

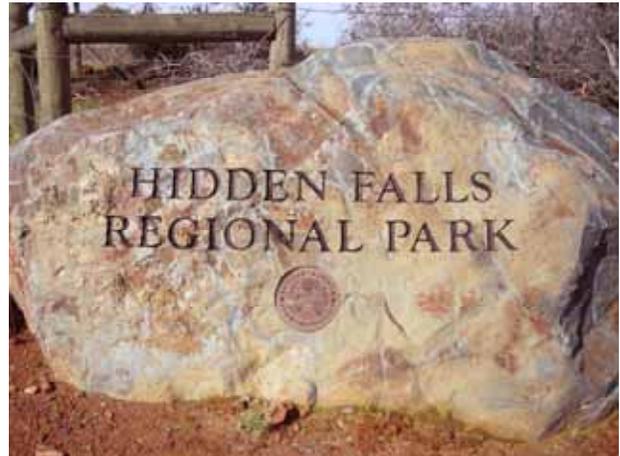
Grey Squirrel Trail, 2.3 miles long

Hidden Falls Regional Park, Placer County, 8 miles west of Auburn

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Introduction:

On May 22, 2013 opening ceremonies were held on the new expansion for Hidden Falls Regional Park. The newly-constructed 23 miles of trails on 961 newly-acquired acres of the Spears Ranch (\$3.5 million) brings the total to **thirty miles of public trails** and **1,300 acres** of park land for Hidden Falls Regional Park. This is huge accomplishment will directly benefit equestrians who are conditioning for endurance rides (such as the Tevis Cup), or who want to train their horses for mountain trails.

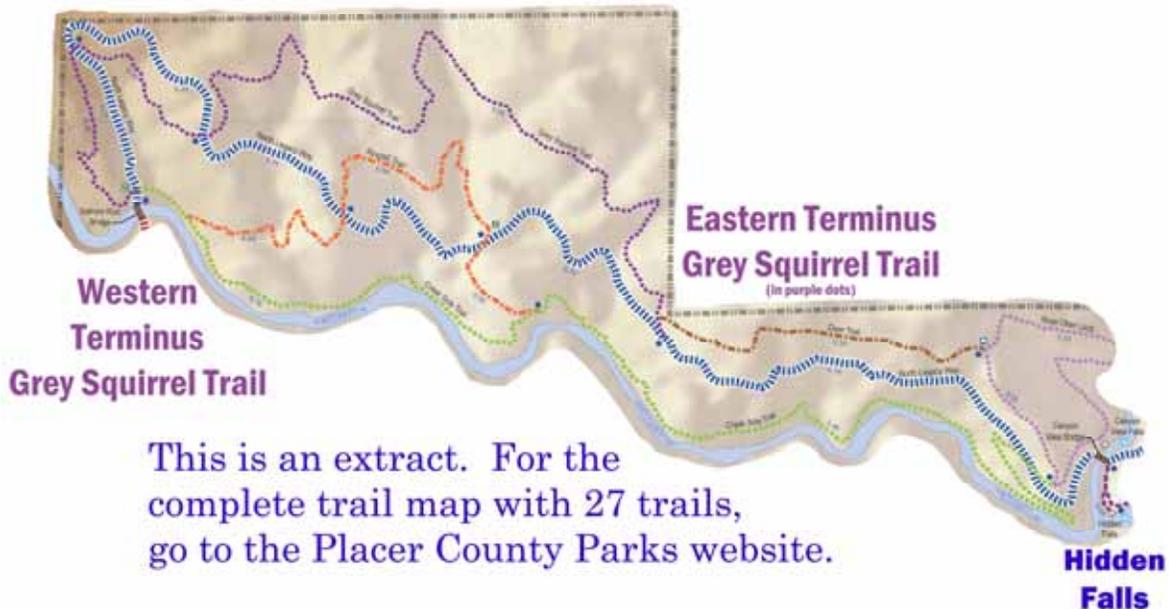


Extensive Trail System = 27 Looping Trails

On the south side of Coon Creek there are 13 named trails, and the north side has 14 trails, for a total of **27 named trails**. Most of them are looping trails and interconnected, which is ideal for equestrians. This report is about **Grey Squirrel Trail**, located in the northwestern sector of the park. It is an optimum trail for horsemen.

