

Quarry Road Trail



Distance: 5.6 miles; 2¼ hours each way (hiking)
Difficulty: Easy
Slope: 0.5% avg; 15% max. (see below)

Trailhead / Parking

Trailhead is 2 miles south of ASRA Park Headquarters. Take Hwy 49 from Auburn south, turn right across the American River towards Cool, then turn left on a small dirt road, ¼ mile south of the river crossing. Trailhead is beyond the parking area at a green gate.

Description

This wide, level trail can be used for a half-day walk and a pleasant picnic along the Middle Fork (MF) American River. It goes through some of the best scenery available in the American River Canyons, and picnic tables are provided along the first 1¼ miles of the trail. For those looking for a good workout, this trail is 11.2 miles round-trip. Several side trails are accessible that can be used to create even more challenging loops. There is little shade, however, so take plenty of water and sunscreen on hot summer days.

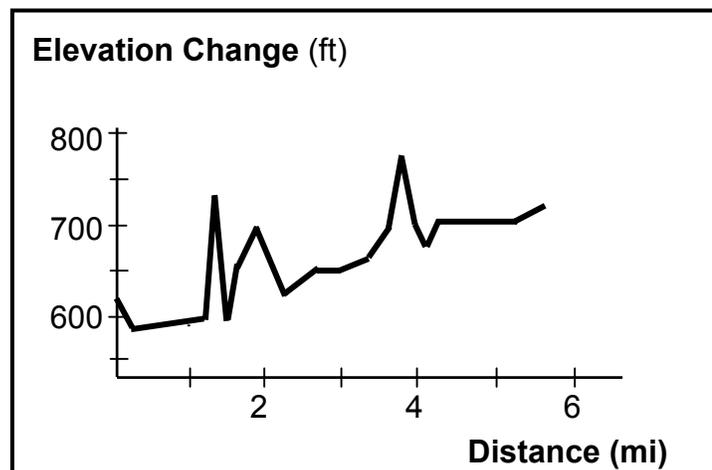
The Quarry Road Trail follows the route of the gold rush-era Grand Flume, a 13-mile long wood and canvas flume that was built annually

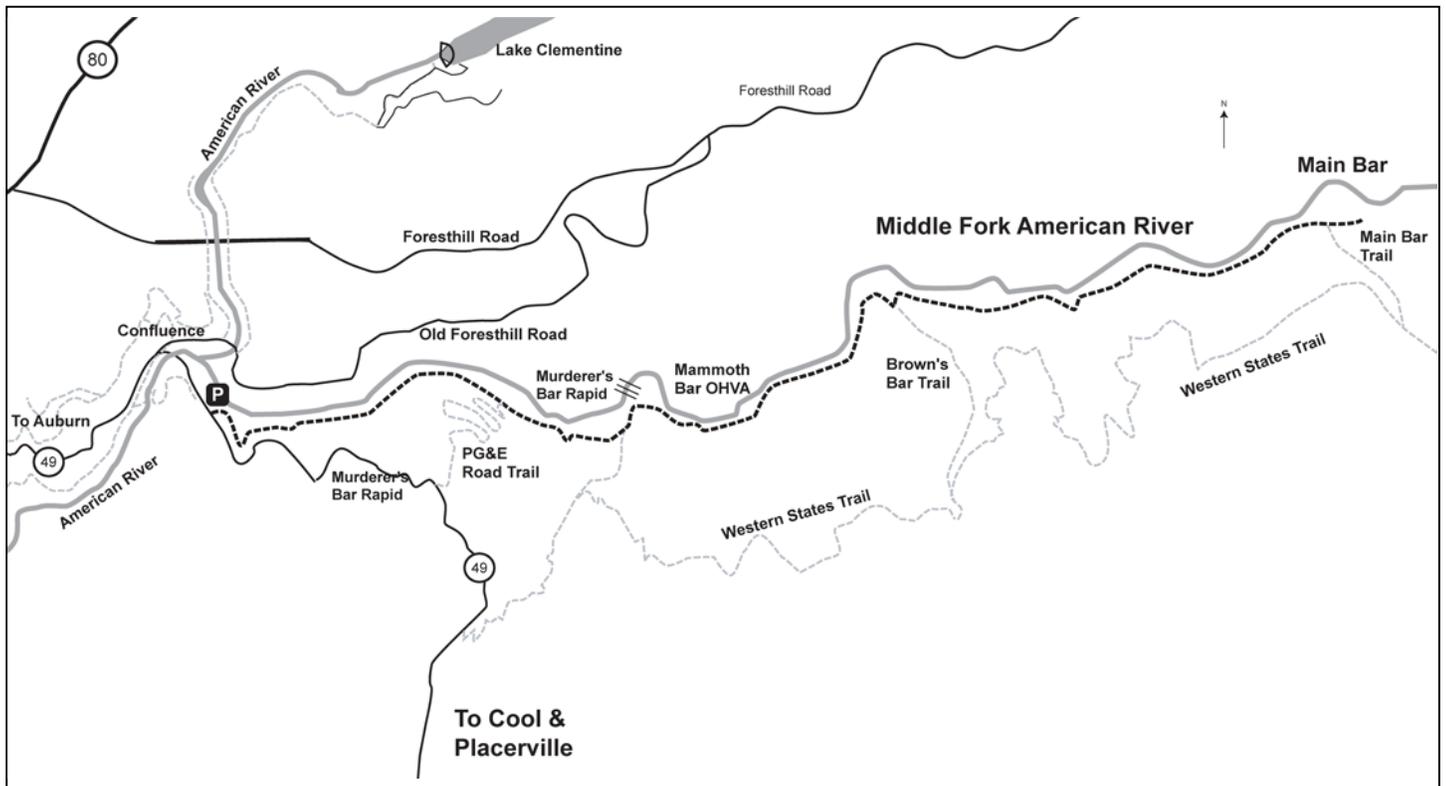
by private mining companies to extract gold from the river during the late 1850's. The Mountain Quarries Railroad also used the first 1¼ miles of the trail in the early 1900's to transport limestone from the quarry up to Auburn.

