



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District


R-13-66
Meeting 13-17
July 24, 2013

STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM 1b

AGENDA ITEM

Informational Presentation on the Vision Plan Public Engagement Report

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

1. Receive an informational presentation on the Vision Plan Community Conversations Report, describing the public engagement process and results to date from Phase 2, "Hearing the Voices".
2. Discuss and provide input regarding the Vision Plan process and progress to date. 

SUMMARY

Vision Plan community engagement efforts used a "Community Conversations" strategy during the second phase of the planning process (April – June 2013). Community members were asked four open-ended questions designed to elicit thoughts on what is important to them as they envision the future of open space. The community conversations reached over 725 people, including more than 225 people at District Preserves. In addition, the Vision Plan website was seen by almost 1,800 visitors, including 300 active participants. All methods engaged diverse and broadly distributed stakeholders and constituents. Responses were collected and analyzed by theme and topic.

The resulting conversations were fairly well balanced amongst the Vision Plan themes. However, the *Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living* theme came up most frequently. Regardless of the theme, the top four most commonly mentioned topic tags were *Recreational Activities*, *Healthy Living for People*, *Additional Preservation / Stewardship*, and *Scenic Opportunities/Benefits*. This report provides more detail on the process used, and on the observed trends and commonly shared viewpoints.

DISCUSSION

The Vision Plan's community engagement efforts used a flexible but consistent strategy to gather people's thoughts, ideas, aspirations, and values in a way that fosters two-way engagement, supports relationship-building, and complements scientific polling. This approach was part of the Vision Planning process described to and endorsed by the District Board at its January 15, 2013 meeting (see Report R-13-10). Four open-ended questions were used to understand what important to people as they envision the future of open space.

Responses were collected in three ways. First, approximately 75 trained student interns from San Jose and San Francisco State Universities conducted interviews through referrals, personal contacts, and at various community events within District boundaries (e.g. Earth Day and farmer's markets). Second, District rangers conducted interviews with preserve visitors at most District preserves. Third, an online public participation platform (imagine.openspace.org) was employed to elicit responses to the questions and to encourage participants to engage each other by responding to and voting on others' ideas.

All methods engaged diverse and broadly distributed participants. The community conversations reached over 725 people, including more than 225 people at District Preserves. In addition, the Vision Plan website reports over 17,000 page views by almost 1,800 visitors, including 300 active (signed-in) participants. The gender distribution was roughly evenly split. A wide array of age groups participated, with greatest numbers from the 18-55 year old range. Although Caucasian/European participants are somewhat overrepresented, participants were ethnically diverse. Conversations were held at over 30 locations in and near the District.

To allow analysis of the input and capture a greater level of detail in addition to the overall Vision Plan Theme, staff refined a series of categorized topic tags to capture the topics commonly mentioned. This approach allowed each quote and comment to be tagged with a theme, a primary topic, and up to two sub-topics. District staff and consultants used the tags to sort, group, and review quotes and comments to find common values.

Community Conversations Results

Although the *Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living* theme was brought up most frequently, conversations were fairly well balanced amongst all the Vision Plan themes. Regardless of theme, the top four most commonly mentioned topic tags were *Recreational Activities*, *Healthy Living for People*, *Additional Preservation / Stewardship*, and *Scenic Opportunities/Benefits*. The following table summarizes the observed trends and commonly shared viewpoints.

Vision Plan Theme	Prominent Topics	Other Frequent Comments
Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recreational activities ● Increased public access ● Healthy living for people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Desire for more hiking and mountain biking trails ● More regional trails
Healthy Plants, Animals, and Waterways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iconic species or habitats ● Healthy natural systems ● Additional preservation, conservation and stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seeing plants and animals is an important aspect of the recreational experience ● Clean water and clean air ● Protecting natural open space from development
Enriched Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education, outreach and community service ● Healthy living for people 	No high frequency comments noted

Vision Plan Theme	Prominent Topics	Other Frequent Comments
Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic opportunities and benefits • Additional preservation, conservation and stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appreciation of beauty • Desire for escape and refuge • Need to preserve scenic beauty
Viable Working Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, food systems, and agricultural lifestyle • Healthy living for people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appreciation for the area's agricultural heritage • Importance of working lands to providing jobs

For further information, including sample quotes that illustrate representative participant perspectives, please refer to the full Community Conversations Report (see Attachment 1).

Comparison to Benchmark Scientific Survey

The community conversations input is intended to complement rather than replicate the core values section (Section 4) of the March 2013 Benchmark Scientific Survey conducted by Strategic Research Institute. Due to the subjective nature of the response collection and tagging procedure, strict numerical comparisons would be inappropriate. The values expressed by Community Conversation participants are generally consistent with the findings of the Benchmark Survey. The core values section of the Scientific Survey did not include questions about a number of subjects that were raised frequently in the Community Conversations, notably Recreational Activities, Increased Access, Education, and Outreach and Community Service.

Outcomes and Next Steps

The community conversations provide valuable input to the development of themes and goals. In addition, the act of asking people to help shape District work invited a positive and respectful relationship between the District and the public, especially in the over 225 conversations conducted by District rangers.

The planning, outreach, and relational outcomes of the community conversations provide a solid foundation for the next steps of the Vision Planning Process. Phase 3, "Enriching the Conversation", includes reflecting back on what was previously heard, educating the public about the District, and obtaining feedback on those topics of primary importance to the District.

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY13-14 budget includes \$223,000 for the Vision Plan project public engagement consultant, Public Dialogue Consortium. Expenditures by this consultant remain on track.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Board waived Committee review of this project in lieu of full Board engagement. The full Board continues to remain apprised of ongoing Project progress and next steps.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice was provided pursuant to the Brown Act. Notice was also sent to the interested parties list for this project.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Vision Plan public engagement update does not constitute a project under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Attachment(s)

1. Vision Plan Community Conversations Report

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide a report on the Vision Plan team's efforts to elicit the public's vision and aspirations for the future of open space in the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District). Toward this end, the community engagement process included a series of partner, small group, and "person on the street" interviews called "Community Conversations" to meaningfully engage the public in the visioning process and build understanding and support for the District. Community Conversations are a flexible but consistent way to gather people's thoughts, ideas, aspirations, and values in a way that fosters two-way engagement, supports relationship-building, and complements scientific polling.

