



Park Activities Fact Sheet

Bedwell Bayfront Park Master Plan

Geocaching

What is it? Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. An example is shown to the right.



Land use considerations Geocaches can be found all over the world. It is common for geocachers to hide caches in locations that are important to them, reflecting a special interest or skill of the cache owner. These locations can be quite diverse. They may be at your local park, at the end of a long hike, underwater or on the side of a city street. Generally accepted geocaching rules include:

- Physical elements of different geocaches should be at least 0.10 miles (528 ft or 161 m) apart.
- Geocaches should not be placed in restricted, prohibited or otherwise inappropriate locations.
- Wildlife and the natural environment should not be harmed in the pursuit of geocaching.
- Geocache placements should not damage, deface or destroy public or private property.
- Geocaches should never be buried, neither partially nor completely.
- All local laws and documented land management policies apply.

Orienteering

What is it? Orienteering is a competitive international sport that combines racing with navigation. It is a timed race in which individual participants use a specially created, highly detailed map to select routes and navigate through diverse and often unfamiliar terrain and visit control points in sequence. Courses also can be enjoyed as a walk in the woods, with difficulty levels from beginner to expert offered at most events. **Bedwell Bayfront Park currently hosts an orienteering course**



Orienteering course A permanent orienteering course contains checkpoints or control locations (sometimes called "controls") designated on a map and set up within a park, using one of several types of permanent markers (some parks remove markers in the winter). The marker indicates that the user has found the correct site marked on their orienteering map. The image to the right shows one type of permanent marker, which may be affixed to a tree or post. This photo of an existing marker was taken at Bedwell Bayfront Park.

Hand-launched radio controlled model glider (thermal soaring)

What is it? A model glider is a scale model of a sailplane used in radio control (RC) flying hobby. The model glider normally does not have any form of propulsion, though they can be controlled remotely from the ground with a transmitter. **Model gliding is an activity that was previously allowed at Bedwell Bayfront Park, until the City Council banned flying of remote controlled aircraft and unmanned aerial systems in August 2016.**

Model aircrafts come in all types and sizes, though gliders with a 50"+ wingspan are generally difficult to launch by hand. Within a 36-mile radius of Menlo Park, there are 5 public parks that allow model aircraft flying. The following table lists those sites:

Site Name	Distance from MP (miles)	Aircraft types allowed	Other info
Windy Hill Preserve	8	Slope gliders* (non-motorized)	Day permit required by online request
Coyote Hills Regional Park, Newark	12	Slope gliders only	Flying allowed only at Glider Hill
Baylands Park, Sunnyvale	13	Electric aircraft	No official recognition of RC model flying is indicated on the Baylands Park website
Rancho San Antonio Park**	14	Electric aircraft	No helicopters, multicopters/drones. Weight, sound, and speed limits
Mission Peak Regional Park	26	Slope gliders (non-motorized)	N/A

* Slope gliders are defined as: gliding in the updraft created by wind blowing into a hill

**See image below for example of the signage provided at this site

Rancho San Antonio County Park has signage that is posted to notify glider users of the regulations and permitted uses. Bedwell Bayfront Park could use similar language, sign, and use restrictions to help mediate the use of the gliders.

At Bedwell Bayfront Park, prior to the Council ban, hand-launched gliders and motor-assisted gliders, as well some gliders launched by “hi-start” (stretched rubber tubing and string serving as a glider slingshot) were typically flown from the northern edge of the meadow. Slope gliding near the north west corner of the park also took place.

Noise and wildlife concerns

- A hand launched glider does not generate any noise beyond its own



movement and could be compared to the sound of a flying kite. Nesting birds can be disturbed by (full size) aircraft, but research into model glider impacts are less clear. Some research indicates that flying kites can disturb nesting birds. The biologist for the master plan project has not identified the use of gliders (nor kites) as an ecological concern. Baylands Park in Sunnyvale borders an open water bird preserve. The park's rules prohibit kites and model rockets, but model aircrafts are permitted as long as they are not flown over the bird preserve.

- Park user concerns – The degree of hazard posed by model aircraft depends on the weight and speed of individual models. Gliders are generally lightweight (5 pounds or less), and speeds would depend on wind conditions and flight patterns.

Boat Launch Information

Users

- Non-motorized: kayak, canoes and other small boat paddlers

Water body type

- Tidal water bodies experience dramatic changes in water level; a deep channel can become a muddy flat within a period of hours. Tidal changes can pose risks to paddlers when rocks or other hazards are exposed in lower water levels. Paddlers need to plan their trips to take advantage of optimum tides. Launches need to be built to withstand tidal fluctuations and possible impacts caused by floating debris or aquatic life carried in or left behind by tidal currents. Materials used to construct launches should be salt-resistant.
- Current small boats, such as kayakers, who launch from the Port of Redwood City are able to navigate to Bedwell Bayfront Park, Flood Slough, and Westpoint Slough, but are not able to put in at the park. Providing a boat launch would allow paddlers to stop at the park, and provide an alternative launch point.
- Similar uses are provided at the Alviso Marina County Park boat ramp in the South Bay, pictured to the right. The Park is a gateway to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and provides water access to Alviso Slough, trails within the Refuge, and open waters of the San Francisco Bay.



Environmental considerations

- Vegetated banks with informal launch and take-out sites can be fragile and subject to trampling by paddlers, who may be unaware of their impact. Rocks or other natural materials may be placed in a way that directs paddlers toward specified launch areas and paddlers can be educated about their impacts. Natural grasses along these banks can help control erosion and preserve habitat.
- Environmental factors specific to salt water areas should also be considered when choosing a launch location or type, such as the level of sunlight needed by marsh and marine grasses.

Structures that block light may prevent vegetation from receiving sufficient light for growth. Additionally, using piles or other support structures on sandy estuary bottoms may cause sediment displacement.

- Some threatened bird species visit Flood Slough, and paddlers would need to maintain the recommended buffer distances from sensitive species, particularly during nesting season.

Launch design

- The choice of materials used to construct launches is particularly important in an environmentally sensitive area. Materials that require little onsite alterations and are least toxic are the most preferable for these sites. A natural resource specialist should be consulted during the site planning, construction and maintenance to assure the integrity of the shoreline is not jeopardized along with the quality of the water.
- Natural surface designs are the most ideal for launches in areas of fluctuating water levels. A low sloping beach, shown to the right, provides a perfect adaptable access point at various water levels. If no site similar to this is available, a floating or pile-supported launch could be considered. The water level should remain below the height of built decks.
- In multi-user sites provide some parking for vehicles with and without trailers.

