

About the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Our History

The late 1960s was a time of rapid growth in the Bay Area. As tract housing and commercial development began to dominate the "Valley of Heart's Delight," concern for the preservation of the Midpeninsula's irreplaceable foothill and bayland natural resources mounted among open space advocates.

Through the determined and heartfelt efforts of local conservationists, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District was created by successfully placing a voter initiative, Measure R, on the ballot in 1972, which passed by more than a two-thirds vote.

At that time, the District was created in northwestern Santa Clara County. Fulfilling the conservationists' original dream to include portions of San Mateo County within the District's boundaries, the voters expanded the District in 1976 to include southern San Mateo County. And in 1992, the District further expanded by adding a small portion of Santa Cruz County.

With the final approval of the Coastside Protection Program in 2004, the District's boundary was extended to the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County, from the southern border of Pacifica to the Santa Cruz County line.

Purpose

The District's purpose is to purchase, permanently protect, and restore lands forming a regional open space greenbelt, preserve unspoiled wilderness, wildlife habitat, watershed, viewshed, and fragile ecosystems, and provide opportunities for low-intensity recreation and environmental education.

The District works to form a continuous greenbelt of permanently preserved open space by linking its lands with other public parklands. The District also participates in cooperative efforts such as the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, and Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail, which are regional trail systems in the Bay Area that include District lands.

The District has permanently preserved nearly 59,000 acres of mountainous, foothill, and bayland open space, creating 26 open space preserves. The District covers an area of 550 square miles and includes the following cities and unincorporated areas: Atherton, Cupertino, East Palo Alto, El Granada, Half Moon Bay, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Menlo Park, Montara, Monte Sereno, Moss Beach, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Pescadero, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Carlos, San Gregorio, Saratoga, Stanford, Sunnyvale, and Woodside.

Board of Directors

The District is divided into seven geographic wards of approximately equal populations, each represented for a four-year term by an elected Board member. The Board holds public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the District offices.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend District Board meetings, and to participate in the decision-making process. In addition, special public hearings and neighborhood meetings are held periodically on specific issues. Citizen participation is an essential part of the planning process for the development and use of the District's open space preserves.

Staffing

The staff currently consists of approximately 100+ employees in five departments: Administration, Operations, Planning, Public Affairs, and Real Property.

Funding

Funding is provided by a small share of the annual total property tax revenues collected within District boundaries, except on the San Mateo County Coastside. This amounts to about 1.7¢ per \$100 of assessed property value, which currently provides approximately \$31.8 million in tax revenue (2009-2010 fiscal year). Other revenue sources may include federal and state grants, interest and rental income, donations, and note issues.

Open Space Management

The District's preserves range from 55 to over 18,000 acres and are open to the public free of charge, 365 days a year from dawn until one half-hour after sunset. The diverse ecosystems at the preserves include redwood, oak, and fir forests, chaparral-covered hillsides, riparian corridors, grasslands, and wetlands along San Francisco Bay.

The open space preserves are generally kept in a natural condition in order to best protect the environment and wildlife habitat, and are developed with only the amenities needed to provide public access for low-intensity recreation. Improvements may include gravel parking areas, restrooms, signed trails for hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use, and an occasional picnic table.

Enjoying Your Open Space Land

The District offers 220 miles of hiking trails, ranging from easy to challenging terrain. Many trails are open to bicycles and horses. Leashed dogs are allowed on some preserves, including one off-leash area at Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve. The District also has a number of trails that are suitable for people with varying degrees of physical ability. These "easy access" trails are appropriate for visitors with wheelchairs, strollers, children, or for anyone desiring a less-strenuous open space experience.

The District can provide a guest speaker for service organizations, homeowners' groups, business clubs, or other associations within the District's boundaries.

