

# Circle X Ranch

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Santa Monica Mountains  
National Recreation Area



## Mountains to Sky

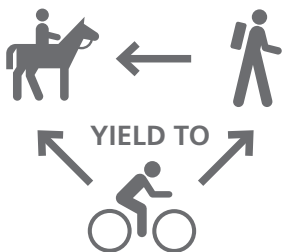
Tucked in the canyons above Malibu and nestled below majestic Boney Mountain, you will find Circle X Ranch. This former Boy Scout camp offers many opportunities for exploration and leisure.

Hike one of the many trails that wind through this rare coastal Mediterranean ecosystem. Experience the chaparral plant community and look for red shank chamise, a tree-like shrub with reddish-brown bark, clusters of thread-like leaves and small bunches of white

flowers that bloom in July and August. Keep an eye out for blue-bellied lizards and scrub jays during the daytime, and gray foxes and bats at twilight.

You can climb to the top of Sandstone Peak, the highest point in the Santa Monica Mountains, or hike the Happy Hollow Loop Trail, enjoying a picnic at Oak Grove. Marvel at one of the few locations near Los Angeles where you can see the Milky Way Galaxy.

## Information and Safety



**BE PREPARED** for changing weather conditions. Bring water, food, map or some type of navigation device, a headlamp, and first-aid supplies on your hikes. Be alert for ticks, bees, rattlesnakes, and poison oak. Wear sturdy footwear, e.g. hiking boots or shoes with good tread. Cell phone reception is largely non-existent in much of this area.

**TRAIL ETIQUETTE** improves everyone's trail experience. Hikers should yield to equestrians. Equestrians should communicate with passing hikers and bicyclists. Horses should not graze or leave the trail. Remove manure from parking areas.

**BICYCLISTS** must ride courteously and yield to hikers and equestrians; speed limit is 15 mph unless conditions require a safer speed. Bicyclists and equestrians are allowed on designated trails only (avoid social trails and fire lines).

**NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES** including rocks, plants, and animals are protected by law and may not be collected or disturbed. Do not climb on structures. Weapons, nets, and traps are not allowed in parklands.

**HORSE TRAILERS** are not recommended due to winding roads and limited parking areas.

**WILDFIRE** is a year-round concern. Fires of any kind are not permitted on trails.

**TRAIL CLOSURES** will be in effect during and following extreme weather or hazardous conditions.

**PETS** must be under control and on a leash that doesn't exceed six feet. Pick up after your pet. Pets are not allowed off trails.

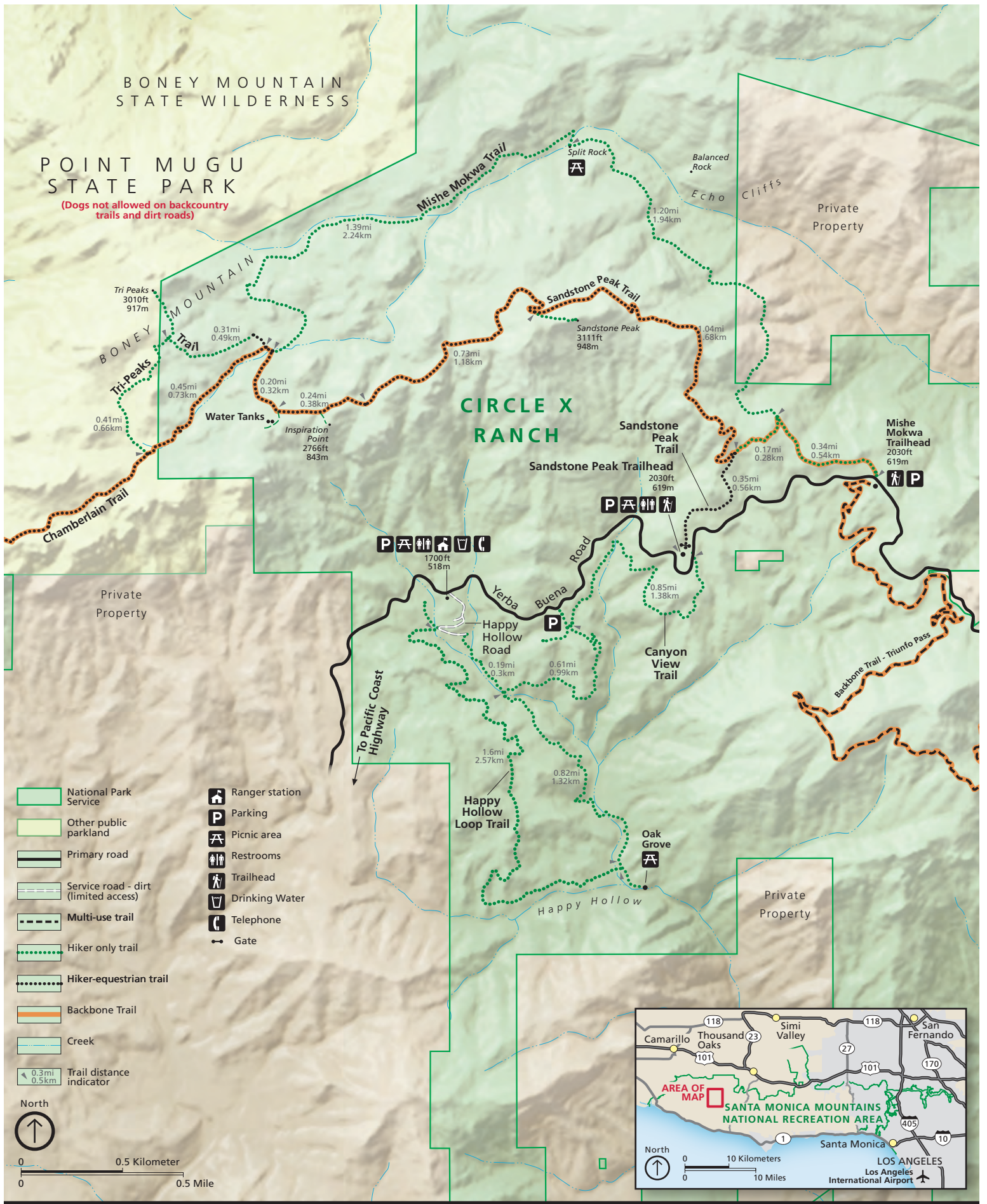
**WATER** that comes from streams is not safe to drink due to possible contamination or the presence of giardia.

