Mount Umunhum Area and Trails

Gain Perspective
Enjoy breathtaking 360-degree views of our region, including San Francisco, Monterey Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and even see 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 identify 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 Goodridge 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 cattle-drawn deck extends over the hillside, providing an amazing vantage point of the Santa Clara Valley. Inside, interpretive panels highlight the site’s cultural, military and natural histories.
- **Lake View Knob** – The high point of Mount Umunhum, Mount Diablo, and Mount Tamalpais can be seen as well as the valley below.

Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

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

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 Windy Trail.

**Bald Mountain Parking Area Elevation:** 3,485 feet.

**Mt. Umunhum Summit Elevation:** 3,604 feet.

**Total Elevation Gain:** 1,159 feet of continuous gain at approximately 10% grade.

**Total Length:** 3.7 miles, moderate at 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 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.

**Deer populations across the Summit basin remain high.** 0.2 miles of Mt. Umunhum Road instead of the Trail and using the Summit bike rack, bikes are not permitted on Summit paths.

**Equestrian:** Horses are not permitted beyond the trailhead shelter.

Access to Summit

- **Summit Parking Area:** ADA accessible and open to hiking only.
- **Hiking Only**: 0.2 miles of trail between the trailhead shelter to the summit is hiking only and includes steps, facilities to secure horses and bicycles are provided at the trailhead shelter.
- **Bald Mountain Parking Area:** Elevation: 2,336 feet. ADA Parking, restrooms, shade shelters, and pathways are located at the Mt. Umunhum Summit parking area.

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.

Call Box:

Accessible Features

- Accessible parking, restrooms, shuttle shelters, and pathways are located at the Mount Umunhum Summit parking 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 tissues is continually improving. For updates visit www.openspace.org/about/accessibility**

Restoration in Progress

The trail gardens at the Summit of Mount Umunhum support fragile plant communities. Vegetation can take years to recover from the newly planted garden areas. Thank you for protecting these rare and fascinating ecosystems.

Gain Perspective

Visiting Mount Umunhum’s Summit

Audio Tour – Stories of Mount Umunhum

Download the Stories of Mount Umunhum Audio Tour to experience “visiting” the Summit at your own pace. Meet Mount Umunhum’s got its name and how 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: call 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 to Mount Umunhum!**

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, the Santa Cruz Mountains and Mount Tamalpais beyond. On a clear day you can even see the Golden Gate Bridge.

**Air Force History – (Radar Tower West Side)**

This unique concrete tower was once a base holding a large radar dish operated by the Air Force from 1957 to 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 have fond memories of living on the mountain and contributed their efforts 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 alert 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 150 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 peoples 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 their forebears conducted sacred ceremonies. It was then decided to purchase the lands surrounding Mount Umunhum to create a place where future generations could “帰る場所” – a place to remember their past.

**Visiting Mount Umunhum’s Summit Audio Tour – Stories of Mount Umunhum**

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Plant and Animal Guide

The distinctive canyon liveflower thrives on exposed rocky outcrops.

The mountain is called “Umunhum”, which contains the root word for hummingbird in five Ohlone languages.

Hummingbirds love scarlet beardtongue flowers and the Summit’s adjacent flowering plants.

Bobcats, like the baby one, live at Mount Umunhum.

Lindley’s blazing star is limited to a small area in California.

Searing and peak-loving birds such as golden eagles are frequent Summit visitors.

Brewer’s clarkia is a rare endemic flower found only on local Bay Area peaks.

To see more images go to www.openspace.org