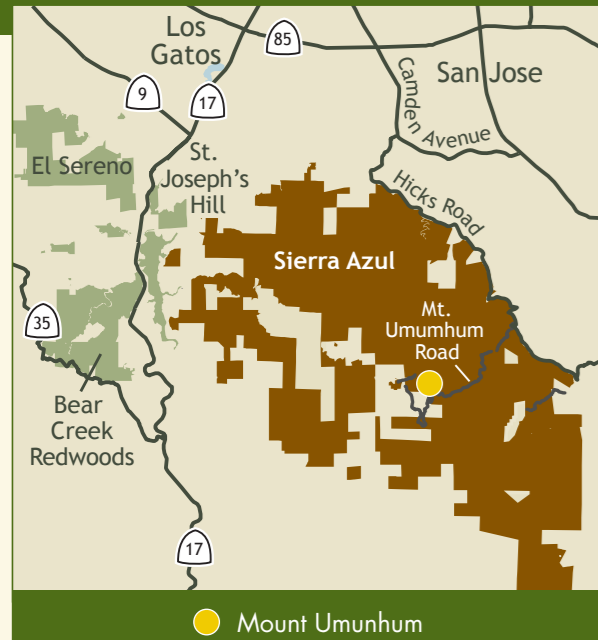


Mount Umunhum

Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve



Cover photo Bryana Fleming. Photographers for timeline from top to bottom: Ray Cowan, Hooked on Los Gatos—Library & Museum History Project, Robin Goldthwaite, Ken Hickman, Midpen staff, Midpen staff, Midpen staff, Midpen staff, Gary Henry, and Karl Gohl.

Mount Umunhum



Sierra Azul
Open Space
Preserve



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
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9-2017

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Created by voter initiative in 1972, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of open space. Midpen's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. Currently, Midpen protects 90 rare native species in 26 unique preserves with over 220 miles of publicly accessible trails. Preserves are open 365 days a year and are free to the public.



Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

Sudden Oak Death

Sudden Oak Death is a forest disease that is killing oaks and infecting other forest plants in California. The Sudden Oak Death pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, most often kills tanoak and coast live oak trees and can spread to many other plants common in oak forests.

Help Stop the Spread of Sudden Oak Death

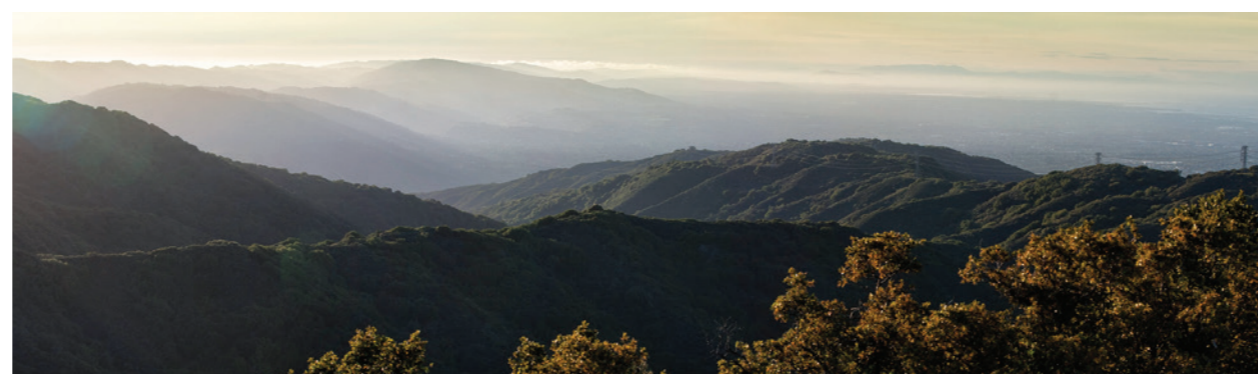
- Preserve visitors are encouraged to stay on trails and clean their shoes, pet's paws, horse's hooves, and bicycle tires before leaving the area.
- Do not collect or move plants or soil, including firewood, from the preserves. For more information visit the website: www.suddenoakdeath.org.

