

MOUNT DIABLO REVIEW



MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

Established in 1974

Summer 2006

MDIA PO Box 346, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0346 • 925.927.7222 • fax 877.349.5016 • www.mdia.org

Superintendent's Report

Mount Diablo Roads Project Gets Go Ahead

By Craig Mattson, Bay Sector Superintendent



The long planned road rebuilding project for North Gate and Summit Roads has been approved for construction. The project is expected to last up to seven months starting in the middle of June. Work will consist of major road base rebuilding with a complete asphalt overlay of the Summit Road. The plan calls for

the roads to be open on weekends Friday nights through Sundays and holidays.

South Gate Road is unaffected by this project and will be open for visitor use. Camping and day-use facilities will remain open on South Gate Road to the Junction Ranger Station. Camping and day-use facilities will be closed during weekdays along North Gate and Summit Roads.

This project has been in planning for the past three years with our finally getting a contract awarded for work. The paved road network at Mount Diablo has an interesting history. Since the time of the California Gold Rush the roads to the summit of Mount Diablo have been used by visitors. Starting out as dirt and improved in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps with culvert installation and asphaltting of the road surface. Today much of the 1930s work is starting to show its age with numerous culvert failures and road surface problems requiring a major road rebuild.

State Parks is working with the contractor to assure we minimize the impacts to visitors as much as possible; however we are expecting some extensive road closures during this project. We apologize for the inconvenience it may cause to our park visitors.

For more information on the road closure you may call Mount Diablo State Park at (925) 837-2525 or check the web at www.parks.ca.gov Mount Diablo State Park.

Nightly Rates

In- Season	May 15 - September 15	\$20.00
Off- Season	September 16 - May 14	\$15.00
Additional Vehicles		\$6.00
Senior Discount		\$2.00 off Camping Fees

Group Camps

Name	Nightly Use Fee	Capacity	Vehicles
Stagecoach	\$45.00	20	7
Boundary	\$45.00	20	7
Buckeye	\$66.00	30	10
Wildcat	\$66.00	30	10
BBQ Terrace	\$111.00	50	17

Fire Danger - How Will It Affect You?

Fire Danger Reading	Wood fire permitted in stoves and BBQ pits in designated picnic and camp sites	Use of Compressed Logs	Use of Charcoal	Use of Self-contained Stove	Cigarette Smoking (including within a vehicle)	Park Closed
LOW	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
MEDIUM	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
HIGH	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
HIGH WITH RED FLAG	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
VERY HIGH/EXTREME	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

Name That Mount Diablo Site



Do you recognize where this is in Mount Diablo State Park? For the answer, turn to page 3.

MDIA President's Column

Welcome to your beautiful Mount Diablo State Park! We of the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) partner with Park management to serve you, the visiting public, to provide educational, interpretive, and restoration programs to help enhance and enrich your experience in the Park. This MOUNT DIABLO REVIEW is one of our complimentary publications. We publish it three times annually, with 20,000 copies each time. Three-quarters of the REVIEWS are handed out to Park visitors, and the remainder are distributed to retail stores and public offices in the communities surrounding Mount Diablo State Park.

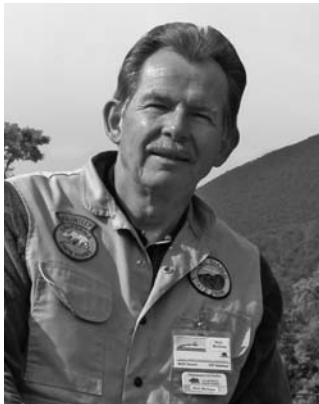
Consider joining the almost 400 volunteer members of MDIA ! We can use your ideas, energy, and financial support. Volunteering can give your mind, soul, heart, and body a jump-start! You'll be happier and healthier and have a purpose and greater sense of self-satisfaction. Volunteering can even lower your stress level, heighten your immune system and help you sleep better at night. Many people report feeling healthy and content as a result of their volunteer activities. Go ahead--give it a try!

