



MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
Celebrating Over 40 Years of Open Space Preservation

VIEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS ON OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION AND PROGRAMS • SPRING 2015

HEALTHY PARKS, HEALTHY PEOPLE



Jack Gerschfeld

Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve

Midpen Kicks Off New Series of Walks For Health

To encourage outdoor exercise and introduce people to local open spaces, Midpen is partnering with San Mateo County Medical Association Community Service Foundation to host "Walk with a Doc" activities at different preserves. On these short walks, participants will have the chance to talk with physician volunteers from the medical association who will answer health-related questions along the way.

Did You Know?

Spending time in nature has many health benefits for individuals and communities. Being outdoors is connected with greater physical activity, reduced blood sugar for diabetics, and increased mental well-being. It also helps children stay more alert during the day and is associated with physical resilience and longevity.

The Walk with a Doc program will help Midpen broaden our community outreach to connect more people to open space. "We are delighted to partner with Midpen and share the benefits of healthy outdoor exercise with our community, at the same time introducing participants to the beauty of our local open spaces," said Alice Georgitso, director of the Community Service Foundation of the medical association.

Walk With a Doc Spring Activities

Saturday, March 7 • Ravenswood, 10:00 am – 11:00 am
Refer to page 6 for activity details.

Saturday, March 21 • Windy Hill, 10:00 am – 11:00 am
Refer to page 7 for activity details.

Saturday, April 11 • Pulgas Ridge, 10:00 am – 11:00 am
Refer to page 9 for activity details.

To register for Walk With a Doc, visit
www.openspace.org/events.

The program also complements Midpen's participation in Healthy Parks, Healthy People (HPHP), an initiative that connects Bay Area residents with outdoor activities in order to improve health.

The physicians speak both English and Spanish, and walks are open to people of all ages and fitness levels.

Please join us for a Walk with a Doc this spring! 🌿

MEASURE AA

Alpine Ranch, La Honda Creek



**FUNDED BY
MEASURE AA**

Once zoned for nine ranchettes, the gorgeous 353-acre Alpine Ranch in La Honda will be protected in perpetuity with \$2.5 million in Measure AA funds. The property features beautiful redwood forests, two critical watersheds, and creeks that drain into adjacent public open space land. 🌿

Get Outdoors! Listing of Spring Docent-led Activities—page 3



Commitment to our Constituents

With the passage of Measure AA this past June, all of us at Midpen have been thinking about more and better ways to connect with our constituents. With increased expectations about preserving and protecting open space and creating new public access opportunities, it is essential that we who manage the preserves understand what you are thinking about, what we do, and how we are doing it. Starting now and continuing over the next few years, we will be developing new capacities to both act on those expectations and connect with the public who fund Midpen. You may notice some changes such as improved access to our website, clearly signed preserve entrances, new staging areas and trails leading from them, and more community events. We will be making a concerted and sustained effort to reach out and connect with old and new preserve users and better understand the needs of the rich diversity of communities and backgrounds that characterizes our area. Since the District covers an area of 550 square miles, this is no small task, but it is an essential one if we are to be responsive to you, the public.

At the same time, the work that will be accomplished through Measure AA funding will serve a second constituency, one that I've referred to as "the smaller majority." These constituents evolved with the landscape and are essential to its health and ours and, of course, they are the plants, animals and other living things that bring life to the preserves. The work we have been doing, and can now accomplish on a much broader scale, is aimed at preserving and protecting more of the magnificent redwood forests, restoring the function of the

streams so that steelhead and Coho salmon can once again spawn in those cool redwood drainages, and creating new, permanent wildlife corridors so that mountain lions, grey foxes, skunks, and all wildlife can move through the landscape and not be struck by automobiles or vanished with habitat that could have been saved. We will be increasing livestock grazing to manage the grasslands that evolved with grazing animals to ensure that we are maximizing the grasslands' ability to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and store it. And the way we will do this will always have the overarching goal of protecting the inhabitants of those grasslands so that decisions about how much grass the livestock eat and how much water they drink will ensure that the displays of wildflowers, the red-legged frog, the San Francisco garter snake, the badger, the grasshopper sparrow, the callippe fritillary, and so many more all thrive.