Be Aware and Be Prepared

Drinking water is not available at most Midpen preserves—carry water with you. Rattlesnakes are native to this area and are especially active in warm weather. Poison oak grows on most preserves; learn to identify and avoid it in all seasons. Be aware that ticks are present in this area and may carry diseases. Mountain lions are a natural part of this region's environment and are occasionally sighted.

A Storied History

We invite you to visit Mount Umunhum, as people have done for thousands of years. Learn its rich stories steeped in Native American history, gold rush-era mining, and the Cold War, and help create Mount Umunhum's next chapter as one of the Bay Area's great publicly accessible peaks. This mountain was sacred to local native people. In 1850, it was part of California's first mining claim and was inhabited, explored, and timbered by settlers. In 1957, the Summit was occupied by the Almaden Air Force Station (1957-1980), one of dozens of radar stations operating along the West Coast during the Cold War. Midpen purchased the 36-acre Summit in 1986. In 2009, Midpen received \$3.2 million in federal funding to clean up the site and began an extensive public planning process to open the Summit. The Summit and Trails officially opened to the public in September 2017.



Views from Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

How to Get There

Mount Umunhum is ONLY accessible via Hicks Road to Mt. Umunhum Road. Do not take any other route recommended by online maps or your GPS device – these directions include roads with locked gates.

Mount Umunhum Summit Parking Area
Parking is available at the Summit, accessible from Mt. Umunhum Road. Parking is only allowed in designated spaces.

- Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From Southbound 85 turn left on Camden Avenue. From northbound 85 turn left on Camden Avenue.)
- Travel on Camden Avenue about 1.6 miles.
- Turn right on Hicks Road. Travel on Hicks Road about 6.3 miles.
- Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Road. Travel on Mt. Umunhum Road for 5.3 miles.
- The Preserve parking lot is on the left and stairs will lead visitors to the Summit. A limited number of accessible parking spaces are located 0.2 miles further up Mt. Umunhum Road within the turnaround area.

Road safety

Mt. Umunhum Road is steep, narrow, and winding with blind curves. Cyclists and drivers should use caution and patience on the mountain and obey posted speed limits. Shift into low gear on the descent to save your brakes.

Regulations

For visitors' safety and protection of the preserves

Visitors are responsible for knowing and obeying Midpen ordinances. Below is a list of basic regulations that will help to ensure a safe, enjoyable visit. A complete list of all Midpen ordinances is available at the Midpen office and on the Midpen website.

Hours: Preserves are open from dawn until one half-hour after sunset.

Bicyclists: Bicycles are allowed on designated trails. Helmets are required at all times. Please observe the 15 mph trail speed limit (5 mph when passing). Ride on designated trails shown on the Midpen map for bicycle use.

Call Box: For emergency use only.

Closures: Trail and road conditions can vary depending on the season, the impact of storms, construction and maintenance, and other occurrences. Please be aware that closures may change from day to day without notice based on changing weather conditions. During winter storm season, high waters can make creek crossings hazardous, so plan your outing accordingly. For updates visit the Midpen website at: www.openspace.org/visit-a-preserve/trail-conditions.

Dogs: Dogs are not allowed on the Mt. Umunhum Trail, Summit area, or the Mt. Umunhum Road (includes dogs in cars).

Equestrians: Horses are allowed on designated trails. They are not allowed on Bald Mountain Trail or the last 0.2 miles of the Mt. Umunhum Trail. Currently no equestrian parking is available.

Fires: Fires are prohibited in preserves.

Plants & Wildlife: Please leave plants and animals undisturbed. If you encounter wildlife during a visit, do not approach, startle, or feed it. Although wild animals are generally fearful of humans and will run away, some wildlife can be dangerous.

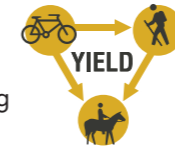
Smoking: Smoking is prohibited in preserves.

Water Areas: Swimming, wading, or engaging in any water-contact activity in any water areas of Midpen is prohibited.

Weapons: All weapons are prohibited in preserves.