MDIA is but one of the 80 Cooperating Associations that are active in 80 of the 278 California State Parks. The funds generated by these associations go to the continuation of educational/interpretive programs at the individual parks. The net income to these 80 associations in 2003 was nearly \$11 million.

What should you do in the Park today? Here is a partial listing:

- Take a Hike
- Scramble Over Rocks at Rock City
- Look for Wild Birds

- Visit the Summit Museum
- Enjoy the Visitor Center in Mitchell Canyon
- Marvel from the Many Vistas
- Look for Spectacular Wildflowers
- Ride a Horse
- Bike Ride on Trails
- Study the Geology
- Picnic
- Camp
- Pick up Litter
- Mountain Day Dream and Unwind!



Rich McDrew, President

Summit in Summer

Jacqueline Bardsley

*Beyond tides of traffic, suburbs'
careless wrack, the only sounds the swish
of wings below me, lizards' scuttle, bees'
ceaseless buzz in the chamise.*

*I retreat from views of misty Delta,
sun-silvered Bay, smudge
of Sierras on the edge of sky,
turn to chert, graywacke, greenstone.*

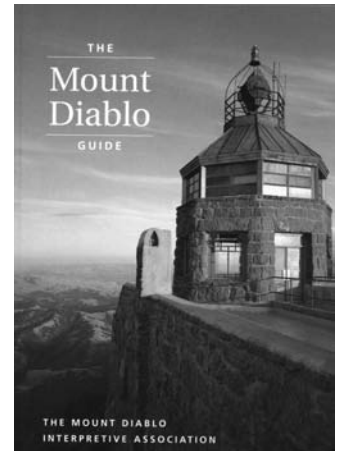
*Their solid roughness warm
against my skin,
I close my eyes, leave
time, and sun, and summer—
lean into forever.*

Spotlight On

THE MOUNT DIABLO GUIDE

2nd Edition (2003)

reviewed by Harvey S. Brosler



The Guide provides 162 pages of useful information with over 50 photos and illustrations you need to get the most out of your visit to the Park. The Guide will fit easily into a backpack or pocket, has sections on Mt. Diablo history, animals, trees and flowers, geology and hiking. It also contains information on camp and picnic sites and other Park details. Of special interest are the Park Highlights section- more detail about the view from the summit and the Summit Museum- and the Cultural History section which covers some Native-American and Spanish history, private land ownership on the mountain, mining, surveying, the beacon, and the formation of the State Park. A summary of key dates from March 1772 is given. The Guide can be purchased at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center or the Summit Visitors Center for \$12.00 or by mail from MDIA for \$14.00.

Park Fees: (per car)

Mitchell Canyon Entrance
\$3 minus \$1 for Seniors 62+
Macedo Park Entrance
\$3 minus \$1 for Seniors 62+
North and South Gates
\$6 minus \$1 for Seniors 62+

Q & A

by Harvey Brosler

Q. When was Mount Diablo State Park established? How large was the Park when it was established?

A. In 1921, State Senator Will Sharkey of Martinez sponsored a bill in Sacramento declaring 630 acres on the summit of Mt. Diablo a State Park and Game Refuge. There was a ceremony on the summit on June 19, 1921. (Source: Mt. Diablo Guide, p. 33)

Q. Was there mining on the mountain? If so, what minerals and rocks were mined or excavated?

A. Yes. The most important minerals and rocks that have been mined or excavated on or around Mt. Diablo include mercury, diabase, graywacke, white sands, coal, blue schists, travertine, copper, and - farther north and east - gas and oil. (Source: Mt. Diablo Guide, p.24)

Q. Was a hotel located on Mt. Diablo?

A. Yes. The Mountain House Hotel opened in May 1874. It had sixteen rooms. The hotel closed in 1895 and burned to the ground in 1901. The great naturalist John Muir was one of its guests. It was located near the junction of North Gate and South Gate Roads. (Source: Mt. Diablo Guide, pgs. 28-31)

