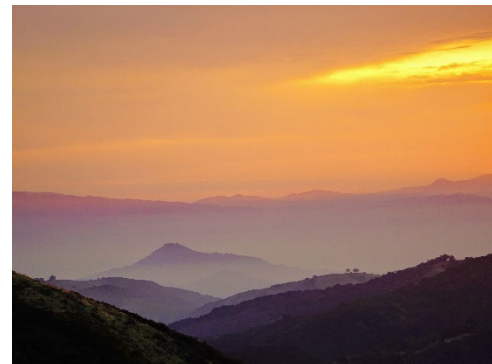




Major Accomplishments Report

July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022



Above, left to right: Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve (C. Lambert), Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve (Wing Yung), La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (Leigh Ann Gessner), Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Renate Elster), El Sereno Open Space Preserve (E. S. Mills), Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (Tian Lin)

FY22 MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Mission:

To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Coastside Mission:

To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.


The following accomplishments highlight the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's focus on a balanced mission: land acquisition and preservation; natural resources protection and restoration; public access and education; and for the Coastside, encouraging viable agricultural uses of land resources and preserving rural character.

These accomplishments encompass projects to expand public access, including the opening of the 250th mile of publicly accessible trail with the addition of Grasshopper Loop Trail in La Honda Creek Preserve, completion of the Mount Umunhum radar tower repairs in Sierra Azul Preserve, and substantial completion of the Alma College cultural landscape rehabilitation project in Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve. Progress was also made on various priorities and goals, including habitat restoration; wildlife corridors; reduction of wildland fire risk; land conservation partnerships; and the protection of more than 65,000 acres of public open space lands.

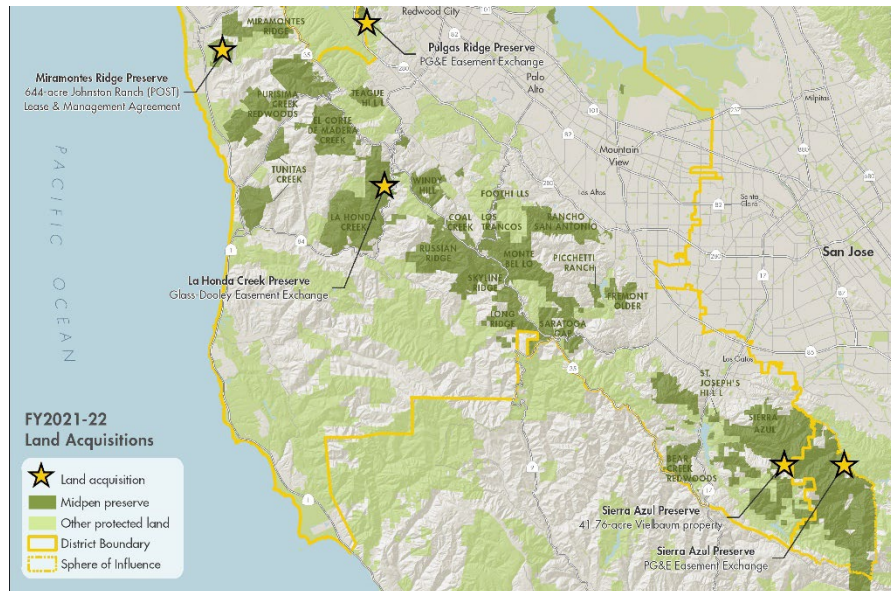
On the San Mateo County Coast, accomplishments include progress toward acquiring key agricultural lands to preserve natural resource and scenic open space values and improving agricultural infrastructure to support the conservation grazing program that helps protect the biodiversity of coastal grasslands. In addition to completing projects on the land, Midpen placed significant effort in strengthening the administrative and organizational systems that are necessary to support our mission, including substantial completion of and relocation to the new administrative office. In FY22, Midpen also began celebrating 50 years of public open space protection, restoration and connection through successful public events, organized activities, informational tablings, and social media posts.

COVID-19 continued to impact project and program delivery in FY22. Halfway into the year, Midpen office staff successfully transitioned to a hybrid remote work model. While some construction activities experienced delays due to supply chain disruptions, and costs escalated in most areas, our adaptable and resilient staff remain committed to the mission. All in all, FY22 was a busy, productive, and rewarding year. Much was accomplished and many projects were accelerated forward, ensuring the preservation of open space lands now and into the future.