Sharing the Public Trails

- Please be courteous to other trail users.
- Always yield to equestrians and allow other trail users to pass.
- When in a group, avoid blocking the trail.
- Prevent injury and avoid damage to natural resources by only using designated trails.
- Bicyclists, please announce your presence when approaching hikers and equestrians from behind.
- Control your speed at all times and obey speed limits.
- Littering is prohibited in preserves. Visitors should carry out any materials brought in.
- Abuses of trail etiquette should be brought to the attention of a Midpen ranger, or call the Midpen administrative office at 650-691-1200. Also call this phone number to inquire about lost and found items.



Green Tip

Save paper! Did you know this map is available online at www.openspace.org/UMmap and can be downloaded and saved to your mobile device? Please do your part by returning or recycling maps when you're through.

For More Information

Please call, write, or visit the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA 94022-1404. Call 650-691-1200, send email to info@openspace.org, or visit www.openspace.org.

In Case of Emergency

If you experience an emergency on Midpen lands (fire, accident, or other immediate threat to life or property), call 911 or contact Midpen's 24-hour emergency dispatch number for Midpen rangers at 650-968-4411. This phone number is for emergency use only.

Mount Umunhum History and Timeline

A Mountain Made of Stories

The Natural World

For millions of years, Mount Umunhum has been shaped by close proximity to the San Andreas fault system. The unique geology and low-nutrient serpentine soils are home to many rare native plants. The headwaters of several creeks originate on the mountain, and critical reservoirs are tucked into its foothills on all sides. Some of the mountain's most striking features are its exposed Summit and slopes with jutting rock outcrops and scattered clusters of rare plants.

The First Caretakers

Long before this region was "Silicon Valley" and "The Valley of Heart's Delight", it was home to one of the largest Native American populations on the continent, with 70 flourishing tribal units. For hundreds of generations, indigenous people actively stewarded the land, using traditional practices such as:

- Planting the seeds of favorite useful plants close to settlements for easy harvest
- Pruning plants to produce better fruits, straighter twigs, and promote grasses for basket making
- Using fire to prevent shrub encroachment on grasslands and increase landscape productivity for hunting and plant collection

Miners and Settlers

The history of Mount Umunhum is directly connected to the nearby New Almaden Quicksilver mining operation, which began in 1845. Five years later, it was the site of California's first legal mining claim after statehood. It was discovered that the cinnabar pigment used by the Ohlone people contained mercury, also known as "quicksilver", which was essential for processing gold during California's Gold Rush. In 1870, "Austrian Gulch", situated on the southwest slopes of Mount Umunhum was settled by German and Austrian refugees of the Franco-Prussian War. Well known for their orchards and vineyards, this rugged community survived off the land for 60 years despite having to rebuild from fires and floods on multiple occasions.



8,000 BCE–1770s: Native Americans inhabited the region and cared for the land

1769: First contact between Spanish explorers and native tribes



1850: Mount Umunhum is part of the first legal mining claim filed in California



1850s: Hunters, sawyers, and explorers looking for mineral resources explore the region extensively



1853: Mount Umunhum is officially named by Alexander Dallas Bache, Superintendent of the U.S. Coast Survey and Benjamin Franklin's great grandson



1870s-1930s: The southwest slopes leading to Austrian Gulch are settled by German and Austrian refugees

Almaden Air Force Station

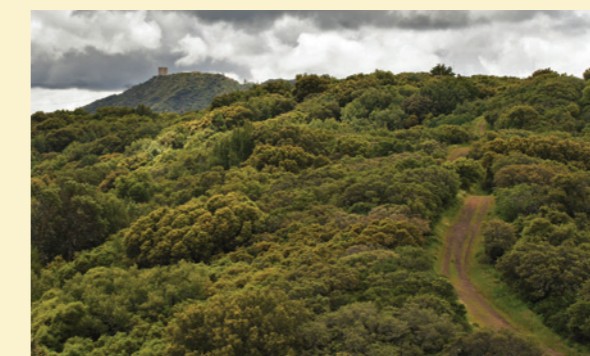
In the late 1950s, the United States government procured Mount Umunhum to build the Almaden Air Force Station, an early warning radar station that operated from 1957 to 1980. The station was constructed as part of a network of radar stations used to keep watch over the United States' airspace during the Cold War. The radar tower on Mount Umunhum was one in a system of 23 similar stations in California, and one of hundreds across the country that fed radar signals into the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) defense system. The Summit has been closed since 1980.

