

White Oak Flat — Equestrian Staging Area

Todd Valley area, Foresthill Road, Placer County

Auburn State Recreation Area

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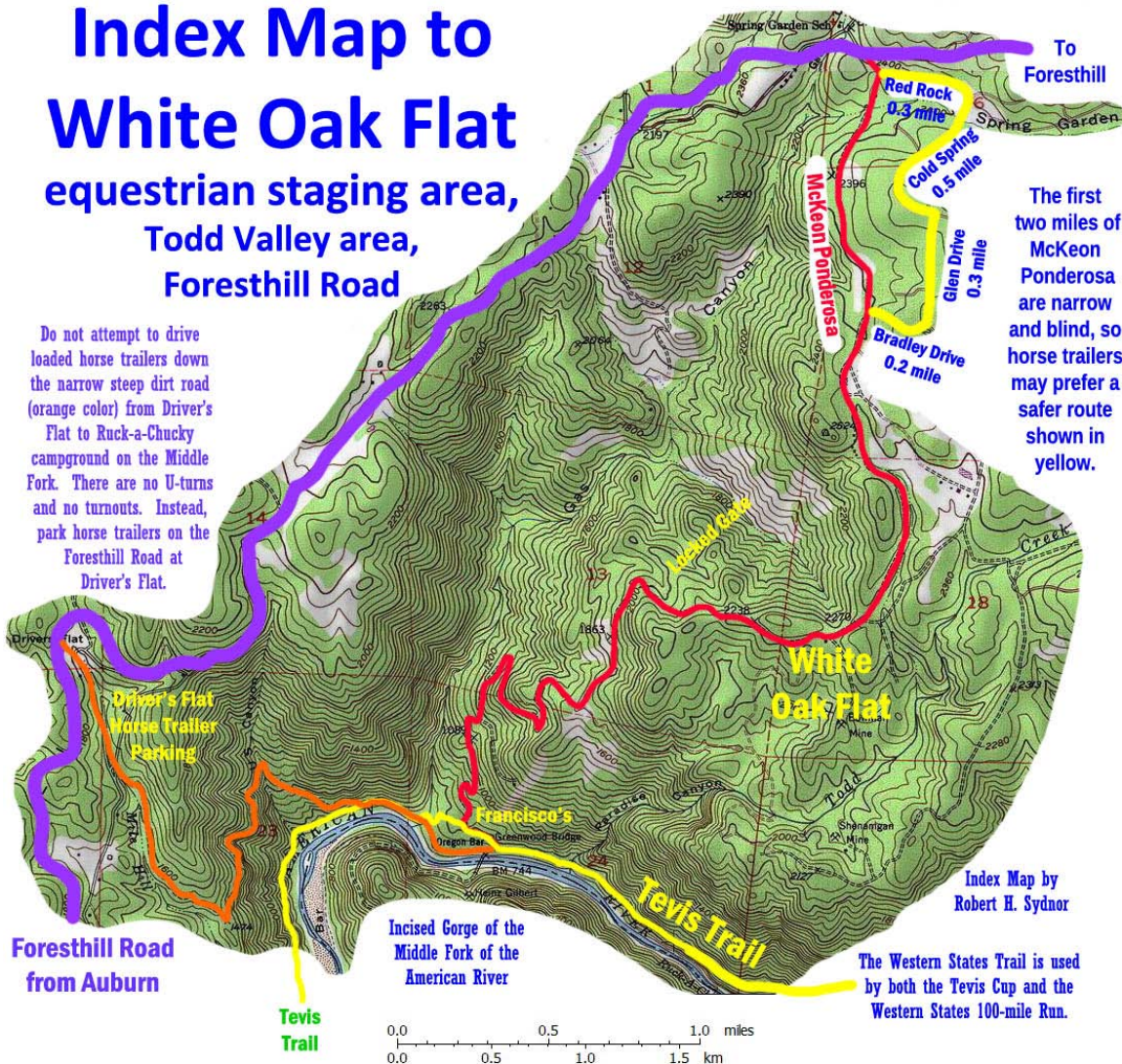
May 2011