Q. Is Mt. Diablo a habitat for any endangered snakes?

A. Yes. The Alameda whipsnake. In 1997 the whipsnake was added to the federal government's list of threatened species. The snake is sooty black with yellow-orange stripes running the length of its body, and it eats lizards, rattlesnakes, small mammals, and birds. (Source: Mt. Diablo Guide, pgs. 46-47)

Q. Is Mt. Diablo a volcano?

A. No. Although basaltic lava rock can be found on the mountain, the lava was formed far at sea, upwelling from deep in the earth through fissures in the ocean crust. (Source: Mt. Diablo Guide, p. 113)

Save Mount Diablo generously publishes the "Events Schedule" which includes hikes in Mount Diablo State Park. This schedule may be found on-line at www.savemountdiablo.com or via a link at www.mdia.org. It can also be obtained at various locations in the park.

Volunteering at Mount Diablo State Park

by Steve Elliott

Among the many ways to donate your time in this world, volunteering at Mt. Diablo State Park can be particularly rewarding. Volunteers maintain the trails, serve as visitor center docents, lead hikes, patrol the backcountry and assist with many other tasks. Volunteers are an integral part of the Park's operations.

The first step in volunteering is to express your interest. To do this, simply call the Mt. Diablo Interpretive Association (phone: 925-927-7222 or email: mdiamail@aol.com). You can also contact the Park's volunteer coordinator, Ryen Goering at 925-837-6129. There is a list of volunteering opportunities on the MDIA website - www.mdia.org. We will help match your interest to the right area.

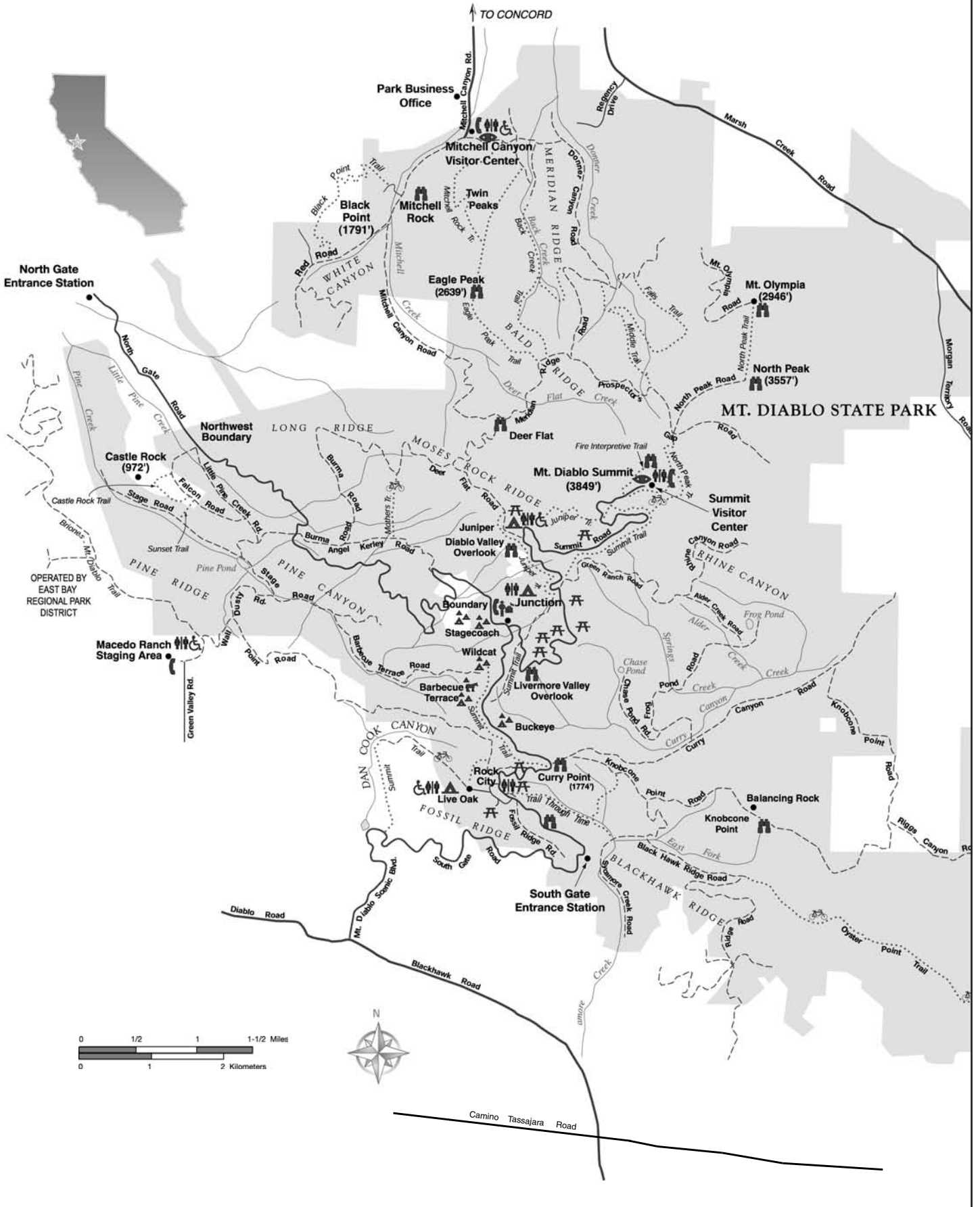
The next step for many prospective volunteers is to attend a Volunteer in Parks (VIP) Training Class. Hosted by the Park staff on a Saturday or Sunday every few months, this class is an excellent introduction to the Park and how to become involved. After this class, you can then pursue your area of interest and/or additional training.