In 2009, federal funding allowed Midpen to deconstruct about 80 Air Force Station buildings. Nearly all of the 13,680 tons of concrete, asphalt, wood and other materials were recycled or reused. Midpen also removed 3,000 cubic yards of hazardous materials, including lead paint, asbestos, and fuel storage containers.

Public Access and Partnerships

Midpen intended to open Mount Umunhum for public access since acquiring the property in 1986. The active restoration period began in 2009 and was made possible, in part, by the passage of Measure AA in 2014. The bond measure provided approximately \$15.8 million to support road and trail improvements, parking areas, weather shelters, and other trail amenities.

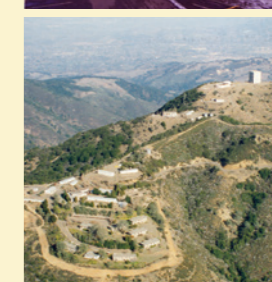
The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and the California Coastal Conservancy worked in partnership with Midpen to provide support, restoration, and trail development and provided \$1 million dollars in funding toward public access improvements.



Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

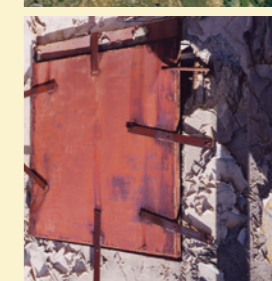


1957–1980: The Almaden Air Force Station is in operation with the mission of defending California skies and shores during the Cold War



1986: Midpen purchases 36-acre Summit for \$261,566

1989: The 6.9 magnitude Loma Prieta earthquake centered at nearby Loma Prieta Mountain damages the radar tower



2009: \$3.2 million in federal funding is obtained to clean up hazardous materials and remove dilapidated structures from the former Air Force Station

2012: Cleanup, remediation, and demolition work completed



2014: Bald Mountain parking and trail area completed



2016: The mountain is recontoured to a more natural state. Summit and interpretive plans completed

September 2017: Mount Umunhum's public grand opening

Gain Perspective

Enjoy breathtaking 360-degree views of our region, including San Francisco, Monterey Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and sometimes even the Sierras from ADA-accessible viewpoints.

Immerse Yourself in Nature

As the peak was restored, its serpentine geology and unique community of plants and animals were revealed. Check out the plant and animal guide in this brochure and see how many you can spot during your visit.

Discover a Rich History

Delve into Mount Umunhum's fascinating past going back thousands of years through interpretive signs. To enhance your visit, download the free audio tour app. More information is available in the Audio Tour section in this brochure.

Explore New Trails

Bike, Hike, or horseback ride up the mountain using the Mt. Umunhum Trail. Enjoy views, woodlands, and the headwaters of Guadalupe Creek.

Summit Features

- **Ceremonial Circle** – Honoring the site's Native American history and the return of local tribes to the mountain, this is a place to reflect on and renew connections with nature.
- **Radar Tower** – The radar tower was part of a system of 23 similar radar stations in California, and one of hundreds across the country that fed radar signals into the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) defense system. This tower was in operation as part of the Almaden Air Force Station from 1957 to 1980.
- **Summit Shelter and Viewpoint** – A shaded area for visitors to rest. A cantilevered deck extends over the hillside, providing an amazing vantage point of the Santa Clara Valley. Inside, interpretive panels highlight the site's unique cultural, military and natural histories.
- **East Summit Viewpoint** – From here, the high point of Mount Umunhum, Mount Diablo, and Mount Tamalpais can be seen as well as the valley below.



Know Before You Go

Call Box: Available for emergency use only.

Restrooms: Vault toilets are provided at the Bald Mountain and Mount Umunhum Summit parking areas.