Introduction

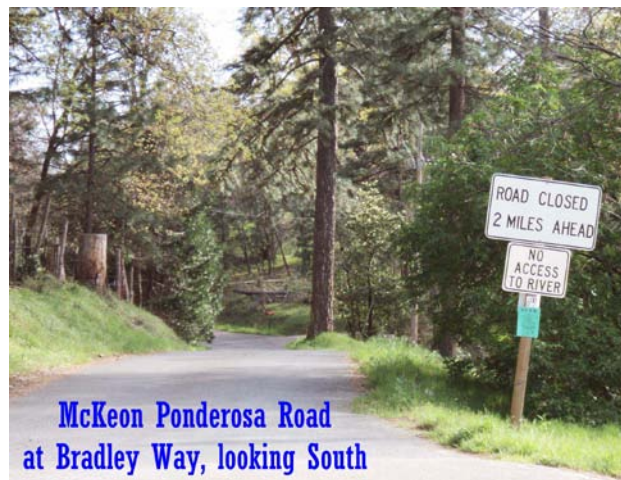
White Oak Flat is located within the Auburn State Recreation Area in Todd Valley, Placer County. The access is from Foresthill Road, thence onto McKeon Ponderosa Road. Refer to the index map. White Oak Flat is located on the historic Western States Trail, so it has been an important staging area for horses and mules for more than a century. The modern Tevis Cup and Western States 100-mile run does not go through White Oak Flat anymore, so it is not as well known. The modern route of the Tevis Cup now gradually descends from Foresthill at California Street into the deep canyon of the Middle Fork of the American River, across Dardanelles Creek, across Peachstone Creek, to near the river at Ford's Bar, thence paralleling the river to Francisco's at the 85-mile mark.

Each Spring, the **Tevis Educational Ride** takes advantage of the natural 33-mile loop that is formed by the two trails (the historic Western States Trail, and the modern Tevis Trail). Starting at the Foresthill millsite (elevation 2,230 feet), the riders and horses descend steadily on the modern trail into the canyon of Middle Fork of the American River, then turn the corner at Francisco's (elevation 787 feet), and return up the steep McKeon Ponderosa Road to the lunch-stop and veterinarian-check at White Oak Flat (elevation 2,230 feet), thence back through Todd Valley to Foresthill millsite (elevation 3,350 feet).

Index Map to White Oak Flat equestrian staging area, Todd Valley area, Foresthill Road



Driving Directions for Horsemen to White Oak Flat



At left, the signposts for the turn-off at McKeon Ponderosa Way.

At right, the signage along McKeon Ponderosa at Bradley Way.

Because the first two miles of McKeon Ponderosa are narrow with many blind turns, many horsemen with large trailers choose to use safer alternate route (= 0.3-miles along Red Rock, turn right onto Cold Spring for 0.5-miles, then right again onto Glen Drive for 0.3-miles, then right onto Bradley Way for 0.2 miles, then rejoin McKeon Ponderosa Road.) Refer to the index map with the yellow route.

We horsemen can smile at the road signage *for vehicles*.... because of the locked fire-gate two miles ahead. However, for horses, we do have access all the way to the river, but our beloved horses have to do the heavy lifting.

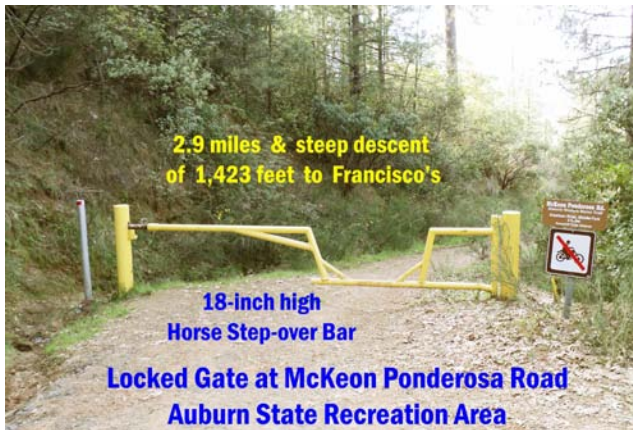


At left, signage by the Foresthill Trail Alliance shows the Historic Western States Trail.

At right, a view of White Oak Flat and the parking space for vehicles. There is no piped-water and no spring-water since this is located on the flat crest of a ridge. White Oak Flat is public property within Auburn State Recreation Area, but there are private ranches on both sides of the roadway, so be respectful of private property. Do not park with your horse-trailer blocking the roadway.



At left, the trail signpost is hung high-up in a white oak tree. At right, a view northwestward across the meadows at White Oak Flat. This is a vet-check during the Tevis Educational Ride each Spring.



At left, the locked fire-gate on McKeon Ponderosa Road. There is no turn-around here for vehicles. Never come here in a horse-truck; stay at White Oak Flat. Your horse must be able to step 18-inches over the bar. At right, a view of the meadow at Francisco's at the 85.0 milepost of the Tevis Cup.



At left, Tevis signage at Francisco's. At right, the beautiful cascades of Todd Creek at Paradise Canyon.