Consider the possibilities! Donate a few hours each month to help preserve the Park and to help provide an engaging visitor experience.

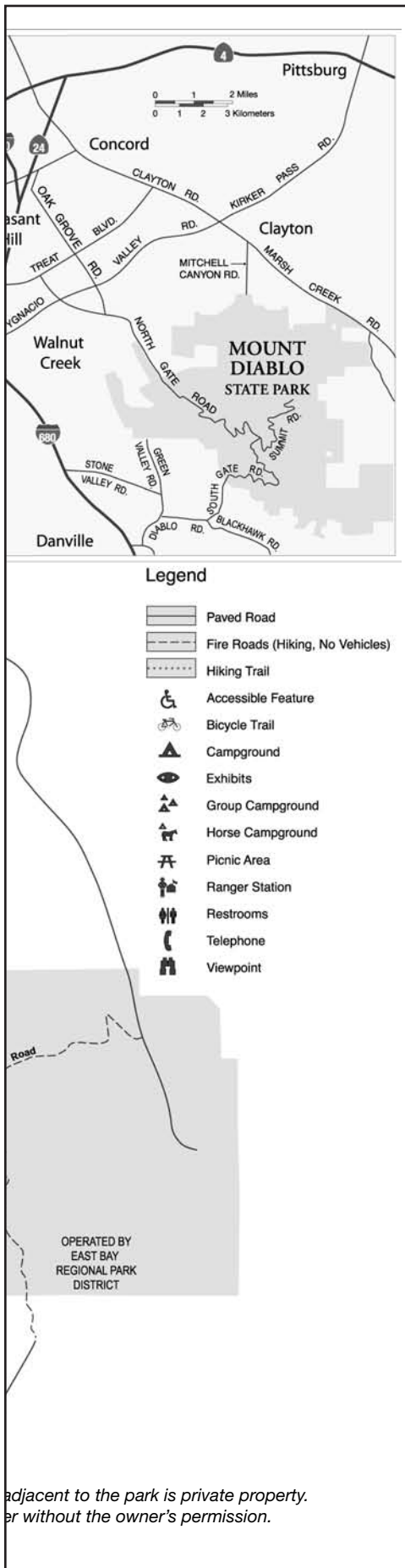


It is Turtle Rock— see MDIA Trail Map, Edition 5, Coordinates D6.

