



WINTER 2025/26 TRAIL NEWS

2026/27 Trail Passes

Here is your new 2026 ANNUAL or 2026/27 GOLD Tamarancho Trail Pass. Please check that your name and address are correct on the label. If there is an error, contact the Scout Office in San Rafael by phone (415-454-1081) or by email: fot@boyscouts-marin.org.

It is important to read and follow all the "Friends of Tamarancho membership policies and pass rules so mountain-bike riders can continue to have access to the Camp trails which are all on private property. Passes are not transferrable; only the person whose name is printed on the label may use it. Use the provided luggage tag loop to attach it to your bike handlebars, seat rails as shown above, or a hydration backpack.



2026 Day Passes

If you bring friends to ride at Camp Tamarancho, you (the member) are responsible to make sure your guests have a day pass. **"Friends don't let friends poach Tamarancho!"**

Day passes (just \$6!) are for sale online at the Tamarancho mountain-biking website:

<https://www.boyscouts-marin.org/tamarancho-mtn-biking/4023>

Or available at the following retail store locations in-person:

Marin Museum of Bicycling
1966 Sir Francis Drake, Fairfax
(415-450-8000)



Split Rock Tap & Wheel
2020 Sir Francis Drake, Fairfax (415-721-7644)



Sunshine Bicycle Center
737 Center Street, Fairfax
(415-459-3334)



Winter Trail Work 2026

The extensive 8-mile trail loop at Camp Tamarancho was originally constructed over a 6-year period from 1995 to 2001 by hundreds of local volunteers in the mountain-biking enthusiast community. The work was supervised by Jim Jacobsen who was then president of the Bicycle Trails Council which paid for materials, and a member of the Forest Knolls Freewheelers who contributed much of the back-breaking sweat equity.

During the past two decades we have hosted volunteer trailwork days to maintain and improve the trails. This process involves clearing drainage to reduce erosion, cutting back foliage to improve sight lines, removing invasive plant species, and more! This is your opportunity to give back to the finest mountain-bike trail system in Marin . . . BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!

For Winter 2026, the Marin Trail Stewards is our community partner and trailwork organization. Trailwork days are scheduled some Saturdays in December 2025, and many more well into January/February 2026. You must register in advance! Find out more details and sign-up at this link:

<https://marintrailstewards.org/calendar>



All trailwork days begin at 9am sharp and end at 12:30pm. We meet in the main parking lot at the center of Camp Tamarancho by the bike maintenance shed and the Ranger's Office. You can drive up to the camp parking lot or ride your bike. Look for the yellow 'Trail Work' sign shown here:



Tamarancho Trail Rules

- 1) **Pass must be Visibly-Displayed!** All Riders age 13-or-older must have a current DAY, ANNUAL, or GOLD pass on their bike, gear or person at all times.
- 2) **NO PARKING Anywhere on Iron Springs Road or in Camp Tamarancho!** Park legally in Fairfax village and ride your bike to the trails. DO NOT drive up Iron Springs Road which is all private residences.
- 3) **NO DOGS allowed on trails!**
- 4) **CLOSED at 8pm or sunset** (whichever is later). Trails are open from sunrise to sunset.
- 5) **Closures due to RAIN.** Please let the trails dry out after a big storm. FLOW Trail is closed during any rainstorms and for 3 days following rainfall events to avoid erosion.
- 6) **Stay on Trails!** Bikes must stay on singletrack routes. The center of Camp Tamarancho and all fire roads are strictly off-limits to cyclists.
- 7) **Ride in Control!** Trails are heavily-used by bicyclists and some hikers. Be aware of other users and two-way traffic; uphill riders have right-of-way!
- 8) **DON'T SKID on Downhills or Switchbacks!** Skidding/sliding causes ruts and trail erosion.

Violation of any of the above rules may constitute grounds for pass termination.

TAMARANCHO TRAIL NEWS --- WINTER 2025/26

A Brief History of the Tamarancho Trails Network

The original trail loop at Camp Tamarancho was built by hundreds of volunteers under the direction and guidance of Jim Jacobsen, president of the Bicycle Trails Council, and with the financial support of that organization in agreement with the Marin Council, Scouting America land owner. Randy Libby who was the president of the Forest Knolls Freewheelers, and the members of that small local riding club were some of the most active volunteers and skilled trail builders responsible for most of the grunt work digging the trails and building many of the bridges, retaining walls, and banked switchbacks.

