

# Rock Spring Trailhead

REVIEW // ROUND 2



SIDE 1

**You are standing on the spine of the Mt. Tam Watershed. A raindrop that falls here may flow south to the Pacific Ocean, or north to our drinking water reservoirs and eventually to Tomales Bay.**



**Welcome to Rock Spring**

**Earth**  
Rock Spring emerges from deep underground at the meadow ahead of you, within a mosaic of grasslands, oak woodlands, and coastal forests. Keep an eye out for woodpeckers, deer, and bobcats foraging and hunting here.


**Air**  
Ready for an alpine-meadow misty veil of fog from the Pacific, Ocean behind you. Sweeping views offer spectacular sunsets and white-washing peaks across the bay. A person for protecting this area helped spur the new century-old conservation movement for Mt. Tam.

**Hikes from Here**  
Discover the beauty of the bay and the mountains in the area of the bay.

**Water**  
Since 1972 the Marin Municipal Water District has provided high-quality drinking water while protecting the plants and wildlife that also depend upon these lands.

**Mt.**  
Rock Spring has long been a source of sustenance and inspiration. For thousands of years, the Coast Miwok harvested acorns and hunted game here. Since the 1800s, hikers have also realized this scenic spot above the fog. A person for protecting this area helped spur the new century-old conservation movement for Mt. Tam.

**Area Highlights**




**Learn more about how you can help keep Mt. Tam healthy and vibrant at [onetam.org](http://onetam.org)**

**ONE TAM** **MARIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**PANEL 1**  
Welcome graphic  
36" w x 48" h

**PANEL 2**  
display case  
36" w x 48" h x 2" deep

SIDE 2



**Hiking on Mt. Tam**  
**Protect What You Love**

Mt. Tam is an internationally recognized natural treasure and a vital source of local drinking water. Help care for this incredible place, and the plants, animals, and people that depend upon it. By staying on trail, leaving your dog (where they are allowed) and keeping yourself and your pets out of all lakes and creeks. Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints.

**Enjoy the Beauty, Be Prepared**


- 1. Stay on the trail and avoid sensitive areas.
- 2. Have a cell phone with a charge.
- 3. Remain hydrated.
- 4. Have the weather forecast and wear clothing for the conditions.
- 5. Bring a map.
- 6. Do not use alcohol.
- 7. Do not litter.
- 8. Do not smoke.
- 9. Do not use your vehicle.
- 10. Do not use your vehicle.
- 11. Do not use your vehicle.

**Hikers to Know**  
The information on the Panel Design System is © 2015. All rights reserved. See [onetam.org](http://onetam.org) for more information.

**Learn more about how you can help keep Mt. Tam healthy and vibrant at [onetam.org](http://onetam.org)**

**ONE TAM** **MARIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**Hikes from Rock Spring**



**Thruway Loop**  
Easy 1.5 miles

**Barth's Retreat Loop**  
Easy to Moderate 2.5 miles

**Powers Meadow Loop**  
Moderate 2.5 miles

**West Point In Loop**  
Moderate 4.5 miles

**Rock Spring to Alpine Lake**  
Difficult 2.8 miles, one way

**West Peak Loop**  
Difficult 6.3 miles

**Hiking Tip**  
The altitude of the area may be high with you. Be prepared for weather and terrain changes.

**Learn more about how you can help keep Mt. Tam healthy and vibrant at [onetam.org](http://onetam.org)**

**ONE TAM** **MARIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**PANEL 3**  
Hiking info graphic  
36" w x 48" h

**PANEL 4**  
Loop hikes graphic  
36" w x 48" h

# Rock Spring Trailhead

FINAL

## PANEL 1

Welcome graphic - 36" w x 48" h



## Welcome to Rock Spring

### Earth

Rock Spring emerges from deep underground in the meadow ahead of you, within a mosaic of grasslands, oak woodlands, and conifer forests. Keep an eye out for woodpeckers, deer, and bobcats foraging and hunting here.

### Air

Rising hot air inland pulls in racing tendrils of fog from the Pacific Ocean behind you. Sweeping views offer spectacular sunsets and whale watching.



### Hikes from Here

Suggested hikes from Rock Spring are displayed on the other side of this kiosk.

