

# Sierra Madre Trails

## Trail & Park Information



**City of Sierra Madre**  
**232 West Sierra Madre Boulevard**  
**Sierra Madre, California 91024**

Trail Guides donated by The Sierra Madre Environmental Action Council

## **PARK INFORMATION**

### **BAILEY CANYON PARK**

**Bailey Canyon Park:** 451 West Carter Avenue at Grove Street. Sierra Madre's small

nature study area with trails, plant identification and information kiosk. Handicap access to kiosk and fire ring. Picnic area with tables and stoves. Permits not required for fires in stoves but are required for use of the fire ring. Parking available inside the park. Open year round. Overnight camping prohibited. City has use of the area by permit from the Los Angeles County Flood control District.

### **BAILEY CANYON WILDERNESS PARK**

**Live Oak Self-guided Nature Trail:** Through turnstile gate west side of Bailey Canyon Park, begins at the entrance to Bailey Canyon above the debris basin. Easy study (loop) trail in oak woodland area, approximately an eighth of a mile. Limited handicap accessibility across bridge to oak woodland. Parking available in Bailey Canyon Park. Handicap parking above the dam, near the footbridge. See Police Department for details. Trail leaflets available at the Police and Community Services Departments, City Hall and Library.

**Canyon View Self-guided Nature Trail:** Through turnstile gate west side of Bailey Canyon Park, begins a short distance beyond the footbridge in Bailey Canyon. Approximately one-half mile to small but beautiful waterfall. Parking available in Bailey Canyon Park. Trail leaflets available at the Police, and Recreation Departments, City Hall and Library.

### **TRAILS**

**Bailey Canyon Trail:** Through turnstile gate west side of Bailey Canyon Park, 1 mile to "MacCloud Saddle" where one may view evidence of the Sierra Madre Fault and 2.2 miles to streamside rest at the "old cabin foundations". To start the trail, follow Canyon View Nature Trail to marker #11 and then continue to the old cabin foundations and on to Jones Peak. Jones Peak is just inside the boundary of the Sierra Madre Historical Wilderness Area. Total distance to Jones Peak is 3.3 miles. Two trails beyond this point are not shown on the map and are unfinished at present.\*

### **SIERRA MADRE HISTORICAL WILDERNESS AREA**

**Mt. Wilson Trail:** Street parking at junction of Mira Monte and Mt. Wilson Trail. As the trail moves into the Sierra Madre Historical Wilderness Area, a 1.5 miles gradual climb, largely front country, leads to First Water. Access to streamside rest at First Water. The next 2 miles to Orchard Camp have more shade and heavy timber. For advanced hikers, it is another 4 miles to Mt. Wilson through heavy timber and difficult switchbacks.\*

## TRAILS CONNECTING TO MT. WILSON

**Mt. Wilson 'Toll Road:** It is only 2.7 miles from the Mt. Wilson Toll Road gate (2260 Pine Crest Drive, Altadena) to the beautiful Henniger Flats. Overnight camping, faucet water, picnic tables and stoves are available. For the adventurous, it is another 6 ½ miles by road from Henniger Flats to Mt. Wilson.

**Winter Creek to Big Santa Anita Canyon:** The distance from Mt. Wilson Trail by way of a steep firebreak and switchback trail to Hoegee's Camp (Camp Ivy) is 4 miles. Down Winter Creek from Hoegee's to Big Santa Anita Canyon and Chantry Flats is just under 3 miles. Alternate Upper Winter Creek Trail from Hoegee's to Chantry is 3.5 miles. Both trails from Hoegee's are easy travel. There is a campground, stoves, and faucet water at Chantry Flats. Fire permits are required at both sites. \*

All trails are closed during the fire season. Information concerning hiking and closure conditions may be obtained by calling Sierra Madre Parks and Recreation Department At (626) 355-5278 or the United States Forest Service.

\*Note: All trials distances are approximate.

