller motorcycles and ATVs with an engine size under 90cc.

Renz Ranch: Located within the Lower Ranch, this 1,600-acre property features predominately single track trails complete with frequent grade changes and rolling trail contours. Together they create maximum rider interest while minimizing impacts to the natural and cultural resources. Some routes are designed to accommodate ATVs.

The Grand Prix Track (GP Track): Adjacent to the Upper Ranch, the GP Track is a classic closed course track set in a natural terrain of rolling hills and oak woodlands. The GP Track is available for use through the special event process. Please call 831-638-3390 for further information. (See Upper Ranch map for location.)

Special Events

Areas within the park can be reserved for special events – everything from family reunions, weddings, poker runs, and trail rides, to group camping and club outings. For more information, or to book a special event, please email hollisterhills.HollisterHills.Events@parks.ca.gov or call 831- 638-3390.

Education

Hollister Hills SVRA offers a variety of educational programs including OHV safety training, nature hikes, school presentations, and community outreach. For more information about these programs, please call the District Office at 831-637-8186.

Nature Area

The Nature Area, located in the Lower Ranch, is available for non-motorized recreational opportunities including hiking, mountain biking and nature viewing. This 280-acre area encompasses a network of scenic trails available for exploration and enjoyment. The entrance to the Nature Area is located at the west end of Madrone Camp. Dogs on leash are welcome.

Getting Involved

Volunteering: Hollister Hills SVRA offers many opportunities for volunteers. For those interested in joining the team, volunteer opportunities include Trail Patrol, education and outreach, resource management, and Trail Watch. For more information about volunteering, please call the District Office at 831-637-8186.

Cooperating Association: Hollister Hills Off-Road Association (HHORA) is a non-profit organization that supports Hollister Hills SVRA and its mission of providing sustainable OHV recreation. HHORA is dedicated to enhancing and promoting the recreational experience of park visitors. For over 30 years, members have assisted in a wide variety of activities ranging from organizing roadside clean-ups to holding family-oriented special events for club members. To get involved or find out more, please visit www.hhora.org.

Facilities

Day Use/Camping

Day use and camping at Hollister Hills SVRA are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Fees are collected at the Main Entrance Station at the Lower Ranch. Day use is allowed throughout the park, including the designated camping areas. Hook-ups and a dump station are not available.

Lower Ranch: There are four campgrounds in the Lower Ranch – Walnut, Lodge, Bee, and Madrone – all with flush toilets. Radio Ridge, a day use area that provides overflow parking for the campgrounds, has pit toilets.

Showers: Showers are available at Walnut, Lodge, Bee, and Madrone campgrounds. There is no charge to use the showers.

Renz Ranch: Picnic tables, a pit toilet and interpretive displays are located at the Windmill area.

Group Campground "Area 5": This area is a large group campground available for groups and special events. Accommodations include picnic tables, shade ramadas, fire rings, flush toilets, showers, a large barbeque pit, a food prep area, a stage, electricity, and parking. For more information, or to book a group or special event, please call 831-638-3390. (See Upper Ranch map for location.)

Air Compressor: Air for tire inflation is available at no cost near the District Office.

Fire/Firewood Restrictions: Firewood may be purchased at the park store in the Lower Ranch. Collection of firewood within the park is not allowed. No ground fires are allowed.

Park Store

A general store is located at Lodge Camp. The store offers a variety of items for park visitors including motorcycle and ATV parts, riding apparel, camping supplies, ice, drinks, snacks, and packaged food. To contact the general store, please call 831-637-9780.

Park History

A tribe of the Ohlone people that lived, and still live, in the vicinity of Hollister Hills SVRA are called "Mutsun." During the late 1700s, Spanish explorers encountered these and other Native Americans in the area. Spain established nearby Mission San Juan Bautista in the late 1790s and forced many of the Ohlone people, along with members of other tribes or bands from the area, to build the mission.

In 1822, the Mexican government, which was hostile to the mission system, took back the lands from the church, and in 1839, the land was divided into two Mexican land grants: Rancho San Justo and Rancho Cienega del Gabilan. Today, Hollister Hills SVRA is located on parts of both of these former land grants.

Howard Harris created the foundation of what today is known as Hollister Hills SVRA. Howard's great grandfather, Jesse Whitton, was a civilian surveyor for the John C. Fremont expedition that traveled through the area in

1846. After the expedition, Jesse Whitton returned to the area and successfully purchased 600 acres for $50 per acre. The land was passed on through the family and finally to Howard Harris in 1959, who became the last private owner of the property. In the following years, Howard purchased more of the surrounding properties and built many of the park's trails and roads. He used the land for a number of activities including mining, farming, ranching, hunting, scientific studies, and OHV recreation.

OHVs were first used on the ranch in 1947 when Howard established the Bird Creek Hunting Club. Jeeps, motorcycles, and "tote-goats" were used for transportation to get around the ranch. The Bird Creek Hunting Lodge was located at the site of the current general store in Lodge Camp. During the 1950s, private OHV activities were held and by 1970, the ranch was officially opened for public OHV recreation. Howard managed the land as a motorcycle park until October 1, 1975, when the land was sold to the State of California and became Hollister Hills SVRA.

