

Let's explore both Liberty Canyon and Talopop trails

LOS ANGELES TIMES

# Hiking: Malibu Creek State Park

## In Step With History

By JOHN MCKINNEY

Across Mulholland Highway from the main body of Malibu Creek State Park is an arm of parkland called Liberty Canyon, as lonely a place as you'll find in this popular state park.

Talopop was the name of the native Chumash village located here; it's now the loop trail that circles the ancestral land.

In 1834, the land along Las Virgenes Creek became part of the Las Virgenes Rancho belonging to Domingo Carrillo and Nemisio Dominguez. Dominguez's daughter Maria married Pedro Sepulveda in 1859, and the couple built an adobe near the banks of the creek.

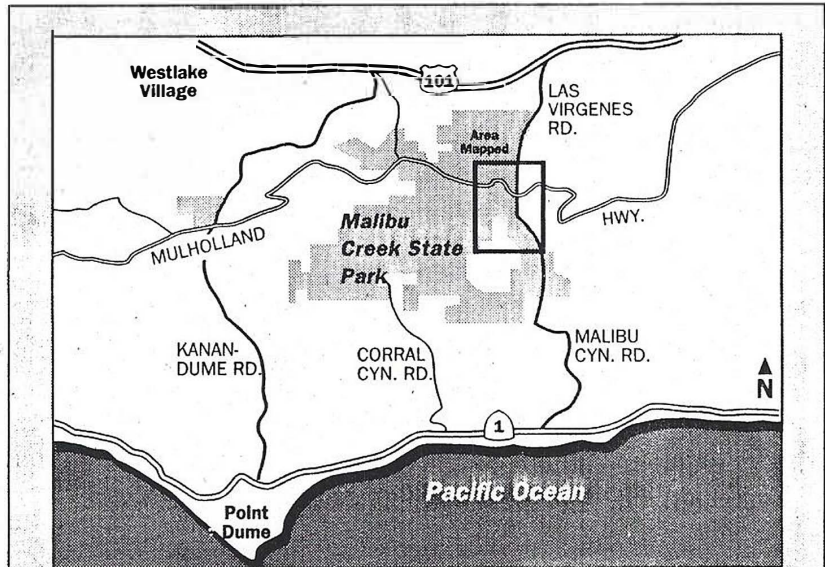
The Sepulveda adobe remains, deteriorating behind a chain-link fence.

Another closed-to-the-public treasure, the White Oak Farm, is an early 20th-Century dairy and ranch. Bob Hope's brother James lived there and managed the ranch for more than 20 years. The ranch house, long coveted as an interpretive center by historians, is a residence of a park ranger.

The two major trails—Liberty Canyon Trail and Talopop Trail—don't connect.

**Directions to trail head:** From U.S. 101, exit on Las Virgenes Road and drive 3½ miles south to Mulholland Highway. Park in the small lot at the southwest corner of Las Virgenes and Mulholland or in one of the turnouts.

**The hike:** Walk west along Mulholland over the bridge over Las Virgenes Creek and join the unsigned trail on the north side of the road leading toward the Sepulveda adobe. Continue past the historic site, crossing a meadow and heading toward the tiny Crater Substa-



### Liberty Canyon, Talopop Trails

**WHERE:** Malibu Creek State Park.

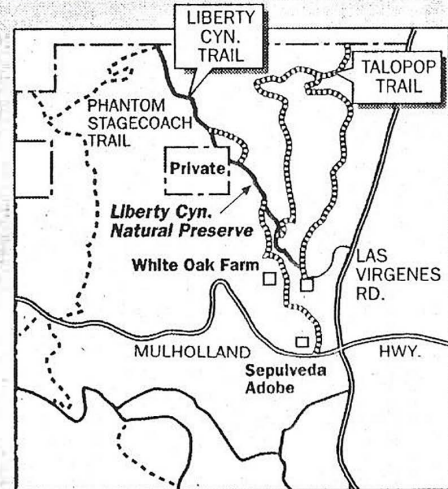
**DISTANCE:** Talopop Loop Trail is 3 miles; Liberty Canyon walk is 3 miles round trip.

**TERRAIN:** Oak-dotted hills and canyons.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Much regional history in undiscovered part of popular park.

**DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:** Moderate.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Mountain Parks Information (800) 533-PARK.



HELENE WEBB / Los Angeles Times

tion power plant. At the paved power plant road, turn right, walk 200 feet, then join the dirt road on your left, which soon leads past the ranch house and barn of White Oak Farm, skirts a meadow, then crosses Las Virgenes Creek.

Arriving at a junction, you briefly join Liberty Canyon Trail before coming to a second signed junction. Liberty Canyon Trail continues straight ahead while Talopop Trail veers right, rising above the canyon floor and following a grassy ridge that offers excellent views.

The trail dips and climbs a couple times before descending a sage- and scrub-oak-smothered

hillside east to a junction. The left fork leads a quarter-mile east, then bends north to the state park boundary and Lost Hills Road.

From the junction, Talopop Trail leads an easy mile back to White Oak Farm, where you can either return to the trail head or join Liberty Canyon Trail.

**Liberty Canyon Trail:** From its junction with Talopop Trail, the wide path heads up the canyon, bends and continues to the state park boundary. At the trail's end is Patrick Henry Place and suburbia. To the left is an unsigned junction with the Stagecoach Trail, which heads south back to Mulholland.