There will be subsequent trail reports on more than a dozen other trails that vary from Easy (11 trails), Moderate (12 trails), to Difficult (4 trails).

Index Map of Grey Squirrel Trail northwestern sector of Hidden Falls Regional Park

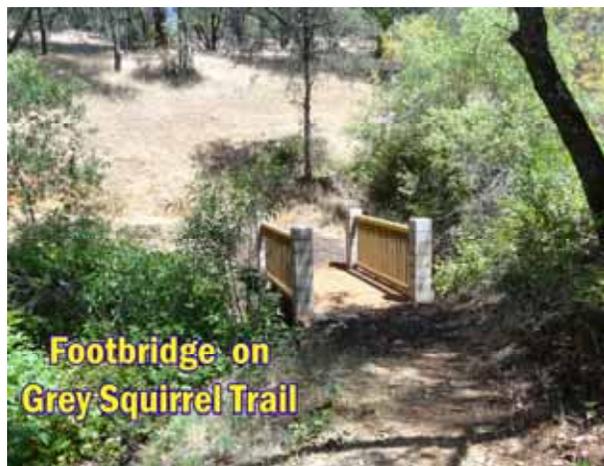
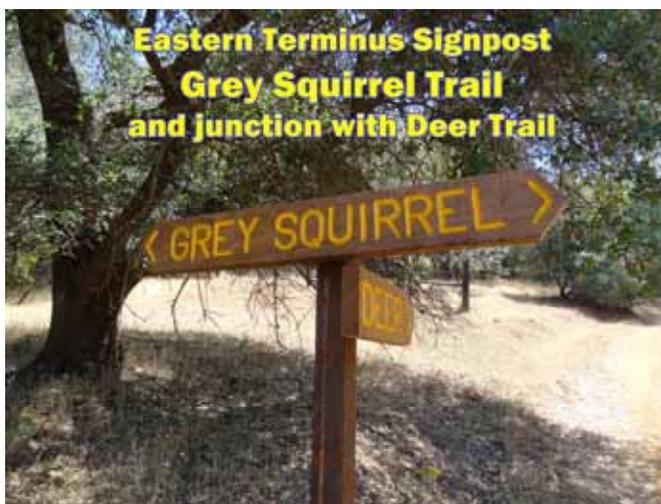


This is an extract. For the complete trail map with 27 trails, go to the Placer County Parks website.

Grey Squirrel Trail, 2.3 miles long; rating = “moderate”

The northwestern sector of Hidden Falls Regional Park contains Grey Squirrel Trail. The eastern terminus is at the triple junction with Deer Trail (full-width ranch road) and North Legacy Way (full-width gravel access road). Many equestrians prefer to ride Deer Trail in a group, then continue single-file onto Grey Squirrel Trail (a single-track trail), then water their horses in Coon Creek near Salmon Run Bridge. *(Refer to trail map.)* **Grey Squirrel Trail is optimum for horses** because of the many climbing turns and rolling grade-dips. There are no steep side-slopes. About 80% of the trail alignment is shaded by a canopy of trees. There is no drinking water along the trail, so bring your own. There is an **Eagle Scout bench** where you can pause, eat lunch, and admire the view from the ridge crest in the shaded fuel break. There is one **foot-bridge**. *(Refer to photographs of the trail.)*

A large number of GPS-tagged photographs have been taken at 50-foot intervals along the Grey Squirrel Trail, and these are plotted onto GoogleEarth for horsemen to review.



At left: a footbridge was constructed by the California Conservation Corps.

