



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Leigh Ann Gessner

650-691-1200, [lgessner@openspace.org](mailto:lgessner@openspace.org)

### **Midpen earns national recognition for new trail at Mt. Umunhum**

Los Altos, CA— Mount Umunhum Trail in the Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve is one of 19 trails across the country, and the only one in California, to be designated a national recreation trail this year, ahead of National Trails Day June 2. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, the public agency managing the trail and preserve, also received an award of excellence in park planning from the California Park and Recreation Society for new public access at Mount Umunhum.

“Planning, building and maintaining great trails that provide the public with an enjoyable experience in nature, and withstand the test of time, is something Midpen staff work very hard at and take a lot of pride in,” said Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Acting General Manager Ana Ruiz. “It’s an art informed by science.”

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District staff designed and built the 3.7-mile trail as part of new public access to Mount Umunhum that opened last fall. The trail offers a gentle climb to the summit of one of the highest peaks in the Bay Area for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. It passes through chaparral, under the canopy of pine and oak woodlands and over the headwaters of Guadalupe Creek offering views of the valley below, ridgelines above and nearby peaks along the way. The trail emerges near Mount Umunhum’s rocky summit, where interpretive signs and weather shelters help visitors discover local history, rare plants and wildlife and 360-degree views of the region.

The Mount Umunhum Trail is the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District’s first to be designated a national recreation trail, however all of its trails are built with the same high standards of quality, attention to the environment and visitor experience. Midpen provides more than 225 miles of trail to the community in 24 open space preserves throughout the South Bay, Peninsula and San Mateo County Coast areas that are free and open to the public daily. Docents lead free year-round hikes and activities to connect the public with these trails and nature.

The National Recreation Trails Program includes more than 1,000 trails, and is administered by the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service with partners including American Trails.

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*The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a public agency created by voters in 1972 that has protected more than 63,000 acres of open space. Its 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. [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org)*