



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

December 1, 2017

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### **Midpen to consider conservation easement at Mount Umunhum with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band**

**Los Altos, CA**— The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District’s board of directors will vote Wednesday, December 6 at their regular public meeting on whether to enter into a conservation easement over 36 acres atop Mount Umunhum with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.

If approved, the easement would grant the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, made up of descendants of local Native Californians, the ability to steward the mountaintop for natural resource conservation, cultural relearning and public education. Mount Umunhum is sacred to the Amah Mutsun people and is central to their creation story.

“In the process of collaborating with Midpen to identify, conserve and educate the public about Mount Umunhum’s cultural and natural resources, we learned that our missions are very similar,” said Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Chairman Valentin Lopez. “A conservation easement would formalize our partnership and further our efforts to protect and heal nature for the benefit of all people.”

The proposed easement would not affect public access to Mount Umunhum, and all activities would be coordinated with Midpen. These might include the creation of a native plant garden, use of indigenous plant management techniques, tribal ceremonies and sharing traditional knowledge with the public.

Conservation easements are commonly used by Midpen and other land conservation organizations as a tool for protecting and managing natural open spaces. The Amah Mutsun holds a similar conservation easement near Año Nuevo State Park on land owned by the Costanoa Lodge.

Midpen’s public meeting at which the conservation easement will be considered is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6 at 7pm at 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA 94022. The board report for this item can be found after December 1 on Midpen’s website at [www.openspace.org/about-us/board-meetings](http://www.openspace.org/about-us/board-meetings).

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*Created by voter initiative in 1972, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of open space. The District is a California special district governed by an elected board of directors. The District’s mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land and agricultural land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.*

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