At right: the blue line (added for topographic emphasis) indicates the sweeping turns, and the rolling grade-dips for proper out-sloped drainage. This new trail was properly designed by a trail-construction expert. The Grey Squirrel Trail, 2.3-miles long, will provide a work-out for your horse that is both interesting and scenic to ride. By combining this trail with several others, it is easy to **ride 15 to 20 miles in one day at Hidden Falls**, depending on your available time, the condition of your horse, and the weather.



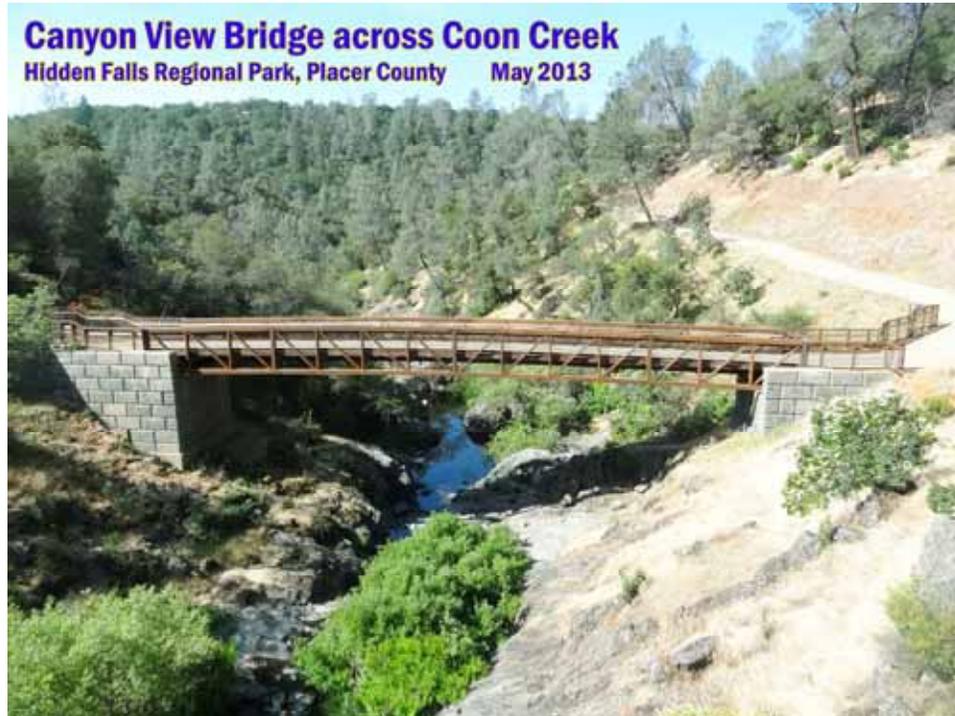
Horsemen can return to the equestrian trailer parking lot by the Ringtail Trail and the North Legacy Way (the main graveled access road). There are lots of other choices for looping trails, depending on the condition of your horse and the weather.

If you need to water your horse, there is an access path to Coon Creek just east of Salmon Run Bridge (as shown above). However, be very careful and do not enter the water or disturb the delicate salmon spawning habitat in the sandy gravels of Coon Creek. Rein your horse so that he carefully sips water only from the edge of Coon Creek.



Two Large Steel Truss Bridges = key access to the Grey Squirrel Trail

For access across the rock gorge of Coon Creek, it was necessary to construct two large steel-truss bridges at a cost of \$1.48 million. Horses and hikers cannot cross Coon Creek in this region, and the new park ranchland occurs on both sides of the incised creek. Canyon View Bridge is 102 feet long and rated at 18-ton capacity, while Salmon Run Bridge is 118 feet long and rated at 36-tons.



Canyon View Bridge across Coon Creek
Hidden Falls Regional Park, Placer County May 2013



Canyon View Bridge across Coon Creek
Hidden Falls Regional Park, Placer County
18-ton capacity, 102 feet long
15 feet wide, guard rails 5 feet high