

Granite Bay Equestrian Assembly Area to Beals Point

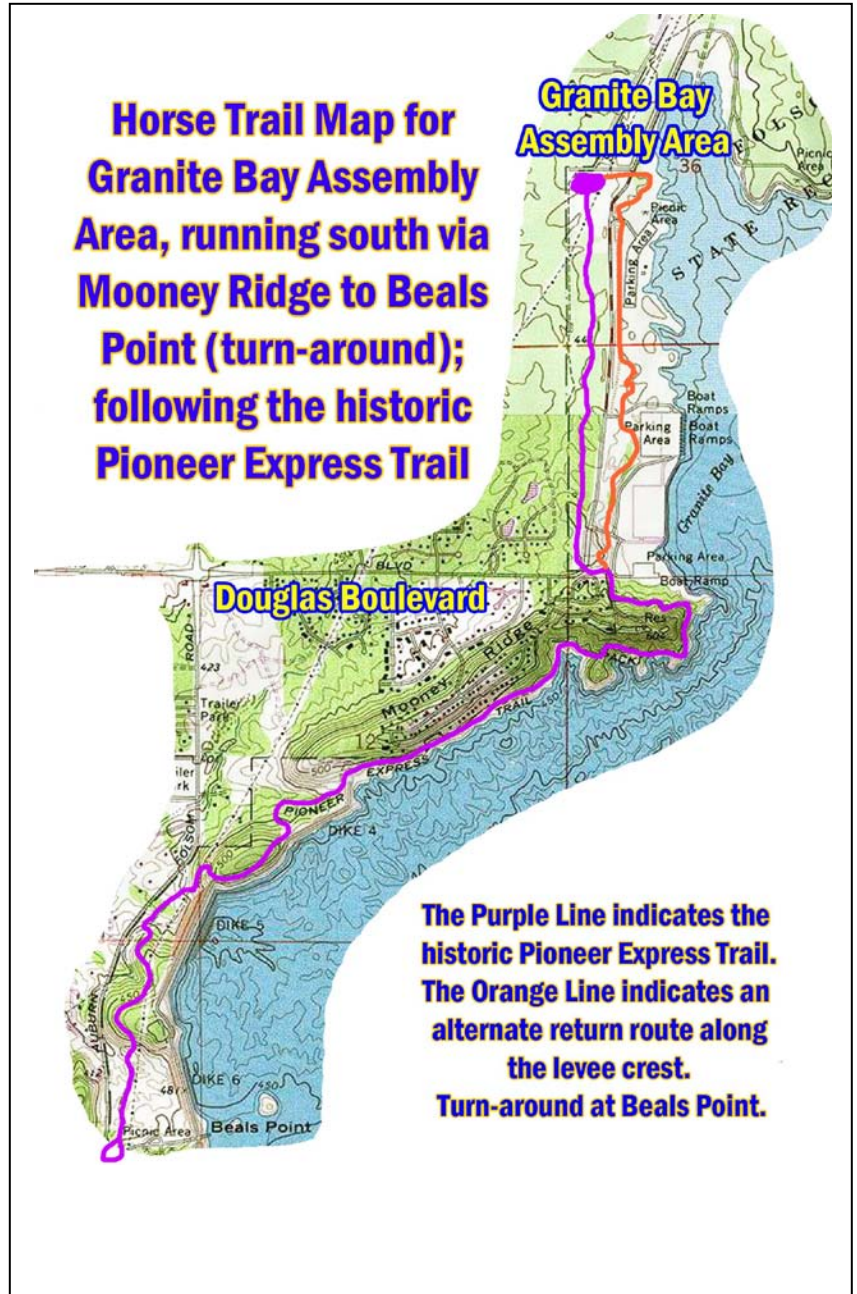
on the Historic Pioneer Express Trail within Folsom Lake State Recreation Area

by Robert H. Sydnor, AERC Trail Master

February 2012 LBHA Newsletter

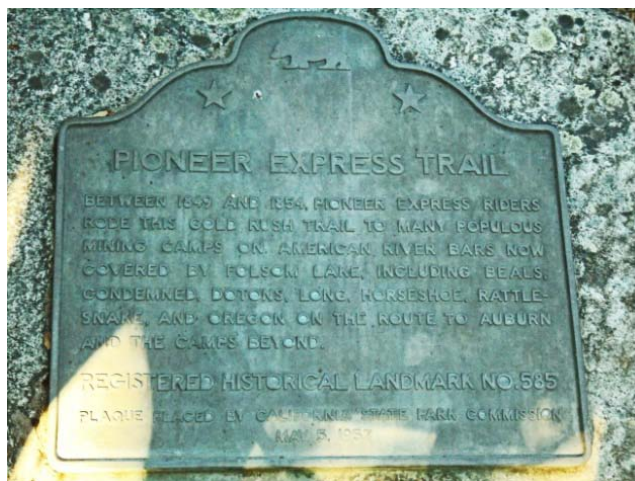
During the wintertime, with short daylight and uncertain weather, most equestrians from Loomis Basin Horsemen's Association prefer to ride locally at lower elevations. But our horses need exercise year-around to stay in shape. An expedient workout is a simple out-and-back ride on the historic Pioneer Express Trail using the convenient staging facilities at Granite Bay Equestrian Assembly Area. The ride is roughly 8 to 9 miles total (depending on the route variations), so that this short ride can be completed in less than two hours.

From the eastern terminus of Douglas Boulevard, pass through the pay-station at Granite Bay (use your annual Poppy Pass), then proceed north to the Granite Bay Assembly Area. There are hitching posts, picnic tables, wash-racks, a round-pen, a vault toilet, water faucets, and one watering trough.





At left, the historic Pioneer Express Trail skirts the east side of Mooney Ridge. The trail bed at this locality is a full-width fire road, and is heavily used by joggers, bicyclists, and horsemen. At right, a new timber bridge was constructed in 2009 when a one-mile section of the Pioneer Express Trail was rerouted west of Dike #5 by the Bureau of Reclamation. This was necessary because of remedial earthwork to seismically strengthen several of the high embankments on the west shore of Folsom Lake. This timber bridge is about one mile north of Beals Point. We dismounted here to clear-away the fallen branch which my horse is apprehensively looking at.



The brass Registered Historical Landmark #585 placed on May 5, 1957 commemorates the Pioneer Express Trail.



At Beals Point, we turn-around and head back to the equestrian staging area at Granite Bay. At right, an alternate route in Granite Bay follows the crest of an interior levee. Refer to map with this trail marked in orange.