Mount Diablo State Park



Camping At Mount Diablo State Park



Mount Diablo has three designated family camping areas and five group camps:

Juniper Campground (36 sites, elevation 3000 ft.) Located approximately 2 miles below the summit, on Summit Road, Juniper is known for its fantastic views. Reservations Available.

Live Oak Campground (22 sites, elevation 1450 ft.) Located one mile above the South Gate Entrance Station, off South Gate Road. Live Oak is near Rock City. At Rock City one can explore rock formations. Reservations Available.

Junction Campground (6 sites, elevation 2200 ft.) Located where South Gate and North Gate meet at the Ranger Station. This campground is situated in an open woodland area. Available on a first come/first served basis ONLY.

*All campgrounds are provided with picnic tables, fire pits or stoves, potable water and rest rooms. Showers are available at Live Oak and Juniper campgrounds, at no additional charge.

*The campgrounds are mainly designed for tent camping, yet they can accommodate RVs up to 20 feet in length. There are no hook ups and no dumping stations provided in the park.

*Pay phones are located at the Junction Ranger Station and the Summit Visitor Center.

Camping Procedures

You may make reservations from 48 hours to 7 months in advance by calling **Reserve America at 1-800-444-7275** or by visiting their website at www.reserveamerica.com. Reservations can be made for a specific campground but not a specific site.

Campers will not be registered at Mitchell Canyon.

***Check-in time is 2:00 PM. — Check-out time is 12:00 PM.**

Reservations are available for all group camps with Reserve America. Each campground is primitive with running water and pit toilets. BBQ Terrace is equipped with horse ties for equestrian use. Motorhomes are not allowed in the group camping areas. During the fire season (generally, May—October) the park is subject to closure due to extreme fire danger. Campers must call the park at **(925) 837-2525 or (925) 837-0904** one day prior to their arrival to confirm park status.

General Rules

*Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the park.

*8 people maximum per campsite.

*Each juvenile (under the age of 18) must have written permission from his/hers parents (with the parents' phone number) prior to camping. Phone verifications will be attempted.

*Quiet hours are from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM

*No electric generators from 8:00PM to 10:00 AM.

*Firewood gathering is prohibited.

*Fires must be in stoves or fire pits provided (NO GROUND FIRES).

*Campfire restrictions are in effect during the fire season. Check fire conditions for appropriate use (see page 1).

*Campers are locked in the park overnight from sunset to 8:00 AM. For emergencies, dial 911.

ALL FEATURES OF THE PARK ARE PROTECTED.

Do not remove or disturb plants, animals or geological features. You are responsible for obeying all park rules. Ask a Park Ranger for further information.

Trash Removal Project

Trash Talkin'

by Rich McDrew

The next time someone says, "But it is biodegradable," and then carelessly tosses the trash trailside, hand that person the following facts:

Orange Peel--2 years to biodegrade
Cigarette Butt--3 years to biodegrade
Tin Can--80 to 100 years to biodegrade
Aluminum Can--200 to 400 years to biodegrade
Glass Bottle--One million years to biodegrade

John Steinbeck, the Nobel prize - winning novelist, said it best: "The trash and litter of nature disappears into the ground with the passing of each year, but Man's litter has more permanence." It is precisely because of this trash "permanence" that a small group of visionaries (perhaps-masochists!) agreed over five years ago not to wait for "Man's litter" to biodegrade in Mount Diablo State Park. This group formed the Trash Removal Project (TRP). With Park management guidance and assistance, the following mission statement was settled upon as the guiding principles: "The mission of the Trash Removal Project (TRP) is to remove from Mount Diablo State Park (MDSP) worthless and discarded non-indigenous material or objects that detract from the natural beauty or management of the MDSP. An exception would be material or objects that have a historical or cultural significance as determined by the MDSP officials." The primary objective is to make the Park even more beautiful than it already is by removing unsightly and hazardous trash--to make the Park "100% Trash Free". The all-volunteer TRP initiative has formal sponsorship from the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA).

