

MENDOCINO WOODLANDS STATE PARK

Civilian Conservation Corps Heritage Adventure

In the 1930s, the state and local park movement accelerated, thanks to New Deal projects run by the National Park Service. One of these projects was the Recreation Demonstration Area (RDA) program. A combination of progressive urban reform ideas, a federal program to buy up spent land from farmers for other uses, and the availability of Works Progress Administration (WPA) and CCC labor led to the creation of thirty-four RDAs across the United States.

RDAs were a new kind of state park, built to provide group camping and outdoor recreation opportunities near urban areas. Mendocino Woodlands is the only one still being used for group camping, and it still looks very much as it did when it was completed in 1942. It is notable for its finely crafted buildings, arranged into three separate camps along the Little North Fork of the Big River, and is one of the country's best examples of the National Park Service's depression-era landscape designs. Because of its historic context and integrity, Mendocino Woodlands has been designated a National Historic Landmark.

Built Mainly by WPA Workers, with Some CCC Work

Mendocino Woodlands was built on land that had been heavily logged over. Unlike the other sites on these tours, it was constructed almost entirely by local WPA workers. CCC "boys" from Russian Gulch camp developed the roads and trails, and transplanted native plants to improve the scarred landscape.

Managed for 60 Years by a Nonprofit Group

Mendocino Woodlands has been run by the nonprofit Mendocino Woodlands Camp Association (MWCA) since 1949. MWCA manages and maintains the park, handles group reservations, raises money to help preserve the Woodlands, and provides high-quality environmental education programs. Groups that use the Woodlands run the gamut from family reunions to corporate retreats, as well as a wide variety of camps for children, families, and adults.

Important Information about Visiting Mendocino Woodlands

-While as a State Park it is open to the public, please be considerate of any groups using the camps. **The camps are often occupied.** Please **call ahead (707-937-5755)** to arrange a time that you may visit. The camps were designed for walking, and are best viewed that way. Ask about where to park, and alternatives if you are not able to walk around the camps.

-Late August through early October is the best time to visit. The busy summer season is over, the winter rains have not started, and days are usually free of fog.

-The final three miles of the trip to Mendocino Woodlands is on a winding gravel road, so be prepared to take a little longer to reach the park. But it is worth it. There are *ninety-three* historic buildings in three separate group camps at the end of the drive, arranged in almost completely intact 1930s National Park Service classic landscape designs.



On the Trail of the CCC and the WPA

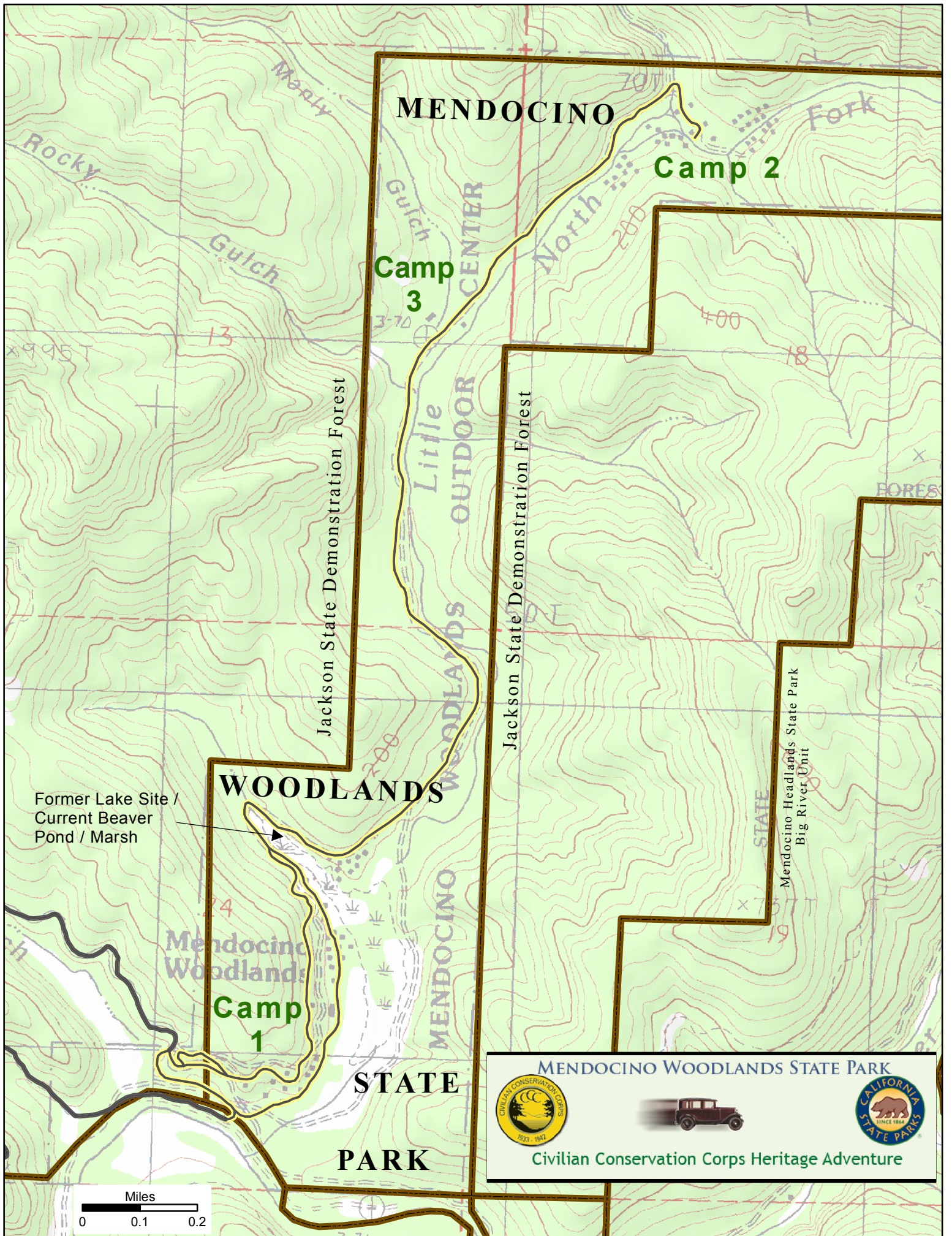
Hike to the Observation Point

Start: Forest History trailhead on Road 408, or from trailhead near Mendocino Woodlands Camp 2.

Length: 1 mile (one way) to Observation Point from Road 408. 4.5 miles for entire loop plus access trail from Road 408.

Difficulty: Moderately Difficult (some steep sections)

The Forest History trail loops around a hill in the Jackson Demonstration Forest, which was part of the original Mendocino Woodlands RDA. Sections of the trail were built by the CCC. A spur trail on the loop's north side leads to the Observation Point. WPA workers built a lookout platform at Observation Point. It is no longer there, but the views are still great.



MENDOCINO

Camp 2

Camp 3

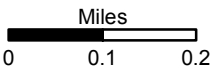
WOODLANDS

Camp 1

STATE

PARK

Former Lake Site /
Current Beaver
Pond / Marsh



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