LAND ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION

- ❖ Purchased the 41.76-acre Vielbaum property as an addition to ***Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve***. This purchase permanently preserves forested lands and wildlife habitat within the Upper Los Gatos Creek watershed and furthers the goals for a continuous open space greenbelt and the protection of wildlife corridors.
 - ❖ Received Board approval for the purchase of the 644-acre Johnston Ranch Uplands property at ***Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve*** and entered into a Lease and Management Agreement with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). The purchase preserves coastal open space, protects grazing and agricultural lands, protects the Arroyo Leon Creek watershed and provides for future public trail opportunities in partnership with the City of Half Moon Bay and California State Parks. Additionally, a grazing lease was assigned to Midpen by POST.
- 
- ❖ Received a 60-foot-wide public access easement from PG&E over a portion of Mt. Umunhum Road in ***Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve*** to ensure ongoing general public use, including vehicular driving, hiking, bicycling, and equestrian uses along with the right to repair and maintain the roadway. PG&E also granted Midpen a 100-foot-wide public access easement over a portion of Woods Trail to ensure ongoing general public trail access and the right to repair and maintain the trail. In exchange for the public access easements, Midpen granted PG&E a 50-foot-wide gas line easement over a portion of ***Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve*** for an existing high-pressure PG&E gas line.
 - ❖ Received an access easement at ***La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve*** for operational use (no public access) over an existing road across neighboring private property. This access easement is important for crossing La Honda Creek bridge to access the Lone Madrone (central) area of the preserve. Also received a waterline easement across private property to allow for ongoing maintenance of an existing waterline. In exchange for the access and waterline easements, Midpen granted the neighboring property owner access and waterline easements over the preserve.
 - ❖ In preparation for the potential purchase of the approximately 6,500-acre ***Cloverdale Ranch*** property, held numerous community engagement meetings with individuals and attended ***Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council*** and ***Sustainable Pescadero*** meetings. Also held a site visit at Lower La Honda with the Pescadero community members to discuss the project. Completed a second year of botanical studies, drafted a road and trail inventory, and began the rangeland management plan. Worked with the Grants Program to prepare State and County grant agreements to help offset the purchase cost.

- ❖ Reviewed, identified, and catalogued prospective lands considered for future land conservation and worked with GIS to prepare maps of prospective lands. Completion of the Land Conservation Guidance Document is pending review by the Real Property Committee.



NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

- ❖ Completed projects and actions that protect sensitive animal species and wildlife corridors:
 - Completed annual California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake monitoring to support the recovery of the species. Submitted annual report to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and US Fish and Wildlife. Applied for an extension of the current recovery permit with anticipated renewal in FY23.
 - Monitored sensitive species populations to assess the success of habitat restoration projects in **La Honda Creek** and **Russian Ridge Open Space Preserves**.
 - Completed final study analysis and report for the Badger/Burrowing Owl project. The study identified a core area of badger habitat in Skyline preserves, narrow and limited pathways for badger movement throughout the peninsula, and questionable genetic condition of badgers in the peninsula.



- Finalized and presented a report on newt mortality for the Alma Bridge Road Newt Mortality and Population Study project at **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**, demonstrating the need for developing a newt crossing across an existing county public road. Developed a cooperative agreement with Santa Clara County and solicited a request for proposals and qualifications (RFPQ) to begin the design of wildlife crossing safety infrastructure and outline the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process for a future capital project. The Cooperative Agreement with the County was approved in February 2022.



- Continued the Highway 17 Wildlife and Regional Trail Crossings project that will provide a safe wildlife corridor and a separate regional trail crossing of the highway:



- Completed environmental field surveys and technical studies that will inform environmental review documents.
 - Secured full funding for the Project through the design phase.
 - Completed the Accessibility Requirements report.
 - Identified trail alignments to connect adjacent open space preserves on the east and west side of the proposed crossings, and to connect further beyond into **El Sereno Open Space Preserve** and Sanborn County Park.
- Collaborated with outside researchers to perform bird counts and surveys at multiple preserves to assess populations and protect sensitive resources during maintenance and construction activities.
 - Completed annual data collection (via in-person surveys and recording units) in murrelet habitat to inform general resource management and specific project planning for the Marbled Murrelet Recovery project. Murrelets are listed as endangered in California and as threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Annual monitoring of populations within preserves contribute to region and state-wide recovery goals and enable Midpen to comply with wildlife agency requirements.
- ❖ Collared six mountain lions within Midpen preserves for the Mountain Lion Collaring Effort - Rancho San Antonio/Foothills Area Preserves as part of a study to reduce mountain lion-human conflicts to protect mountain lions and enhance public safety. Provided an informational presentation to docents and volunteers to inform outreach efforts. Received approval from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Institute of Animal Care and Use Committee to pursue behavioral modification methods. Implemented behavioral

modification with one individual mountain lion. Continued the Wildlife Picture Index project to understand how visitor use may influence wildlife movement and behavior.



- ❖ Collected and processed monthly wildlife camera data to submit special status species information in the in GIS database. Executed an agreement to utilize the Wildlife Insights platform with IST support. Continued the collection of image data and cataloging efforts with support from the UC Santa Cruz PUMA Project to integrate the image data with the Mountain Lion Collaring Study.
- ❖ Completed projects and actions that protect sensitive plant species and restore habitats:
 - Began 5th year of targeted invasive species removal at ***Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve*** with partial funding from a 5-year Valley Water grant that is guided by Midpen’s Integrated Pest Management Program to restore native habitats.
 - Removed mature, non-native, invasive French broom, cape ivy, and periwinkle as part of the Bear Creek Redwoods Invasive Weed Treatment and Restoration project at ***Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve***.
 - Accepted a final feasibility report for the Irish Ridge Restoration project at ***Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve***. Began the development of the biomass removal and restoration plan.
 - Drafted the La Honda Forest Management Plan for ***La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve***, met with stakeholders and held a public meeting with neighbors to review the current project status and recent findings.
 - Completed the designs for the Lower Turtle Pond Repair at ***La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve***. Began permitting partnership discussions with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District.
 - Implemented annual Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program activities to improve native habitats by removing invasive plants that negatively impact native plant and animal communities.