Water: No potable water is available anywhere on the Trail or Summit. Non-potable water is provided for horses at a trough near the Summit.

Accessible Features

Accessible parking, restrooms, shade shelters, and pathways are located at the Mount Umunhum Summit and shown in purple on the map above. At the main parking area, visitors can use accessible parking, restrooms, trailhead shelter, and picnic tables. Restrooms are only available at this location.

At the Summit turnaround area, there are three (3) accessible parking spaces and a drop-off area. Visitors can enjoy the accessible pathway to the west Summit and ceremonial circle, the east Summit, Summit shelter, and interpretive displays.

Accessibility in Midpen preserves is continually improving. For updates visit www.openspace.org/about-us/accessibility



Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

Download Information

Audio Tour App – Stories of Mount Umunhum

Download the Stories of Mount Umunhum Audio Tour to experience a "virtual" guide around the Summit at your own pace. Hear how Mount Umunhum got its name and hear Air Force veterans, Native Americans and others tell their personal stories about life on the mountain.

- Make sure to download the audio tour app before your arrival at the Summit due to limited wireless connectivity. Available free from iTunes or Google Play stores. Note: cell service may be unavailable beyond Mt. Umunhum Road.
- Follow the stops along the map. Stops can be listened to in any order.
- If you wish to skip ahead, stop the chapter and move on to the next one.

Audio Tour Starts Here

- Welcome – (Summit Shelter)**
At this stop you'll be introduced to Mount Umunhum. Here, visitors will be standing on one of the highest peaks in the Bay Area at almost 3,486 feet in elevation – high enough to get snow on a cold winter's day. From the Summit, you can enjoy a 360-degree view spanning more than 2,000 miles. Along with its human history, you'll discover the unique climate and habitat that makes the Summit an "island in the sky".
- Views – (Cantilever Deck)**
The Deck provides an exhilarating vantage point from which to enjoy sweeping views of the valley below. To the north is the Peninsula, San Francisco and Mount Tamalpais beyond. On a clear day you can even see the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Air Force History – (Radar Tower West Side)**
This eight-story concrete tower was once a base holding a large radar dish operated by the US Air Force. Between 1957 and 1980, the Air Force used Mount Umunhum's spectacular views to help protect the West Coast from the possible threat of Soviet planes during the

Cold War. The Almaden Air Force Station permanently closed in 1980 when satellite technology made the radar station here obsolete. Some military veterans who worked at the Air Force Station took their technical skills down the mountain and contributed them to the growth of Silicon Valley.

- A Clean Watershed – (Radar Tower East Side)**
Today, the Summit supports a different kind of technology that is also serving an important role for people: measuring drinking water. Learn how Mount Umunhum is part of a network of weather stations that affect water that eventually comes out of faucets in people's homes in the valley below.
- Life on the Summit – (East Summit)**
This mountaintop was not an easy place to live. The high elevation and exposure means it can be baking hot or bitterly cold. Winds can reach 100 miles per hour, and it's not unusual to see snow in the winter, or for up to ten inches of rain to fall in a single day. Learn how in spite of these challenges, this mountaintop is surprisingly rich with plants and wildlife.
- Creation Story – (Ceremonial Circle)**
The first people to visit Mount Umunhum thousands of years ago were the native people of California for whom this mountain was sacred. Their descendants requested a place where they could return to Mount Umunhum for the first time in nearly 200 years to pray and dance where they feel closer to their creator, just like their ancestors did.
- Conservation Lands – (West Summit)**
Standing near the highest point on Mount Umunhum you'll see the City of Santa Cruz and beyond to the Pacific Ocean. Look directly down the spine of the Santa Cruz Mountains towards other Midpen preserves. A special plaque dedicates Mount Umunhum to you, the public, for generations to come.

