



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Midpen Open Space preserves and trails remain open with new health and safety measures in place

Los Altos, CA — The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District continues to keep its preserves and trails open to the public as is allowed during the current shelter-at-home directive. New health and safety measures are in place that align with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [guidelines](#) for social distancing and help prevent the spread of illnesses.

“The health and safety of our preserve visitors, volunteers and employees is our top priority,” Midpen General Manager Ana María Ruiz said. “During this challenging time, the preserves are providing a space for people to connect with nature, breathe fresh air and enjoy the outdoors for mental, emotional and physical health and well-being.”

Midpen has made the following changes in response to public health directives to help keep our community healthy and safe by reducing the spread of COVID-19:

- **Restrooms are closed effective Friday, March 20** to help prevent spread of the virus and protect public and staff health. Visitors are advised to carry and use hand sanitizers.
- **Areas receiving high use will be intermittently closed without notice** to promote safe social distancing. Areas likely to be affected are Rancho San Antonio County Park and Preserve and the Mount Umunhum Area of Sierra Azul.
- **Group gathering areas are closed** including Deer Hollow Farm, Daniels Nature Center, Black Mountain Backpack Camp and Picchetti Winery and picnic area.
- **Group activities are suspended** including docent-led hikes, volunteer projects and special use permits.
- **Midpen administrative staff are telecommuting and remain available to the public** during business hours.

Preserve visitors are reminded to stay at home if they are sick, and to maintain social distances of at least 6 feet from others. Many Midpen preserves are remote, vast in acreage and offer many miles of trails, allowing people to enjoy nature while maintaining safe social distances. Visitors are encouraged to consider visiting Midpen’s more remote and less crowded preserves to enjoy the experience of exploring new lands and taking in new scenic vistas. All of the details needed to plan a successful visit, and updates on Midpen’s response to the COVID-19 virus can be found at openspace.org.

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The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District’s mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. On the San Mateo County coast, our mission also includes preserving agricultural land of regional significance and rural character and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources. Midpen has successfully protected nearly 65,000 acres of public open space land in the Santa Cruz Mountains region since 1972.