

Maple Falls



Region: Santa Cruz County, Forest of Nisene Marks State Park
Length: 6.2 miles round trip (from Porter Family Picnic Area)

Difficulty: Moderate

Elevation Gain: 823 feet

Girls Bring:

backpack, 1 liter of water, snack, hat, jacket, good hiking or walking shoes, sunscreen, face mask. Adults add: Map/Info sheet, Required paperwork, first aid kit, phone, TP & ziploc (pack it out). If hiking after ~3pm add: headlamp, space blanket

When to go: Year round, open Sunrise to Sunset. Trail is mostly shaded and it can be cool and damp early/late in the day. Park and parking lots can be crowded on weekends. Highly recommended to arrive by 9 am.

Getting There and Parking: From the Hwy 1 Northbound, Exit 433B / Rio Del Mar Blvd in Aptos. Bear right on exit. Make left onto Soquel Drive. Follow Soquel Drive to Aptos Creek Road (~2 miles). Make right onto Aptos Creek Road and follow the road to the park entrance. Pay \$8 at the kiosk and continue on the road. If able to proceed, continue on the road until Porter Family Picnic Area. Ok to park at any earlier lots, it will just add

distance to your hike. Road ends at the gate. Park in the parking area and follow trail signs by the gate.

Bathrooms: Porter Family Picnic/Parking Area has bathrooms. Each parking lot within the park has bathrooms.

Safety Considerations: Use good judgement climbing any rocks or fallen logs. Mostly no poison oak until you reach the area near the falls.

Helpful Links:

<https://www.alltrails.com> (search Maple Falls)

Route Description (from alltrails):

Off the beaten path, The Forest of Nisene Marks is a refreshing retreat from the busy towns and beaches along Highway 1 near Santa Cruz. Its dense second- and third-growth redwood forest rises from near sea level to steep coastal mountains. The trail head is just a few yards beyond the locked gate. Continue north on the fire road beyond the locked gate, start on the Loma Prieta Grade Trail on the left. In about a 0.5 miles bear to the right at the fork and switch over to Bridge Creek Trail. Follow Bridge Creek Trail all the way to Maple Falls about 3 miles to the falls (6 miles in and out). The park map makes





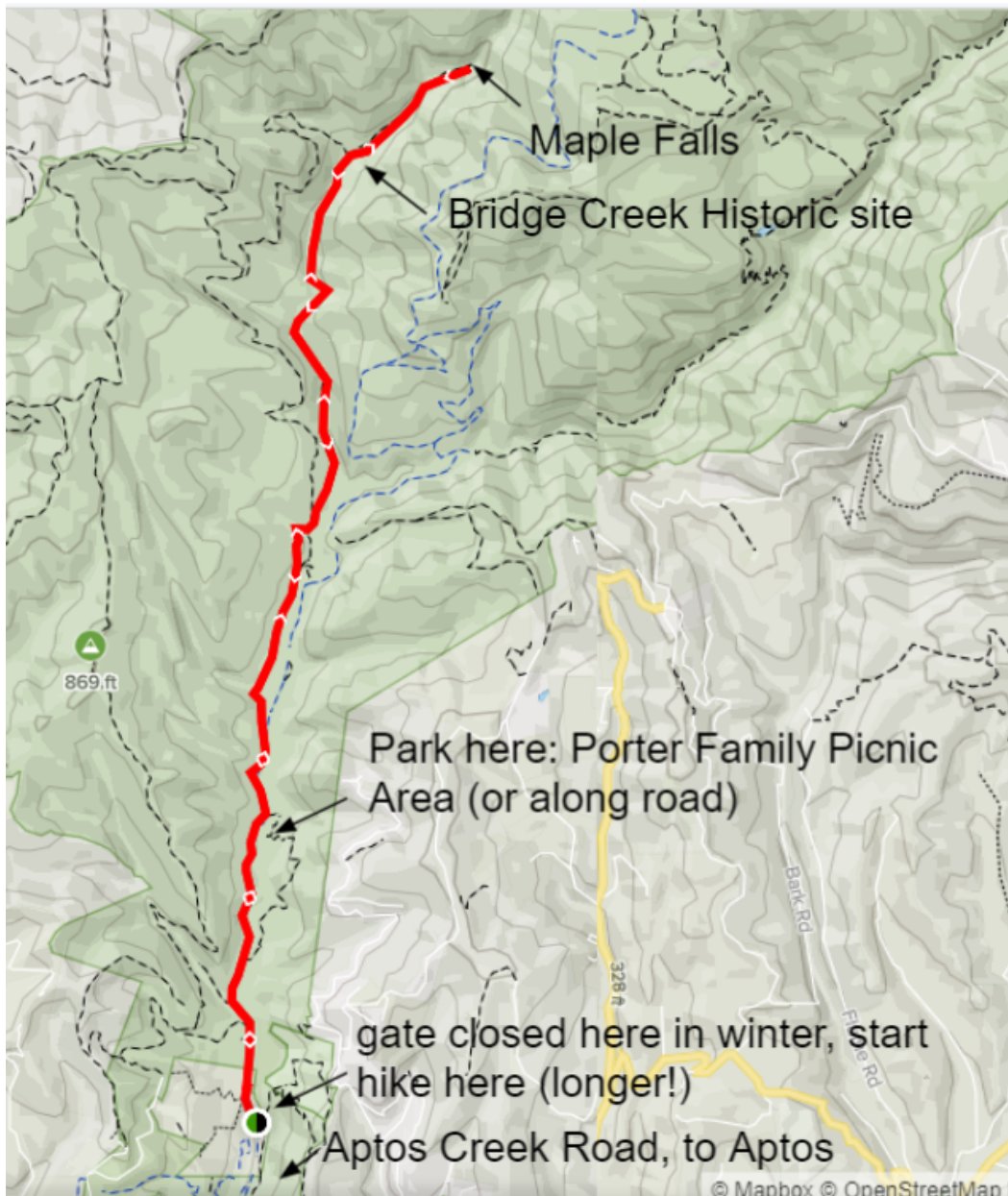
mention of a winter gate on the Aptos Creek Fire road so depending on the time of year you visit the park if this gate is closed you will need to leave your car at the George's Picnic Area. Walk to the Porter Family Picnic Area to start the trail by use of the Aptos Creek Fire Road. If this is the case it will add approx. 1 mile each way for a total of 2 miles roundtrip. The trail starts out easy and quickly changes to moderate. It goes through dense redwood forest, steep trails, canyons, bridges and a couple of river crossings hopping over rocks. It gets a bit challenging in some points especially towards the end as you get close to the waterfall.

*Be aware: There is a left climb up from the stream back up to the road about .4 miles from the fall.

How to Get Your charm:

Take a photo of you with the falls in the background or by the old logging stacks. Email the photo and the names of the registered Girl Scouts in the photo to programs@girlscoutscoc.org with the subject "Happy Trails-Maple Falls." You'll get an embroidered charm to hang on your patch loop.

Maple Falls





 Happy Trails