Park Resources

Hollister Hills SVRA is home to many species of plants and animals, including California tiger salamander and California red-legged frog, both federally-listed as threatened, and Gairdner's yampah, western azaleas, a variety of hawks, mountain lions, and more. The park's commitment to protecting these species, while providing high-quality sustainable OHV recreation opportunities, requires active resource management. Park staff is constantly working to improve trail design, monitor wildlife habitat, implement erosion control measures, maintain roads and trails, suppress excessive dust, protect riparian areas, and address invasive plant and animal species within the park. Managing natural and cultural resources requires constant vigilance. Throughout the park you may encounter trail reroutes, fencing, gates, and/or closed areas. Please do your part to ensure that Hollister Hills SVRA will be available to you and future generations by staying on trails, respecting wildlife, and staying out of vegetated and closed areas.

Park Features

The Windmill: Located on the Renz Ranch, the Windmill area is a destination spot with a rich history. Interpretive displays are provided at the site and share some of the history of the Renz family who often had family picnics in this very location. Today, under the shade of majestic oak trees and an operating windmill, visitors can once again carry on the tradition of family picnics in this scenic location.

Olive Orchard: Located on Olive Orchard Road in the Lower Ranch, the Olive Orchard was planted in 1865 by retired sea captain David Pierce. Pierce went to Barcelona to purchase olive trees, and brought them back to Hollister. Unfortunately, soon after planting the trees, Pierce died and the orchard was never farmed.

Tule Lake: Located on High Road, Tule Lake is a favorite among visitors to the Lower Ranch offering picturesque views and a shaded picnic area.

Walnut Orchard: Remnants of a walnut orchard planted by Howard Harris can be seen on the right hand side of the road near the park's main entrance. This orchard is an excellent example of one of California's earliest and more successful experimental orchards. The techniques pioneered by Howard were originally criticized but resulted in significantly increased yields and soon were adopted as the industry standard.

San Andreas Fault: Cutting northwest through the park, the San Andreas fault zone defines the tectonic boundary between the North American and Pacific plates, marking a divide between two contrasting terrains. The area east of the fault has dark, clay-rich soils on rolling hills covered in grassland and oak woodlands. This portion of the park sits on the North American plate and is slowly moving south. West of the fault, the landscape is higher and steeper and sits on the Pacific plate that is moving north. This portion of the park consists primarily of much older and more weather-resistant granitic rock, with pine, sage and chaparral taking root in the sandy soils. The Pacific and North American tectonic plates have been sliding past each other for 30 million years at a current rate of about 1.5 inches per year.

Rider Responsibilities

Be Prepared!

OHV recreation is a great way to connect to the outdoors. To ensure you have an enjoyable experience, be prepared for the unexpected.

The park is not exclusively used by OHV recreationists but is shared by others, including many species of wildlife. Showing courtesy to all makes the park experience most enjoyable.

Drive and Ride Safely

Use proper equipment: When operating an OHV, proper protective gear should be used at all times.

All operators should thoroughly acquaint themselves with all aspects of their vehicle before starting out.

Take a training course: All operators of an OHV should take the appropriate safety training course(s).

Drive and ride within your limits: Minimize the chance of injury and maximize your fun by exercising common sense. Take time to evaluate the situation and consider options. Do not attempt to exceed your abilities. Operate your vehicle safely and treat others with courtesy.

ATV Laws

In California, there are laws specific to operating ATVs on public lands.

Passengers: Passengers are only allowed on ATVs designed by the manufacturer to carry a passenger.

Helmet: All persons must wear an approved helmet at all times while riding an ATV on public lands.

ATV Safety Certificate Requirement

18 years and older: A safety certificate is not mandatory to operate an ATV. It is recommended.

Ages 14-17: All riders ages 14 to 17 must possess an ATV Safety Certificate, **or** be under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, or other adult who has completed an ATV safety course and has an ATV Safety Certificate in his/her possession.

Ages 13 and under: All riders 13 and under MUST BE DIRECTLY SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES. Either the child or the child's parent, legal guardian, or someone who is authorized by the parent or legal guardian to supervise the child, must possess an ATV Safety Certificate.

ATV Certification

Free ATV Safety Training may be available from the manufacturer for adults and their families who have purchased a new ATV. Free ATV Safety Training is also available for all California residents under 18 years of age, including those riding used ATVs. Contact the ATV Safety Institute at 800-887-2887 for more information.

Accessibility

California State Parks supports equal access. Visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the District Office at 831-637-8186 or 711 TYY relay service prior to arrival. This publication is available in alternate formats by contacting the OHMVR Division at ohvinfo@parks.ca.gov. Alternate formats for print media include audio, large font print, electronic files, internet information, and Braille.

PARK HOURS:
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Vehicle operation: sunrise to sunset
Red Sticker Closure: June 1 - September 30

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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Hollister, CA 95023
831-637-3874
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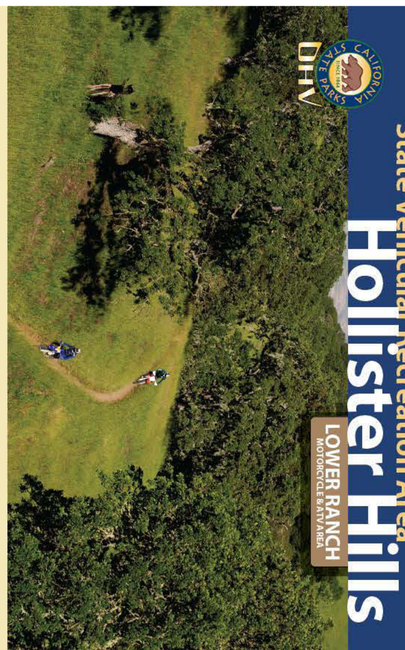
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