## NATURAL HISTORY

As you begin hiking into the San Gabriel Mountains, observe the many deep canyons and steep, sharp ridges. This is typical topography of a youthful mountain range. Although these mountains are young in geological time, they are made of ancient granitic rock. The granites of this range are among the oldest found on the North American Continent, some as old as 2 billion years. The San Gabriel Mountains are called a fault-block range because they were built by the action of earthquakes. It has taken hundreds of thousands of years for the mountains to reach their present height; the last significant uplifting (200-300 ft.) occurring about 3,500 years ago. As you hike into the mountains, you will notice that they are not solid rock but rather a pulverized, crumbling structure, the effect of the earthquake activity over millions of years. Even as the mountains are water and other natural forces are working together to tear them down. The deep canyons and steep, sharp ridges are the result of the water sculpting the face of the land. because they were built by the action of earthquakes. It has taken hundreds of thousands of years for the mountains to reach their present height; the last significant uplifting (200-300 ft.) occurring about 3,500 years ago. As you hike into the mountains, you will notice that they are not solid rock but rather a pulverized, crumbling structure, the effect of the earthquake activity over millions of years. Even as the mountains are uplifted, water and other natural forces are working together to tear them down. The deep canyons and steep sharp ridges are the result of the water sculpting the face of the land. Because of the crumbling nature of the mountains, a

hiker. water and other natural forces are working together to tear them down. The deep canyons and steep, sharp ridges are the result of the water sculpting the face of the land. Because of the crumbling nature of the mountains, a venture off the trail, either up or down, frequently leads to serious difficulty for the hiker.

The elevation at the start of the trails in Little Santa Anita Canyon and Bailey Canyon is slightly over 1,000 feet. At this point, the plants are distributed in definite patterns where two different drought-resistant plant associations overlap. The larger shrubs belong to the Chaparral Plant Association, the smaller, less woody species to the Coastal Sage Scrub. The trails start at the upper limits of the Coastal Sage Scrub and the lower limits of the warm Chaparral Plant Associations. When you are able to look down into the stream channel, where there is more moisture, you will see different plants. These plants are members of the Riparian (stream side) Woodland Plant Association, which find here the large quantities of water that they require for use as a cooling system during the hot summer months. The Oak Woodland Plant Association in our trail system is confined to a very small area in and near the 'Live Oak' Nature Trail in Bailey Canyon Wilderness Park. Here, the rugged, steep slopes and the established streamside Woodland Plant Association restrict the extension of the Oak Woodland. In other adjacent canyons the Oak Woodland may extend to higher elevations forming a patchwork arrangement with the Chaparral, Coastal Sage Scrub, and streamside Woodland Plant Associations.