As we move forward, we intend to serve both constituencies well. The focus on you, the public, and "the smaller majority", is a long-term commitment we at Midpen have made. We will find new ways to reach out to you so we can hear how we're doing and improve our service. And we will also listen carefully for the din of the chorus frogs, the yapping of the coyotes, and the soothing song of the tree cricket to be sure that we are hearing them as well.

Stephen E. Abbors
General Manager

100th Birthday Tribute to Beloved Conservationist

Robert C. Stebbins would have been 100 on March 31st and to this day he remains a legend in the field of herpetology. He devoted over 40 years as a professor, curator of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, and a committed field researcher at UC Berkeley. He advocated for the study of biology the "old-fashioned way" by going out and observing it. Dr. Stebbins was an influential force beyond the University as an author, artist/illustrator and conservationist. Through his efforts the federal government set aside 1.5 million acres to create Mojave National Preserve in 1994. He was also influential in the efforts to elevate Joshua Tree and Death Valley to national park status. He was amazingly productive from his first amphibian book in 1951 to his last *Field Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles of California* (2012, UC Press) at the age of 97. The third edition of his *Peterson Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians* in 2003 remains "the bible of the field."

Shortly after I came to MidPen in 2009, Dr. Stebbins asked me to take him on a trip through his beloved Mojave Desert before he and his wife, Anna-rose, moved to Oregon. We had taken many such

trips in the past and this one, it turned out, was to be our last. First we visited the Desert Tortoise Reserve in California City where he intently studied the interpretive signs that described the desert life.



Steve Abbors and Dr. Stebbins

After spending the night in Ridgecrest, we headed off to the great Panamint Valley. He loved the breathtaking view where Hwy 178 passed over the Slate Range and the entire valley lay before us off into the distance. We found our way to the ghost town, Ballarat, where he befriended an old, leather-skinned resident and delighted in recalling notorious figures they had known. Then we left and half way up the valley, we got out of the truck and walked around. Dr. Stebbins was checking the underside of quartz rocks that could harbor algae because of their translucence... and he found some! Then I said to him, "You know,

Dr. Stebbins, we were right here at this spot some years ago with our families". He looked out at that magnificent desert landscape and said with a big smile, "You know, I can't remember that, but being here is like falling in love all over again". Thinking back now, I can still hear him telling me that he felt like the luckiest man in the world. To have had him here so long among us, I think we were surely the lucky ones. 🌿

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



SPRING 2015
March – April – May

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

To Ensure That Your Experience is Enjoyable, Please Review This Important Information

- Please be courteous to other trail users. Stay alert and make your presence known to other trail users well in advance, particularly when approaching from behind.
- Hikers yield to horses; bicyclists yield to hikers and horses. Observe trail speed limits (15 mph max; 5 mph when passing).
- Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions or rental horses). Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for all horses, and helmets must be worn by all riders under age 18.
- Heavy rain within two days prior to a mountain bike or horseback ride cancels the activity.
- For all hikes, wear boots or sturdy walking shoes appropriate for rugged trails.
- Dress in layers (T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, sweater, and/or jacket). The weather can be unpredictable. No matter what season it is, be prepared for rain, wind, fog, or sun!
- Carry ample water with you to drink. Water is not available on preserves.
- Bring sun protection (hat, sunscreen) and insect repellent.
- Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.
- Please carpool if possible. Parking is limited in some locations.

SPECIAL NOTE

If you have a group of 8 or more people who would like to attend a docent-led activity listed here, please contact the Docent Program Manager to discuss in advance at 650-691-1200 or docent@openspace.org. Other arrangements may need to be considered for your group.



Picchetti Ranch
Open Space Preserve

GENERAL INFORMATION

With this newsletter in hand and a sense of exploration in mind, we invite you to enjoy the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves. These 26 extraordinary preserves include over 62,000 acres of permanently protected open space, from redwood forests to bay shoreline. We encourage you to participate in the wide variety of adventures offered inside Outdoor Activities.

The activity durations listed are averages based on our experience. However, always allow extra time in your schedule for unusual circumstances, or the slower pace of some groups.

You can help by arriving a little early to ensure a prompt start for each activity.

The activities are free, though some require reservations. Heavy rain cancels the activity unless otherwise noted in the description. If there is light rain or the threat of rain, go to the meeting place.