WHAT WE DID AND HOW WE DID IT

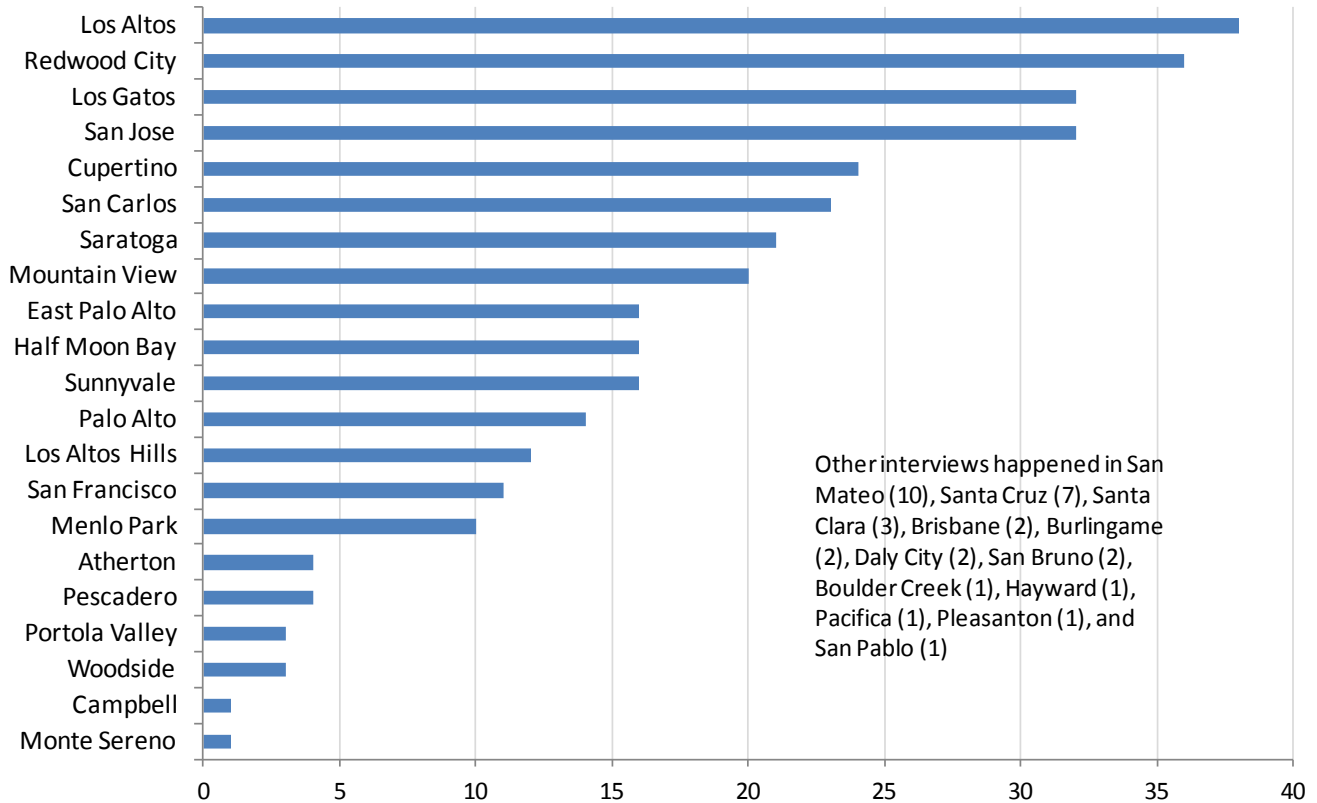
District staff and the public participation consultant, Public Dialogue Consortium (PDC), worked with the community conversation strategy in the second phase of the vision planning process (April – June 2013). The "conversations" took different forms, including in-person or telephone interviews, facilitated small group conversations (like a focus group), and online "town hall" discussions. The online discussions used the Mindmixer web platform (see imagine.openspace.org), which is effective in engaging technology-savvy members of the public. Community Conversations began with the District Board, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and other close partners. The invitation to participate online (see [Attachment A](#)) was posted at District preserves and distributed at outreach events.

Community members were asked four open-ended questions designed to elicit thoughts on what is important to them as they envision the future of open space. The questions were:

1. Keeping these open space themes in mind, what do you want the Peninsula, South Bay, and San Mateo Coast to be like in the future?
2. How might these open space themes contribute to the future you imagine?
3. Can you tell me more about why these things you have mentioned are important to you?
4. What are the most important actions that the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District or others could take to move us toward the kind of future you want?

75 Trained student interns (from San Francisco and San Jose State Universities) and 20 District Rangers conducted the in-person conversations, documenting topics raised during the conversation as well as notable quotes. Community conversations took place throughout the District, including six farmer's markets, District events, and on most District preserves. Students also conducted a number of phone interviews of members of the public referred by the CAC. The community conversations reached over 725 people, including more than 225 people at District Preserves.

