



## Friends of los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Upcoming Hikes & Volunteer Events Safety Trail Closure Black Mtn. Park Elevated Levels of Arsenic Detected

You'll notice that we have a special notice included in this message from the City of San Diego. The City has moved to close the Miner's Loop Trail in Black Mountain Open Space Park. Part of this trail traces its route around the finger canyon that includes the Black Mountain Arsenic Mine that was built and operated from 1923-1927. We include a city-provided map that shows the portions of the trail that were closed last weekend. Other trails on Black Mtn. are still open.

A researcher from San Diego State University was researching the defunct Black Mountain Arsenic Mine. The graduate student tested soils around the mine and its adjacent canyon and found what were characterized as elevated levels of arsenic, above levels acceptable to the Environmental Protection Agency. Arsenic is a mineral commonly found in soils all over the U.S. It is often a contaminate in well water and other sources of water. In an abundance of caution, the City

closed this trail, probably due to the possibility of the arsenic being kicked up as dust in the air. Read their press release and check out the map below to know where the closures occur.

I have visited and guided others into the mine shafts and even up the giant chimney laying against the hillside a number of times over the last 20 years. I have also led many a hike along the Miner's Loop Trail over the same period of time. I expect that further testing will demonstrate no risk is present for the public. Let's hope so, it's a beautiful piece of trail with an interesting history.

— Mike Kelly  
Secretary & Conservation Chair  
(Also member of the Citizens  
Advisory Committee for Black  
Mountain Open Space Park

[www.penasquitos.org](http://www.penasquitos.org)

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### January Events

#### **Black Mountain Geology Hike with a Ranger**

Sat. Jan. 14, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Take a hike with a Ranger and learn about the unique geology of Black Mountain. On this 3 mile hike we will talk about the geologic history of the area and learn how geology affects plants, animals and people. Meet at the Black Mountain Glider Port Parking area on the south side of Carmel Valley Road, ¼ mile east of Black

Mountain Road, San Diego, 92129.

Leashed, friendly dogs are welcome on this hike. For more information call the Black Mountain Ranger Office: (858) 538-8021.

#### **Trail Work on Black Mountain**

Sat. Jan. 14, 7:45 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join San Diego Mtn. Bike Assn. and Rangers in building new trail connectors. No experience needed. Meet at the trailhead on Sundevil Way, Rancho Peñasquitos.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, Jan. 6, 2017

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## **City Closes Trail to Conduct Tests in Black Mountain Ranch Open Space Park**

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego, in collaboration with its research consultants, has detected higher than normal arsenic readings at the abandoned arsenic mine in Black Mountain Open Space Park. There is no conclusive evidence that there has been or is an imminent threat to the health of the public, plants or wildlife in and around the mine or along nearby trails as a result of this discovery.