All activities are developed and led by docents who have completed a District training program. These docents volunteer their time to share their knowledge of nature with you. For more information about the volunteer docent program, visit the District's Web site at www.openspace.org, or phone the District at 650-691-1200 weekdays, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Header photos above, left to right: Strether Smith; staff; Amanda Louria; and Liv Ames.

www.openspace.org

WHERE TO MEET

Directions to preserves featured in this season's schedule of *Outdoor Activities* are listed below. Some preserves have more than one access point. Some activities meet at different locations than where the activity will actually occur. If an activity does not meet at the preserve listed, or if there is more than one preserve access point, the alternate meeting location will be indicated in italics on a separate line following the preserve name as part of the activity header. (For example: **Skyline Ridge Meet: Russian Ridge** or **Russian Ridge Meet: Caltrans vista point**). If no information follows the preserve name, then refer to the detailed directions for the preserve or alternate meeting location listed below.

Note: Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.

PLEASE CHECK THE LISTED DESCRIPTION TO MAKE SURE YOU MEET YOUR ACTIVITY LEADER AT THE CORRECT LOCATION.

DANIELS NATURE CENTER

Park at the Russian Ridge Preserve parking lot on the northwest corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection (across Skyline Blvd. on the right). Walk to Alpine Pond at Skyline Ridge Preserve by going through the tunnel under Alpine Rd. The Nature Center is a small gray building on the east shore of Alpine Pond.

EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK

Exit I-280 at Edgewood Road. Head east on Edgewood Rd. about 1 mile to the park entrance on the right (at Old Stagecoach Road).

EL CORTE DE MADERA CREEK

Meet at the Preserve parking lot located on the west side of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard), about 1-mile south of the Caltrans Skeggs Point parking area and 2.7 miles north of the intersection of Highway 35 and Highway 84.

Skeggs Point: Meet at the Caltrans vista point on the east side of Skyline Boulevard, about 4 miles north of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 1.5 miles south of Kings Mountain Road. Please note that Caltrans prohibits a left turn into the parking lot when approaching from the north along Skyline Blvd.

FREMONT OLDER

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Prospect Road in Cupertino. Exit Highway 85 at De Anza Boulevard. (From northbound 85 turn left on De Anza Blvd. and from southbound 85 turn right on De Anza Blvd.) Travel on De Anza Blvd. (toward the mountains) for about 0.5 miles. Turn right on Prospect Rd. At the first stop sign, turn left and cross the railroad tracks to remain on Prospect Rd. Follow Prospect Rd. for 1.3 miles, turning left after the Saratoga Country Club, until you reach the Preserve parking lot.

LONG RIDGE

Meet at the roadside pullout area on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, 3.6 miles north of Highway 9 or 3.3 miles south of Page Mill Road. If you are coming from the north on Skyline Blvd., the pullout is just past Portola Heights Road on the right. From the south, the pullout is near the Palo Alto city limits sign on the right. There is additional parking across Skyline Blvd. at the Grizzly Flat trailhead (Santa Clara County Park).

LOS TRANCOS

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Monte Bello Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

MONTE BELLO

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Los Trancos Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

PICCHETTI RANCH

From the intersection of I-280 and Foothill Expressway, go 3.5 miles southwest (toward the mountains) on Foothill Boulevard/Stevens Canyon Road. Turn right on Montebello Road. The Preserve is 0.5 miles up Montebello Rd. on the left.

PULGAS RIDGE

From I-280, exit Edgewood Road. Drive 0.75 miles on Edgewood Rd. toward San Carlos/Redwood City. Turn left (north) on Crestview Drive, then immediately turn left on Edmonds Road. Follow Edmonds Rd. to the Preserve parking lot entrance on the right.



Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve

PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS

From the Highway 92 and Highway 1 intersection in Half Moon Bay, travel south on Highway 1 approximately 4.3 miles. Turn left on Verde Road. After turning on Verde Rd. and traveling 0.25 miles, continue straight to remain on what becomes Purisima Creek Road. (Verde Rd. splits off to the right.) Travel approximately 3.7 miles on Purisima Creek Rd. to reach the Preserve.

RANCHO SAN ANTONIO

From I-280, take Foothill Boulevard south and turn right almost immediately onto Cristo Rey Drive. Continue about 1 mile, veer right around the traffic circle, and turn left into the park. Go to the lot farthest to the right and meet near the restroom at the bottom of the hill.

RAVENSWOOD

From Highway 101, exit on University Avenue. Follow University Ave. north (about four long blocks) to Bay Road. Turn right on Bay Rd. and follow it to the very end (about 1.2 miles). The Preserve entrance and parking lot are marked with large signs.