After 1¼ miles, the trail bears right up a short hill above the picnic area. Remnants of a large limestone-loading platform for the rail cars can still be seen on the left. At the top of the hill, a separate unmarked trail (known as the PG&E Road Trail) takes off uphill from just above the ruins of the limestone-loading platform. The PG&E Road Trail offers fascinating views into the now abandoned quarry (for hikers and bikers only). A short uphill trek and a couple of switchbacks brings you to a spectacular amphitheater in the quarry – well worth a 20-minute detour. For those with enough stamina to take this 1¼-mile trail to the top, it offers some awesome viewing spots of the river canyon and quarry. It comes out on Hwy 49 at the top.

Returning to the Quarry Road Trail and continuing upriver, the trail meets the historic Western States Trail (WST) at the 2-mile point (see sidebar). In the river below, you can hear the Murderer's Bar Rapids (and scramble up some rocks for a nice view), so named for a deadly skirmish between miners and Native Americans that occurred here in 1849. Further upriver, you may sometimes see and hear off-highway vehicles scurrying up and down the canyon on the other side of the river in the Mammoth Bar OHVA (the only designated OHV area in ASRA).

At the 3½-mile point, the trail intersects with Brown's Bar Trail (#4), which heads uphill along a creek and intersects at the top with the upper WST used by Endurance Runners. No bikers are permitted on either of these trails. The Quarry Road Trail ends at Maine Bar. Just before reaching Maine Bar, the trail intersects with Maine Bar Trail (#20), which heads uphill along a creek and intersects at the top with the upper WST used by Endurance Runners. No bikers are permitted on either of these trails.





Did You Know? – The Western States Trail originally stretched from Sacramento to Utah. The Sierra Crest portion of the trail, blazed by Paiute and Washoe Indians and later used by miners and Pony Express riders, is now the route of two world-famous endurance races: the Tevis Cup Ride for horses and riders, and the Western States 100-mile Endurance Run. Both races begin before dawn at Squaw Valley in the Lake Tahoe Basin and end in Auburn after nightfall, traversing roughly one hundred miles.

This part of the WST (from Ruck-A-Chucky campgrounds to the Hwy 49 crossing) is different for runners and riders. Endurance Runners hug the canyon wall on a narrow, winding trail about 600 feet above the river, while Tevis Cup riders take a wider, flatter trail closer to the river, following the route prospectors used to get from bar to bar along the river. The Quarry Road Trail joins with the lower WST from Main Bar to Murderer's Bar.

Thank you for visiting the Auburn State Recreation Area. Please take care to preserve and protect the trails, plants, and historic artifacts for other visitors (and for the wild residents of ASRA) by staying on the trail and by packing out all garbage to the trailhead. Some trails are very popular and may be crowded at times with hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Trail courtesy requires that bikers yield to hikers and equestrians, and that hikers yield to equestrians. In order to reduce conflicts and increase everyone's enjoyment, park visitors are required to act in a safe and courteous manner, obeying all park rules and speed limits, and respecting trail designations. **Not all trails are open to all uses. A large print version of this trail guide is available at ASRA Park Headquarters.**

This trail guide was created by ASRA Canyon Keepers, volunteers who assist the professional Park Rangers by providing information and assistance to ASRA visitors. Canyon Keepers conduct monthly hikes and meetings (open to the public) to learn more about the history and natural beauty of the American River Canyon. They also help maintain and improve hiking trails in ASRA. To learn more about Canyon Keepers, please call 530-885-3776 or click www.psyber.com/~asra/asrack.htm