



Regional  
OpenSpace

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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April 22, 2014

NorCal OAPM EA  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Western Service Center - Operations Support Group  
1601 Lind Avenue SW  
Renton, WA 98057  
Email: 7-ANM-NorCalOAPM@faa.gov

Re: Public Comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Northern California Optimization of Airspace and Procedures in the Metroplex (NorCal OAPM)  
Dear Secretary Foxx

On behalf of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen), a special district created through voter initiative with vast expanses of open space lands in San Mateo, Santa Clara, and a portion of Santa Cruz Counties, I respectfully submit the following comments regarding the above-referenced DEA.

Since 1972, Midpen has worked to preserve more than 62,000 acres of public open space land, much of it located on the ridgeline and foothills of the San Francisco Bay Peninsula. Midpen land has protected large, continuous swaths of sensitive habitat along a significant stretch of the new flight path that is proposed in the NorCAL OAPM. These lands (known as South Skyline Region) include: Los Trancos Open Space Preserve (OSP) (272 acres), Monte bello OSP (3,436 acres), Skyline Ridge OSP (2,143 acres), Long Ridge OSP (2,035 acres), and Saratoga Gap OSP (1,542 acres). These five open space preserves offer more than 46 miles of public recreational trails atop the highest elevations of the Santa Cruz Mountains, ranging between 2,200 to 2,800 feet.

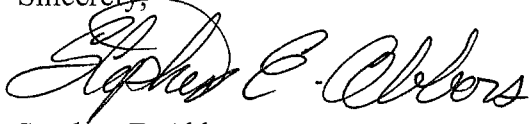
As a steward of the public's sensitive natural resources, and provider of tranquil nature study areas and outdoor recreation that affords people a respite from the hustle and bustle of city life, we are particularly concerned about the potential noise impacts of NorCAL OAPM to recreation, tranquil nature study, and to sensitive wildlife that is not acclimated to such noise. We anticipated noise impacts to be significant in our South Skyline Region given given in part the high elevations of Midpen property that reduce the distance and available buffer between NorCAL OAPM aircraft and sensitive receptors on the land.

To adequately address potential noise impacts, please provide an assessment of the potential increase in noise levels, including the potential highest elevated noise levels that may be produced by the NorCAL OAPM at any one time over a 24 hour period and on average over a

continuous period of time. In addition, please compare these noise levels to the thresholds of significance for sensitive receptors and sensitive activities, including outdoor recreation/people recreating on open space lands, tranquil nature study/researchers and nature observers, and sensitive wildlife. As part of this assessment, please include raptors, which are known to be highly sensitive to noise, particularly during breeding and nesting periods.

We bring these issues to your attention, as you may not be aware of unique noise-sensitive receptors and noise-sensitive activities that are present along the proposed new flight path that is part of the NorCAL OAPM. I would like to thank you for your time and consideration of our comments. Feel free to contact Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Manager, via phone at (650) 691-1200 and via email at [aruiz@openspace.org](mailto:aruiz@openspace.org) if you have any questions regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen E. Abbors". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "S".

Stephen E. Abbors  
General Manager

cc: Lennie Roberts, Committee for Green Foothills  
Mipen Board of Directors