- Collaborated with outside researchers to perform botanical surveys at multiple preserves. These surveys help assess the health of Midpen habitats and protect sensitive plants during maintenance and construction activities.
- Completed removal of final bridge stream crossing at Hendry's Creek in **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**. This is the last piece of the Hendry's Creek Restoration project to remove unpermitted roads and structures to restore important creek habitat for wildlife and water quality. The bridge crossing was a poorly built, unpermitted structure that would eventually fail and cause stream channel issues.



❖ Completed projects and actions to rehabilitate lands:

- Received a fish passage assessment report from the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) for the Madonna Creek Fish, Water Supply and Bridge Replacement project at **Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve**. Completed geotechnical and hydrologic studies in support of dam stability, fish passage and bridge evaluations.
- Completed oil well investigations at **Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve** and cleaned an above ground storage tank containing hazardous oil.
- Completed an analysis of potential water supply improvements and pond restoration priorities at **Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve** and identified two springs to undergo future improvements in FY23.
- Contracted with historic and hazmat consultants to recover resources at **Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve**; recovery of historic materials will precede remediation activities to remove hazardous materials that were deposited prior to Midpen ownership of the property.
- Completed grading and drainage repairs to along legacy road located below Bear Creek Stables. Stabilized the site with temporary erosion control measures to minimize sedimentation to a tributary to Briggs Creek.
- Hired a consultant to evaluate sediment sources in **Skyline Ridge and Long Ridge Open Space Preserves** that may be affecting the larger Pescadero Watershed to understand whether there are locations on Midpen lands that need to be addressed.
- Decommissioned four unused wells as part of the Groundwater Well Decommissioning project to protect the water aquifer. Placed one well on 'stand by' for future use.



- Successfully completed the Billingsley Site Cleanup project at **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**. Removed site structures, metal shop, shipping containers and all associated debris from the site. Salvaged four existing water tanks and staged the tanks at an existing concrete pad site that will be retained as a future helicopter landing zone and/or as a wildfire response staging location. Completed hazardous materials abatement, performed site grading and installed final erosion control.
 - Successfully completed the Burton Property Site Cleanup project at **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**. Abated and removed two unpermitted structures, two horse corral structures and miscellaneous debris from across the site. Performed site grading and installed final erosion control.
- ❖ Protected the Lehigh Quarry Ridgeline Easement at **Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve** through a partnership with Santa Clara County, allowing Midpen to enforce violations of the easement. Partially completed the first annual monitoring of the Ridgeline Easement. Provided review and comment on a number of related topics to the Lehigh Quarry Reclamation Plan to protect public interests.
- ❖ Finished the literature review and synthesis for four topics selected by the Board as part of the first round of Science Advisory Panel (SAP) work. Midpen formed the SAP in 2019 to provide an independent, science-based review of key issues and serve as a resource for guiding future land management decisions. The panel includes scientists and experts in local ecology and natural history, climate change and land management from two locally-esteemed research organizations: San Francisco Estuary Institute and Point Blue Conservation Science.
- ❖ Modeled carbon storage and carbon flux for soils and vegetation communities on Midpen preserves in the San Gregorio Watershed and produced recommendations for how to improve the resilience of carbon stocks as part of the Carbon Storage Study Pilot Project.
- ❖ Adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, submitted permit applications, and received a 401 Permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board and 1602 permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Programmatic State and Federal Environmental Permitting project, which allows Midpen to conduct open space maintenance activities in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- ❖ Board adopted the Mitigation Policy as a new chapter to the Resource Management Policies (RMPs) after receiving input from the public and environmental advocacy groups. Completed staff training and policy rollout.
- ❖ Worked with PG&E to reduce impacts from a road improvement and power-line clearance project at Woodruff Creek in **Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve**, then transferred mitigation funds from PG&E to support a partnership with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) to conduct fisheries stream restoration at the Apple Orchard property in **La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve**.




- ❖ Completed projects that support Midpen’s conservation grazing program and grassland management, including:
 - Completed fence and water infrastructure at **Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve** to add 98 acres of grasslands to the conservation grazing program, including adding a watering trough for equestrian use.



- Held a Board study session and a workshop for the Agricultural Policy project. Distributed a survey to help gather feedback from stakeholders.