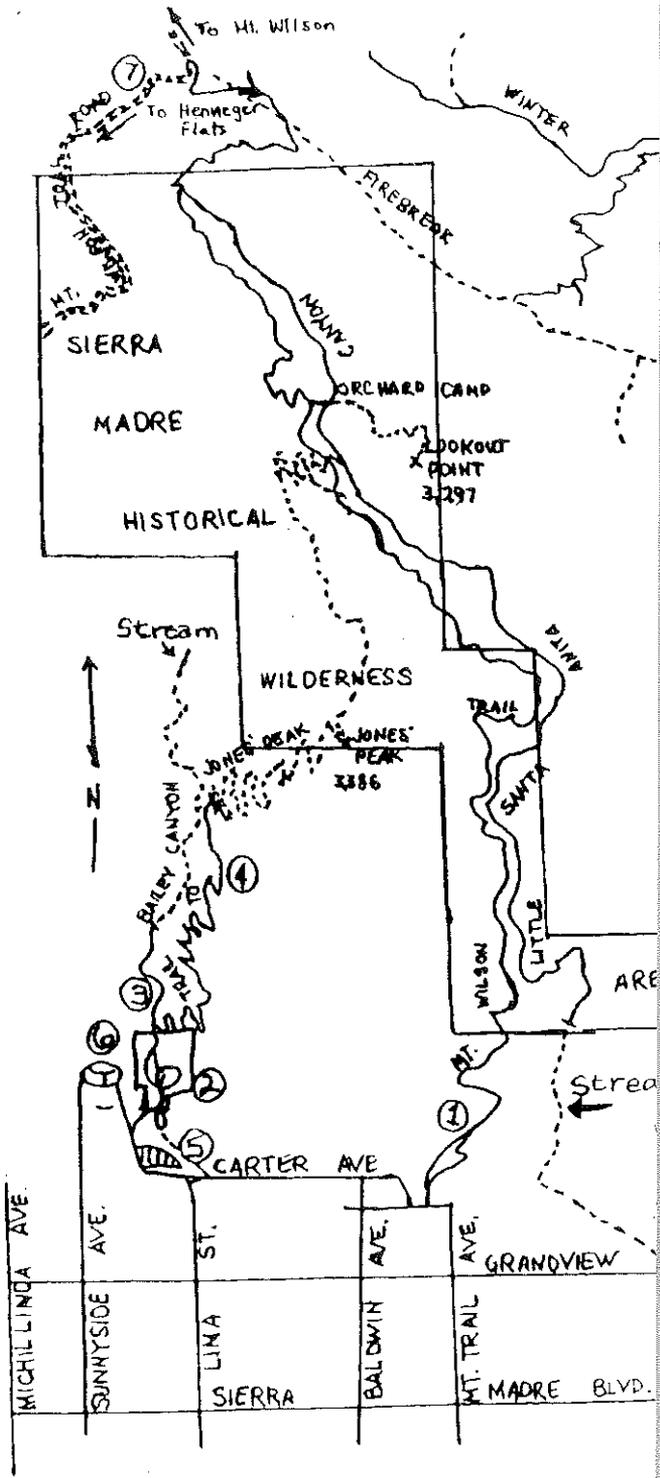
An indicator species identifies a particular plant association. It is found along with the other indicator species. For example, when Chamise, Toyon, Mountain Mahogany, Yucca and Coffee Berry are found together they indicate you are in a Chaparral Plant Association. In the Oak Woodland Plant Association, the indicator species are Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*), Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) the three leafed nuisance, and the Coastal Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). The Live Oak can be found extensively in the residential areas of Sierra Madre. These widely spaced oaks, when found in undisturbed areas, have an under story of native grasses and shrubs. Coast or California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*), White Sage (*Salvia apiana*), and Lemonade Berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) are the indicator species for the Coastal Sage Scrub Plant Association. The indicator species of the Chaparral Plant Association are Greasewood or Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), Toyon or California Holly (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), California Coffee Berry (*Rhamnus californica*), Redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*), Manzanita or Little Apple (*Arctostaphylos* sp.), Mountain Lilac (*Ceanothus* sp.), Scrub Oak (*Quercus dumosa*), Yucca, (*Yucca whipplei*) and Holly Leaf Cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*). Other chaparral plants are: Laurel Sumac (*Rhus laurina*) and Sugarbrush (*Rhus ovata*). The California Scrub Oak is a densely branched evergreen shrub of the chaparral-covered slopes. The word chaparral is from the Spanish chaparro or evergreen oak, and means a thicket of dwarf trees. The Chaparral is sometimes called Chaparral plants have become fire-adapted: that is, although fire destroys the existing foliage, it has a