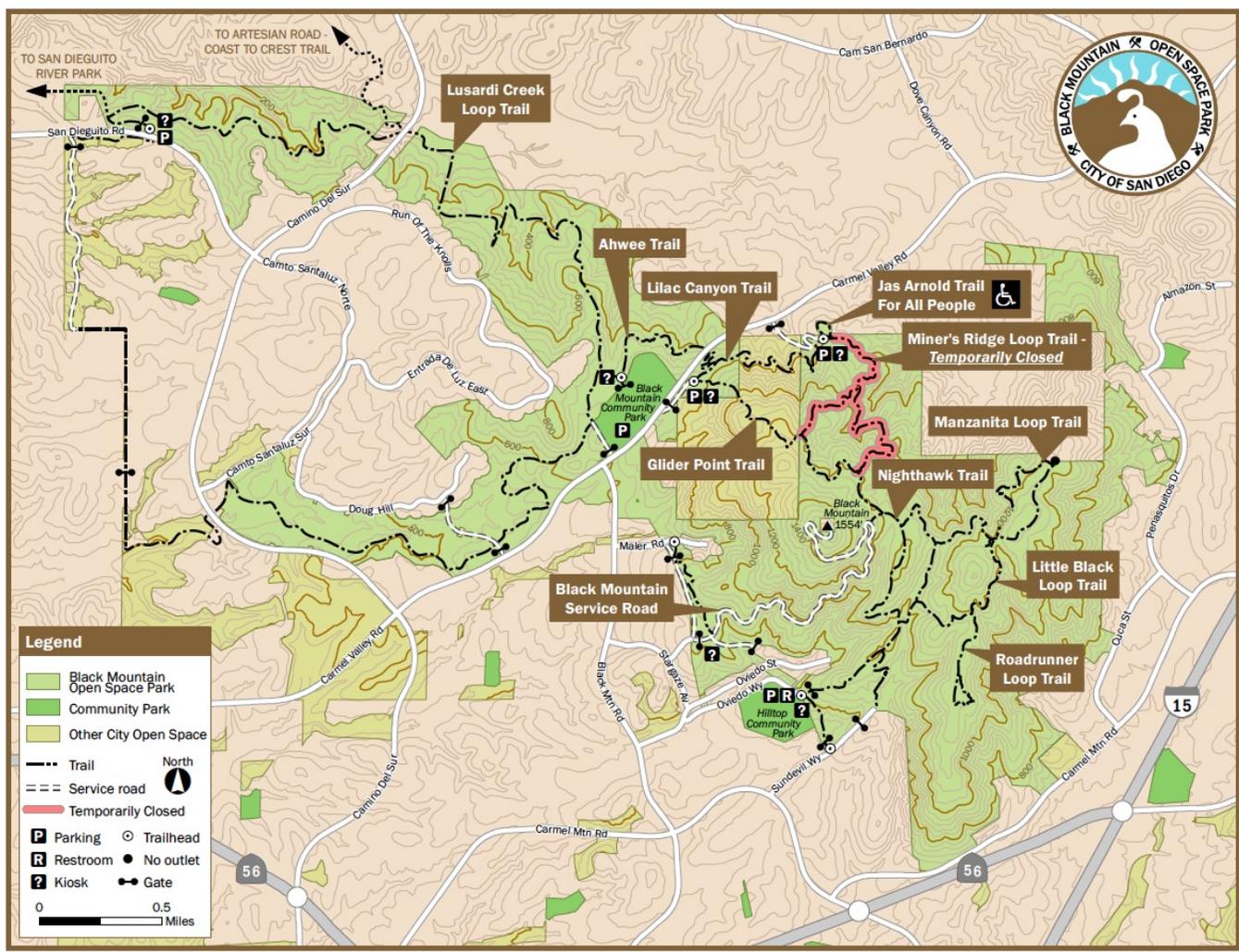
Trails in close proximity to the mine are closed to allow researchers to conduct further testing, sampling and monitoring of the mine and trails in the area. Public access to the mine and surrounding area is prohibited. This includes a portion of the Miner's Ridge Loop Trail. Research and thorough testing is expected to take several months. Members of the public are advised to follow all signage and Ranger instructions in Black Mountain Ranch Open Space Park.

The Black Mountain Arsenic Mine is located on the north slope of Black Mountain at an elevation of 1,000 feet and was mined for naturally occurring white arsenic (arsenious oxide) in the 1920s for approximately eight to 10 years. Many remnants of the mine operation still exist on the site, but the mine has not been in use for more than eight decades. There are no designated trails that lead the public to the mine in the open space.

Access to Black Mountain Peak is still available to the public along with western portions of the park, and Rangers will continue to patrol the area as before. Hikers are reminded to always use designated trails when visiting the park.

Public updates will be provided as relevant information becomes available. An updated map indicating the locations of the trail closures is available to the public at Black Mountain Open Space Park as well as online at <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/parks/osp/blackmtn/>.

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**Legend**

- Black Mountain Open Space Park
- Community Park
- Other City Open Space
- Trail
- Service road
- Temporarily Closed
- P Parking
- O Trailhead
- R Restroom
- ? Kiosk
- No outlet
- Gate

0 0.5 Miles