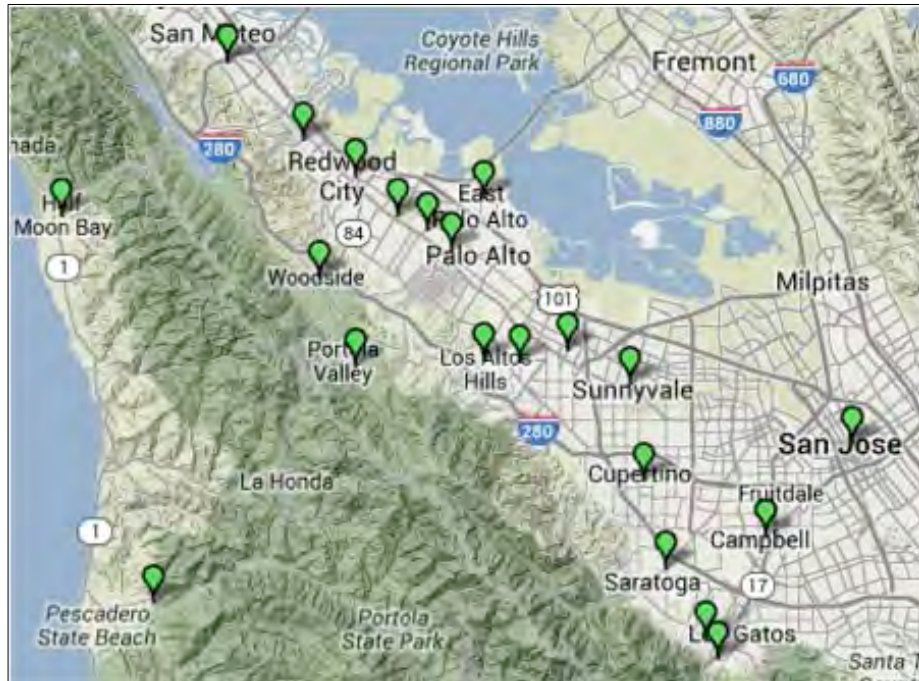
Location of Conversations (Cities)



In addition to the conversations represented above, the Vision Plan website reports over 17,000 page views by almost 1,800 visitors and 300 active (signed-in) participants so far.

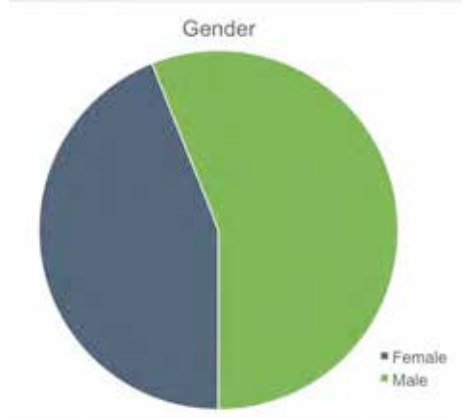
It is likely that these participants will continue to engage and increase in numbers as the vision planning process continues.

Location of Community Conversations

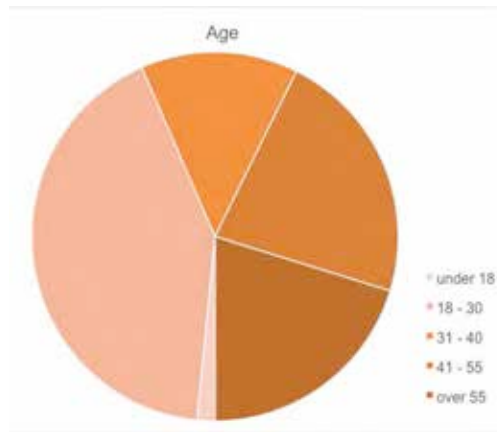


Who We Talked To (Demographics)

The community conversations engaged diverse and broadly distributed participants in the vision planning process. The gender distribution of participants through in-person methods (see chart at right) and the Vision Plan Website were quite similar.

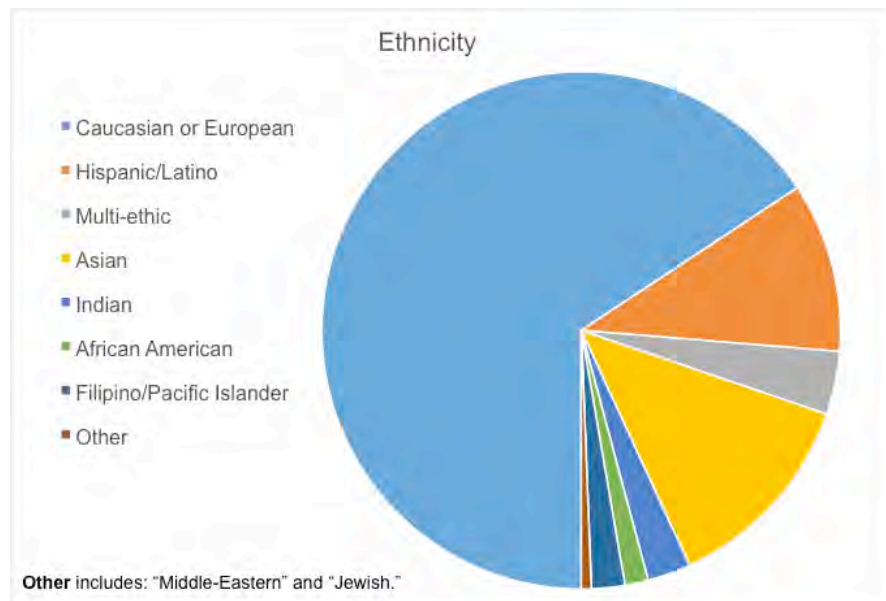


While the in-person conversations were dominated by participants in the 18-30 year old range (see chart at right), the age distribution of online participants was more weighted toward the 41-55 year old range.

