Rambler Trail

This 0.8 mile out-and-back trail is located on Bear Yuba Land Trust’s 35-acre Clover Valley Preserve near the community of Alta Sierra. Built by hardworking volunteers and opened during the winter of 2015, the trail offers a pleasant walk along gentle switchbacks on a sunny slope dotted with Ponderosa pines and red buds. Look for the trail’s namesake, an old rusting sky blue 1964 Rambler a relic from a bygone era, before reaching the trail’s end, at a pretty spot near the edge of South Wolf Creek.

Place: Alta Sierra area of Grass Valley, CA  
Season: Year around  
Land: Bear Yuba Land Trust preserve, 35 acres  
Trail signs: Bear Yuba Land Trust sign at trailhead  
Length: 0.8 mile out-and-back  
Altitude change: 80 feet  
Difficulty: Moderate  
Trail surface: Native soil  
Environment: Mixed conifers and deciduous trees.  
Caution: Poison oak in the area.  
Rules: Non-motorized, foot and bike only. Dogs on leash. No smoking or camping.

Trailheads: From Highway 49, take McKnight exit, Grass Valley and turn onto Dog Bar Road. Travel on Dog Bar Road for 4.2 miles. Turn right onto Carrie Drive, travel for 1.1 miles. Turn left onto Gary Way for 0.2 mile. Turn left onto Brewer Road for 1.5 miles. Just past the school on the right, look for Clover Valley Road on the left. Go 0.1 mile to the crest of the hill and the trailhead will be on the right. Park in the dirt shoulder of Clover Valley Road next to the Preserve sign.

Trail tips: In December 2014, the Bach family – owners of the property since the 1970s – generously donated the land to BYLT for the purpose of protecting the land from development forever. Visitors of the Rambler Trail will have the opportunity to explore Clover Valley Preserve, a lovely example of an oak and mixed conifer forest.

Built by volunteers, the Rambler Trail is located on what was an empty lot that had been used as a dumpsite for years. Old mattresses, tires and other refuse were pulled from the site before trail construction began. Time is reclaiming an abandoned 1964 American Motors “Rambler.”

South Wolf Creek bisects the length of the landscape, providing habitat for aquatic and terrestrial life. Clover Valley Preserve is home to diverse trees and shrubs such as: Blue oak, black oak, live oak, Ponderosa pine, cedar, red bud, coffee berry, native blackberry and maiden hair fern. While you are hiking, listen for the soothing sound of the babbling creek. Invasive Himalayan blackberry brambles were cleared at the bottom of the trail, creating a nice quiet resting place next to the water.

Near Alta Sierra Elementary School, the Rambler Trail provides another outdoor recreation opportunity for the Alta Sierra community, in addition to nearby BYLT-owned and managed properties: Mathis Pond, Adam Ryan Preserve and Alan Thiesen Trail. Bear Yuba Land Trust fills a void in the community by providing community parks and trails where, besides a golf course, no others exist.