

Check trail conditions and seasonal closures by calling the District office at 650-691-1200 or visiting the Web site www.openspace.org. GPS coordinates displayed on this map are projected in WGS 1984 and represent the approximate locations of points of interest.

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Created in 1972, the District is an independent special district that has preserved over 57,000 acres of public land and manages 26 open space preserves. The District's boundary extends from San Carlos to Los Gatos and to the Pacific Ocean from south of Pacifica to the Santa Cruz County line. The District's purpose is to create a regional greenbelt of unspoiled public open space lands in order to permanently protect the area's natural resources and to provide for public use and enjoyment.



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

Sreether Smith

Emergency Contact Information

Be aware that cellular telephones may not have reception on the Preserve. A pay phone is located at the Backpack Camp.

In the event that you experience an emergency on District lands (fire, accident, or other immediate threat to life or property), call:

- **911**
- **650-968-4411** (24-hour emergency dispatch for District rangers; this phone number is for emergency use only)
District rangers and other field staff are equipped with radios and can radio for additional assistance from local law enforcement and emergency response agencies.
- **650-691-1200** (District administrative office, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; this number is answered weekdays during regular business hours and voice mail is available outside of regular hours)

For Further Information

For further information about the Black Mountain Backpack Camp at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve, or any of the other District open space preserves, please call, write, or visit the District: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA 94022-1404. The telephone number is 650-691-1200, email to info@openspace.org, or visit www.openspace.org.

Source: ¹"History of Black Mountain and Monte Bello Ridge," written in 1959 by George Morell

Black Mountain Backpack Camp



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

Sleep Under the Stars...

Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

Whether you're looking for a stopping place on your backpacking trip from the valley to the coast, or you're simply looking for a relaxing local overnight filled with stargazing, the Black Mountain Backpack Camp at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve is the only site on District lands where visitors can "sleep under the stars."

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

330 Distel Circle • Los Altos, California 94022-1404
Phone: 650-691-1200 • Fax: 650-691-0485

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Web site: www.openspace.org



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Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

About the Camp

Monte Bello Ridge and Black Mountain provide the scenic backdrop to the communities of Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Cupertino. Four campsites (four people maximum at each site) and one group site (24 people maximum) are available throughout the year for one or two overnight stays. Camping is allowed in the designated campsites only.

- Visitors must arrive at the campsite before sunset; the surrounding open space preserve area is closed a half-hour after sunset.
- A chemical toilet and water for washing is available.
- The water is non-potable (available by hand pump); campers must bring a water purifier or carry in their own drinking water.
- Campfires are prohibited; a cook stove is allowed in designated areas only.
- Store your food appropriately in the storage lockers provided at each camp site; wildlife is common at the Preserve.
- Sorry, no dogs on this Preserve.
- Campers must be 18 years of age unless accompanied by an adult.



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Pack it in. Pack it out. Trash cans are not available. Please plan to carry out everything you bring in, including refuse. Help care for the site; if you find trash left behind, please carry it out with you.

Camp Reservations & Fees

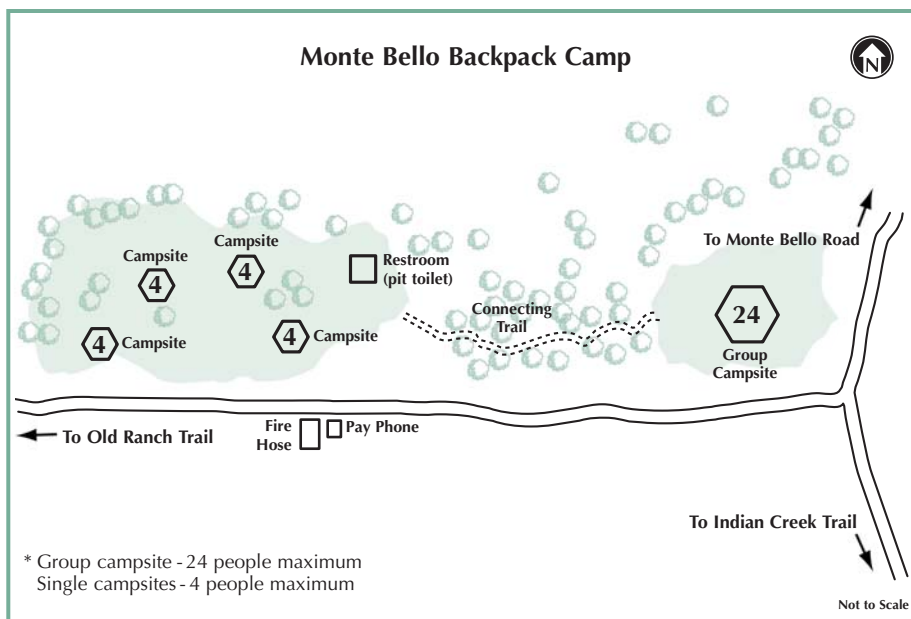
Camp reservations and a permit are required. A nominal fee is charged to reserve a campsite. Reservations are on a first-come, first-serve basis. We encourage you to contact the District at least a week in advance to obtain a reservation for the date you're interested in as the designated campsites can fill up quickly.

To make a reservation and obtain a permit, please call the District administrative office at 650-691-1200 or email info@openspace.org. Please have the following information ready:

- Contact Information:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Email address or fax number
 - Number of campers in your party
- Vehicle Information:
 - License plate number
 - Color
 - Make/model

Reservations can be made Monday through Friday during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.).

Parking. Parking for the Backpack Camp is at the main Monte Bello Open Space Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Los Trancos Preserve). A permit for overnight parking is required. The camp is a 1.5-mile hike from the parking lot, including a 500-foot uphill climb. If you're mountain biking to the campsite from the parking lot, a helmet is required.



History of Black Mountain Ranch

The Spanish explorers called Monte Bello Ridge and its high point Black Mountain the Sierra Morena, or dark mountain. Early American settlers to this area named one of their towns Mountain View because they had a view of Black Mountain and they were “deeply affected by the loftiness and beauty of this great rock looming against western sky.”¹

George Morell, a wealthy newspaper publisher, originally owned the Black Mountain Ranch property. “Nature in the raw” is what led Mr. Morell to buy Black Mountain Ranch. Following is an excerpt from his essay, “History of Black Mountain and Monte Bello Ridge,” written in 1959:

This is a very primitive area, kept so because of its inaccessibility either by road or trail. On the Morell, Winship, Johnson properties no destructive mark of fire or axe can be found. The land remains much as it was a century ago. Wildlife abounds. A magnificent coyote chorus greets the rising moon from a bald promontory. Coons, wild cats and foxes seem to be everywhere. Mountain lions have been



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

in residence during most of the years since 1940, when I bought the ranch. Last year a female raised two cubs and exercised them almost daily within a quarter mile of the ranch buildings. It is hoped that the primitiveness of this core area, the Johnson, Winship, Morell ranches may be preserved. Wilderness areas such as this are becoming more rare and consequently more precious each year.

Stanford University later received Black Mountain Ranch as a gift from Mr. Morell and, in 1974, the District purchased the 760-acre ranch property, creating the Monte Bello Open Space Preserve.

From the top of Black Mountain, visitors have an incredible view of Santa Clara Valley and the Mt. Hamilton Range. On clear days, visitors can see beautiful sunsets from the Black Mountain Backpack Camp, or watch the fog roll in from the coast. A former long-term caretaker of the ranch property remembers, “We had a 200-degree view of the Pacific Ocean. We could see the Crystal Range above Lake Tahoe a few times a year on a really clear day. Arguably we saw some of the greatest sunsets and sunrises in the world.”