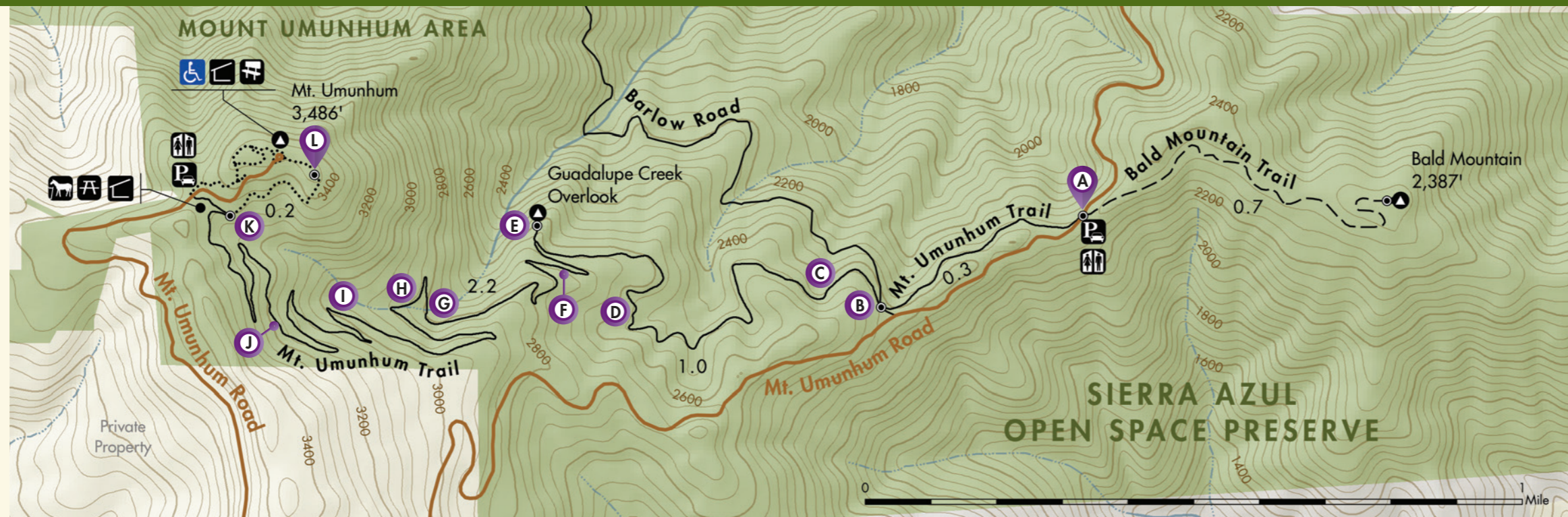
Mount Umunhum Area and Trails

Trails and Recreation

The new 3.7-mile Mt. Umunhum Trail extends from the Bald Mountain parking area to the Summit, crossing through varied habitats and offering incredible views of the valley below, the ridgelines above, and the other great peaks of the Bay Area. This multi-use trail offers moderate terrain for hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders and, at the Summit, is the highest point on the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Note, the highest 0.2 mile section is limited to hiking only.

Mount Umunhum Trail

This gorgeous trail passes through mixed chaparral scrub dominated by chamise, big berry manzanita, birch-leaved mountain mahogany, and poison oak. With elevation gain, the trail passes through knobcone pine woodland, and eventually enters the coastal woodlands dominated by coast live oak, foothill pine, and California bay interspersed with Pacific madrone. The majority of the trail – approximately the upper 3.0 miles – is under the cool canopy of these trees. Eventually, the trail emerges near the top onto steep terrain with cliffs and rocky outcrops, including serpentine boulders. Rocky, nutrient-poor serpentine soils are home to numerous endemic plant species, including rare flowering plants that continue to reveal themselves each spring.

