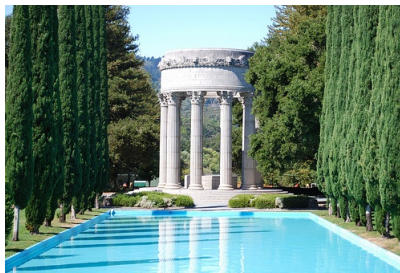


Pulgas Water Temple



This Exploration created in collaboration with the



The Pulgas Water Temple was built at the terminus of the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct as a monument to the new water system. It's located within the watershed, just south of Crystal Springs reservoir. An inscription at the top reads, "I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people," a biblical quote from Isaiah. The San Francisco Peninsula Watershed, managed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, is home to trails that offer access to remote wilderness, Northern California geology, and opportunities to enjoy ridge-top vistas of our watershed lands, reservoirs, the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay.

Trailhead Locations

Pulgas Water Temple is located about one-half mile south of the Canada Road trailhead. To get there, take Interstate 280 to the Edgewood Road exit. Proceed west on Edgewood Road to Canada Road, then north on Canada Road approximately two miles to the temple.

Hours and Parking

Pulgas Water Temple and its parking lot are open to the public on weekdays, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. That said, parking is limited to 30 minutes so if you wish to hike out from there, you'll probably want to have someone drop you off, ride your bike to the temple, or park at the intersection of Edgewood and La Canada roads, about 1.7 miles down the road.

The parking lot is closed on weekends, except for permitted events. To obtain a permit for your wedding or group event, call the SFPUC at 650-872-5900.

Nearby Open Space Attractions

The newly-opened portion of the SFPUC Peninsula Watershed's Fifiield-Cahill Ridge Trail, accessible through guided tours, starts at Skyline Quarry on Highway 92 and extends northward to the watershed boundary at the Portola Ridge Gate, where it connects with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area trail system and the Sweeney Ridge section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail. For tour reservations, see trail.sfwater.org or call 650-652-3203.

The historic Sawyer Camp Trail—once a segment of the main route between San Francisco and Half Moon Bay—winds approximately six miles through SFPUC Watershed land from Crystal Springs Reservoir to San Andreas Lake.

Special thanks to John Fournet and Betsy Lauppe Rhodes of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, for assisting us on this project.



1. Pulgas Water Temple latitude 37.483531 longitude -122.316276

1a. The Pulgas Water temple



In this video, John Fournet of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission explains the origins of the Pulgas Water temple.

1b. The Pulgas Water Temple, continued



In this video, John Fournet of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission explains the unique history and nature of the Pulgas Water temple.

1c. Facing the Pulgas Water Temple



In 1934, the first rush of Hetch Hetchy water flowed through the gravity-driven tunnel system, across California's central valley. It swooshed through the base of the Pulgas Water Temple and into nearby Crystal Springs reservoir while San Franciscans cheered, and some conservationists frowned.

1d. Interior View of the Pulgas Water Temple



Looking up through the top of the temple to blue skies.

1e. Pulgas Water Temple dedication



The Pulgas Water Temple was built at the terminus of the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct as a monument to the new water system. It's located within the watershed, just south of Crystal Springs reservoir. The plaque reads, "I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people," a quote from Isaiah.



2. Crossing latitude 37.487688 longitude -122.318944

2a. John Fournet, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission



Our guide for the day, John Fournet, is the Community Liaison for SFPUC Natural Resources and Lands Management Division.

2b. San Francisco PUC Water Hat



We were definitely envious of our guide's hat. Apparently this design is hard to get these days.

2c. Crossing Canada Road

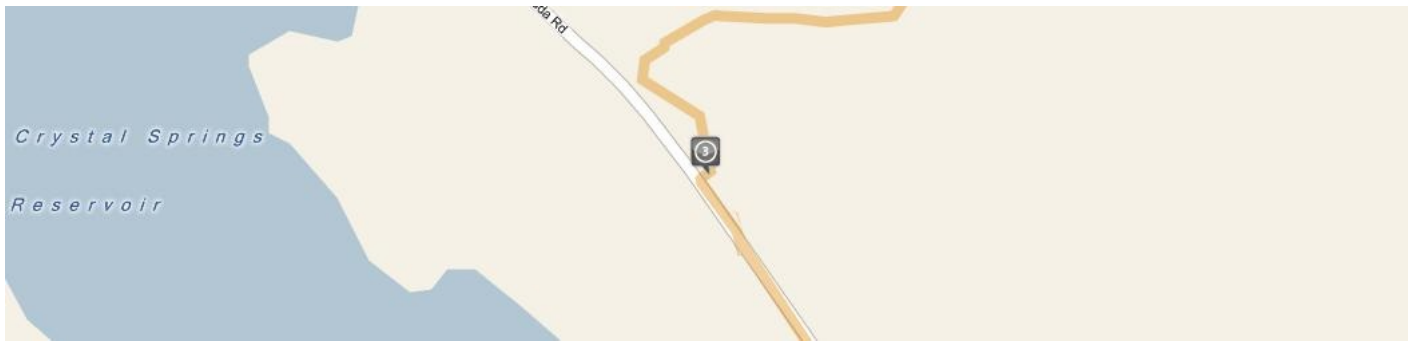


Horseshoe tracks lead the way across Canada Rd. from the Water Temple to the beginning of Sheep Camp trail.

