

## **An Equestrian Welcome to Bear Valley Springs**

Welcome to Bear Valley Springs, Southern California's best destination for equestrian enthusiasts who want to live a four season equestrian lifestyle!

Originally founded as a weekend getaway destination, Bear Valley Springs has evolved over the years into a close knit, year-round community with a diverse demographic ranging from young families to retired professionals, all of whom enjoy their peaceful, rural surroundings in a gate-guarded community.

The 25,000 acres that comprise Bear Valley Springs range in altitude from approximately 4,000 feet to almost 7,000 feet above sea level; the valley contains diverse terrain ranging from the nearly flat grassy valley floor to granite studded mountainsides covered with oaks and pines.

Amenities abound for almost every interest here in BVS, including the equestrian center, a golf course, a recreation center, swimming pool, tennis, volleyball & pickle ball courts, lakes for boating and fishing, a rifle range and archery range. The arts are supported in all their diversity here too, while a feast for the taste buds is available from the simple to the sophisticated at the valley's eating establishments.

While those amenities alone are enough to make BVS a home for some folks, the equestrians who live and ride here count themselves among the truly blessed for the varied horse lifestyle choices they have to choose from.

Starting at the BVS Equestrian Center, the BVS Association offers boarding facilities with round pens and wash racks adjacent. A variety of specialized and general purpose arenas serve every equestrian discipline: a dressage arena, a jumping arena, a covered general purpose arena, an open general purpose arena with announcer's booth and viewing stands, cattle sorting arena and a trail trials area with training obstacles. Visitors and BVS equestrian show attendees can make use of the Equestrian Center campground, which include dry camping RV parking, showers, an RV dump and corrals. A meeting room clubhouse with a kitchen rounds things out.

The Equestrian Center sits at the center of all things equestrian in BVS. From there, one can meet up with fellow riders and ride out on over 50 miles of maintained trails; trails which are open to equestrians and hikers only. Mountain bike and motorbike usage of the trails are specifically prohibited by BVS C&Rs, making the Bear Valley Springs trail network one of the few remaining areas in California that horse riders don't have to worry about two-wheeled surprises coming around the next bend in the trail. The diverse topography of BVS hosts trails ranging from nearly flat around the floor of the valley to High Country trails that provide riders with challenging training rides, and everything in between. One of the favorite rides of old timers and newcomers alike is to pick a trail and ride to the Mulligan Room restaurant or Market Deli

for a brunch or lunch, tie up one's horses at the provided tie racks, enjoy a great meal, then continue on. One can often see dusty trail riders and nattily attired golfers sharing the same menu and enjoying each other's company! There are riding opportunities for everyone (and every horse) here in Bear Valley Springs!

Along with the plentiful facilities, the equestrian community has a number of Bear Valley Springs Association approved equestrian clubs catering to different disciplines. These include:

- The BVS Horsemen's Association. The Horsemen's Association promotes equestrian fellowship & activities. They support the preservation of existing riding trails and acquisition of new trails. The Horsemen's Association sponsors several special rides and events throughout the year. The BVSHA holds monthly meetings that provide a social outlet for all horsepersons in the valley and they host presenters to talk about subjects of interest to the equestrian community.
- Bear Valley Buckaroos. If you enjoy horses, friendly people, and having a good time in the outdoors, the Bear Valley Buckaroos is the club for you. The Buckaroos host equestrian play days, team sorting, training sessions, and clinics. We'd love to have you as a member, whether you want to compete, volunteer, or be a spectator at any of our events!
- BVS Carriage Driving Society. The BVSCDS promotes safe (equine) driving skills, sponsors driving outings and promotes overall good horsemanship.
- BVS Dressage Club. The Dressage Club works to promote classical riding, both English and Western. It sponsors four dressage shows each year, May through August.
- Greenhorns. The Greenhorns provide an environment for horses and rider to learn cattle handling skills that are used in working cattle operations throughout the west.
- BVS Pony Club. BVSPC is part of the United States Pony Club, an organization which promotes the development of the young English or Western rider (ages 5-25). The Horsemaster's branch focuses on enhancing adult rider's current knowledge and skills.