The TRP group identified 113 cleanup sites in the Park. Those sites were photographed and mapped. Each site then goes through a rigorous formal review and approval process by Park management before work can begin at a cleanup site. This insures that endangered or threatened fauna and flora are protected, and that objects of historical and cultural significance are preserved. The TRP cleanup sites vary from the litter-scattered Green Ranch house complex, to a mangled and abandoned steel culvert, to a ranch

School (Danville), Boy Scouts of America (various troops), De La Salle High School (Concord), and East Bay Trail Dogs (Livermore).

Over the past five years, twelve Boy Scout Eagle Projects coordinated by the TRP committee have been completed. Congratulations to five Eagle aspirants who have recently completed their Eagle Projects. Four of these five scouts removed long sections of barbed wire fencing resulting in enhancing the Park's beautification and reduced hazards for people and wildlife. Cattle fencing is no longer needed in the Park as grazing was discontinued in 1993 on most of the 20,000-plus acres of the Park. There still exists 1,000 acres of cattle grazing for 100 cows on the Park's southern boundaries for "demonstration" (educational) purposes. The scouts of those five projects did a superior job of



TRP #94 Burt Bogardus, Steve Wood (teacher), and seven students; 1,000 feet of barbed wire & posts above South Gate Road, removed.

garbage dump, to a dilapidated tree house, to barbed wire fencing. During the past five years, one-third of the 113 sites have been completed.

The large number of volunteers who have worked on these TRP sites has been particularly gratifying. We have had help from individuals and organizations. Since early 2001, these volunteers have worked a total of 6,721 TRP hours. Some of the organizations who have done TRP work are Acalanes High School (Lafayette), Athenian

crew planning, organizing and completing the work efficiently and in a safe manner. The Park is safer and more beautiful today because of their efforts.

IAN ALVARO of Troop #832 (Walnut



Removed by Athenian School Students 11-5-05

Creek)--his 2006 project entailed the removal of 200 fence posts and about one and one-half miles of barbed wire that stretched south from the Burma Fire Road to near the Angel Kerley Fire Road.

GREG KOHL of Troop #36 (Danville)--his 2005 project consisted of removing 175 fence posts and about one and one-half miles of barbed wire that ran east from the BBQ Terrace Fire Road to the Diablo Ranch property.

BRET MENICKE of Troop #36 (Danville)--his 2006 project involved the extraction of 230 fence posts and two miles of barbed wire fencing in upper Curry Canyon near South Gate Road.

ERIC MURRAY of Troop #803 (Danville)--his 2005 project required the removal of 224 fence posts and over two miles of barbed wire fencing along Stage Road in Pine Canyon.

GREG PAPIERNIAK of Troop #36 (Danville)--his 2005 project involved major repair work on Devils Slide Trail. He and his crew built natural rock walls to curtail trail erosion, and did other work on the trail to prevent further erosion damage. Steel fence posts were also removed.

A remarkably large amount of trash has been removed for recycling or Park reuse over the past five years:

- 23,070 Board Feet of Wood
- 59,450 Pounds of Metal
- 520,305 Feet of Barbed Wire (almost 100 miles of single strand)
- 7,350 Fence Posts (both metal and wood not counted above)

So, think trash, and think of Mount Diablo State Park as 100% trash free! When you are out hiking, take a plastic newspaper bag with you and pick up litter. Mount Diablo State Park will gain and earn the reputation of being the most pristine and litter-free Park amongst the 278 in the State.



Greg Papierniak, Troop 36, Eagle Project on Devils Slide Trail

Investing in Mount Diablo

by Steve Elliott

Mt Diablo State Park is well supported by volunteer groups dedicated to providing educational programs and developing new experiences for Park visitors. Among such groups are: Save Mount Diablo, Mount Diablo Interpretive Association, Mount Diablo Observatory Association and the Mount Diablo Astronomical Society.

