

11th Annual El Cerrito

Hillside Fest 2025

Saturday May 3

Sunday May 4

Locations throughout the
Hillside Natural Area.

FREE



Presented by El Cerrito Trail Trekkers and
El Cerrito's Environmental Quality Committee



Explore El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area.
Activities for young and old.

Questions? davidsweinstein@yahoo.com

Trail Trekkers is dedicated to expanding El Cerrito's wildland and urban paths and trails and preserving open space. The Environmental Quality Committee advises the city, educates the public, sponsors cleanups and more. The Hillside Natural Area is a 100-plus acre park that will be preserved forever as open space.

Be aware: Even short hikes have steep sections. Wear sturdy shoes with grip heels. Bring water, wear a hat. Watch for poison oak and check yourself for ticks.

Saturday, May 3

8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Early Morning Bird Walk led by Cathy Bleier, a Golden Gate Bird Alliance member. Identify birds and learn how, when and why they make use of the Hillside. We'll walk up to a 1.5 mile loop. Bring binoculars and walking sticks, if needed, for a couple of short steep pitches. **No dogs please, other than service dogs!** Location Five, King Court Gateway.

10:30 a.m. to noon. Insect Hike. Eddie Dunbar, founder and president of the Insect Sciences Museum of California, will lead a family-friendly yet erudite hike revealing secrets of the Hillside's tiniest animals. Location Five, King Court Gateway.

12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Beginner-General Level Plant Walk. Janet Gawthrop of the California Native Plant Society leads this moderate walk, focusing on native plant restoration. Janet hopes to find Oakland star tulips in bloom. Location Three, Madera Circle Trailhead.

You can start anytime between 1 and 3 p.m. Nature Scavenger Hunt. Learn about plants, birds, animals, rocks, and creeks. Parents help their children in this fun drop-in event. Find things on your illustrated list (no actual collecting please), take photos, return to talk about your finds and win prizes. Location Six, Schmidt Lane Trailhead.

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Family-friendly Rock Walk. Learn about the geology of the East Bay Hills by seeing and handling rocks and visiting nearby rock outcrops. Gary Prost and Mark Petrofsky of the Northern California Geological Society will share their knowledge and enthusiasm on a short walk. Location Six, Schmidt Lane Trailhead.

4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Lichen Hike. Join UC Berkeley's lichen curator Dr. Klara Scharnagl to learn about where lichens grow and their role in the environment. Learn key features for identification, including growth form. Lichen hikes move slowly with frequent stops. Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass to enjoy these fascinating organisms! Location Five, King Court Gateway.

6 p.m. to 7 p.m. An Evening Tree Hike. Enjoy the Hillside in the run-up to sunset with Stephen Prée, the city's arborist and staff liaison to the Urban Forest Committee. Learn about native and invasive

trees, how the city cares for this diverse urban forest, and how you can help our arboreal canopy. Stephen will also discuss application of recommendations made in the draft HNA Fire Resilience and Forest Conservation Management Plan. Location One, Motorcycle Hill.

Sunday, May 4

10 a.m. to noon. Edible and Medicinal Plant Walk. Learn about ethnobotany — how native plants have been used for food, medicine, and crafts — with Alan Siegel, a docent at Tilden Botanic Garden. Family-friendly uphill walk. You may download the free iNaturalist app to help identify and document what you learn. Location Four, Regency Entry.

12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Geology Walk. Co-sponsored by the Northern California Geological Society. Leaders are geologist Gary Prost and Mark Petrofsky, a former teacher and Bill Motzer, a geologist/geochemist. Learn about the geological setting of El Cerrito, rocks, faults and landslides. This strenuous walk has steep sections. Location Six, Schmidt Lane Trailhead.

12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Haiku Hike. Celebrate the winners of our haiku contest. Winners will be awarded prizes at the trailhead and read their haiku along the first half mile of walking. Then there are options for a 1 mile or a 2-1/2 mile round trip hike. Leaders are Melissa Hobbs, Barbara Lass and Wade Huntley. Location Five, King Court Gateway.

2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. El Cerrito History Hike. Step back in time as we explore the history of El Cerrito and environs on this traverse of the upper Hillside Natural Area. Retired East Bay Regional Parks supervising naturalist Dave Zuckermann will be your guide on this moderate 2-mile hike with a few very steep sections. Location Five, King Court Gateway.

4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Native Plant Amble led by Margot Cunningham. Check out native plants in the grasslands along Wildwood Creek and in the oaks on this slow out-and-back walk. Trails are steep and rough. Bring hiking sticks or poles. Location Two, Navellier Entry.