PUBLIC ACCESS, INTERPRETATION, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- ❖ Garnered regulatory and County permits for the Alpine Road Regional Trail in **Coal Creek Open Space Preserve**. Completed the construction documents and successfully bid the project. Entered into a funding agreement with Santa Clara County for Stanford Recreation Mitigation Funds. Retained the services of a bio-monitor and prepared for construction to commence.
- ❖ Completed 6th year of native planting at Cooley Landing and **Ravenswood Open Space Preserve**.
- ❖ Continued progress on public access projects at **Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve**:
 - Completed geotechnical investigations and 65% design drawings for the northeast trailhead as part of the Phase II Trail Improvements. Completed construction documents and a bid package for two slide repairs. Crew completed construction of the Briggs Creek Trail, rocking of the Public Stables Loop Trail, and improvements to the future all-season patrol access route.

- Substantially completed construction of the Alma College Cultural Landscape Rehabilitation project. Completed work includes a concrete overflow weir at Upper Lake and an overflow connection to the Webb Creek Culvert under the parking lot; site improvements at St. Joseph's shrine; construction of accessible walkways throughout the site; hazardous materials abatement; architectural rehabilitation of the remaining structures; site grading and masonry rehabilitation; and the demolition of building ruins.
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- Submitted a Use Permit application for the Bear Creek Stables Repair project and hosted an inter-departmental coordination meeting with Santa Clara County.
- ❖ Made significant progress on removing ADA accessibility barriers to improve access for people with different physical abilities:
 - Removed ~30% of total ADA barriers identified in the ADA Transition Plan.
 - Made significant progress on ADA easy access trails improvements at **Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve** and Horseshoe Lake and Alpine Pond at **Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve**.
 - Completed geotechnical survey work for the Rancho San Antonio ADA Path to Deer Hollow Farm at **Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve**. Developed a task order for ADA consultant services to help design the improvements.
 - ❖ Continued efforts to open additional areas of **La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve** to the public:
 - Completed construction of and opened the 1.3 mile easy-access Grasshopper Loop Trail to the public; includes seasonal on-leash dog access. This trail brings Midpen's total trail mileage open to the public to 250 miles.



- Completed multiple technical studies (traffic, biological, botanical, arborist, wetlands delineation, cultural resources, topographical and geotechnical) for the La Honda Creek Parking and Trailhead Access project in preparation for an opportunity and constraints analysis report to be presented to the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee in FY23. Provided a project update for the community through tabling at the Grasshopper Loop Trail opening event and La Honda Fair.
 - Completed cultural and wildlife resource surveys and reports for the Phase II Trails project. Hired a consultant to evaluate proposed trail alignments. Initiated field investigations and protocol-level botanical surveys.
- ❖ Made significant progress on multimodal access projects to improve transit, bicycle and pedestrian access to preserves, including:
- Completed the installation of new bike racks and a bike repair station related to the Rancho San Antonio (RSA) Multimodal Access projects (VP and MAA) at **Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve**. Negotiated commitments with the City of Cupertino for road improvements to be implemented in FY23. Released a Request for Proposals for the development of subsidized ride hail and shuttle programs.



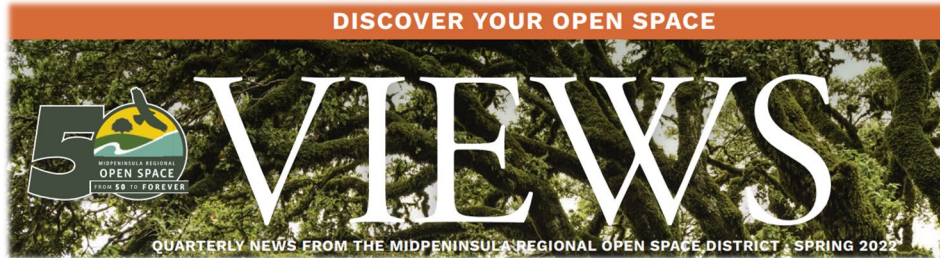
- Completed over 20 public and outreach engagement activities and events for the Purisima Preserve Multimodal Access Study project that aims to reduce single occupancy vehicle parking demands and improve the visitor experience at **Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve**. Completed two rounds of visitor surveys and data collection activities. Presented to Sustainable Pescadero, Pescadero Municipal Advisory Committee and Midcoast Community Council. Conducted a hike with Spanish-speaker hiking group. Implemented short-term strategies, including a pilot to try out wayfinding signage, mapping improvements and website format changes to assist visitors with planning their trips. Presented the transportation demand management (TDM) strategies to the PNR Committee on March 15, 2022. Shared TDM strategies and a project update with the community at a joint open house on