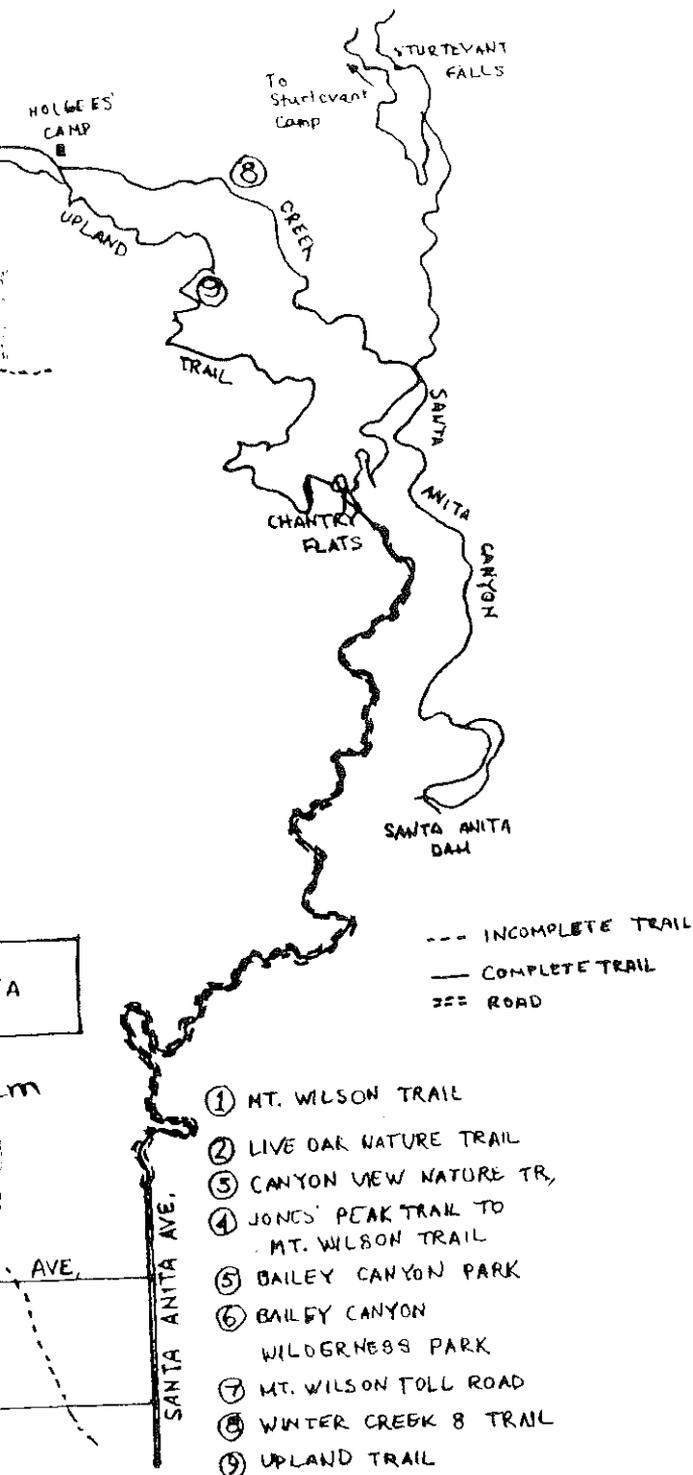
stimulating effect that causes the plant to produce new growth (sucker sprouts). This is why Chaparral is called a fire-type vegetation. Indicator species for the Riparian Woodland Plant Association are the Western Sycamore (Platanus racemosa), Big Leaf Maple (Acer macrophyllum), California Laurel or Bay (Umbellularia californica), famous for its strong, pungent aromatic odor: and White Alder (Alnus rhombifolia).

The Canyon Live Oak (Quercus chrysolepis) has many names. Its large, thick, golden yellow acorn cup easily separates it from the Coast Live Oak. The Canyon Oak Tree at Orchard Camp is one of the largest and oldest in the area.