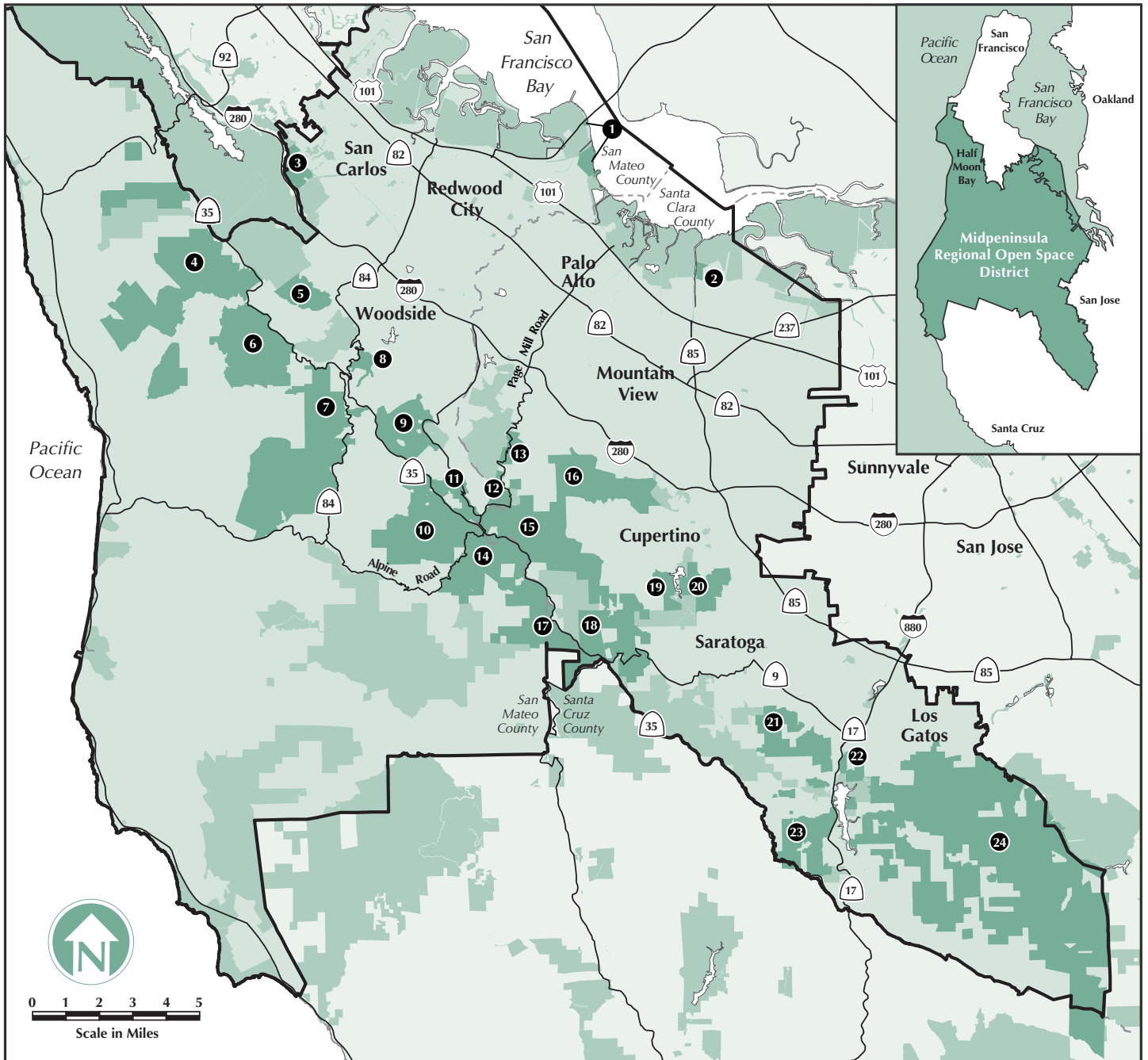
Volunteer Opportunities

The District's volunteer programs provide an opportunity for individuals to contribute their time and energy to preserving and protecting open space lands by participating in a variety of ways such as educating and inspiring visitors, constructing and maintaining trails, and removing invasive, non-native vegetation. The District offers several volunteer programs, including Outdoor Activity Docent, Outdoor Education Leader, Preserve Partner, and Trail Patrol. The best way to get started is to visit the District's Web site; if you find a program that interests you, you can sign up on-line.

For More Information

To be added to the District's *Open Space Views* newsletter mailing list, request a preserve trail brochure, or obtain further information on any of the District's preserves or programs, please call 650-691-1200; visit the Web site www.openspace.org; or send an e-mail to info@openspace.org.

Welcome to Your Open Space



Visit Your Open Space Preserves
www.openspace.org

Preserves	#	Acres							
Bear Creek Redwoods	23	1,377	● ¹	● ¹				□ ¹	
Coal Creek	11	508	●	●	●	●		□	
El Corte de Madera Creek	6	2,817	●	●	●			□	
El Sereno	21	1,415	●	● ⁴	● ⁴			□ ⁶	
Foothills	13	212	●	●	●	●		□	
Fremont Older	20	739	●	●	●	●		□	●
La Honda Creek	7	5,760	● ¹	● ¹				□ ¹	
Long Ridge	17	2,035	●	●	●	● ¹		□	
Los Trancos	12	274	●	●	●	●		■	●
Monte Bello	15	3,278	●	●	●			■	●
Picchetti Ranch	19	308	●	●	●	●		■	●
Pulgas Ridge	3	366	●	●	●	●		■	●
Purisima Creek Redwoods	4	4,411	●	●	●	●		■	●
Rancho San Antonio	16	3,988	●	●	● ⁴	●		■	● ⁵

■ Ample Parking
 □ Limited Parking
 □ Very Limited Parking
 ● Corresponds to preserve/# on map
 1 In designated area by permit only
 2 Kennedy-Limekiln area only
 3 Mt. Umunhum area only
 4 On designated trails only
 5 On weekends, arrive early to find parking
 6 Overlook Trail parking area by permit only

Preserves	#	Acres							
Ravenswood	1	376	●	●	●	●		■	●
Russian Ridge	10	3,138	●	●	●	●		■	●
Saratoga Gap	18	1,580	●	●	●	●		■	●
Sierra Azul (Cathedral Oaks, Kennedy-Limekiln, Rancho de Guadalupe, & Mt. Umunhum Areas)	24	18,446	●	●	●	● ²		□ ³	● ³
Skyline Ridge	14	2,143	●	●	●	●		■	●
St. Joseph's Hill	22	270	●	●	●	●		□	●
Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area	2	55	●	●	●	●		□	●
Teague Hill	5	626	●	●	●	●		■	●
Thornwood	8	167	●	●	●	●		□	●
Windy Hill	9	1,335	●	●	● ⁴	●		■	●

■ Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves
 □ Major city, county, state & federal parks, open space preserves, and publicly-owned watershed

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