- June 29, 2022 that included Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Project and Purisima Multimodal Access Project.
- Completed intercept surveys, science panel benefits and impacts literature review, noise study, and agency surveys to evaluate potential e-bike use on Midpen lands. Presented findings to the Board. Received Board approval to allow Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on designated paved and improved bicycle trails in **Rancho San Antonio** and **Ravenswood Open Space Preserves** and continue the prohibition of e-bikes on all other Midpen (unpaved) trails to limit potential impacts to preserves.
- ❖ Completed numerous projects and actions to improve public access and safety at **Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve**:
- Completed topographic survey and initiated traffic study for the Hwy 35 Multi-use Trail Crossing and Parking project. Conducted spur trail scouting with the SFPUC. Led a kick-off meeting with the SFPUC, Ridge Trail and POST funders/stakeholders. Completed biological resource surveys and assessments. Coordinated with the Purisima Preserve Multimodal Access Study project to incorporate TDM recommendations into design concepts. Presented to stakeholders from the Kings Mountain Association and Mid Coast Community Council.
 - For the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area project:
 - Conducted virtual stakeholder meetings with neighbors, coastal interested parties, and trail users via Zoom in July 2021.
 - Completed technical studies: biological and cultural assessments, topographic/boundary surveys, culvert and drainage assessment and opportunities and constraints analyses.
 - Presented the vision, goals, opportunities and constraints to the Board and community at the December 1, 2021 Special Board meeting and virtual community open house.
 - Completed consultation with San Mateo County Farm Bureau, neighbors, grazing tenant, and equestrian and mountain bike stakeholders.
 - Developed and released a visitor survey in collaboration with the Purisima Multimodal Access Study.
 - Developed draft conceptual parking area design alternatives.
 - Presented a draft of the conceptual designs for trail and parking alternatives at the June 29, 2022 in-person open house in Half Moon Bay.
- ❖ Continued regional trail planning actions and efforts to connect the public to open spaces:
- Completed a report for the California Riding & Hiking Trails project and shared the findings with a State representative. Sent a request to the State to initiate the process of quitclaiming trail rights at **Russian Ridge** and Lower **La Honda Creek Open Space Preserves** that facilitate connections to Sam McDonald Park in San Mateo County.
 - Continued participation in the Peninsula Trails Team and Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network Trails Committee. Coordinated and communicated with partner

- agencies on the Bay to Sea Trail, Bay Area Ridge Trail priorities, SFPUC South Skyline Ridge Trail Extension, Stevens Creek Trail, Unincorporated San Mateo County Active Transportation Plan and State of the Trails project in Santa Cruz Mountains.
- Designated the Stevens Creek Nature Trail, Skid Road Trail and White Oak Trail in **Monte Bello Open Space Preserve** as part of the regional Stevens Creek Trail.
 - Completed project scouting for the Long Ridge Trail Connection to Eagle Rock and Devils Canyon project at **Long Ridge Open Space Preserve** and documented opportunities and constraints for a trail connection.
- ❖ Completed numerous projects and actions to improve public access and safety at **various other preserves**:
- Initiated the CEQA process for the proposed La Honda Creek Redwood Cabin Removal and Site Restoration project at **La Honda Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve**, which included release of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Completed and published the Draft EIR for public review and comments.
 - Completed 95% design plans for the La Honda Creek White Barn Structural Rehabilitation project at **La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve**.
 - Procured security fencing materials for the Beatty House Site Security Improvements project at **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**.
 - Coordinated with the city of East Palo Alto on open space elements of their Parks Master Plan and Cooley Landing management agreement. East Palo Alto provided staffing to open existing restrooms for daily use that were previously only open for events to the general public at **Ravenswood Open Space Preserve** and Cooley Landing Park.
- ❖ Completed Radar Tower repairs at Mt. Umunhum in **Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve**, including abatement of all interior hazardous materials, installation of a new roof and roof hatch, exterior concrete and rebar repairs, guardrail installation, gutters and downspout installation, ventilation louvers and wildlife screening installation, installation of interior floor coverings and miscellaneous interior item demolition and disposal. Notice of completion was filed and the summit area was re-opened to the public.
- ❖ Presented the Vision and Goals for the Hawthorns Area Plan at **Windy Hill Open Space Preserve** to the PNR Committee in August and November; presented the Hawthorns Area Plan planning and public engagement process to the PNR Committee in March. Held successful project collaboration meetings with the Town of Portola Valley and community stakeholders. Received Board approval of the Project Vision and Goals on March 23, 2022. Released a Transportation Planning Services Request for Proposals. Initiated technical studies pertaining to property boundary delineations, wetland resources, wildlife resources, archeological resources, historic resources and hazardous materials at the Hawthorns Area. Conducted an in-person Neighborhood Meeting with Town residents in June.

❖ Completed multiple Districtwide actions in support of public outreach goals:

- Increased circulation of the quarterly newsletter by 59%, including two insertions in regional newspapers that increase the quarterly print newsletter circulation from approximately 13,000 to approximately 100,000.