2b. Trail along Canada Road



Walk along the trail next to the road your way towards the entrance to Sheep Camp Trail.



3. Gate latitude 37.488767 longitude -122.31967

3a. Signs at trailhead



The gate to Sheep Camp Trail - the multitude of signs belie the mosaic of many public resources at the city, county, state and private levels that make up our Bay Area's watersheds.

3b. Water department property



As if the Poison oak was not enough of a warning....

3c. Past the signs, begin the trail

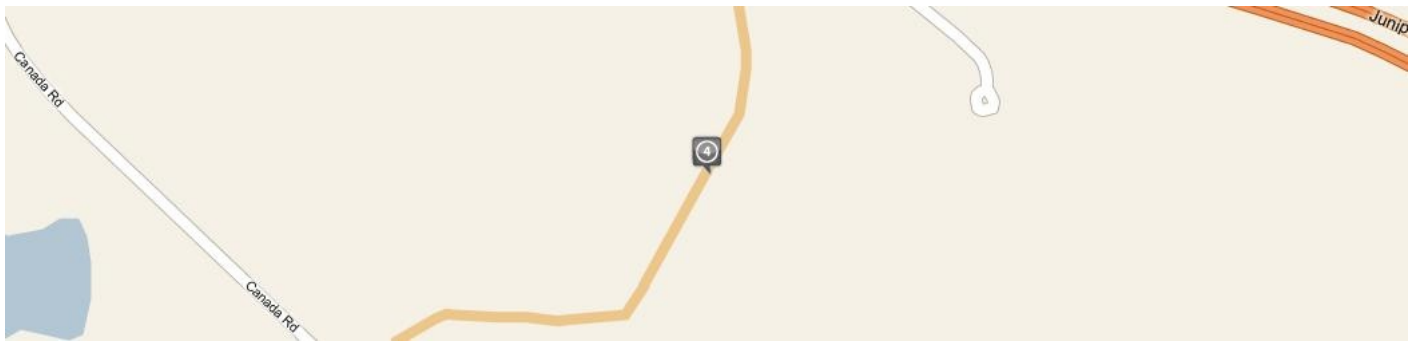


Now that the signs have reminded you that you're on important property, begin your trek up to sweeping views of the watershed.

3d. Grass and fence



The trail quickly opens up to grassland. A fence alongside reminds hikers that their access to this watershed property is limited.



4. Oaks and Friends latitude 37.49256 longitude -122.315356

4a. Oaks and other usual suspects



Further up the ascent, hikers find themselves among common flora of the Bay Area landscape: coast live oak, coyote brush, flowering annual grasses.

4b. Spanish moss



Many of the oaks are hosts to Spanish Moss (*Ramalina menziesii*), which is actually a lichen, a combination of a fungus and an algae. The lichen doesn't harm the tree, though it can often be found on leafless branches where it can get more light.

4c. Moss on dying oak



This oak, an oddity for being somewhat of a loner rather than among a stand of trees, was probably once home to much more Spanish Moss, but has now become too dry provide a good site for the lichen.

4d. Don't touch those leaves



And no Bay Area hike could be complete with out spotting our constant companion, poison oak. Though the leaves are pretty, they're best left alone.



5. Rocks, Teasels, Lichen latitude 37.5007 longitude -122.3188

5a. Blueschist vignette



This blueschist is an unusual type of metamorphic rock that forms in high-pressure, low-temperature environments, such as plate subduction zones, where one of the earth's tectonic plates slides under another.

5b. Dried Teasels



Ringling this blueschist bolder is *Dipsacus fullonum*, or Common Teasel. This non-native, thistle-like plant has been used for combing out wool for centuries. Despite its storied history in Europe, it is considered an invasive weed here in North America.

5c. Common Teasel and blueschist



Dipsacus fullonum, or Common Teasel, here seen in its fresh state, accompanying a lovely blueschist boulder speckled with colorful lichen.

5d. Lichen mosaic on blueschist



This blueschist plays host to lichens of white, orange, yellow and chartreuse.



6. Trailhead, Tectonics, Naked Ladies latitude 37.50322 longitude -122.32042

6a. At the top, your reward



This view from the top of the hill is no ordinary vista. The body of water is Upper Crystal Springs reservoir, one of several that holds San Francisco's drinking water. The San Andreas fault runs through the valley under Crystal Spring. This means you are standing on the North American tectonic plate (which is moving south) and looking across the valley at the Pacific plate (which is moving north). If you could return in 5,000 years, you might be able to notice how things have shifted.

6b. Naked Ladies



Amaryllis belladonna, more commonly known as Naked Ladies, sprout green foliage in spring, which dies down over summer. Later in the season, the leafless stalks spring forth with beautiful, if somewhat haunting flowers.

6c. Naked lady, close up



A closer view of the belladonna lily. The heady perfume of a fresh bloom has been likened to bubble gum or cotton candy.

6d. End of the trail



From here, you can continue on to other San Mateo parks trails, such as Water Dog Park, and can even continue all the way to Camino Real. You can find connecting routes on the Map of Mid-County Trails, downloadable from the San Mateo Department of Parks website.