



COHO SALMON AND STEELHEAD TROUT

enter Lagunitas Creek, San Geronimo Creek and several other tributaries through Tomales Bay to spawn after the first heavy rains of fall in the Lagunitas Watershed and enter Redwood Creek (Muir Woods) directly from the Pacific Ocean. Fish have been sighted from September to January, with spawning normally peaking in December in the Lagunitas Watershed. Steelhead trout spawn later, usually between December through February.



Salmon Protection and Watershed Network
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How to Identify Salmon and Steelhead

Spawning coho salmon are seen much more commonly than spawning steelhead because they stay and guard their nesting sites (sometimes for a week or longer) until they die. Steelhead spawn quickly and leave (some return to the ocean and come back to spawn in subsequent years).

Coho in the Lagunitas Watershed are approximately 24" long. They enter the freshwater as silver fish, but begin an incredible metamorphosis. Males turn bright red and grow a hooked jaw. Females are pink with a less distinct hooked jaw. The female's tail (caudal fin) often looks white, as scales are scraped off during nest digging and fungus begins to grow. The tail area along the backbone ridge of males also often turn white, though less so than females. Jacks are small males (usually less than 1/2 the size of adults) that are sexually mature. Jacks return after only 1/2 year at sea (compared to nearly 1 1/2 years at sea for other adults).

Steelhead look similar to coho, but do not develop a strong hook on their jaw. Their color is darker (sometime with a pink stripe) but they do not turn bright red. The steelhead are a similar length but are more streamlined or torpedo shaped. Steelhead spawn in late winter and only overlap with the last of the season's spawning coho. Historically, 6000 coho and steelhead returned to spawn in this watershed. Today, only 500 return to spawn. Please do not further jeopardize their existence or the viewing pleasure of others. See "Salmon Viewing Tips" on the other side of this brochure.



Where to See Spawning Salmon and Steelhead

1 Roy's Pools (formerly Roy's Dam)

This site is an excellent place to see migrating coho salmon and steelhead trout demonstrate their magnificent jumping skills. There are three jump pools below the former dam site that the fish must leap through to continue their upstream migration. There is also a fish ladder that the fish can use as well during low water flow.

Directions: Head west on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (approximately 5 miles west of Fairfax). Turn left (south) at Nicasio Valley Road (1st turn after entrance to SG Valley Golf Course entrance) and proceed 1 block to end of road. Turn left (east) onto San Geronimo Valley Drive and park along road. The pools lie just beyond the chain link fence and can be viewed from the bridge. Please be careful and vigilant of automobile traffic!

2 Leo Cronin Salmon Viewing Area

Marin Municipal Water District. Fish can be seen spawning in the creek directly below the parking lot and at several locations upstream as you walk along the fire road (~ 1/2 mile in length) up towards Peter's Dam (Kent Lake). The dam spillway is the end of the road, blocking further migration for Lagunitas Creek coho and steelhead. Shafter Bridge (on Drake Blvd., which crosses over Lagunitas Creek) is at the confluence (intersection) of Lagunitas Creek and San Geronimo Creek. Fish can also be observed from Shafter Bridge (look to the right or east) jumping at the Inkwells, a series of natural small waterfalls in San Geronimo Creek. Please use caution when crossing this busy road!

Directions: Head west on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (approximately 8 miles west of Fairfax). After passing through the town of Lagunitas, the second light-green colored metal bridge is Shafter Bridge. Between

December 1 and February 28, the parking lot of the Salmon Viewing Area is open to the public. If heading west, it is a left-hand turn into the parking lot immediately after the bridge. Before December 1, park in the turn-outs along Sir Francis Drake just past the Samuel P. Taylor State Park sign and walk back to bridge. Please make sure that you park in legally designated areas.

3 Samuel P. Taylor State Park Campground

Spawning fish can be observed by walking along the creek. One spawning site often used by fish is directly behind the headquarters building at the entrance. (There is an entrance fee for driving into the Park.) **Directions:** Head west on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (approximately 9 miles west of Fairfax). Main Entrance/Campground on left (south).