Big Cone Douglas-Fir (Pseudotsuga macrocarpa), the lowest in altitude of the cone-bearing trees of the area, at one time dotted the lower slopes of Bailey Canyon but have since died. They grow thickly in the area of the cabins, in the upper reaches of the trail to Jones' Peak, and on the well-drained slopes of Little Santa Anita Canyon, sometimes to a height of 60 feet. The lower branches are often elongated, drooping and slender. A number of varieties of Currant (Ribes sp.) common to Southern California, including our most distinctive species of Gooseberry, the Fuchsia Flowering Gooseberry (Ribes speciosum), may be seen in shady areas along trails. Other flowers include: California Rose, Mountain Rose, Scarlet Larkspur (Delphinium cardinale) with four to six foot orange spikes, Western (blue) Larkspur (Delphinium hesperium), several varieties of Monkey flower (Mimulus sp.), the sticky Monkey flower, Red Monkeyflower and Common Large Monkeyflower (yellow), California Blue Bells (Phacelia minor), several species of Penstemon, Douglas Nightshade (Solanum douglasii) and just below Orchard Camp, Baby Blue Eyes (Nemophila menziesii). Some fine flowering bulbs may also be seen: Brodiaea (Brodiaea ixoides), Mariposa Lily (Calochortus plummerae), and the beautiful Humboldt Lily (Lilium humboldtii), with large orange-maroon spotted flowers on six to ten foot stalks. Birds of the area are: Acorn Woodpecker, Anna's Hummingbird, Bewick's Wren, Bushtit, California and Spotted Towhee, California Thrasher, California Quail, Copper's Hawk, House Wren, Northern Flicker, Northern Mockingbird, Oak Titmouse, Red-Tailed Hawk, Western Scrub Jay, Wrentit, and in Bailey Canyon during the fall and winter, the Band-Tailed Pigeon. Animals living in the area but infrequently seen (many are nocturnal) are: Audubon Cottontail, Coyote, Bob Cat, Brown Bear, California Ground Mouse, Pocket Gopher, Grey Fox, Mule Deer, Puma, Striped Skunk, and Raccoon. The observing eye will see many tracks on the trail in the morning and, if the forest visitor is quiet, some of the animal's may be visible in the day.

In the early days of Sierra Madre and other foothill communities, water ran freely and in great abundance in the canyons, and plant life abounded. Early floats in the Tournament of Roses New Year's Day Parade were decked with ferns, lilies and many other flowers and plants from the canyons. With the increasing demands of growing populations, more and more water has been piped from the canyons at upper levels and the Riparian Woodlands below have all but disappeared in many areas where water-pumping trees have waged a losing battle against a vanishing water table.





## **HISTORICAL INFORMATION MT. WILSON TRAIL**

The first trail to Mt. Wilson was made by the Tongva (Gabrielino) Native Americans, and was used by them when they carried timber from the mountains for use in the construction of the San Gabriel Mission in 1771. The original Mt. Wilson Trail was built in 1864 by Benjamin I. Wilson (known as Don Benito), in order to obtain timber from Sugar Pine and Incense Cedar on Wilson's Peak for his ranch, which was situated on the land that is now the Huntington Library and Gardens. He hired Native Americans and Mexicans to work on the trail which started from Sierra Madre.

The first water along the trail was found at a spring near what was later known as the Quarter-Way House, and the first buildings were erected by Don Benito at the Half-Way House. This property was homesteaded by George Islip and George Aiken. An orchard of apples, cherries, plums, and chestnuts was planted, and it became known as Orchard Camp. James McNalley was the first person to establish a resort there, and for fifty years or more, under several owners, Orchard Camp provided shelter for the public.

In 1889, Harvard College established the first observatory on Mt. Wilson and the 3,700 pound, 13 inch telescope was carried over 4,000 feet up the mountain trail after being broken down into parts small enough to load onto pack animals. Later, William Sturtevant brought a string of twenty-three pack burros to Sierra Madre and packed the building materials up the Trail for the Mt. Wilson Hotel and cottages.