For current contact information on any of the above clubs, please visit the Bear Valley Springs Association website: [www.bvsa.org](http://www.bvsa.org) or pick up a copy of Bear Tracks magazine, available at the Association office, market or real estate office.

Thank you for considering Bear Valley Springs as your equestrian lifestyle destination, and welcome, from the entire BVS equestrian community!

Many Happy Trails!

## **HORSES IN BEAR VALLEY SPRINGS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Who owns and operates the public equestrian facilities in BVS?**

The equestrian facilities (Equestrian Center and trails) and all other amenities are owned by the Bear Valley Community Services District (CSD) which leases them to the Bear Valley Springs Association (BVSA.) It operates and maintains them.

### **Where can I keep horses in BVS?**

Horses can be kept on properties of one acre or more. One acre allows up to four animals (horses, donkeys, mules, goats etc.) Each quarter acre more permits one additional animal. Horses can be boarded at the Equestrian Center, if space is available. Some private properties have boarding arrangements. Such arrangements require that a conditional use permit be obtained by the stable owner, since businesses operating in Bear Valley are regulated.

What are the guidelines for keeping horses?

Each animal must have at least 576 sq. ft. of space. That is equivalent to a 24X24 ft. square. Kern County requires that horses have cover from the heat and weather, and adequate food and water.

- Fences: Standard perimeter fences are post and rail, minimum 4ft. high in larger areas, with woven wire to the insides where there are horses. Steel pipe corrals are allowed for animal containment, but not for perimeter use. Other fences require Environmental Control Committee approval, as does construction of shelters and barns. Barbed wire is strictly prohibited. T-posts are prohibited for perimeter fence use.
- Manure disposal: Manure must be picked up and removed often enough to minimize obnoxious odors, fly breeding and contamination of streams and ground water. A dedicated manure disposal area is located to the west of the green waste area, and north of the CSD Transfer Station bins.

### **Where are horses allowed to go in BVS?**

- All horsemen using trails or the Equestrian Center are required to sign and submit an annual liability release form to Equestrian Center management. They are available at the Equestrian Center office or online at [http://www.bvsa.org/files/mnu\\_page\\_19.pdf](http://www.bvsa.org/files/mnu_page_19.pdf).
- There are over 50 miles of dedicated equestrian and hiking trails in BVS. Dedicated trails have been recorded with Kern County to assure permanent public use. All dedicated trails have been evaluated according to United States Forest Service standards. They range from Level One (most difficult) to Level Five (easy.) Riders in BVS need to be aware of the relative difficulty of our trails, so as not to endanger themselves and their animals. In addition, all roads in BVS have a “Road Right of Way” (RRW) to either side. The width

of RRW varies throughout the valley. The purpose of the RRWs is to allow access for utilities and road maintenance. Simply put, the property water meters and utility poles are in the RRW. As such, the RRWs are also available for pedestrians and horse use. HOWEVER, many RRWs are too narrow, unstable and steep for riding horses. Also, some property owners do not desire that horses cross the front of their land. Be a good neighbor and respect their wishes. Maps of the dedicated trails in BVS are available at the Equestrian Center.

- The BVS Equestrian Center comprises about 42 acres facing onto Bear Valley Rd. The street address is 26800. It consists of two barns, six arenas, three round pens, large turnout areas and a campground. As an amenity supported by membership assessments and use fees, it, and the trails, are available to all property owners (members) and renters with amenity use privileges. As with all amenities, special rules can apply. At the Equestrian Center, they are posted by each arena. Please read and follow them. Several equestrian events are held at the Equestrian Center each year. It is also the intersection point for four dedicated trails. The Equestrian Center office number is 661-821-3960.

### **Where are horses prohibited in BVS?**

The following areas are off limits to horses, ridden, driven, or hand-walked:

- Oak Tree Country Club Golf Course
- The amenity lakes: Four-Island and Cub Lakes and their surrounding parks
- The Ron Samuels Radio Controlled Aircraft field west of the CSD facilities on S Lower Valley

(NOTE: there is a trail loop around the field. Intrusion into the airfield area can cause horses to bolt because of the aircraft & drones overhead. Do not ride to the inside of the trail area.)