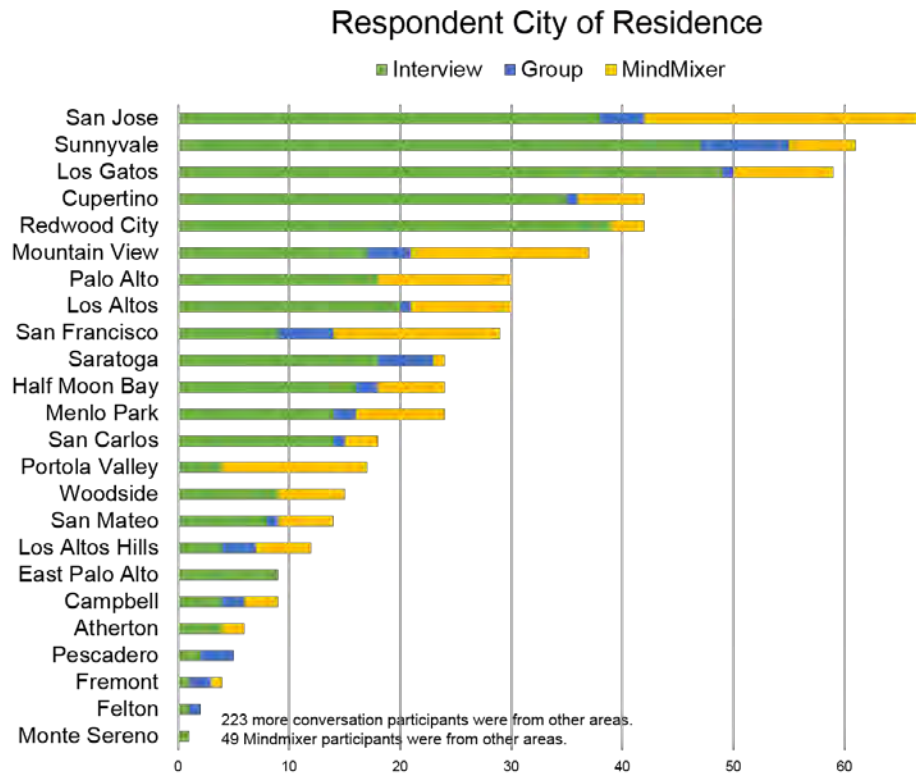


Participants self-identified their ethnicity, and many chose not to answer the question. Although Caucasian/European participants are somewhat overrepresented, participants were still ethnically diverse.

In future stages, the Vision Plan team will continue to outreach to diverse communities with an emphasis on Hispanic/Latino and Asian groups.



The additional cities of residence not shown on the chart at right include some of the rural unincorporated areas in the District as well as some out-of-District areas.



Public Input Analysis Process

The analysis and interpretation of subjective information like the Vision Plan community conversations required a loosely structured approach. Once PDC had compiled all the various forms of public input into one online database, staff began the process of organizing and analyzing each quote or comment received, identifying the dominant Vision Plan theme being expressed. A method to capture more detail was also needed, because, as the following quote shows, participants often co-mingle the themes when they are sharing their values and aspirations:

“The natural resources, working land, access to the preserves, and scenery and history tie in together. They interrelate with each other. For me, recreational access is very important, especially for mountain biking.”

Over a month-long process of review and refinement, staff developed a series of categorized topic tags to capture the topics commonly mentioned and allow analysis of the various dimensions that a participant is attempting to communicate. This approach allowed each quote and comment to be tagged with a primary topic and up to two sub-topics in addition to the overall Vision Plan Themes. [Attachment B](#) shows the tag and sub-tag scheme that was developed.

With the help of PDC, District staff used the tags to sort, group, and review quotes and comments to find common meanings. Once all the quotes and comments were tagged, themes and sub-tags were grouped together, and commonalities were identified. A list of quotes was generated that illustrated representative participant viewpoints, as further described in the next section.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS RESULTS

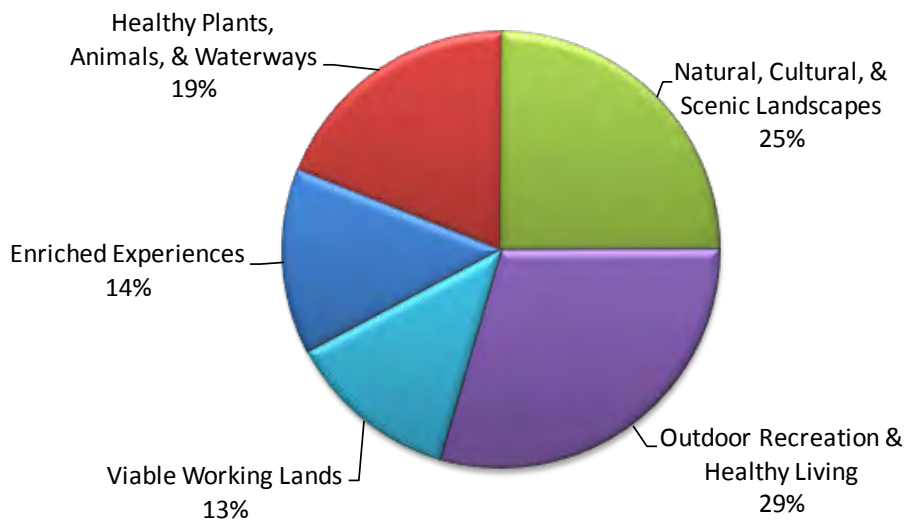
Themes Overall

The conversations were fairly well balanced amongst the Vision Plan themes. However, as shown in the following chart, the **Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living** theme came up more frequently than the others. The top two most commonly mentioned themes were mentioned in more than half of the conversations.

Vision Plan Themes

- *Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living*
- *Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Landscapes*
- *Healthy Plants, Animals and Waterways*
- *Enriched Experiences*
- *Viable Working Lands*

