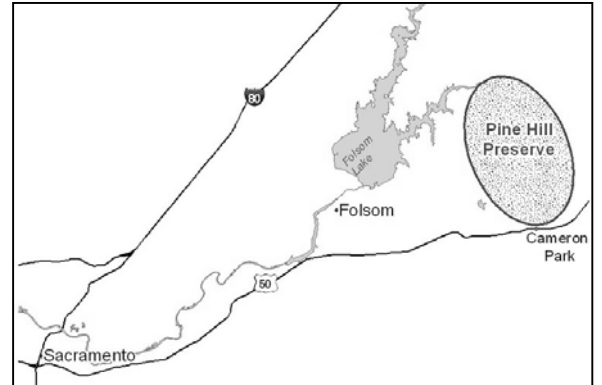


Pine Hill - a Gabbro Soil Island

Description: The Pine Hill gabbro soil “island” is a type of chaparral scrub in an area of unique geology with a suite of rare native plants. The 30,000 acre gabbro area is centered on Green Valley Road in El Dorado County, and stretches north from Cameron Park to Folsom Lake.



Interesting facts

- This volcanically-derived soil is an ecological island sandwiched between valley soils to the west, and mountain soils to the east.
- Gabbro soils are uncommon because they are made from rocks formed deep under the earth’s crust and then lifted up to the surface (as the Sierra Nevada mountains were being formed). The resulting soil is generally red (from iron), mildly acidic, and often contains other heavy metals, such as chromium, and nutrient-poor.
- Growing on these gabbro soils are a suite of eight rare plants, commonly referred to as the Pine Hill endemics because they grow nowhere else in the world. Almost all of these rare plants can be found on the short trail to the top of Pine Hill.
- See <http://www.pinehillpreserve.org/about/index.htm>

Why is this community important?

- 740 plant species – almost 10% of all California plant species! – have been recorded on the gabbro area and adjacent soils. Eight of these species are extremely rare and found no where else in the world. Thus this tiny portion of the state contains nationally significant species diversity.

Conservation Status and Threats: Housing and commercial development have threatened the continued existence of the Pine Hill endemics. The Pine Hill Preserve currently encompasses over 3,900 acres; the goal is to protect 5,000 acres when the Preserve is completed.