Save Mount Diablo (SMD) is the driving force behind acquiring land to donate to Mt. Diablo State Park. They are devoted to preserving and experiencing nature in the East Bay. SMD has been very effective over the years raising money and purchasing property. They are currently fundraising to acquire several new additions to the Park. They also sponsor a variety of public awareness and educational programs related to the Park and the surrounding area. For more information, contact SMD at

925-947-3535 or
at www.savemountdiablo.org.

The Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) invests time and money in providing and enhancing the visitor experience. They produce the Park maps, educational publications, and interpretive materials. This newsletter, the Mount Diablo Review, is provided by MDIA. They sponsor the Park's trash removal program, purchase and install trail signs and develop interpretive displays. For example, a project nearing completion is the new Trail Through Time. This new trail and its interpretive panels presents highlights of the geological and cultural history of Mt. Diablo.

For 2006, MDIA just published a new map of the Park and is planning updates of other Park publications. New interpretive displays are being considered on topics such as Native American culture, specific geological features, the Civilian Conservation Corps (the 1930s group that built much of the Park's facilities) and other points of interest. For more information about MDIA call 925-927-7222 or visit MDIA's website, www.mdia.org.

The Mount Diablo Observatory Association (MDOA) and the Mount Diablo Astronomical Society (MDAS) are complementary organizations whose mission is to provide astronomy programs and facilities at Mt. Diablo. The height of Mt. Diablo and the summit conditions provide an excellent venue for studying the night time skies. Investment in a new viewing facility at the Summit and other capabilities provides an exhilarating visitor opportunity. For more information about MDOA or MDAS or to check out the schedule of public programs, call 925-695-3134 or visit www.mdas.net.

**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for obeying these and other park rules.
Ask a Park Ranger for further information.**

• **ALL FEATURES OF THE PARK ARE PROTECTED!**

Do not remove or disturb plants, animals or geological features

• **PARK CLOSING TIME:** Park closes at SUNSET.

Visitors should be in their vehicles heading out at sunset to avoid being locked in

• **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** All alcoholic beverages are PROHIBITED IN THE PARK. State laws regarding alcoholic beverages are STRICTLY ENFORCED

• **VEHICLES/BICYCLES:** SPEED LIMIT is 15-25 MPH on park roads, 15 MPH in campgrounds and picnic areas. OFF ROAD USE PROHIBITED. All vehicles must stay on pavement and are prohibited on trails and fire roads

• **BICYCLES ARE ALLOWED** only on paved roads, fire roads and designated trails. Check at Ranger Station for current regulations

• **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, ROLLERSKATES** and gravity-propelled devices are prohibited

• **DOGS** — MUST BE IN TENT or vehicles at night MUST BE ON LEASH at all times when out of your car. MUST STAY IN DEVELOPED AREAS ONLY — not allowed on trails or fire roads

• **CAMPING** — MAXIMUM OF 8 PERSONS AND THREE VEHICLES PER CAMPSITE IS

PERMITTED ONLY IN THE JUNIPER, JUNCTION AND LIVE OAK CAMPGROUNDS. JUVENILES (under 18) MUST HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION from parents

QUIET HOURS 10pm to 6am

NO ELECTRIC GENERATORS 8pm to 8am

• **FIRES** — RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT DURING FIRE SEASON—check with Ranger MUST BE IN STOVES OR BARBEQUES PROVIDED - no ground fires FIREWOOD GATHERING PROHIBITED

• **PEACE AND QUIET:** NOISE must not carry beyond your immediate camp or picnic ground

• **TELEPHONES:** Located at Junction Ranger Station. Summit and Macedo/Mitchell Canyons. Dial 911 for emergencies

• **FIREWORKS:** PROHIBITED

• **FIREARMS/AIRGUNS:** PROHIBITED

• **NO HUNTING**

**Summit
Museum is
open
Wednesdays,
through
Sundays
10:00am
to 4:00pm**

State Park Phone Numbers:

Supervising Ranger	855-1730
Junction Ranger	837-6129
Mitchell Canyon Ranger	672-4266
Summit Museum	837-6119
Entrance Station	837-0904
Maintenance	837-6122
Sector Office	673-2891
General Information	837-2525

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Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

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