### Water

Since 1912, the Marin Municipal Water District has provided high-quality drinking water while protecting the plants and wildlife that also depend upon these lands.

### Us

Rock Spring has long been a source of sustenance and inspiration. For thousands of years, the Coast Miwok harvested acorns and hunted game here. Since the 1800s, hikers have also relished this warm spot above the fog. A passion for protecting this area helped spur the now century-old conservation movement for Mt. Tam.

### Area Highlights



Amphibians, such as **Oregon ensatinas**, can be seen along these trails during the wet season.



**California tortoiseshell butterflies** are a common sight in Rock Spring's meadows.



Dramatic **calypso orchids** are among the numerous spring wildflowers found here.



Beautiful green **serpentine** rock outcrops are home to many rare, threatened, and endangered plants.



Over half of **Marin County's drinking water** comes from Mt. Tam.



The branches of this giant **tanoak** tree once spread 60 feet across this site.

**Learn more** about how you can help keep Mt. Tam healthy and vibrant at [onetam.org](http://onetam.org).

ONE  
TAM



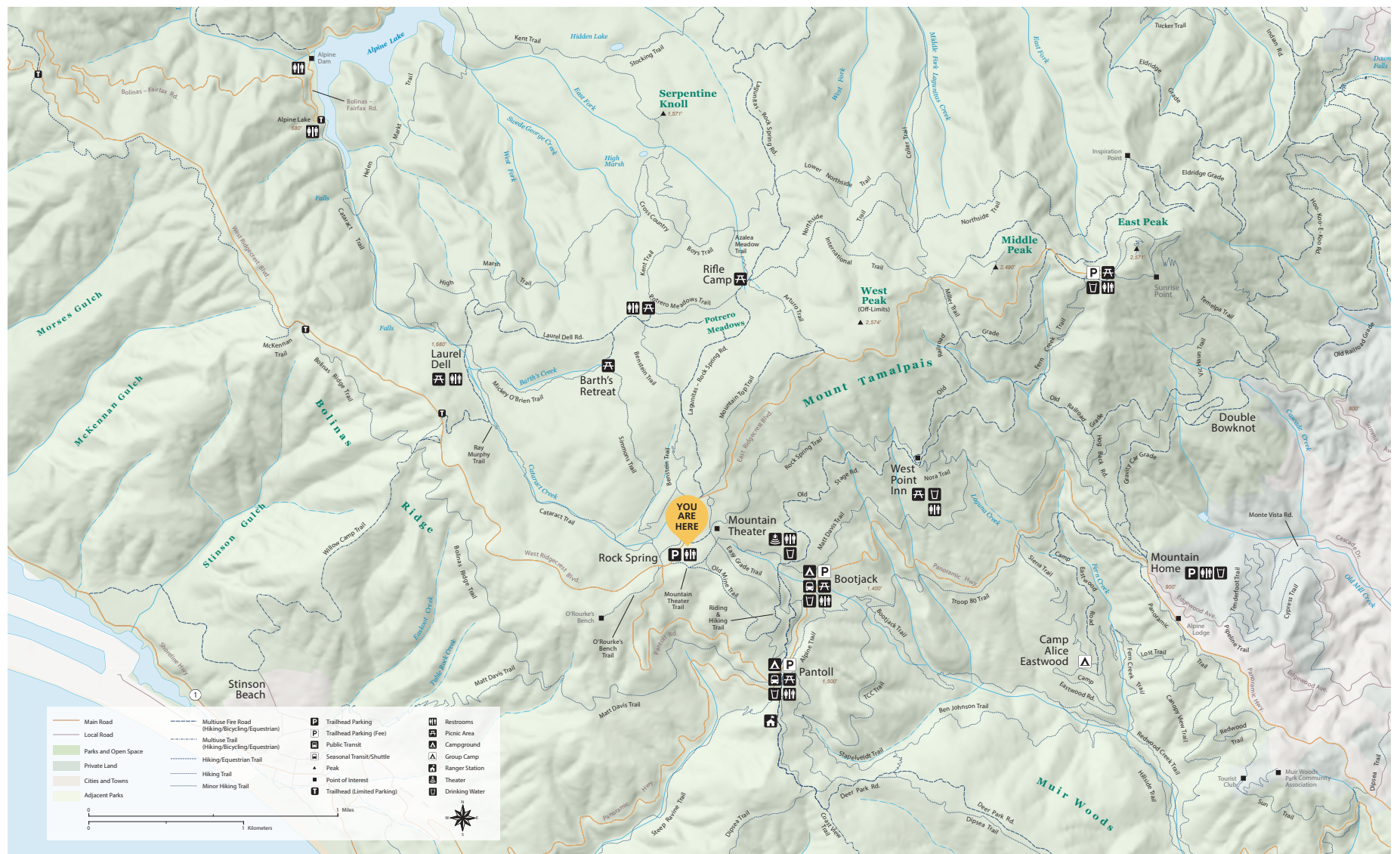
MARIN MUNICIPAL  
WATER DISTRICT

# Rock Spring Trailhead

FINAL

## PANEL 2

Hiking info graphic - 36" w x 48" h



## Hiking on Mt. Tam

# Protect What You Love

Mt. Tam is an internationally recognized natural treasure and a vital source of local drinking water. Help care for this incredible place, and the plants, animals, and people that depend upon it, by staying on trail, leashing your dog (where they are allowed), and keeping yourself and your pets out of all lakes and creeks. Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints.

