

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Ohlone and Portolá Histories Honored in New Crystal Springs Monument Dedication

SAN MATEO – San Mateo County Parks will host a public dedication of the Ohlone-Portolá Heritage Trail at the Crystal Springs Dam at 9 a.m. on Friday, April 24.

The event will include remarks from State Senator Josh Becker and San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller, followed by the unveiling of a new stone monument and interpretive panels.

The displays highlight two interwoven stories -- the way of life of the Ramaytush Ohlone, who inhabited the Peninsula for thousands of years before Spanish explorer Gaspar de Portolá arrived in 1769. The expedition relied on the Ohlone's knowledge for food and navigation.

The Portolá expedition, which began in Southern California, ultimately led to the first European sighting of San Francisco Bay and preceded later expeditions, including that of Juan Bautista de Anza.

Content for all interpretive materials was developed in collaboration with project partners, including representatives of the Ramaytush Ohlone. The dedication marks the completion of a major phase of the project, with additional interpretive and trail enhancements planned over time.

Event Details:

When: 9 a.m., Friday, April 24

Where: Crystal Springs Dam, located south of the Sawyer Camp Trail South Trailhead, 950 Skyline Blvd., San Mateo

Getting There: Limited on-street parking is available

The Ohlone–Portolá Heritage Trail project originated in the mid-2010s as a [San Mateo County–led effort](#) to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Portolá expedition while also recognizing the longstanding presence of the Ohlone people.

First proposed by local advocates and later advanced by a multi-agency and tribal committee, the concept envisions a roughly 90-mile interpretive trail following historic Indigenous routes and expedition camps across the Peninsula.

Early planning — supported by County funding and a [2019 feasibility study](#) — focused on creating a regional trail that would both trace the expedition’s path and more fully tell the story of the Ramaytush Ohlone communities who guided and supported it.

The project was funded in part by a \$500,000 allocation secured by Senator Becker during the 2023 California legislative session.

The planned 90-mile trail is a long-term, multi-agency effort that incorporates segments of the California Coastal Trail, as well as existing sidewalks and trails across lands managed by Peninsula Open Space Trust, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, State Parks, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and San Mateo County Parks.

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