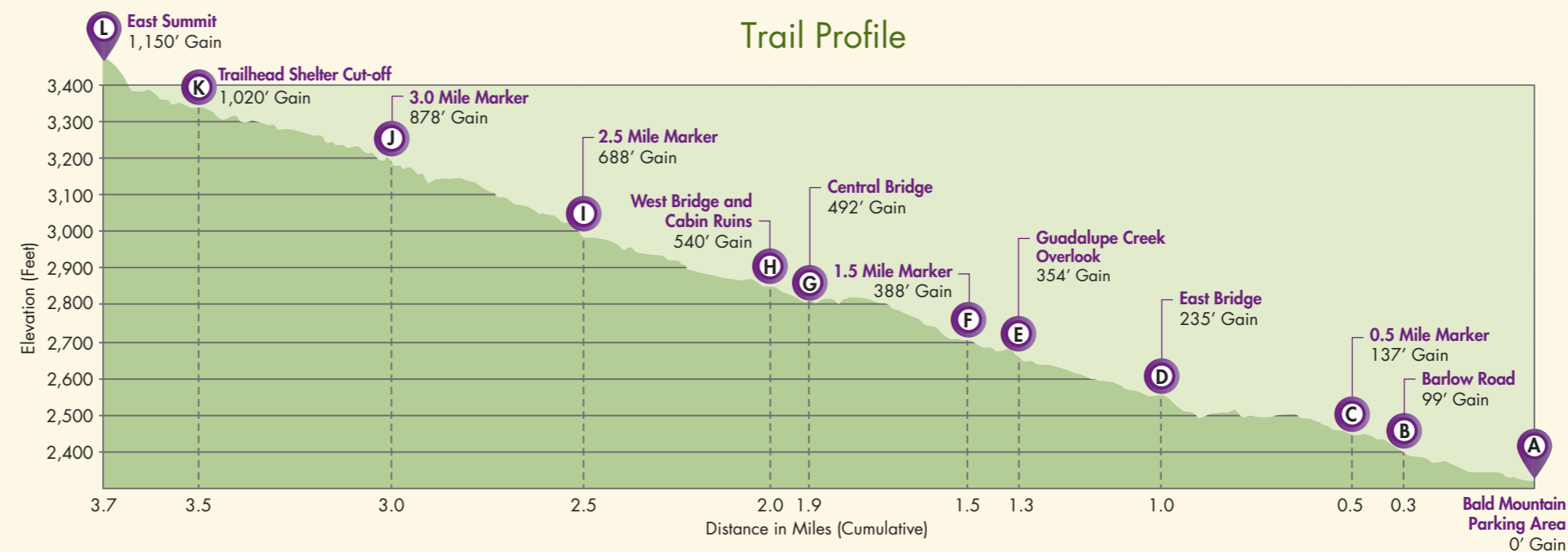


Map Legend

- Hiking Only
- - - Hiking, Bicycling
- Hiking, Bicycling, Equestrian
- Trail Junction
- ▲ Point of Interest
- P Parking Lot
- ♿ Restroom
- ☑ Shelter
- ☑ Picnic Table
- ☑ Bench
- ☑ Water Trough (Non-Potable)
- ♿ Accessible Features

Mt. Umunhum Trail Profile

Trail Entry Point: The Mt. Umunhum trailhead is located at the Bald Mountain parking area. The Trail can also be accessed via Barlow Road from Woods Trail.
Bald Mountain Parking Area Elevation: 2,336 feet.
Mount Umunhum Summit Elevation: 3,486 feet.
Total Elevation Gain: 1,150 feet of continuous gain at approximately 10% grade.
Total Length: 3.7 miles; multi-use = 3.5 miles, hiking only (at Summit) = 0.2 miles.
At the Summit: The 0.2 miles of trail between the trailhead shelter to the east Summit is hiking only and includes steps, facilities to secure horses and bicycles are provided at the trailhead shelter. A second bike rack is also provided near the Summit shelter. Summit paths at the very top are ADA accessible and open to hiking only.
Bicyclists: Can access the Summit by using the final 0.2 miles of Mt. Umunhum Road instead of the Trail and using the Summit bike rack; bikes are not permitted on Summit paths.
Equestrians: Horses are not permitted beyond the trailhead shelter.



Restoration in Progress

Please Stay on the Trails
The rock gardens at the Summit of Mount Umunhum support fragile plant communities. Vegetation can take years to establish in newly planted restoration areas. Thank you for protecting these sensitive resources.



Plant and Animal Guide



To see more images go to www.openspace.org