



DISCOVER

FRANKLIN RIDGE

Franklin Ridge

The hills to the west and southwest of downtown Martinez are known locally as Franklin Ridge, named for Gold Rush pioneer Edward Franklin who came to California from England in 1849. He purchased a two-story adobe ranch house from Vicente J. Martinez in 1853 that can be seen at the John Muir National Historic Site. A climb into these hills is a delightful way to experience this landscape much as it was years ago.

Alhambra Creek

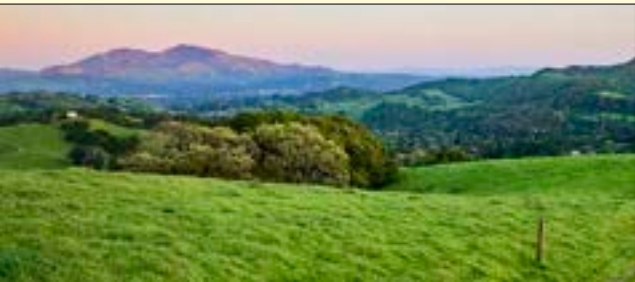
The upper tributaries of Alhambra Creek nourish indigenous wildlife such as the belted kingfisher, river otters, and the green heron. Alhambra is also home to the famous Martinez beavers, who have been sighted in downtown Martinez, sparking the annual Beaver Festival.

Almond Ranch

This stunning 281-acre property was the proverbial “missing piece” that now connects all properties along Franklin Ridge. A top priority of land conservationists for decades, the ranch is the nexus for major trails. Its acquisition in 2019 added a vital missing segment to the Bay Area Ridge Trail—a 550-mile loop that circumnavigates the entire Bay Area.

Gerlack & Barnett

In 2024 JMLT added 100-acre Kenneth Gerlack Preserve and 134-acre Barnett Ranch to the patchwork of conserved lands atop the Ridge. Gerlack established new trail connections, and Barnett added two stunning vista points while expanding the range of the wildlife corridor to the north and east.



Sky Dutra Gustin

John Muir Land Trust acquired Sky Ranch in 1998 and then Gustin Ranch in 2002, saving both from impending development. Historic 158-acre Dutra Ranch, the critical link between the two, was acquired from the Dutra Family in 2004. The properties are at the heart of this vital corridor for native wildlife. The 3-mile Tina Batt Trail is named for a founder of JMLT. As you walk along her namesake trail, delight in the surrounding live oak and bay laurel woodlands, rolling grasslands, and coastal scrub.

Parking

These three properties are accessed via Feeder Trail #1 from the Dutra Road trailhead. From Alhambra Road, take Franklin Canyon Road west one mile and turn south on Dutra Road. The trailhead is on the left about one-tenth mile up the road. Park before the trailhead and stables, then follow Feeder Trail #1 for one mile to the Sky Ranch entrance.

Stonehurst

John Muir Land Trust was founded by neighbors around a kitchen table to protect this 150-acre open space from development. Vaca Creek Trail provides public access where it connects with the Hal Olson Founders Trail, named for a founder of JMLT. Take it up into the hills to enjoy endless family recreation.

Parking

The trailhead and parking are on Vaca Creek Road, just north of Alhambra Valley Road. Across the road, Pine Tree Trail connects to the expansive Briones Regional Park.

Flora & Fauna

Native oaks and wildflowers, including poppies, lupines, and Mt. Diablo sunflowers flourish across the landscape. Creeks provide habitat for the threatened California red-legged frog and Alameda whipsnake, while songbirds and raptors soar overhead.



John Muir National Historic Site

4202 Alhambra Ave., Martinez, CA 94553

For decades, JMLT and the National Park Service have been partners in the expansion of the John Muir National Historic Site (JMNHS), the home of the Victorian mansion where famed naturalist John Muir lived. JMLT enlarged the site by acquiring Mount Wanda in 1992 and donating West Hills Farm in 2018. Ongoing efforts to expand Franklin Ridge increase the entire protected area—lands owned by the two partners—a seamless natural wonderland of trails and stunning views.

Parking

The main JMNHS parking lot is located at the intersection of Highway 4 and Alhambra Avenue.

The Mount Wanda staging area and parking lot are located nearby, on the south side of Highway 4 at the intersection of Alhambra Avenue and Franklin Canyon Road. The trailhead leads to the entire Franklin Ridge trail system.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Franklin Ridge

These glorious properties were acquired by John Muir Land Trust (JMLT) over three decades: Stonehurst (1991), Mount Wanda (1992), Sky Ranch (1998), Gustin Ranch (2002), Dutra Ranch (2004), West Hills Farm (2015), Almond Ranch (2019), Kenneth Gerlack Preserve (2024), and Barnett Ranch (2024). They offer stunning panoramas from elevated ridgetops, miles of multi-use trails, vital wildlife habitat, and the opportunity to reflect on the area’s rich history as you walk in the footsteps of John Muir himself. Visitors marvel at sweeping views of the Bay and Mount Tamalpais to the north and west, gorgeous rolling hillsides in vibrant seasonal colors to the south, and Mount Diablo and the distant snow-capped Sierra Nevada to the east.



Getting There

The Franklin Ridge properties are located south of Martinez, CA, most easily accessed from Highway 4 via the Alhambra Avenue exit. There are three main trailheads and parking areas.

Please make a donation today.
Scan the QR code or visit
jmlt.org/donate Thank you!