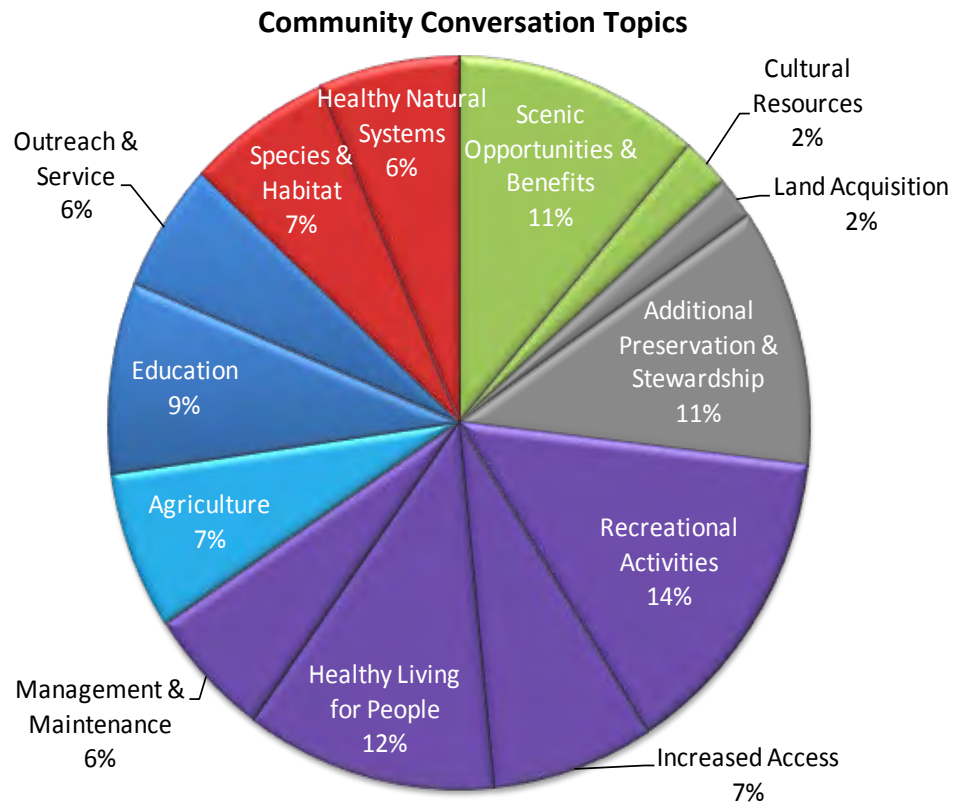
Themes in Community Conversations



Topic Tags Overall

Overall, regardless of theme, the top four most commonly mentioned topic tags were *Recreational Activities*, *Healthy Living for People*, *Additional Preservation / Stewardship*, and *Scenic Opportunities/Benefits*.

Cultural Resources and *Land Acquisition* were the least commonly mentioned topics overall. The chart at right shows the overall percentage of times that each topic tag was mentioned.



Topics by Theme

The topic tags were also grouped by theme to further identify trends and commonly shared viewpoints, discussed further below. Additional participant quotes are provided in [Attachment C](#).

Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living Theme

Although all topics were mentioned within the Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living Theme to some degree, *recreational activities*, *increased public access* and *healthy living for people* were the most prominent topics that participants mentioned.

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently mentioned the relationship between outdoor recreational activities and healthy living for people.	“Being outdoors in open space areas that allow recreation is good for our community and our youth. It brings friends and family together, but most importantly it allows everyone the opportunity of potentially living a healthier lifestyle.”
Participants frequently talked about the desire for more overall access to open space.	“I love to run and hike, so I want more access to be able to do these outdoor activities.”

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently talked about the desire for more hiking and mountain biking trails. Comments reflected a variety of viewpoints.	“Multi-use trails particularly for mountain bike, hiking and dogs. I think we should have more multi usage trails, with off shoots, so hikers who prefer fire roads can hike on fire roads, and those who prefer single track can hike single track as well. Trails that mountain bikers that prefer technical mountain biking or single track can enjoy.”
Often participants expressed an interest in expanding regional trails and trails that are community connectors.	“Increase cycling connections to allow for 50-100 mile loop rides. Many of us like long, exploratory rides; I'd like to be able to do it all on dirt, away from traffic. A large loop route up high on the ridge with multiple routes leading down to the coast and the populated areas of the Bay would be lovely.”
Participants commonly mentioned management and maintenance in conjunction with recreational activities.	“As a user, I would like to see trail maintenance. A poorly maintained trail gets eroded, and bridges may go out. Please provide more funding for infrastructure, building trails, accessing trails, managing & maintaining lands, and patrolling lands.”
People discussed their interest in expanding the variety of trail experiences.	“The preserves are close to the public (urban areas) and can provide recreational activities without having to drive to Yosemite. Please provide more camping, backpacking, overnight opportunities. Have more staging areas to allow more public.”
Many participants mentioned increasing the availability of places to take their dogs.	“I enjoy the outdoors, and that's why I do a lot of hiking. I like to take my dogs with me since it's great exercise for them too. Plus it's my main way of getting outside since I work a lot during the week.”
Many participants mentioned the importance of sharing outdoor recreational experiences with their friends and families.	“It is vastly important for me to have safe and healthy place to take my family to enjoy nature and animals. I feel like most of the places that I had when I was a kid are gone. When the plants are healthy, the water is clean, and the animals are milling about it is a beautiful scene. My kids often stay indoors most of the week playing video games or doing homework so it is important to get them outside and active. Sometimes we take a plant book or bird book and try to teach the kids about all the different things we see these places serve as a bonding time for our family.”
Many related their outdoor recreational experiences to open space conservation and preservation in the region.	“Since I use these locations for recreation, preservation is near and dear to my heart. I think we need stop development in our rural areas. We need to make sure that future generations have access to hike, bike or run. There is no where else that people can go and enjoy these types of locales. Suburbs are taking over and there are fewer and fewer places that people can get away from the stress of the daily grind.”
Participants expressed concerns about management of multiple trail uses and trail impacts.	“I know it may be expensive, or funding may be an issue but more ranger presence would enforce the rules of the trails and then people would adhere to the rules by picking up after their dogs, etc. so it could be more enjoyable for everyone.”

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants seem to feel that management and maintenance of open space should be a priority.	“Open Space areas are full of living things, whether plants or animals, so they need to be properly maintained.”

Healthy Plants, Animals, and Waterways Theme

Although many topics were mentioned within the Healthy Plants, Animals, and Waterways, *iconic species or habitats, healthy natural systems, and additional preservation, conservation and stewardship* were the most prominent topics that participants mentioned.

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently said that seeing plants or animals was an important aspect of their recreational experience.	“When I go hiking in open space, I really don’t want to see what I can see in an urban environment, I want to see the trees and the plants that are native to the area. That are more likely to originate there. I want to see nature. I don’t want to see weeds along the trail but native plants and animals.”
Participants frequently mentioned the importance of clean water and clean air.	“I am an outdoors person, so all of these really matters to me. Clean air is a signature symbol of Northern California and I would like to keep it that way instead of it all being industrialized, as well as keeping clean water running.”
Participants frequently mentioned protecting natural open space from development.	“The single greatest thing the District could do is to continue to protect open spaces and further connect lands - this speaks to all the themes.”
Participants frequently mentioned additional conservation and preservation in conjunction with this theme.	“I grew up in the mountains, so it is very important to me that others respect nature. We need to preserve natural landscapes because they are dying out.”
Participants often related the health of nature to the health of people.	“Having healthy plants and animals, clean air and water directly correlates with human health based on the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink.”
Some participants discussed restoring fisheries.	“I think it is important to support fish passage projects to restore steelhead & salmon. Many pristine and protected MROSD streams currently lack steelhead and salmon runs due to human built migration barriers downstream of these open space areas. Most of the best salmonid habitat and perennial stream flow on the Peninsula occurs on MROSD streams. MROSD must engage with and support local groups and efforts working to provide fish passage downstream, and outside of, their Preserve boundaries.”

