

PALOMAR MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

Civilian Conservation Corps Heritage Adventure

Silvercrest Picnic Area

The effects of the Poomacha fire on the park are most evident in and around the Silvercrest picnic area. Some of the picnic tables built by the CCC were destroyed at the edges of the picnic area, but firefighters were able to save the picturesque groupings of stonework tables and benches built around three impressive heritage trees in the center of the picnic grounds. This picnic area also contains two two-way camp stoves and one four-way stove, as well as individual camp stoves built by the Cs.

Doane Valley Campground

Traveling down the road to Doane Valley you will leave the fire area. As you cross over the bridge into the campground area, look to the right—you will see part of the elaborate rockwork spillway the CCC boys built for the Doane Pond dam. The CCC built the pond and the dam to add to the recreation resources of Doane Valley. The pond is a popular fishing spot.

Continuing on, you will see the pond itself to your right, and then enter the pleasant, shady Doane Valley campground. The campground features terraced campsites with extensive rockwork retaining walls and stairs built into the hillside by the CCC. As is fitting for the park rustic style of architecture used in CCC projects, the rock walls blend into the natural stones of the area, even using some stones that were already there as part of walls. Many camp stoves and tables built by the Cs are still in use in Doane Valley. At the beginning of the nature trail, on the northwest side of the campground, you will see more extensive rockwork on the creek banks and on the supports of the trail bridge from the campground. The wooden bridge itself is a more recent replacement, but is built in the shape of one that the Cs constructed in the park.

Boucher Hill Scenic Drive

The CCC developed this road around Boucher Hill as a scenic drive. Take time to stop at the top and walk out to the view deck, which is also wheelchair accessible. To the southwest, over 4,500 feet below you, lies the verdant Pauma Valley. Equally stunning sights greet you to the north, west, and southeast. The dramatic views also make this an excellent spot for a fire lookout. An interpretive sign near the parking lot will tell you that the current lookout tower is the third to be constructed on Boucher Hill. The CCC built the second tower.

Ranger Residence and garage

This home was originally know as the warden's residence. (In the 1930s, the park supervising ranger was called the Park Warden.) The house was saved from the Poomacha fire, thanks to hi-tech fire retardant gel, but the wood sections of the garage burned. The accompanying picture is of the house and garage soon after it was completed. California State Parks is working to restore the garage. An interesting feature to note between parks on this tour: the Mt. San Jacinto State Park warden's residence was built using the same plans as at Palomar, but with massive wooden pillars instead of rockwork.

Want to Go Farther?

CCC companies stationed at the Doane Valley CCC camp built the road and telephone line up to Palomar Observatory, a short distance away from Palomar Mountain State Park.



On the Trail of the CCC

Hike from a CCC-built bridge foundation to a CCC-built dam

Start: Northwest side of Doane Valley Campground: cross red bridge and take nature trail

Length: approximately 1 1/4 miles (one-way)

Difficulty: Moderately easy (two stream crossings and a few steep areas on nature trail)

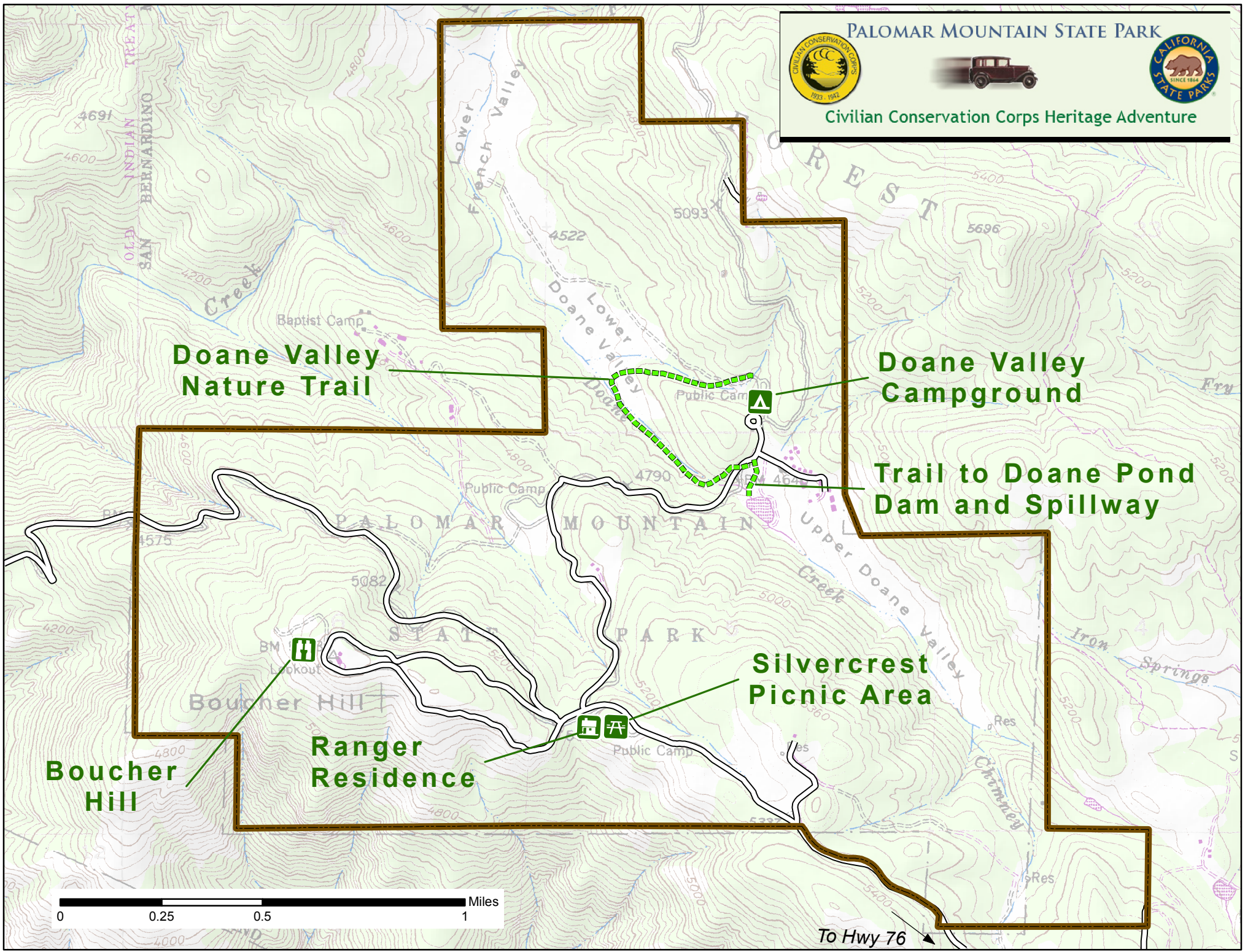
The CCC built the bridge supports and other rock work at the beginning of this walk. When you reach the road, cross and take the trail to the Doane Pond dam. You will cross over more CCC bridge supports on your way to the dam and its rockwork spillway.



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Doane Valley Nature Trail

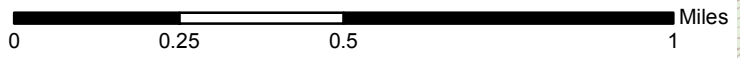
Doane Valley Campground

Trail to Doane Pond Dam and Spillway

Silvercrest Picnic Area

Ranger Residence

Boucher Hill



To Hwy 76