

**Hike Statistics**

**Starting point:** Parking lot.

**Distance:** 3.5 Miles

**Time:** Allow about 2-3 hours

**Grade:** Moderate

**Suggested age:** Webelos

**Suggested Season:** Fall, Spring, early mornings are recommended.

**Black Diamond: Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve**

Eastbay Parks: Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Antioch, CA

**Directions:** Take Highway 4 to Somersville Road exit in Antioch. Drive south on Somersville Road to the Preserve entrance. There is a Parking fee.

**Note to Trail Trekker Coordinator:** Make sure everyone has sunscreen, plenty of water; temperatures can get hot as you're mostly in the sun with some trees.

**Hike Description**

From the parking lot follow the paved Nortonville Trail. After about 220 feet, turn left on to Stewartville Trail. When you reach a gate and junction with the Rail Road Bed Trail continue straight on the Stewartville Trail pass the Pittsburg Trail through the grasslands. When you reach the Gate, turn right on to the Ridge Trail. At about 1.1 miles in there is a little open area to take a break and wonderful views of Mount Diablo and Black Diamond Valley. The Ridge Trail begins to descend down trail, and bends left. Continue on the Ridge trail until you reach the Lower Chaparral. Once on the Chaparral Trail continue straight. After a bridge crosses the canyon, you will reach a junction turn left following the sign toward the Manhattan Canyon Trail. Go left on to the Manhattan Canyon Trail to the junction leading to the Black diamond Trail. Right on the Black diamond trail where it will end at the junction with Nortonville Trail. Turn right. Follow the Nortonville Trail pass you can turn left to see the Rose hill Cemetery or continue on the Nortonville Trail returning to the park. Be sure to pick a day that the mines are open. A must see is the Visitor center and the Mining tunnel to explore. This is a great way to cool off after this Moderate hike.

**Historical information**

This area was once occupied by three Native American tribes Chupcan , Volvon and the Ompin who all spoke the Miwok language. Black diamond is more known for the early settlers from 1850 to 1900s who came to work in the coal mining towns of Somersville, Stewartville, Nortonville, West Harley and Judsonville. It's estimated about 4million tons of coal was mined from these hills by some 900 miners some as young as eight years old. In 1920 sand mining operations began. Sand was extracted from Somersville to supply the Hazel-Atlas Glass Company of Oakland who made glass products. Nortonville, supplied sand to Pittsburg Steel companies until competition and the closing of the steel mill forced the mines to close. In 1940, many of the Mines turned to ranching which was the main industry until the discovery of the coal.