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Some highlighted the importance of ecosystems, biodiversity, and connectivity.	“It’s all about the connections. Connecting habitats and connecting trails. Enhance the wildlife corridor for species that need a certain range like mountain lions, bobcats, deer, and coyotes. Mountain lions need to be able to cross roads and need to have a habitat that connects all throughout.”
Participants often mentioned management and maintenance of invasives	“Midpen must be more active managers, but you don’t have the staff now as it is. Think about more use of citizens - get the public to help survey the lands and wildlife. Provide more opportunities for volunteers to manage pampas grass, broom and other invasives.”
Participants mentioned purchasing additional land to preserve natural areas.	“I was raised in the Bay Area- in San Mateo – and I have seen how the area has changed. I am getting on in years and now, but I can look back and remember this area as a child. I am interested in protecting what is left. It is disturbing how much has already been lost. MROSD have done a remarkable job of preserving vast amounts of open space. But need to be vigilant and continue to do this – it won’t just happen on its own. We need to have a common vision that stretches out into the future. Take advantage of opportunities that come up to acquire lands. Have the funding to do that, work with land trusts, must partner with them to provide access for the public and manage the land.”

Enriched Experiences Theme

Although all topics were mentioned within the Enriched Experiences Theme to some degree, *education*, *outreach and community service*, and *healthy living for people* were the most prominent topics that participants mentioned.

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently mentioned finding new ways to outreach to people about the benefits of open space.	“I think people need to know how important those spaces are, and actually know the effects and what happens to the environment when more people live there. There should be training so people can volunteer and help do their part.”
Participants frequently expressed the importance of educating people about nature.	“I may be an old woman, but that doesn't mean I'm not still curious to learn about what's going on outside my white picket fence. I love taking docent-led hiking tours. I bought a bird book, but am always eager to learn more from people that are more knowledgeable than myself. I would like to see groups established for older women who are still healthy and want to hike together. I have found that taking long walks keeps me both physically and mentally sharp, and I'd like to have access to new places to engage in this activity.”
Participants often connected knowledge about nature with healthy lifestyles.	“I want people to know about the trails, to have information on what's going on with them; keeping the community involved to stay healthy and moving.”

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants expressed an interest in more outreach about recreational activities in open space	“I am a Boy Scout so nature is very important to me. I believe that not enough people know enough about nature and what it contains. An endless amount of knowledge can be gained from nature. Exercise and education can happen at the same time in nature such as hiking in the woods, walking or cycling thus making it a very valuable asset to society.”
Participants mentioned an interest in ensuring that the next generation would be able to relate to nature.	“I am definitely in favor of access to these lands because I think that it is important for people to understand their natural surroundings. I think that it is especially important for children so that they can learn at a young age and grow up knowing about the importance of nature.”

Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Landscapes Theme

Although all topics were mentioned within the Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Landscapes Theme to some degree, *scenic opportunities and benefits*, and *additional preservation, conservation and stewardship* were the most prominent topics that participants mentioned.

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently expressed an appreciation of beauty.	“Walking the trails and taking in the beautiful scenery is what it's all about, and we can't do that if we don't maintain what we have.”
Participants frequently mentioned desiring escape and refuge.	“Having open space by a community is beneficial. The closer it is the more people will visit. Those benefits include a chance to be out in nature and appreciate it. To get away from hustle bustle, as well as breathing the clean air and appreciating the peaceful atmosphere.”
Participants frequently mentioned the need for preserving scenic beauty.	“Nature inspired me at a young age to become a park ranger when I get older. I want others to be able to get inspired by nature in the same way, and I want the preservation of these beautiful lands more than anything else.”
Participants mentioned an interest in ensuring that the next generation would be able to experience the beauty.	“It’s always nice to have places to go and relax with your family. When I go out to nature it reminds me a little bit of where I am from. Future generations will not be able to enjoy places out in nature if someone doesn’t do something to protect them.”
Participants somewhat frequently mentioned the restorative effects of nature as an important part of their recreational experience.	“I enjoy taking my grandmother who is in a wheelchair over to Rancho to breathe some clean fresh air. My grandmother doesn't speak much, but she enjoys being out there and her mood uplifts when she is among the wildlife.”

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants occasionally mentioned the importance of preserving cultural resources.	“It is important for us to leave behind signs or traces of our history that can be admired for years to come. The amount of beauty and inspiration I receive from visiting various preserved sites allows me to remain adamant about continuing our efforts to preserve landmarks. I wish people took better care of our nation's and area's landmarks. I plan to visit landmarks in the surrounding areas during my free time this summer.”

Viable Working Lands Theme

Although many topics were mentioned within the Viable Working Lands Theme, *agriculture, food systems, and agricultural lifestyle* and *healthy living for people* were the most prominent topics that participants mentioned.

	<i>Sample Participant Quote</i>
Participants frequently expressed an appreciation for the area’s agricultural heritage	“People are drawn to visit these farms that are producing their food. That first link is through their gut. Then they get this other wealth of knowledge and experience that comes from intimate connection that farms have with the environment, and act as interpreters for the land and as a step towards understanding all of the ecosystem functions of that place: the soil, water, and climate. All you need to grow or raise animals, all that comes from a really deep relationship to a place which often exists over generations.”
Participants frequently discussed food systems and its relationship to healthy people	“Everybody eats and every hiker, mountain biker, birder; all eat. And what people eat is consistent with their ecological desires about Open Space preservation. There hasn’t always been a connection to the consequences of their actions and food can play a really great role for us to understand the impact of our consumption to the planet.”
Participants frequently mentioned the importance of working lands to providing jobs	“Many jobs are created through farms and this is where we grow our healthy food. Without having sustainable farms, we would not be able to provide the food we sell in our supermarkets. The use of productive land not only creates healthy food, but also jobs.”
Some participants discussed their perspective on the District’s management of working lands.	“Protect the farms and ranches. I would like to see the preservation of farms and ranches. Midpen is continuing to acquire land and not able to manage land the way they really want to. Decent ranches just sit fallow. I think you should leave them as a working piece of land, do the studies, and then come back, so the land doesn't go fallow.”

