Condon Park Trails

Condon Park is near and dear to the many who know and use it frequently. On any given day you will find dozens of folks out playing disc golf, skateboarding, shooting baskets, or tending to their dogs in the "Dogs Run Free" facility under the pines. Two little league fields are in frequent use. Runners, walkers and bike riders course through the maze of trails in the wooded western part of the park. For those who don't yet know Condon Park, there is a world of good things to discover here.

**Place:** Grass Valley, CA  
**Season:** Year around  
**Land:** 80 acres owned by City of Grass Valley  
**Trail signs:** No named or signed trails. A few trail markers.  
**Length:** Over 3.5 miles of primary trails; additional miles of secondary paths.  
**Altitude change:** Depends on route taken. Gently rolling terrain. About 100' maximum change.  
**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate  
**Trail surface:** Mostly dirt; a few paved or decomposed gravel paths on east side of park  
**Environment:** Mixed conifer and hardwood forest in most trail areas. Some openings. There are shallow seasonal drainages; a small pond in the southeast corner of the park. The Allison Ranch Canal runs north-south through the western end of the park, sometimes in a ditch and, in places, as a free-flowing stream. There are three bridge crossings.

Cautions: Poison oak is found along many trails. Watch children carefully near the canal, streams and pond. Beware of flying discs on the disc golf course.

**Facilities:** Wide variety of urban park facilities including baseball diamonds, disc golf course, skate park, dog run area, covered group picnic area, BBQ areas, restrooms, arboretum, community building, children's playgrounds, outdoor basketball court, bocce court, horseshoe pits, volleyball area, pond and viewing platform.

**Rules:** No tobacco products except in designated areas; no littering; closed at dark; dogs on leash in permitted areas. Other rules posted on park signs. Detailed animal and dog regulations at GV Municipal Code section 12.32.050 N.

A quick overview: The trail system of Condon Park is a mystery to first-time visitors. There are no trail names, few markers, and the trails seem to go every which way in the western half of the park. Adding to this complexity, the 18 hole disc golf course in the western portion of the park has its own maze of fairways and connecting paths, many of which intermingle with trails crossing or bordering the course. Yet hundreds of people use these trails with confidence every week. The quickest way to learn the western trails is to explore them using the map provided on this web site. The trails on the eastern side of the park are few and easy enough to find.

**Trailheads:** There are many ways to enter Condon Park and its trails, most of them used primarily by residents neighboring the park, or by school kids coming down from Lyman Gilmore Middle School on the north. For visitors from outside the neighborhood, the best starting points are at the main visitor use parking lots inside the park itself.

To reach the park entrance from northbound Hwy 49 in Grass Valley, take the Colfax Hwy174/Grass Valley exit. At the end of the long off ramp, turn left on South Auburn Street then go left on Neal Street and uphill 2 blocks to South Church Street. Go left on South Church Street about 1/3 mile to a "T" intersection at St. Patrick's Catholic Church. Turn right on Chapel Street, then a quick left on Brighton Street. There are signs to Condon Park. Follow Brighton Street about 0.2 mile to Minnie Street and turn right. This street serves as the main park entrance (N39.21486 W121.07223.)

Inside the park, the first parking area you see on your left gives you quick access to trails running both east and west. Going east are several paths in the vicinity of the park's peaceful little pond. Going west from the basketball court by the covered picnic pavilion is a trail that connects with all other trails in the western part of the park, including many loop options.
There is another trailhead area up the road past the dog run and skate park at the large parking area by the disc golf course. Bocce ball courts, picnic areas and restrooms are also located around this parking area. Several trails leave from the bottom (south) end of the dirt portion of the parking area. A much-used trail leaves from the west side of the paved upper parking area. It heads into the southwest corner of the park.

Finally, there is the paved parking area adjoining the two baseball fields north of the community building known as the LOVE Building. From the uphill, most northwesterly, end of this parking area you can make a long, counterclockwise, trail loop around the park that comes back out by the parking lot nearest the entrance. It is an easy walk or ride back up to the baseball parking area from there.

**Trail tips:** *Because of the informal nature of the Condon Park trail system and the high potential for getting lost, the best trail tip for new visitors is to print and use the map on this web site as a guide.*

Please note that not every trail or path is shown on the map. There are various informal "social" or "use" trails making a myriad of connections in the park. Also not shown on the map are paths that run alongside the Allison Ranch Canal on either bank. The four bridges that cross the canal, however, are shown.

Note that there is not a bridge crossing the canal along the north boundary of the park where you might expect to find one. If you are at the far northwest corner of the park at the Cedar Avenue entrance you can cross the canal on a bridge by going about 50 feet due east of that entrance, then angling south-southeast and downhill about 80 yards through the disc golf area to the bridge (B1.)

There is a separate 0.2 mile loop trail through the small "Woodbridge Metcalf Fir Tree Arboretum" due west of the LOVE Building. The access is off the paved road leading to the baseball parking area. Several species of fir tree are marked with large signs. There is a picnic table near the entrance; also a bench under a grove of young fir trees on the north side of the loop.