- The Lower Valley Nature Path
- The BVS Dog Park

Violators are subject to member discipline by the Board of Directors

### **What are the rules on my guests' use of equestrian facilities?**

Member and renter guests are welcome in BVS, subject to the following restrictions:

- Member must obtain an amenity use pass for their guests. This is NOT a gate pass.
- Each guest must pay \$10 per day, per animal for use of the Equestrian Center and/or trails.
- Each guest must complete and submit a Bear Valley Springs Liability Waiver each year.
- Guests should not be permitted to "free ride" unaccompanied by the member.
- Actions of guests are the responsibility of the sponsoring members.
- Guests are expected to observe BVS rules just as residents are.

### **Can non-residents use the equestrian facilities in BVS?**

Residents (members and renters,) are paying the cost of upkeep of the amenities, therefore, open access to BVS is prohibited.

- The exceptions are planned and publicized events where outside entrants are allowed. Again, the rules on \$10 per day per animal, and the signed liability waiver must be respected.
- What about riding instruction?
- Instructors who meet requirements, e.g. Liability Insurance, and annual fees paid, may obtain Recognized Service Provider status. This permits them to teach/train at the Equestrian Center or on the trails.
- They may not teach non-BVS residents on BVSA-operated property.

### **What's the situation on water in BVS?**

- There are no privately-owned water wells in BVS. All pumped water comes through the CSD owned water system. Despite the presence of numerous CSD wells in BVS, over half the current water usage is pumped into the valley, and has to be paid for. This makes our water very expensive, especially for those with large animals. It is imperative that every effort be made to conserve water. In addition, as referenced above, contamination of ground water from manure is a serious concern.

### **How can I keep informed about equestrian issues in BVS?**

- Attend the Equestrian Advisory Committee meeting (First Monday each month, 9AM, at the Equestrian Center Lounge)
- Join an equestrian club: BVS Horsemen's, BVS Dressage, BVS Buckaroos, BVS Greenhorns, BVS Carriage Driving Society and the BVS Pony Club all keep their members informed, through meetings and newsletters. Club contact numbers can be found in the monthly Bear Tracks publication and online at [http://www.bvsa.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page&page\\_id=5004](http://www.bvsa.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page&page_id=5004).
- Attend BVSA and CSD Board meetings. Agendas are required to be posted in advance so that you can be aware of current equestrian issues.

### **Bear Valley Equine Emergency Plan**

Information on the Equine Emergency Plan, Disaster Preparedness for Equines, and the Equine Registration Form can be found at [www.bvsa.org/files/mnu\\_page\\_2947.PDF](http://www.bvsa.org/files/mnu_page_2947.PDF)

### **Where are the Equestrian Rules found?**

For BVSA phone 661-821-5537; online: <http://www.bvsa.org/index.cfm>.

- BVSA Rules especially Articles 6 & 7
- ECC Rules especially Sections 116, 120 & 200
- For CSD phone 661-821-4428; online: <http://www.bvcsd.com/>
- CSD Code especially Titles 3-2, 5-1-7 and 7-4

### **Dogs in Bear Valley Springs**

Most horse owners also own a dog or two and Bear Valley Springs has some beautiful walking paths and a dog park. Here are a few Kern County Animal Services regulations that dog owners should be aware of:

- 7.08.050 Dog License Tag - requires any person owning a dog over 4 months old to purchase a dog license from Kern County Animal Services.
- 7.08.060 Dogs - Rabies Vaccination Required, requires any person owning a dog over 4 months old residing in Kern County must have their dog vaccinated against rabies.
- 7.08.150 Dogs at Large Prohibited - basically states that dogs shall be restrained by a leash (electronic collars are not an exemption) and in immediate control of the handler (owner or custodian of the dog). Bottom-line is that ***no dog can run loose in BVS*** unless on its own property or with consent, on another person's private property.

For more detail on these and other Kern County Animal Services regulations please go to <http://www.kerncountyanimalservices.org/historyAndServices.aspx>