Comparison to Benchmark Scientific Survey

The community conversations input is intended to complement rather than replicate the core values section (Section 4) of the March 2013 Benchmark Scientific Survey conducted by Strategic Research Institute, by paying attention to the patterns of emotions expressed and words used by participants. Due to the subjective nature of the response collection and tagging procedure, strict numerical comparisons would be inappropriate.

Many of the values expressed by community conversation participants are generally consistent with the findings of the Benchmark Survey. For example, participants frequently mentioned the relationship between outdoor recreational activities and healthy living for people. This sentiment echoes Question 4.7 in the Scientific Survey, which shows that survey respondents agree that recreational amenities contribute to health and wellness. Similarly, community conversation participants frequently expressed an appreciation of beauty and the desire for escape and refuge. These sentiments echo Questions 4.9 in the Scientific Survey, which shows that survey respondents agree that natural landscapes, panoramic vistas, and green hillsides provide relief from urban density. It is also worth noting that many participants mentioned increasing the availability of places to take their dogs, consistent with the responses to Survey Question 11.1.

The core values section of the Scientific Survey did not include questions about the following subjects, all of which were raised in numerous community conversations, so no comparison is possible:

- *Recreational Activities* and *Increased Access* topic tags (raised in 21% of community conversations)
- *Education* and *Outreach and Community Service* topic tags (raised in 15% of community conversations).

Caution is advised when comparing the frequently mentioned community conversation topics with the other sections of the Scientific Survey (such as Section 9), because the questions asked in the community conversations were not phrased in terms of potential public investments or expenditures.

The Vision Plan team may wish to further explore the subject of management and maintenance of District lands in the next phase of public engagement, because, even though this subject was only raised in 6% of community conversations, the Scientific Survey found that respondents strongly agreed that regional nature preserves and recreational facilities must be properly maintained.

OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

The community conversations have provided valuable input to the vision planning process during theme and goal development. For example, the planning team added another theme in response to the frequent mention of education and outreach topics. The goals also evolved in response to the community conversation input.

In addition, the community conversations were a vehicle for outreaching to and educating people about the work of the District. Engaging people in conversations that related the District's mission to their own interests and experiences made the information relevant and therefore memorable. This is especially beneficial given the many participants who had never heard of the Midpeninsula Open Space District – including most of the students who conducted the interviews. Also, asking people to help shape the work of the District invited a positive and respectful relationship between the District and the public, especially in the over 225 conversations conducted by rangers. The rangers positioned themselves as respectful listeners eager to hear the preferences and concerns of the visitors to the preserves. This kind of engagement shifts the way people understand and talk about the District and its work.

The planning, outreach, and relational outcomes of the community conversations provide a solid foundation for the next steps of the Vision Planning Process. Phase 3, Enriching the Conversation, focuses on clarifying and synthesizing public input to shape the Vision Plan, including the Action Selection Criteria and Priority Actions. The enrichment aspect includes reflecting back what was previously heard, educating the public about the District, and obtaining feedback on those topics of primary importance to the District. The community conversation results will be referenced during the process of drafting Priority Actions, to ensure that they meaningfully reflect diverse public perspectives.

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IMAGINE

the FUTURE *of* Open Space



We Need Your Input

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District would like your input in helping us define the future of your open space preserves. Join us now through May 2014 by taking part in surveys, making comments, joining focus groups, and more. Find out how you can help Imagine the Future of Open Space. Get started today by visiting www.openspace.org/

imagine or link directly to our online forum at <http://imagine.openspace.org>.



Celebrating 40 years, over 60,000 acres, 26 open space preserves, and 220 miles of trails within Santa Clara, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties.



IMAGINE

the FUTURE *of* Open Space



Tell us how YOU imagine the future of Open Space

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District would like your help in defining open space on the Peninsula, South Bay, and San Mateo Coast. Help us imagine a future that includes:

- Healthy plants, animals, and waterways
- Viable working lands

- Access to open space for exercise and education
- Beautiful scenery and interesting history

Comment on these and other themes that are important to you at <http://imagine.openspace.org> or obtain more information at www.openspace.org/imagine



ATTACHMENT B

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ANALYSIS CODES

Items in **bold** are the sub-tags. Items in **blue** are examples of what might fall into this tag.

SELECT ONE	SELECT UP TO THREE		
Top-Level Theme Tag	Sub Tag 1, 2, and 3		
Outdoor Recreation and Healthy Living OUT	Additional Preservation, Conservation, and Stewardship AD	Healthy Natural Systems HN	Recreational Activities RA
Enriching Experiences EEX	Preservation Stewardship	Natural Environment Ecosystems Greenbelt Sustainability	Hiking Trails Corridor/Connections Facilities
Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Landscapes LND	Land Management Protection Future Generations/Time Anti-Development	Healthy Living for People HP	Cycling Dogs Safety Areas with Multiple-Uses Trash Low-Impact Equestrian
Healthy Plants, Animals and Waterways HTH	Restoration Corridor/Connections Landmarks/Historical Structures Acquire / purchase land Climate Change	Food Systems/Agriculture Healthy Foods Air Quality Fitness Quality of Life Escape/Refuge	Camping Regional Trails Local Hunting/Fishing
Viable Working Lands WRK	Agriculture, Food Syst. & Heritage AG	Increased Access IA	Scenic Opportunities & Benefits SC
	Economic Benefits of Agriculture Agriculture Creates Jobs Regional Ag Local Ag Food Systems Sustainable Agriculture Working Lands Heritage	Distance from/connections with Urban Increased public access (general) Transportation Access Hours	Greenbelt Escape/Refuge Beauty and Scenery Access Future Generations/Time Anti-Development
	Cultural Resources CR	Managing District Lands ML	Iconic Species or Habitats SH
	Protection Education Interpretation	Protection Stewardship Balancing multiple land uses	Plants Water Animals Fisheries Habitat
	Education ED	Outreach & Community Service OC	
	Education Youth Learning about Landmarks and History Interpretation	Outreach and Communication Volunteer/Community Service Public Awareness	



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OUTDOOR RECREATION & HEALTHY LIVING

voices of the community:

"I would love to see the Bay Area Ridge Trail extend uninterrupted from Montara in the North to Mt Umunhum in the South."