P.O. Box 31, Martinez, CA 94553 | (925) 228-5460 | jmlt.org



FRANKLIN RIDGE



ALMOND RANCH



BARNETT RANCH



DUTRA RANCH



GUSTIN RANCH



KENNETH GERLACK PRESERVE



MOUNT WANDA



SKY RANCH

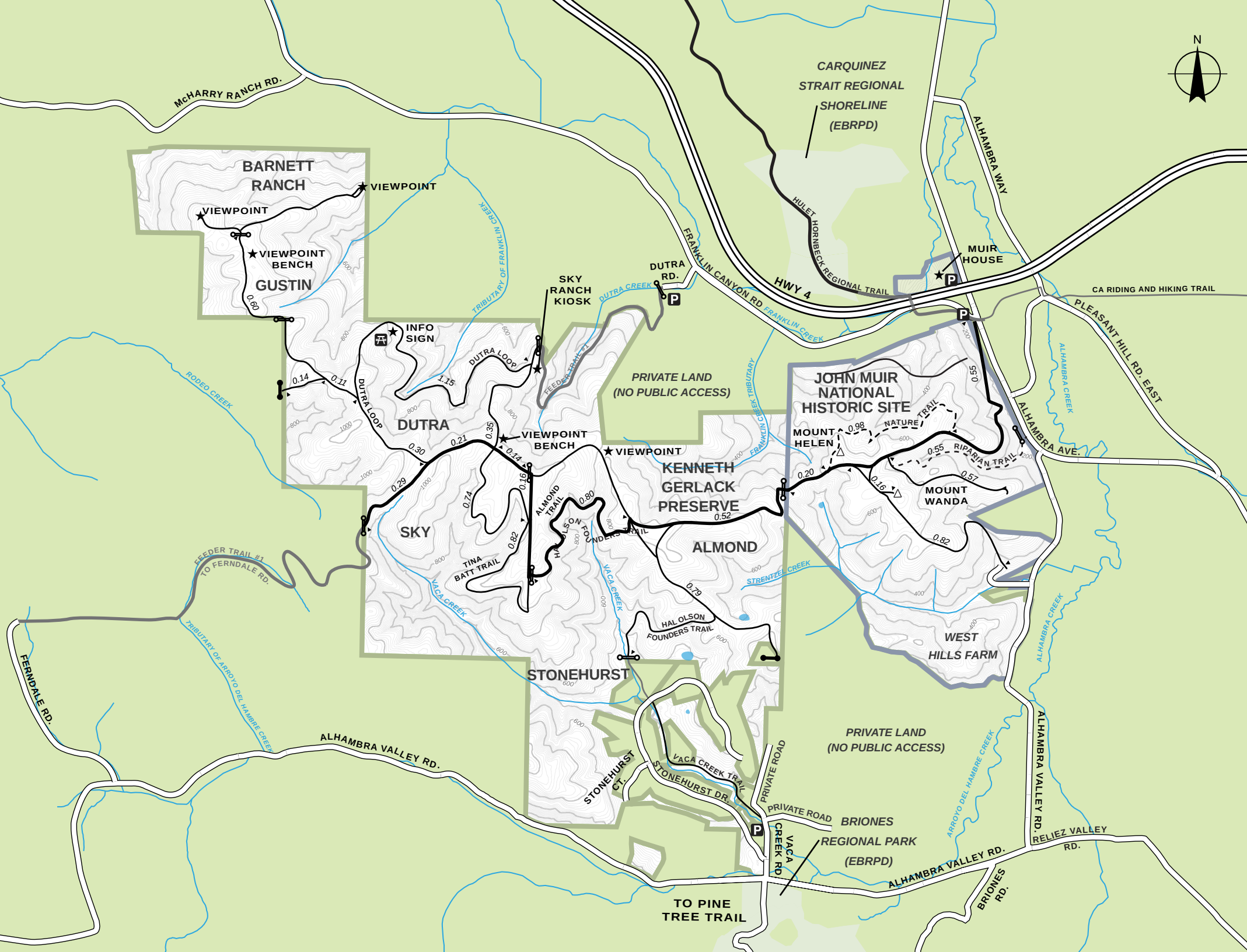


STONEHURST



WEST HILLS FARM





JOHN MUIR
LAND TRUST

LEGEND

— MULTI-USE TRAIL

- - - HIKING ONLY

— BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL (MULTI-USE)

— BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL, PRIVATE LAND (MULTI-USE)

— MULTI-USE PRIVATE LAND

— CREEK

— PAVED ROAD

▼ .26 ▼ MILEAGE BETWEEN POINTS

— LOCKED GATE

— UNLOCKED GATE

P PARKING

PICNIC AREA

★ SITE FEATURE

— NPS PROPERTY BOUNDARY

— JMLT PROPERTY BOUNDARY

20-FT CONTOUR INTERVAL

0 500 1,000 2000 FT

PREPARED BY RESTORATION DESIGN GROUP, INC. 2020

Rules

- Open from dawn to dusk.
- Areas of John Muir National Historic Site have restricted hours and separate rules. Visit [nps.gov/jomu](https://www.nps.gov/jomu).
- Trails are multi-use. Bicyclists yield to hikers. All yield to equestrians.
- Dogs on-leash near picnic area. Dogs off-leash on trails if under control at all times.
- High fire risk. Smoking, campfires, barbeques and fireworks are not permitted.
- Camping, fishing and hunting are prohibited.
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- Drones are prohibited.
- Cattle-grazing area. Do not attempt to touch. Keep distance and avoid getting between cows and their calves. Dogs must be under control or on-leash.
- Close any gate found closed.

Information

- No bathrooms.
- No potable water available.
- Garbage service is limited. Please pack out all trash.
- Contact JMLT at 925-228-5460 or info@jmlt.org.