One of the two original homes in Sierra Madre still stands at the corner of Mira Monte and Mt. Trail. The houses were built by Mr. John Richardson, a Civil War veteran who had been granted a claim of 160 acres by the United States Government as a reward for war services. He came from Vermont with his family, traveling across the plains in a covered wagon and settled on the land, developing it into a ranch. Nathaniel Carter, founder of Sierra Madre, arrived with his family in Southern California from Massachusetts in 1871 and lived in an adobe house on Don Benito Wilson's ranch. In 1881, when the two Richardson houses were the only structures where Sierra Madre stands today, Carter purchased all but 10 acres of Richardson's ranch land, including the house on Mira Monte, and additional land from Lucky Baldwin and the Southern Pacific Railroad. He then began to encourage easterners to move west and settle in the community of Sierra Madre. The Pacific Electric Cars established the route to Sierra Madre in 1906 and ran a continuous service from Los Angeles to Sierra Madre until 1950. During those days literally thousands of people rode red cars to Sierra Madre to hike the Mt. Wilson Trail. Lizzie's Trail Inn, which still stands adjacent to the first house, was built after the red car service began and became a famous eating spot, catering to hikers and also to those who traveled from great distances just to feast on the chicken and ravioli for which the restaurant was well known. The Inn closed during the Second World War.

City ownership of the land now comprising the Sierra Madre Historical Wilderness area

Began with the purchase of 960 acres of property, including Orchard Camp, from Harriet Martins for \$7,900 in March 1940. One hundred and sixty more acres were acquired in 1941 for \$900, and the remainder of the land to complete the current acreage of 1037 acres from the Sierra Madre Mutual Water Company. Largely through the efforts of a small number of dedicated and far sighted Sierra Madre residents, the Sierra Madre Historical Wilderness Area was established by declaration of the City Council on January 24, 1967 by ordinance #781 and dedicated January 27, 1968.

### **BAILEY CANYON**

The history of Bailey Canyon can be traced to the Native Americans who from time to time used the oak woodland as a temporary campsite. Around 1769, the King of Spain acquired the area by the right of occupation. Ownership of the land passed from Spain to Mexico, to the Republic of California, to the United States. In 1875, a Mr. R.J. Bailey received a patent from the U.S. Government for a portion of the canyon area and it became known as Bailey's Canyon. Palmer T. Reed purchased the Bailey Ranch and the mountain land behind it, including the canyon in 1881. In 1883, Mr. Reed sold the eastern part of the canyon to N.C. Carter, and in 1884, the Sierra Madre Mutual Water Company purchased the remainder of the canyon in order to develop water tunnels for domestic water supply. This portion was sold to the City of Sierra Madre in 1907. The eastern portion was purchased by the City from the Carters in 1963. In 1965, a part of the original Carter property, purchased from the Southern Pacific Railroad, was given by the Carter family to the City of Sierra Madre to be included in the proposed wilderness park. In the early 1930's Bailey Canyon was heavily used as a picnic and recreation area and the WPA built an amphitheater and picnic area. The severe floods of 1938 did considerable damage to the park and the flood of 1969 further damaged the amphitheater and widened the stream bed. Subsequent fires and floods have continued to wear away the land.

The Bailey Canyon nature trails were developed by Sierra Madre Junior Girl Scout Troops 279 and 528 in 1966-67. Today, conservation and trail work continues to be done by community organizations. The area was publicly dedicated as a wilderness park in June 1967 by resolution #2326. Subsequent addition of land has increased the size of the park to 72 acres.

### **BAILEY CANYON TRAIL TO JONES' PEAK**

Upon the suggestion of the Sierra Madre Historical Society, the Sierra Madre Mountaineers and Sierra Madre Rangers, two youth organizations dedicated to the development of mountaineering and outdoor skills, volunteered in 1968 to build a trail from Bailey Canyon Jones' Peak was named in memory of the first Mayor of Sierra Madre, Charles Jones, who served seven successive terms of office commencing with the

incorporation of Sierra Madre in 1907. Mayor Jones was president of the Sierra Madre Historical Society from 1948 to 1956.