"I love walking around the natural beauty and more trails would be a plus."

"I'd love to hike more, but not having a car makes it hard to do. I wish there were means of public transportation that could take you to these lovely hiking trails."

"Public access facilitates personal connections with the land that are critical for people to have a relationship with nature."

"Open space is the best way to exercise outdoors and catch fresh air while hiking or running or cycling, especially after work."

"I think there is a delicate balance between providing access, and the health of the land. If there is too much access the land will be negatively impacted."

"Trails and open space allow me to get out of the city, recharge, and enjoy creation."



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HEALTHY PLANTS, ANIMALS & WATERWAYS

voices of the community:

*"These spaces are abundant with nature's true treasures.
We should see them as jewels, not for sale."*

*"Nothing is more important to me than
keeping our water system clean,
animals free, and plants safe from foreign weeds."*

"We need to look at the question; 'Are we saving the land the right way?'"

*"Improve water quality and balance water use
so the Coastal creeks can support fish again!"*

"Yes please! We need salmon and steelhead again!!!"

"Yes, yes, stream restoration should be a high priority."



"We need connected lands for plants and animals to thrive."

*"I like to run through natural preserves, and seeing
plants and animals is part of that experience"*





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ENRICHED EXPERIENCES

voices of the community:

"Let's get people connected to the land, so they know why it's important."

"Please increase interpretive centers and signage!"

"If we start educating youth today about the benefits of the open space, they can be the leaders and advocates for the future."

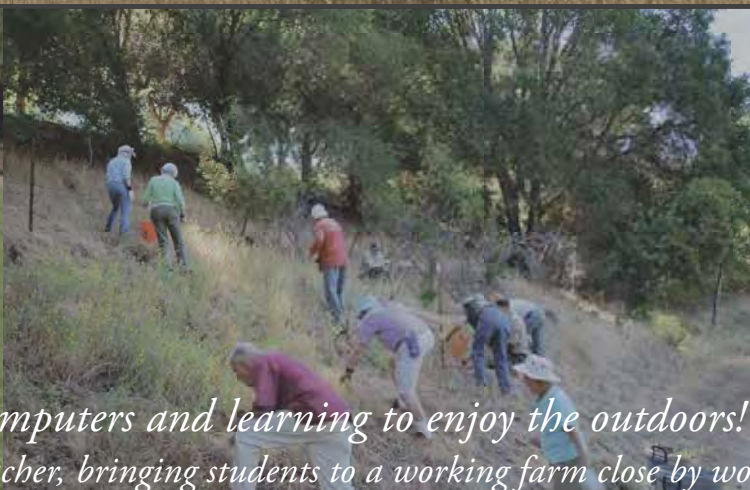
"There needs to be more outreach to universities; even college students do not know much about open space."

*"Education is where the District should begin.,,
Many people are uneducated about the lands and can't appreciate them."*

"I didn't even know these places you're mentioning existed, why is that? Is it really anyone's fault or just my own?"

"Let's get kids out from behind computers and learning to enjoy the outdoors!"

"As a first grade teacher, bringing students to a working farm close by would be an unforgettable experience."





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NATURAL, CULTURAL & SCENIC LANDSCAPES

voices of the community:

"I am a writer, and I find inspiration in tranquility, peace, and silence like the open space gives. It's miles from the busy city, it's like a whole new world. I find it's beauty, scenery, and history a kickoff for my poetry. It's a real joy to leave the city life, for just a moment, and meditate here. I find serenity, sublime, and beauty in these green scenes."

"You never run out of beautiful places to go here!"

"Most people I know who visit our preserved open spaces appreciate the stability of them - there is comfort in returning to a place and seeing it (relatively) unchanged year on year, decade on decade... This holds true also for the coastal landscapes, even the pastoral, rural working lands. Coastsiders (even those of us who only recently rooted here) want the backdrop of our lives to maintain..."

"I'd like to see them preserved as much as possible - particularly those areas that hold some significance - some historic value."

"Also being able to lift my eyes up to the open and beautiful hills from the busy freeways keeps me sane because it brings back memories of wonderful, peaceful times and makes me smile. Thanks for keeping the open spaces open and safe from urban sprawl."



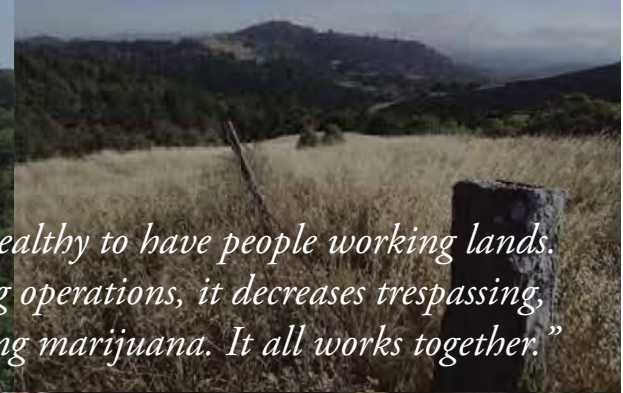
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VIABLE WORKING LANDS

voices of the community:

"Agriculture is healthy for the community and healthy for the land."

"Let's find a way to connect the food grown in our area to the people that live here."



"It is healthy to have people working lands. By having ag operations, it decreases trespassing, vandalism, and growing marijuana. It all works together."

"Working land is just as important to our world as the parks and reservoirs."

"There should be productive use of land however, farming should not hinder the preservation of that land for the animals living there."