- Pitched 14 ideas about Midpen projects and activities resulting in 11 of those pitches being reported via more than 40 stories and calendar listings published by diverse local television, print, digital and radio media outlets to inform the public about Midpen activities and reach new audiences.
 - Continued emphasis on incorporating social media into Midpen’s communications channels, increasing reach 11% to nearly 2.9 million and total followers 11% to 26,075.
- ❖ Returned the Interpretation & Education, Volunteer, and Community Outreach Programs to in-person activities:
- Docent Naturalists contributed approximately 1,450 volunteer hours and provided 85 guided activities to the public at the preserves and enriched the nature experiences for approximately 1,200 participants. These activities included horseback rides and night hikes. Special hikes were also provided by request to organizations and entities.
 - Student field trips facilitated by Outdoor Education Docents returned on a very limited school-request basis in late spring and served 75 fourth graders.
 - The *Wander & Wonder* family-focused activity series was established to engage children in the absence of school field trips due to the pandemic. These seasonal nature exploration hikes were facilitated by duos of Docent Naturalists and Outdoor Education Docents at a variety of preserves. Outdoor Education Docents contributed approximately 135 volunteer hours.
 - Offered three “Days on the Deck” at the Daniels Nature Center in fall 2021 to welcome visitors to stop by for topic-themed discovery days, all hosted outdoors by program staff and docents using displays and offering engaging activities.
 - Collaborative programming with the Santa Clara County Library District and their summer reading program “Off the Beaten Path” resulted in two docent-led outdoor activities and one virtual event offered to children and adults with over 60 people served.

- Two interpretation enrichments were conducted for Midpen rangers by in-house Certified Interpretive Trainers.
- Delayed since 2020, a comprehensive 14-week Docent Naturalist training course was provided from April to June 2022. Twenty-four trainees engaged with a professional ecology instructor, guest instructors, and staff presenters to complete over 80 hours of lectures and field sessions. These new docents began developing, leading and assisting with guided activities in the late summer. Midpen has a Memorandum Of Understanding with the University of California that confers California Naturalist certification status to these trainees.
- Daniels Nature Center at ***Skyline Ridge Preserve*** reopened April 2022 for weekend visitation hosted by Nature Center Docents who contributed approximately 160 volunteer hours reaching approximately 1,200 visitors. Rolo the gopher snake was re-established as a special reptile ambassador to meet and greet interested children and adults.
- Volunteer Trail Patrol contributed over 5,000 hours along the trails and submitted 2,261 online reports, which included 623 reports of trail conditions or violations, supporting Midpen's land stewardship and public outreach goals.
- Provided 86 volunteer project opportunities for new and returning volunteers, special groups and partner agencies who perform crucial ongoing stewardship work in preserves.
- Advanced Resource Management Stewards (ARMS) volunteers contributed over 1,750 hours at their assigned resource management project sites, helping to restore native habitat across Midpen preserves by removing nonnative vegetation.



- Went live with the District's new Volunteer Management System, GetConnected. This cost-effective software, provides an integrated approach to recruit, organize, track and report on volunteers.
- ❖ Issued 7,743 permits for a variety of activities, including research work, public use of the backpack campground and after-hours astronomy viewing as allowed under the changing public health orders.

GENERAL/MIDPEN-WIDE SUPPORT OF MISSION

- ❖ The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion staff committees developed strategies and implementation action items that promote Midpen’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals and policy. The Board reviewed the items and provided feedback. The recommended first phase of DEI action items were included in the FY23 Budget and Action Plan.
- ❖ Made significant progress in implementing the *Climate Action Plan*. Continued to purchase offsets for air travel, purchased 100% renewable electricity, utilized renewable diesel and expanded telecommuting after the COVID-19 pandemic. Emissions were calculated to be 24% below the 2016 baseline, ahead of schedule for the first goal of achieving 20% reductions by 2022.
- ❖ Continued work to prevent, prepare for and respond to wildland fires in response to the increasing fire threat in California:
 - Completed fuel reduction projects in ***Pulgas Ridge*** and ***Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserves***. Supported work of other agencies applying for grants to work on Midpen properties by mapping and initiating botanical surveys. Negotiated a contract to allow the San Mateo FireSafe Council/Woodside Fire to perform work in ***Thornewood Open Space Preserve*** using their grant funding. Gathered fire agency input for future fuel reduction priorities as part of annual cycle of project planning.
 - Completed forest health work and fuel reduction for the Santa Clara County Forest Health and Wildfire Wildland Fire Resiliency grant project in ***Pulgas Ridge, Los Trancos, Montebello, Skyline Ridge*** and ***Windy Hill Open Space Preserves***.
 - Finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council for the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Forest Health Grant project. Completed resource surveys and started invasive species pre-treatment work at priority sites at ***Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve***.
 - Finalized Fire Suppression Program recommendations for Midpen consideration.
 - The California Special Districts Association (CSDA) wrote an article entitled “Midpen uses web mapping to answer your burning questions about wildfires” that showcases the Interactive Wildland Fire Map developed internally by GIS staff.
 - Improved Vegetation Management mapping applications to be able to edit enhanced fire management and ecosystem resiliency data layers, develop annual work plans, track work progress and report year-end metrics to support the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.
 - Completed five stakeholder meetings with fire agencies, local Native American tribes, partner agencies, regulatory agencies and advocacy groups for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program. Communicated how Midpen's proactive expansion of environmentally sensitive vegetation management promotes healthy, resilient, fire-