### Enjoy the Beauty, Be Prepared

- Bring plenty of water and food and wear proper footwear
- Have a cell phone with a charged battery
- Remember a flashlight/headlamp
- Know the weather forecast and wear clothing for the conditions
- Bring a map
- Stay on designated trails
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return
- Lock your car and secure all your valuables
- Report suspicious activity



### Numbers to Know

For information, call the Pantoll Ranger Station at (415) 388-2070.  
For law enforcement, fire, or medical emergencies, call 911.

### Wild Encounters



**Poison oak** exposure can cause severe skin rash, itchiness, and blistering. If exposed, wash skin with soap, isopropyl alcohol, or products like Tecnu®.



**Ticks** carry diseases, including Lyme's. Consider using insect repellent. Check yourself during a hike and after. Seek medical help if symptoms occur.



**Rattlesnakes** will not attack, but if disturbed or cornered, they will defend themselves. Give them distance and respect.



**Mt. Tam's weather** ranges from cold and foggy to hot and dry, and can change quickly. Come prepared for changing conditions.



**Mountain lion** sightings are rare, but if you encounter one, do not run. Face it, make noise, wave arms, and throw rocks. Pick up small children. If attacked, fight back.



**Insect stings** can cause intense, short-term sensations to life-threatening allergic reactions. Seek immediate medical help for severe reactions.

Learn more about how you can help keep Mt. Tam healthy and vibrant at [onetam.org](http://onetam.org).



MARIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

# Rock Spring Trailhead

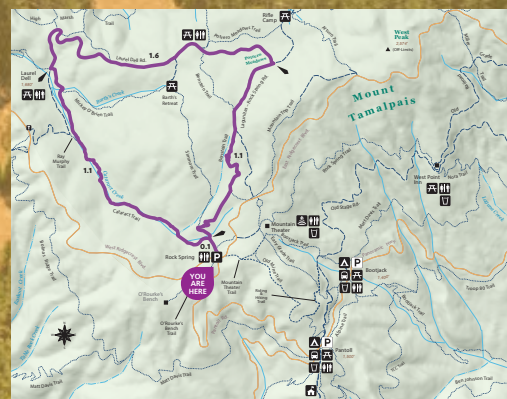
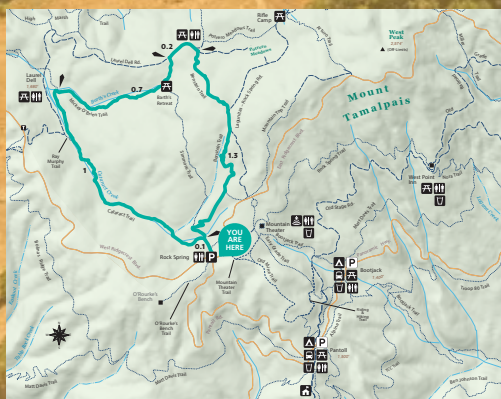
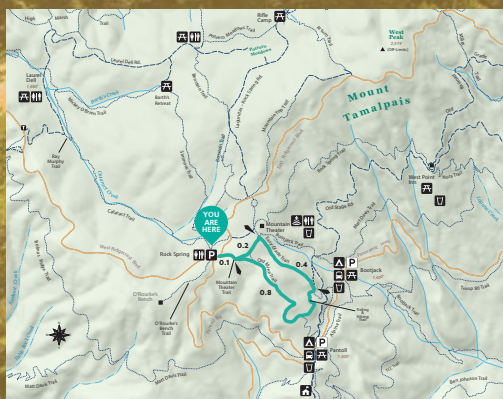
FINAL