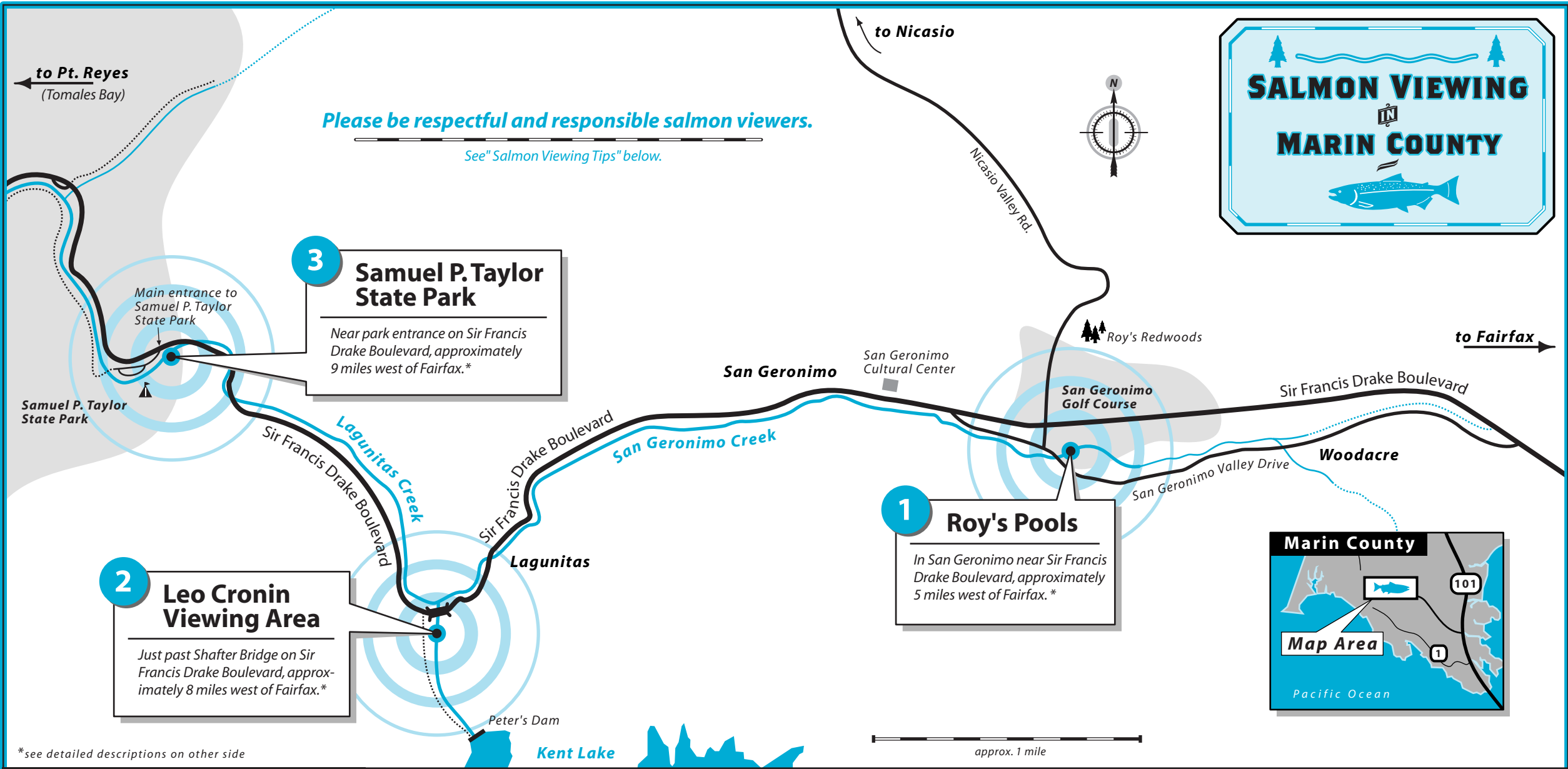
4 Redwood Creek (Muir Woods National Monument—not shown on map)

Spawning coho can be seen here each year. **Directions:** Muir Woods is located off of Highway 1, eight miles west of Highway 101 on Muir Woods Road. Call the Muir Woods Nature Hotline at (415) 388 2595.

The Salmon Protection and Watershed Network

is a non-profit organization that works to protect endangered coho salmon, steelhead trout and the creeks in the Lagunitas watershed through education, restoration, advocacy, strategic litigation, and monitoring. SPAWN offers naturalist-led creek walks, sponsors forums, and publishes a newsletter. SPAWN also trains volunteer StreamKeepers to conduct spawning surveys, monitors water quality and conducts fish rescue and relocation. We are supported by tax-deductible membership contributions by individuals and through grants. Please join us!

SALMON VIEWING MARIN COUNTY

Please be respectful and responsible salmon viewers.

See "Salmon Viewing Tips" below.

*see detailed descriptions on other side

Salmon Viewing Tips

COHO SALMON AND STEELHEAD TROUT are classified as **threatened species under the US Endangered Species Act.** It is **illegal to capture, harm, harass or disturb these species.** We encourage you to **enjoy viewing the spawning fish without jeopardizing their existence.**

STAY OUT OF THE WATER AND ON THE TRAILS. Stepping on a salmon nest (called a redd) can destroy the thousands of eggs that are buried in gravel beds located in the stream.

PLEASE DON'T DISTURB FISH! Binoculars are a great way to get a closer look without disturbing them. Don't approach so close that you cause them to head for cover. Don't throw objects in the water.

KEEP SEDIMENT OUT OF THE STREAM. Don't do anything that will cause silt to get into the streams. Silt clogs spaces between gravel nests and robs the eggs of needed oxygen. By staying on trails and not blazing your own path, you prevent erosion and siltation.

DON'T PICK OR BREAK ANY NATIVE PLANTS. Plants provide cover and shade for fish and are a food source for insects that fish eat.

KEEP CHILDREN UNDER PARENTAL VIEW to ensure that their actions don't harass or harm fish.

KEEP DOGS AND HORSES OUT OF THE STREAM Please leave pets at home.