- adapted ecosystems to reduce wildland fire risk and facilitate the response of fire agencies.
- Received final deliverables for San Mateo County, including the fine scale vegetation map and canopy mortality GIS dataset. Continued to provide technical support to Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties as part of the Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Vegetation mapping project.
 - Completed wildland fire pre-plan maps at eight preserves to support emergency response and planning. Completed field data collection on the remaining four preserves.
 - Mowed and maintained approximately 561 acres of vegetation for fire safety and public access. Maintained defensible space around Midpen-owned structures.
 - Procured one maintenance truck to be assigned for fuel management work in Skyline Area and one mini excavator for Foothills Area.
- ❖ Procured, configured, and implemented Laserfiche Vault to act as the Midpen’s trusted records management system in conjunction with Board-approved records policies and procedures. Converted over 150,000 pages files into digital files.
 - ❖ Launched online public records portal for the public to be able to easily access historic records, including meeting packets, resolutions, previous budgets, etc.
 - ❖ Opened Midpen’s 50th Anniversary Celebrations with proclamations, Open Stories, Love Letters, hashtag campaigns, pop-up tabling, paid media and publicity campaigns. Held the Bayside Family Festival at Ravenswood Preserve, which attracted an estimated 800 participants.
 - ❖ Continued systems implementation of critical Financial and Operational Sustainability Model Study recommendations to enhance Midpen’s delivery of Measure AA and Vision Plan projects:
 - Published the new 2021 Patrol Map geoPDF to Avenza Maps store for staff and partner organizations to easily download maps of Midpen lands.
 - Developed a Rental Property Dashboard web app for property management staff to get a snapshot of active and proposed leases and quickly access tenant contact information.
 - Configured Tyler Munis Enterprise Resource Planning system and migrated three years of financial data. Munis will result in a more robust functionality, introduce numerous efficiencies, expand capabilities and replace multiple legacy Access databases.




- Completed migration and redesign of Midpen website to the updated Drupal 8 platform. New graphic design components were added to the site that allow for the visual display of information and integration of stories across multiple pages on the site.
 - Continued to migrate files to SharePoint from network servers. Deployed and trained staff on a new digital signature solution, which greatly improves the signature routing process of electronic documents.
 - Selected new Customer Relationship Management software to create a seamless management system for public notification. Finalized the implementation plan for development of forms, workflows, and lists.
 - Procured, configured, and implemented a new modern phone system that is more secure, provides increased functionality, and allows for seamless telecommuting and enables desk sharing. Staff can make and receive calls from their District computer, personal cell phone or physical phone all using their original District phone numbers.
- ❖ Opened the new Midpen administrative office facility for improved administrative functions and delivery of projects and services:
- Completed 99% of the construction improvements, including major structural and mechanical renovations.
 - Prepared the new building for occupancy. Procured equipment and refurbished workstations, coordinated with telecom vendors to install services at new building, installed wireless access throughout the building and parking areas, moved servers, assisted with the installation of the HVAC, Alarm, AV and security cameras.
- ❖ Completed transparent ward redistricting process with the public and Board. Coordinated voter assignment updates with county election offices and ensured all web content reflects newly adopted ward boundaries for the upcoming November election.
- ❖ Completed Historic Resources Procedural Manual to provide guidance regarding the identification, evaluation, documentation, disposition and management of historic resources on properties managed by Midpen. Established the Historic Resources Database framework in the enterprise GIS system for cataloging historic status and details across twelve datasets, including building footprints. Conducted historic resource coordination with consultant review and preparation of Historic Resources Evaluations for several Midpen-owned structures and sites.



- ❖ Initiated the Hawthorns Historic Complex Structural Assessment. Hired a consultant to provide a structural assessment of all buildings and structures. The consultant reviewed the historical and existing information, performed site reconnaissance and structural assessment, and prepared a draft memorandum of findings and recommendations, regulatory requirements and project constraints.
- ❖ Completed structural site improvements for the Agricultural Workforce Housing project in **La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve**.
- ❖ Obtained initial County staff support to pursue a San Mateo County master permit for maintenance and small-scale restoration projects. Started preparing master permit application and initiated stakeholder outreach.
- ❖ Completed the Coastal Management Plan, which evaluates potential new land purchase opportunities, management, restoration and future public access priorities and identifies staffing and facilities needs on the San Mateo Coast. Presented the plan to the Board on April 27, 2022.
- ❖ In response to COVID-19 and return to office:
 - Continued to vigilantly respond to changes in State, OSHA, and County protocols to protect Midpen from an outbreak.
 - Regularly upgraded Midpen’s COVID-19 Health Check application to support evolving health guidelines. Added new workflows for travel restrictions, facilities warnings and vaccinated employees.
 - Reconfigured workstations to support return to office and new hybrid work environment.