Approximately two and a half miles from the start of the trail to Jones' Peak, in the Angeles National Forest, the ruins of two small cabins may be found. Situated on a small promontory along upper Bailey Canyon, the lower cabin foundation commands a long, narrow view down the canyon to the valley below. Built in 1910 by three young men attending Throop Polytechnic Institute (later Cal Tech), the cabins were used by their families, friends and themselves until 1942 during World War II, when the area was closed to further private use. Standing in good condition for a number of years, the cabins were eventually vandalized and destroyed. The young men, Ray Andrews, Charles Camp and Vic Hill, carried all materials and supplies by backpack and burro, using the old Water Company Trail.

### **MT. WILSON TOLL ROAD**

After the installation of the first telescope on Mt. Wilson, people clamored more than ever for a decent road to the peak. In 1889 the first Pasadena and Mt. Wilson Toll Road Company was formed by Benjamin Eaton. The intent was to build a wagon road but that idea had to be abandoned in favor of a bridle road, which was finished in 1891. The County-fixed toll was 25 cents for a round trip on foot and 50 cents for horse riders. In 1904, a new Mt. Wilson Toll Road Company, organized by W.R. Staats, J.H. Holmes and W.S. Wright, widened the trail into a wagon road from Foothill Boulevard to the summit.

### **BIG SANTA ANITA CANYON**

The first trail into Big Santa Anita Canyon was known as the Burlingame Trail, starting on the Lannou property just west of Double Drive (Santa Anita Avenue) on the eastern boundary of Sierra Madre and crossing upper Winter Creek. It was built in 1886-87 by a grading contractor named Burlingame who intended to haul out Big Cone Douglas-Fir for lumber. Before the trail was quite completed the San Gabriel Range was made into a National Forest Reserve and the trees were saved. It was not until 1897 that Arthur Carter, son of Natheil Carter, and Louise Newcomb laid out a new trail in the Big Santa Anita Canyon. Sturtevant developed this trail to his camp and opened it to the public in 1898. It is still a well known and beautiful recreation spot. Hoegge's camp was built by Arie Hoegge of A. Hoegge and Sons Awning Company of Los Angeles in 1908, and was a popular resort for over 30 years. Later it was sold and became known as Camp Ivy for several years. As was the case with the Mt. Wilson Trail, all materials for buildings and other needs were carried up Big Santa Anita Canyon by pack mule trains. A pack station still operates at Chantry Flats as a service to cabins in the canyon.

## **PARK AND TRAIL SAFETY**

The Sierra Madre Wilderness Area and Sierra Madre Wilderness Park are beautiful recreational resources located only minutes away from city streets. Some common sense precautions will help you to make your hiking experience a pleasant one.

When possible, hike with a friend. Two or more hikers can assist each other in the Event of an accident. If you hike alone, tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

Practice trail courtesy. Many Sierra Madre trails are shared; please leave room for faster hikers to pass you on the trail.

Stay on the trails. Do not venture out on your own.

Be prepared for weather. Temperatures can be very hot in midsummer and surprisingly cold during the winter. Dress accordingly and carry adequate water and sun protection.

Do not disturb or feed animals in the parks. If you see an obviously sick animal, please Tell the Police Department. Leave rattlesnakes alone. They will not attack if you keep Your distance.

Dogs must be leashed in picnic areas, developed park areas, and wherever leash signs are posted.

They may be taken off leash in remote park areas, but should always be under the owner's control.

Learn to recognize poison oak as most people who touch it will develop an itchy rash. It is a very common plant in the parks.

Be careful with fire, especially during the dry season. Fires should be kindled only in authorized fire rings. Hikers should be extremely careful with disposal of smoking materials.

### **THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL PARKS:**

- |                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Alcoholic beverages   | Dogs without leashes         |
| Firearms, weapons     | Bicycles off the pavement    |
| Hunting, shooting     | Littering, defacing property |
| Open fires, fireworks | Camping, after-hours entry   |

**Parks are patrolled by Sierra Madre Police (626) 355-1414  
In case on an emergency call 911**

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