

Trail Map of Mt. Sutro Open Space Reserve

Lands of University of California San Francisco



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A BRIEF HISTORY:

Mount Sutro Open Space Reserve is part of the University of California, San Francisco. The mountain's steep slopes and dense forest are a striking contrast to the high-rise medical center campus on Parnassus Ave. and a refuge of open space for neighbors and wildlife.

In the late 19th century this mountain belonged to Adolph Sutro (1830-1898). His Rancho San Miguel extended from Parnassus Ave. all the way to Ocean Ave. The original habitat was coastal scrub and chaparral, but Sutro planted it in eucalyptus, cypress, plums, and other trees. As the city grew westward after the 1906 earthquake, Sutro's heirs developed their land into today's Forest Hill, St. Francis Wood, and Westwood Park neighborhoods. Only Mount Sutro remained unbuild.

By the early 20th century, Sutro Forest had become dense and fire-prone. During the Depression, 1935-37, the Federal Emergency Relief Agency hired unemployed laborers to thin the eucalyptus and cut firewood for poor residents.

UCSF acquired 61 acres of Mt. Sutro in 1951 and built Aldea Married Student Housing off Clarendon, linked by Medical Center Way. The city's Recreation and Parks Dept. bought the adjacent 25 acres for its Interior Greenbelt.

During the Cold War, the top of Mt. Sutro was fenced for a radar station to guide the Nike missiles based at the Presidio, complete with guards and German shepherds. The installation was removed by the early 1970s, but the bulldozed clearing soon became choked with French broom. Few trails remained in use, and the surrounding forest became overgrown and mysterious.

In recent decades UCSF and neighbors have collaborated on developing a master plan for Mount Sutro Open Space Reserve. The barren summit has

been planted with a colorful native plant garden, and improved trails have made the mountain accessible again.

TRAILS:

The origins of Mt. Sutro's trails are a bit of a mystery. The steep ridgeline trails probably date back to the 1890s, when Sutro Forest was planted. The Historic and Fairy Gates trails may have been built then, but they could be an undocumented Works Progress Administration project built 1939-41 (neither theory is proven). There were forest roads (not trails) in today's Aldea Housing in the 1930s.

The Fairy Gates Trail remained in use through the present, but most of the other trails were overgrown and forgotten until quite recently. UCSF reopened the South Ridge in the 1990s. Volunteers from Mt. Sutro Stewards and the Trail Center, with UCSF grounds crews, extended the North Ridge Trail from the summit to Medical Center Way in 2005. We returned over many months to reopen the Historic Trail in 2007. Mt. Sutro Stewards continues to maintain and improve the existing trails in accordance with the UCSF master plan.

GIVING BACK:

Nature in the City/ Haight Ashbury Stewards works regularly on habitat restoration at parks and open spaces, including Mt. Sutro. (415) 564-4107. www.natureinthecity.org.

Mount Sutro Stewards meets the first Saturday of every month, to maintain trails and restore native habitat on Mt. Sutro. We normally meet at Woods Lot, and work from 9 AM to 1 PM. We provide tools and training. Wear sturdy shoes, long pants and long-sleeve shirt, bring snacks and water. Information: Craig (415) 819-2788, Ben (415) 387-1437.

Map Legend

- North
- Farnsworth
- Major Trails
- Stairways
- Minor Paths
- Sidewalks
- >> >>> Steep (arrows point up)
- Major Junctions
- Major Junctions
- .11 Mileage between points
- UCSF Open Space Reserve
- UCSF Medical Campus & Housing
- City Parks & Open Space Preserves
- Private Land
- Street
- Improvements
- Caution!
- Rock Outcrop

On Your Visit:

Parking lots on campus require a valid parking permit. Many adjacent neighborhoods have short-term parking (permit parking for residents). Use UC's parking garage or public transit.

Please stay on established trails to protect sensitive habitat. Leave the trails in better condition than you find them. All plants, animals, and natural features are protected.

Dogs must be under owner's voice control; bring a leash.

Be alert when crossing roads—look and listen for cars. Use mirrors when available.

Beware of falling branches during storms and high winds. Stay out of the woods until wind abates and be alert for fresh hazards.

Poison oak grows in several areas. Learn to recognize and its shiny "leaves of three."

Motorcycles, motorvehicles, camping, and fires are prohibited.

UCSF Police: (415) 476-1414

All information on this map is subject to change. Trails may become unsafe or impassable due to overgrowth, storms, windfalls, and other circumstances. Use your best judgement, obey posted closures and respect private property. Mapmaker assumes no liability for the condition of trails or roads shown (or not shown) on this map.