**Circle X Ranger Station**  
12896 Yerba Buena Rd  
Malibu, CA, 90265



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
Santa Monica Mountains  
Interagency Visitor Center  
26876 Mulholland Hwy  
Calabasas CA 91302  
805-370-2301  
[www.nps.gov/samo](http://www.nps.gov/samo)

**EMERGENCIES**  
Call 911. For a ranger, call  
Santa Monica Dispatch  
at 805-370-2399.



**Backbone Trail** ♦ 7.9 miles—The Backbone Trail continues west from Circle X Ranch to Sycamore Canyon and other trails in Point Mugu State Park. Obtain maps before entering the Boney Mountain Wilderness Area. From the Mishe Mokwa Trailhead, the Backbone Trail continues east 4.0 miles to Yerba Buena Road near mile marker 9.1. The total length of the Backbone Trail is 67 miles. Bikes and dogs are not allowed in the Boney Mountain Wilderness.

**Canyon View Trail** ● 1.9 miles; no bikes—This trail can be accessed from three points: the Happy Hollow trailhead near the old group campground, the trailhead 0.3 miles east of the Ranger Station on Yerba Buena Road, or the Sandstone Peak Trailhead. Enjoy views in every direction.

**Happy Hollow Loop Trail** ■ 2.6 miles; no bikes, no horses—There are two main entries you can choose from for hiking the Happy Hollow Loop Trail. To access the first entry point, start at the Ranger Station and walk down below the Ranch House and find the trailhead near the basketball court. To access the second entry point, keep walking down the road to the old group campground and find the trailhead. From either entry you can hike the Happy Hollow Loop Trail to the streamside picnic area at Oak Grove.

**Mishe Mokwa Trail to Split Rock** ■ 3.5 miles round trip; no bikes, no horses—This trail begins at the north side of the Mishe Mokwa Trailhead. Traversing riparian, coastal sage scrub and chaparral, the trail offers wonderful views of Carlisle Canyon and Balanced Rock. Split Rock's oak grove

offers a shaded spot for picnicking.

**Mishe Mokwa Trail to Sandstone Peak** ♦ 6.0 miles round trip; no bikes, no horses—From the Sandstone Peak Trailhead, go to the Mishe Mokwa Trail Connector. Take the Mishe Mokwa Trail to Split Rock and continue to the Backbone Trail heading south. This trail ascends to Sandstone Peak, then descends to the trailhead.

**Sandstone Peak Trail** ♦ 3.0 miles round trip—Start at the Sandstone Peak Trailhead at an elevation of 2,030 feet. The trail climbs 1,081 feet with views of the Conejo and San Fernando Valleys, as well as the Pacific Ocean.

● Easy    ■ Moderate    ♦ Strenuous