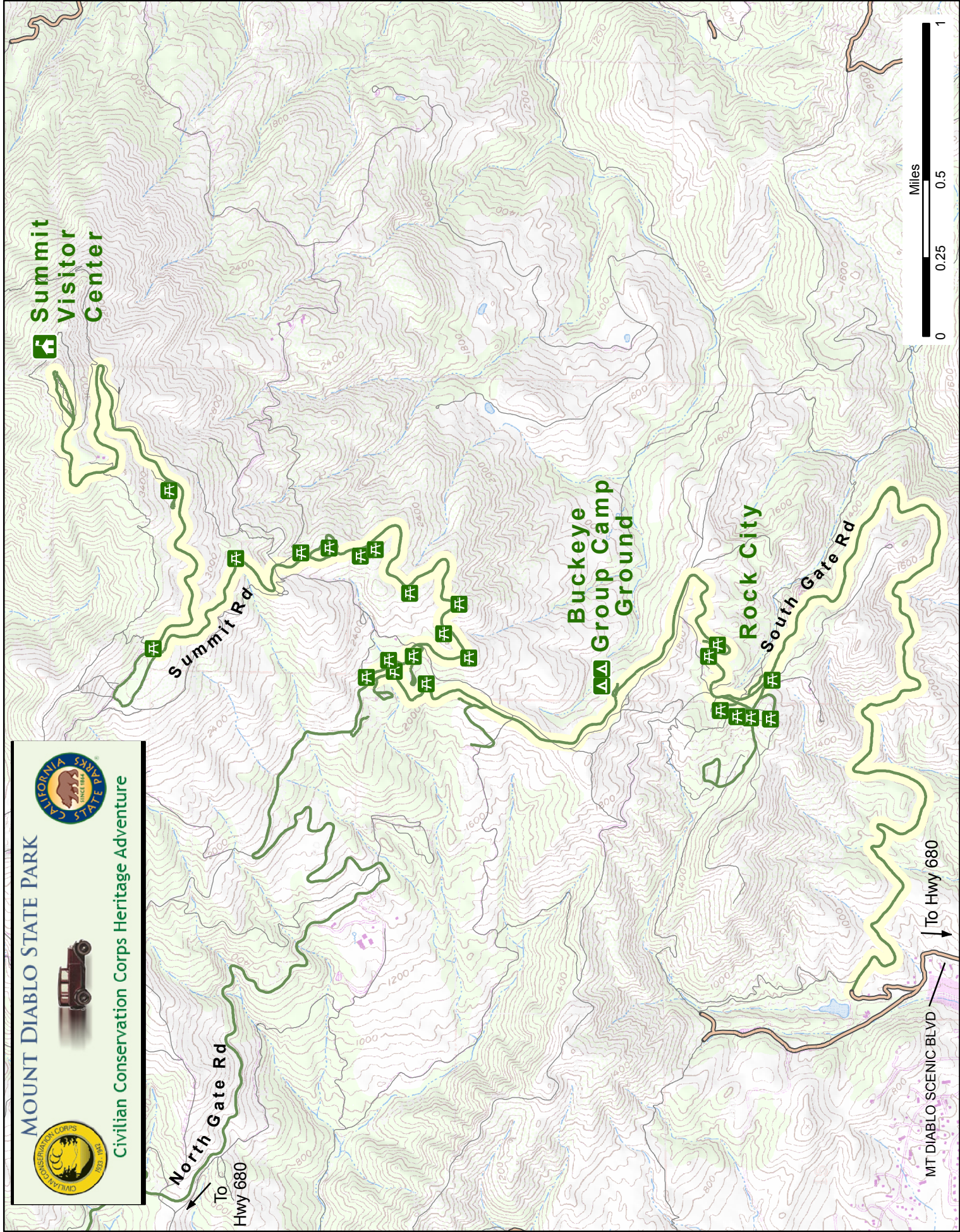


MOUNT DIABLO STATE PARK



Civilian Conservation Corps Heritage Adventure



MOUNT DIABLO CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS HERITAGE TOUR

Rock City Picnic Area

In approximately another mile, you will reach the Rock City area. There are CCC-built day-use sites on either side of the road in this area, developed in 1936. An unusual aspect of these picnic sites is the way they are tucked into semi-private nooks, unlike the more common mass day-use areas of most parks. Especially on the west side of the road at Rock City, the picnic tables, benches, and stoves, made out of the native stone of the area, blend in to the surrounding limestone outcrops.

Buckeye Group Camp

Built in 1936, the Buckeye Group Camp is the most intact of the CCC-built campgrounds in the park. It's interesting to note here the differences in camp stove design. While all of the stoves the CCC built were based on a set of standard designs, they vary from park to park and within parks depending on what materials were available, where they were located, and who built them. Most of the stoves in this area include a chimney and a stone hearth. The stoves in the day-use areas are much simpler.

Individual Picnic Sites

As mentioned in the Rock City description, an unusual feature at Mt. Diablo is the isolated picnic areas built by the CCC. You will see several of these tucked into alcoves on the way to the summit, many with picturesque names such as Bridal Nook, Maple Nook, and The Pines. The men also built these sites in 1936.

The Summit Building

This is the crowning glory of Mt. Diablo, and of the CCC work at the park. A lookout tower portion was completed in 1941, and the rest finished in 1942. Fossil-bearing stone for the building was quarried in the park. The Summit Building is the park's museum and visitor center. Inside, along with other information on the park's natural and cultural history, is a display on the Civilian Conservation Corps in the park. New displays are being developed that will include even more information on the CCC.

A trip to the summit of Mt. Diablo is not complete without a visit to the top of the Summit Building. Stairs wind around the outside, or an elevator is available from the inside for those who need it. The view is stunning—especially on cool, clear winter days.

The aviation beacon atop the Summit Building is no longer regularly used. It was left dark after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. It is now lit every December 7 as a memorial to those who died in the attack.

The summit restroom is an easily overlooked CCC project. Constructed in 1940, it is built right into the hillside, with a viewing platform on top.

Want to Go Farther?

As mentioned above, Company 1921V spent winters at Mt. Diablo and summers at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Calaveras Big Trees is located on Highway 4, three miles east of the town of Arnold. CCC work that can still be seen there includes the Fallen Sentinel Bridge and Jack Knight Hall, originally built as a park recreation building. Calaveras Big Trees was also one of the first CCC camps in California. It opened in June 1933, just two months after President Roosevelt signed the bill creating the Conservation Corps. Calaveras Big Trees State Park is located right outside the heart of the Gold Country, a great area for a weekend get-away and sightseeing trip.

Hike to a CCC Feature

Hike to the CCC Trail Trailhead

(Optional: continue to Sentinel Rock)

Start: the west parking lot at Rock City, by the Big Rock picnic site.

Length: approximately 1/8 mile (one-way)

Difficulty: Easy (Optional hike moderately difficult.)

Take the trail that leaves the parking lot by the Big Rock picnic site. In about 1/8 mile you will reach the CCC Trail trailhead. There is an interpretive panel about the CCC at the trailhead. You will also be able to see the cable route that the CCC built up Sentinel Rock.

To reach Sentinel Rock, hike about a half mile more on the moderately difficult CCC Trail.