



SFB Morse Botanical Reserve

83.94 Acres (2 parcels)

OSAC Category IIA: Protected Natural Resources

The SFB Morse Botanical Reserve is located within the Gowen Cypress Planning Area in two parcels to the south and east of Congress Road. The SFB Morse Botanical Reserve was established in 1972 to protect the endangered Gowen Cypress, as well as other species or associations of species found only on the acidic clay-pan soils found in this area. Subsequently, other rare and endangered species have been identified in the reserve, which includes two principal headwaters tributaries of Sawmill Gulch.

The 84 acres of the SFB Morse Botanical Reserve are adjoined by the 372 acres of the Huckleberry Hill Natural Habitat Area, which contains similarly valuable botanic resources. DMFC holds a conservation easement on the Huckleberry Hill Natural Habitat Area as mandated under the Del Monte Forest Area Land Use Plan of Monterey County's Local Coastal Program and approved by the Coastal Commission. The map on this page shows the over 450 acres of combined botanically unique open space.

In 1976 the Del Monte Properties Company, a predecessor of Pebble Beach Company, deeded the 83.94 acres of the S.F.B. Morse Reserve to DMFC. The Reserve is named for Samuel Finley Brown Morse, grandnephew of the inventor of the telegraph. Morse came to the Del Monte Forest in 1908. In 1915 until the day he died at age 83 in 1969, Morse was intent on preserving the integrity of the land under his charge. A creekside hiking trail starts at Congress Road and traverses the length of each parcel of the Botanical Reserve and connects to trails and fire roads in Huckleberry Hill Natural Habitat Area. The trail in the southern, larger parcel is called the Crawford trail and was named for founding OSAC naturalist Rudd Crawford.