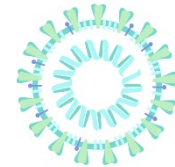


Image credit: Unsplash Pro for the innovative Ceramica Institute

Midpen COVID-19 Health Check

AWARDS/GRANTS/RECOGNITION

- ❖ Secured twelve new grant awards totaling \$16,760,493 for District projects:
 - \$8,000,000 from the California Department of Parks and Recreation for the potential purchase of the **Cloverdale Ranch** property from the Specified Grants Program, at the request of Assemblymember Marc Berman.
 - \$2,000,000 from the California Department of Parks and Recreation for the **Highway 17 Crossings Project** to support planning and studies to complete final plans, specifications and estimates for wildlife undercrossing, directional wildlife fencing, trail overcrossing and regional trail connections from the Specified Grants Program, at the request of Senator Cortese.
 - \$1,590,000 from the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Collaborative Forest Health Grant for implementation of the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program on District land in **Bear Creek Redwoods, Sierra Azul, and Long Ridge Open Space Preserves**. This award was the result of a collaborative effort led by the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council



for a larger multi-agency project totaling over \$7,000,000 for work to be completed on lands also owned by Santa Clara County Parks, San Jose Water and private landowners.

- \$1,500,000 from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Wildland Fire Resiliency Project for coordinated work on District land in ***Bear Creek Redwoods, Sierra Azul, and Long Ridge Open Space Preserves***.
- \$1,428,000 from the California Department of Parks and Recreation in Proposition 68 Recreational Infrastructure Revenue Enhancement Program for the potential acquisition of the ***Cloverdale Ranch property***.
- \$1,000,000 from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to support the final environmental documents and plans, specifications and estimates for the ***Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossings Project***.
- \$400,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy in **Wildfire Resiliency Program** funding for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Implementation project in eleven preserves in San Mateo County.
- \$295,000 from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Santa Cruz Kangaroo Rat: Habitat and Population Management Plan in ***Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve***.
- \$272,211 from Santa Clara County for Stanford Mitigation funding for the Alpine Road Trail, ***Coal Creek Open Space Preserve***.
- \$200,000 from California Department of Parks and Recreation in Habitat Conservation Fund funding for the Johnston Ranch Acquisition as an addition to the ***Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve***.
- \$50,000 from the Windward Fund for the Highway 17 Mitigation Credit Agreement.
- \$25,000 from the Orange County Community Foundation for general operating support (invited to apply and award received).

Managing seven pending grant proposals for up to an additional \$3,253,000 in awards, if fully funded, from federal, state, local and private foundation sources:

- \$1,600,000 in Community Project Funding Program funding requested by Senator Alex Padilla for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program Implementation and Capacity Project through the United States Forest Service.
- \$748,000 in Community Project Funding Program funding requested by Congresswoman Jackie Speier for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program Implementation and Capacity Project through the United State Department of Homeland Security.
- \$400,000 in Community Project Funding Program funding requested by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo for the Highway 17 Spooky Knoll Trial Project in ***El Sereno Open Space Preserve***.

- \$1,080,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy in Wildfire Resiliency Program funding for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Implementation and Capacity Project.
 - \$500,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy in Proposition 1 funding for the Johnston Ranch Acquisition Project as an addition to the ***Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve***.
 - \$500,000 from San Mateo County for the potential purchase of the ***Cloverdale Ranch*** property; Measure K funding award pending Board of Supervisors approval.
 - \$25,000 from the Orange County Community Foundation for general operating support (invited to apply for a new two-year funding opportunity).
- ❖ Held a successful solicitation for the Grantmaking Program resulting in 10 new funding awards totaling \$341,977 to support nonprofit, academic and other partners in projects aligned with the District’s mission and highlighting support for science, youth connection with nature and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
 - ❖ Disbursed \$109,000 in reimbursements to 8 Grantmaking Program FY2018 grantees in support of environmental networks, access to Midpen lands with environmental education for youth and adults, and applied science projects that support the protection and restoration of natural resources on Midpen lands.
 - ❖ Managed over \$28M in secured funding for 23 active grants supporting acquisitions, public access improvements, environmental restoration, planning, and implementation of the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.
 - ❖ Received the Operating Budget Excellence Award from the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers for the fourth time in a row.
 - ❖ Received a special Triple Crown medallion for receiving all three Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awards:
 - Received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (sixth year).
 - Received the Outstanding Financial Reporting Award for the Consolidated Annual Financial Report (fourth year).
 - Received the Popular Annual Financial Report Award (third year).
 - ❖ Received both the Award of Merit and Award of Excellence for Public Outreach for La Honda Public Access Working Group from the American Planning Association.
 - ❖ Received the Technology Innovation Award in the Citizens category from Government Technology News’ Special Districts Award Program for the publicly accessible Wildland Fire Web Map tool.
 - ❖ Recognized as a 2022 Idea Worth Sharing in the Technology Innovation Citizens category from Government Technology for the use of mapping applications in its redistricting process.



- ❖ Received the Best Overall Performance award in the Workers Comp Program from CalJPIA. The Risk Management Awards highlight dedicated efforts and accomplishments in risk management, recognizing Authority members that have demonstrated the best overall performance in the Workers' Compensation Program.
- ❖ The Ravenswood Bay Trail Project received the following awards:
 - The Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition Project of the Year Award.
 - American Public Works Association Silicon Valley Chapter Project of the Year Award in transportation category.



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