## PANEL 3

Loop hikes graphic - 36" w x 48" h



# Hikes from Rock Spring



  **Theater Loop**  
Easy: 1.5 miles

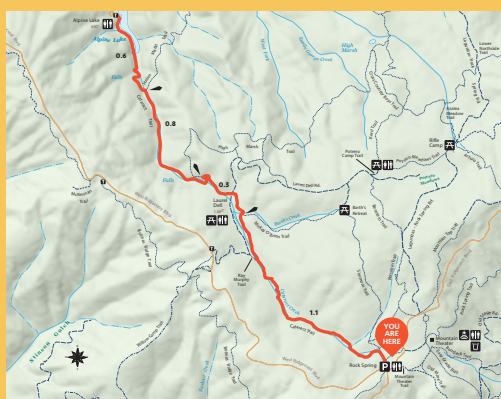
Old Mine trail offers spectacular views of the San Francisco skyline, Mt. Diablo, and glimpses of the Sierra Nevada on especially clear days. In the spring, you'll find a glorious showing of lupine and other colorful wildflowers as you descend toward the Pantoll and Bootjack trailheads. Enjoy a mix of Douglas-fir and tanoak on the way back up, and cap off your hike with a visit to the Mountain Theater for a picnic or water break.

  **Barth's Retreat Loop**  
Easy to Moderate: 3.3 miles

Shaded forests and meandering streams make this enchanting and reflective hike an ideal jaunt to get away from it all. Cataract Trail to Mickey O'Brien can be busy with visitors heading to the falls or toward Alpine Lake, but after the turn off to Mickey O'Brien, crowds give way to huckleberry, tanoaks, and serpentine barrens. At Barth's Creek, the Simmons Trail takes you back a short distance to Rock Spring.



  **Potrero Meadow Loop**  
Moderate: 3.9 miles

Potrero Meadow is the largest wet meadow on Mt. Tam. Small braided channels and depressions support a diverse array of aquatic plants and animals, making this rare habitat a destination for botanists and hikers alike. The meadow is bookended by the popular Potrero and Rifle Camp picnic areas that offer good spots for a bite or quick rest.



  **West Point Inn Loop**  
Moderate: 4.5 miles

Check out a stunning array of plant and animal life as you traverse several of the mountain's different habitats. Along the way, visit the historic West Point Inn, where you can stop for a drink and take in magnificent views of the San Francisco Bay, East Marin, San Francisco skyline, and East Bay hills along the Rock Spring Trail.

  **Rock Spring to Alpine Lake**  
Difficult: 2.8 miles, one way

Cataract is one of the most popular trails on Mt. Tam. The elevation drops from 1,970 feet at Rock Spring to 650 feet at Alpine Lake, with some extremely steep sections. This trail is beautiful year round, but its dramatic waterfalls are exceptionally stunning after winter storms.

  **West Peak Loop**  
Difficult: 6.3 miles

Views, views, and more views. Enjoy everything Mt. Tam has to offer, from sunny open serpentine areas to shady forests, as this hike takes you through a variety of terrains. The magical Azalea Meadow and both Northside Trails offer unparalleled views of the north side of the mountain and the Point Reyes Peninsula.

These hikes were adapted from Barry Spitz' **Mount Tamalpais Trails** published by One Tam/Parks Conservancy.



### Hiking Tip

Take photos of the maps to bring with you. Printed maps are available at the Pantoll Ranger Station.

