

MILAGRA BATTERY TRAIL

A new addition to Pacifica's growing number of enhanced trails has come to fruition: the Milagra Battery Trail. Ribbon cutting took place October 5, with completion of the trail in early November. The National Park Service spared no expense or labor with construction of the trail, with nearly 1,000 tons of boulders, cobbles, and fine gravel imported from Marin and Sonoma counties. Approximately 2,000 feet of multiuse trail, incorporating switchbacks and moderate elevation grades, now provide a much easier hike up to Milagra Ridge and a safer journey down. Sturdy fencing has been put in place to prevent disturbances to sensitive areas and prevent off-trail use. As mentioned in the Pacifica Tribune "Trail of the Month" feature, the newly constructed trail provides a much-needed segment/link with the Bay Area Ridge Trail. The Milagra Battery Trail now provides several extraordinary viewing overlooks with benches for the weary.

The final phase of the trailwork was performed November 19 by several hundred volunteers from the Student Conservation Association, National Parks Conservancy, and Pacifica residents. In the rain, more than 1,000 native plants grown at the Oceana High School Nursery were relocated along segments of the trail. The majority of plants were purple needle grass, a useful soil stabilizer common to Pacifica. Purple needle grass was designated California State Grass in 2004 for its historic and current usefulness.

This event took place in honor of Veterans Day and the military history of Milagra Ridge as a former national security defense site. Gun batteries, bunkers, and missile

silos are obvious heritage landmarks within the park. Primary access to the western trailhead and available parking is at the east end of the Connemara neighborhood, with entry off Oceana Boulevard. Please be respectful of the residents and drive slowly.

The land provided for this trail was the result of Concerned Manor Residents working with property owners and the City of Pacifica Hillside Preservation District Ordinance. This resulted in 34 acres being added to Milagra Ridge Park, making it, at 275 acres, the third-largest park in Pacifica. Milagra Ridge Park profiles, maps, and brochures are on the websites of Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), National Parks Conservancy, and Pacifica Chamber of Commerce.

The Pacifica Open Space and Parkland Advisory Committee (OSPAC) expresses its appreciation to all those responsible for the Milagra Battery Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail.

(This report provided by the Pacifica Open Space and Parkland Advisory Committee's trail subcommittee: Jim Sullivan, Julie Lancelle, Ron Maykel.)