Construction started in Spring 1995 on the B-17 Trail. During the next four years Wagon Wheel, Serpentine, Goldman and Alchemist were built in that order. In November 1999, ground was broken on the longest and final trail to complete the loop: Broken Dam. In May 2001 the final section of this Broken Dam trail was constructed to connect to B-17 thereby completing the 8-mile main loop. It is estimated that over 11,000 man-hours were needed to plan and complete the legendary Tamarancho singletrack trail loop, the finest legal singletrack system in Marin.

During the Winter of 2013, Dave Simon and Jim Jacobsen with many additional volunteers and some specialized trail equipment built the first "flow" trail in Marin. "Endor" is the special downhill-only section catering to riders who like swoopy trails with bermed turns and jumps. This also includes a specialized track area at the bottom of the flow trail to build your skills.

In 2015, a final exit trail crossing private property was allowed by a generous neighbor. Now a decade later after many delays due to environmental reports and construction financing, the Caballo Rojo trail is finally nearing completion and will be open for 2026.

Alchemist – connects from the entrance kiosk on Iron Springs Road uphill to the Goldman Trail along Fairfax Ridge.

Goldman – named for Alan Goldman, a mountain-bike trail advocate and friend who passed away while the nascent trail network was being planned and built.

Serpentine – named for the local rock type found in the area as well as the slithering contours of the curvy switchbacks.

Wagon Wheel – an old iron-spoked wheel was found during construction and is still located just off the upper trail route.

B-17 – named for the type of WWII plane that crashed into White Hill in the 1940's with one of the Poseidon engines still located off a fire road down in the redwood forest canyon below.

Broken Dam – the large truss bridge in the canyon was built across the remains of a century-old dam that historically provided water to a nearby TB hospital.

Endor Flow Trail – the name of the forest moon in "Star Wars" movies and the first flow-type trail in the SF Bay Area.

www.facebook.com/TamoFlow

Caballo Rojo – a downhill-only exit trail named by the generous neighbor off Iron Springs Road who is letting the trail cross their private property.

NO Novices or Beginning Riders!

The singletrack trails around Camp Tamarancho are rated Intermediate to Advanced, and not for beginning riders who may be challenged by tight switchbacks, narrow trail lines, and tight sightline corridors. Sure, you want to show them your favorite trails, but hey, you want them to have a good time and not get hurt doing it!



China Camp State Park is more fun and safer for riders who are not experienced with narrow trails. This area is located nearby in San Rafael with a nice selection of beginner trails and fire roads. A pass is required to ride here also, and you can print out a map of the trails at: <https://friendsofchinacamp.org/park-map/>.

Which Direction of Travel?

Normally, the trails have been open to riding in either direction, but during CoVID we recommended that everyone travel clockwise around the loop for easier physical distancing. This became sort of the norm and continues to this day. Here are some points to consider that will improve traffic flow:

- 1) If you are concerned about oncoming bike traffic, especially on weekends, we suggest you ride the loop in a clockwise direction which about 95% of riders follow.
- 2) Alchemist Trail which connects the loop to the Iron Springs Road entrance kiosk, has by far the most two-way traffic on the network, so always use caution there.
- 3) Uphill riders always have the right-of-way. If you are the downhill rider on a narrow trail, you are responsible for stopping and dismounting off to the side leaving room for the uphill rider to pass.
- 4) Always ride in control. That means when approaching a blind corner, you should be able to stop if there is another rider or hiker coming in the opposite direction.

Tamarancho Shorts . . .

- 1) Mobile phone reception is great almost everywhere thanks to a cell tower on the Marin Council's camp property that services AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon.
- 2) Trail closures following major storms are important to letting the trails dry out. "When it Rains, let it Drain!"
- 3) With winter storms, the surface and trail conditions become more challenging due to mudslides, overflowing streams, and downed trees. If you come across a tree blocking a trail, please send a message to our "Friends of Tamarancho" facebook page or email a report: fot@boyscouts-marin.org.