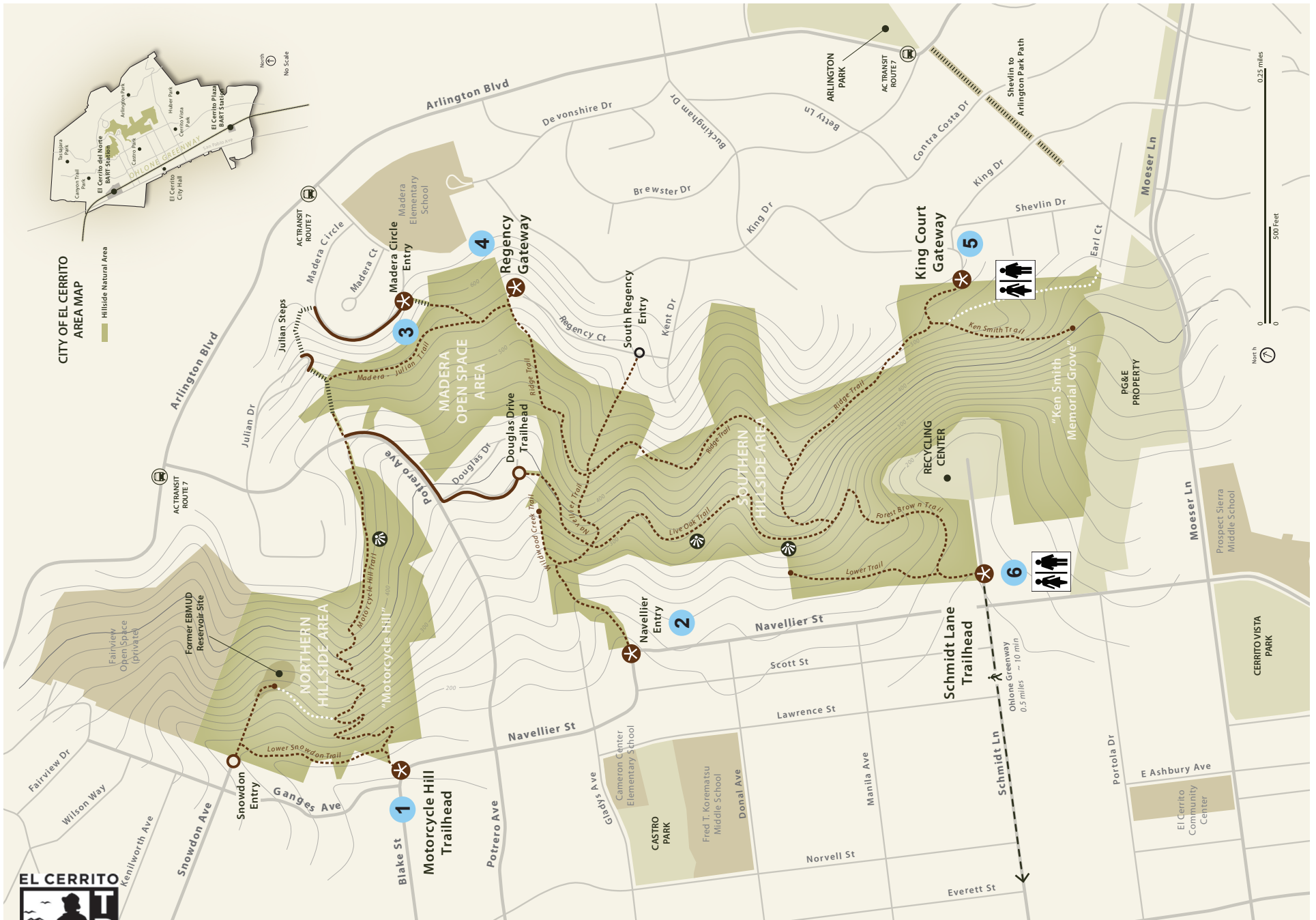
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Everyone is Welcome Gathering. Join an informal gathering with Trekkers, our hike leaders, newcomers, old-timers and volunteers for snacks and beverages. This open-to-all event takes place where the view is great, a few hundred yards from Location Five, King Court Gateway. Follow the signs.

Both days — but only if it rains fairly heavily!

Enjoy the Rain Hike. This stroll occurs only if rain forces us to cancel other hikes. The Hillside is so different in the rain, appealing and mysterious! Join Dave Weinstein for an observational stroll. Check our website if it is raining for start time. Location Four, Regency Gateway.

Porta-potties are available at King Court and Schmidt Lane. There is a restroom open until 5 p.m. Saturday only at the Recycling Center office near the Schmidt Lane Trailhead.





LEGEND



RESTROOMS



TRAILS

Locations: One, Motorcycle Hill, where Navellier and Blake streets meet. Two, Navellier Entry, near 1432 Navellier Street. Three, Madera Circle Entry, between 1520 and 1524 Madera Circle. Four, Regency Entry, at northern end of Regency. Five, King Court Gateway, at end of King Court. Six, Schmidt Lane Trailhead, on Schmidt Lane near the Recycling Center. Please enjoy the haiku poems by Haiku Contest winners displayed throughout the Hillside.