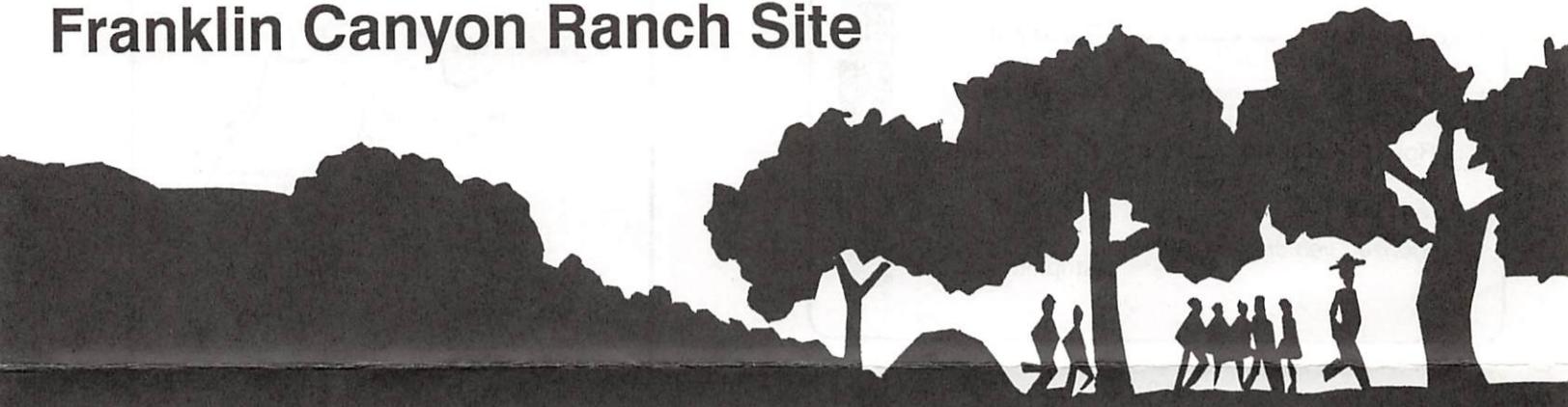


# Santa Monica Mountains

National Recreation Area  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior



## Franklin Canyon Ranch Site



### AN ISLAND WITHIN THE CITY

Less than ten miles from the Ventura Freeway traffic and the hassles of city life lies Franklin Canyon Ranch; an island of quiet and solitude within the city. Surrounded on all sides by urban Los Angeles it is hard to believe that such a place exists. Virtually an oasis from noise and strife, Franklin Canyon Ranch offers relaxation. Picnic under the spreading limbs of the sycamore trees or hike along trails up the chaparral covered sides of the canyon for spectacular views of the surrounding city.

While in the canyon watch for ground squirrels scurrying around their holes or red-tailed hawks soaring overhead. This island within the city provides a home for many plants and animals.

Water has played not only a geological but also a physical role in the formation of Franklin Canyon. Geologically, streams formed the narrow canyon floor. Look for old stream terraces in the sides of the canyon. Physically the Department of Water and Power (DWP) reservoir system creates this island within the city. In 1914 the DWP

constructed the Upper Franklin Canyon Reservoir. This kept the upper part of the canyon from development. A major earthquake struck Los Angeles in February of 1971. The earthen dam of the Upper Reservoir was damaged to the extent that the DWP lowered the height of the water and built a new (covered) reservoir in the lower end of the canyon. The easy access to the lower half of the canyon had been cut off. The fall season of 1982 found the lower reservoir completed; look for it from the ridge trails along the canyon rim.

### AN ISLAND OF HISTORY

Although physically isolated, Franklin Canyon Ranch is closely linked to Los Angeles and its development. The site was owned by the family of Edward L. Doheny. The Doheny family owned six ranches at various times. One of the ranches was a 400 acre parcel in Beverly Hills, purchased in 1912. Much of the land was kept open and rural. The Spanish style stucco house at Franklin Canyon Ranch was built around 1935. In 1954 a major portion of the ranch was subdivided. The family retained about 105 acres. The Beverly

Hills property was owned by the Doheny Family until 1977. Franklin Canyon Ranch was purchased by developers. Their



intention was to develop "gracious homes in a ranchlike atmosphere." After a year of delays in the permitting process, they found their land earmarked for acquisition by the State of California. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy purchased the land, then sold it to the National Park Service in 1981. That year the William O'Douglas Outdoor Classroom (WODOC) joined with the National Park Service to provide outdoor and environmental education to schools and the general public, a program which continues today.

### AN ISLAND OF TRAILS

#### Discovery Trail (0.7 mile; easy)

The Discovery Trail begins across the entrance road from the information kiosk. After travelling through a black walnut woodland, it passes through a riparian area lined with sycamore trees. Look for animal tracks in the sand and mud. Cross the

road and continue up a small hill where wildflowers abound in the spring. While walking along the side of the road to reach the last section of the trail, continue to observe the wide variety of plants that live in this island within a city.

#### Hastain Trail (2.3 miles; moderate to strenuous)

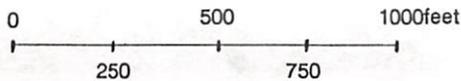
The trail begins at the east side of the lawn past the far side of

the shed. Rising steadily through a chaparral covered slope to the east ridge, you will arrive at an overlook offering views of the lower canyon, West Los Angeles and the coast. From there the trail turns left (north) on a fire road dropping gently to meet with Lake Drive and the park entrance.

# Franklin Canyon Ranch Site

**LEGEND**

Park Boundary	-----	Restrooms	
Paved Road	=====	Telephone	
Fire Road Trail	===== ===== =====	Ranger Station	
Locked Gate (authorized vehicles only)	●-----●	Parking	
		Amphitheater	



**LOCATION MAP**

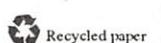


**FOR YOUR SAFETY**

- All natural and historical features, including living and dead vegetation, feathers, rocks, wood, and artifacts, are protected by law and may not be collected.
- Smoking on trails is prohibited.
- Watch for and avoid rattlesnakes and poison oak.
- Please respect the private property of our neighbors.
- Building of fires is not allowed.
- Ride bikes only on designated roads (*Lake Drive and the fire road section of the Hastain Trail*).
- Keep pets leashed at all times.
- Hike only on designated trails.
- Park hours are from sunrise to sunset.
- **IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911.**

For Additional Information:

Contact the National Park Service at:  
 Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area  
 30401 Agoura Road, Suite 100  
 Agoura Hills, California 91301 (818) 597-9192



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