View toward ocean from Windy Hill

RUSSIAN RIDGE

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on the northwest corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection (across Skyline Blvd. on the right). Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 40 minutes travel time.

Mindego Gateway parking lot: From I-280, exit Page Mill Road, and head west. Drive about 9 miles to the junction with Skyline Boulevard, cross Skyline Blvd. and continue on Alpine Road for 1.5 miles. Parking area is on the right.

SARATOGA GAP

Meet at the Caltrans vista point on the southeast corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Highway 9 intersection.



Hal Svendsen

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve

SIERRA AZUL

Meet at the Jacques Ridge parking lot located near the intersection of Hicks Road and Mt. Umunhum Road in San Jose. Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From northbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Branham Avenue and then turn left on Camden Ave. and from southbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Camden Ave.) Travel on Camden Ave. about 1.6 miles. Turn right on Hicks Rd. and travel for about 6.3 miles. Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Rd. The Preserve parking lot will be on the right.

WINDY HILL

From I-280, exit Alpine Road in Portola Valley. Go south on Alpine Rd. about 2.9 miles to Portola Road (the first stop sign). Turn right on Portola Rd. and travel 0.8 miles to the parking lot on the left side of the road.

Skyline Boulevard parking area Meet at the parking area on Skyline Boulevard, 2.3 miles south of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 4.9 miles north of Page Mill Road.

KEY TO SYMBOLS



Easy Hike: Flat to gently rolling hills. Total elevation gain less than 200 feet. Leisurely pace.



Moderate Hike: Steeper or more frequent uphill grades. Total elevation gain 200 to 600 feet. Leisurely to moderate pace.



Strenuous Hike: Steep hills and/or long distances. Total elevation gain greater than 600 feet. Moderate to vigorous pace.



Suitable for children; must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. See the activity descriptions for any age recommendations.



Wheelchair accessible.



Stroller accessible. Jogger-type suggested.



Bring a lunch, dinner, or snack as appropriate.



Well-behaved and socialized dogs are allowed, and must be controlled on a maximum six-foot leash.



Equestrian Ride: Riders under age 18 must wear a helmet. Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for horses. Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions or rental horses).



Reservations Required: Reservations for activities requiring them will only be accepted within the two (2)-week period just before the activity date. To make a reservation or a cancellation, visit the District's Web site www.openspace.org/reservations or call 650-691-2150 (enter Option 2). If you provide information prior to the reservation acceptance period, it will not be processed. Please limit your reservation to a maximum of four (4) people.



Easy Nature Ride: Slow, leisurely pace, minimal climbing, and multiple stops to observe nature.



Introductory Mountain Bike Ride: Outings include demonstration and practice emphasizing trail etiquette and techniques required for dirt riding followed by a 5- to 7-mile ride on fire roads and single-track trails, with occasional natural history stops. Riders should be in good physical condition to perform climbs and descents.



Intermediate Mountain Bike Ride: Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; able to climb and descend steep and moderately-rough trails. Recreational ride at a moderate/brisk pace, 8+ miles on a wide range of fire roads and single-track trails. For experienced riders in very good physical condition with good endurance.



Advanced Mountain Bike Ride: Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; competent at climbing and descending steep and rough trails. Moderate to fast pace, 10+ mile ride on a wide variety of trail conditions. For experienced riders with a high level of physical fitness and excellent endurance.



For all rides, bicyclists must wear helmets and bikes must be in good condition, and the participants must be very familiar with the operation of gears and brakes. Mountain bikes are strongly recommended for all except the Easy Nature Rides. Easy Nature, Introductory, and Intermediate Rides include a natural history component that is provided by the docents during the rest stops. Advanced rides develop and improve mountain bike skills – any natural history discussion stops are secondary to the overall riding experience.



Healthy Parks, Healthy People – Bay Area: Introductory level and easy to moderate activities for people of various ages. Some activities have a health and wellness focus.

MARCH

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • March 1
Los Trancos
2:00 pm – 4:30 pm



Join docents Dave and Judy Boore “where worlds collide” at the junction of the Pacific and North American plates. On this 2- to 3-mile stroll, you’ll discover remnants of the effects of the 1906 earthquake, and discuss plate tectonics and how to prepare for future earthquakes.

Explorer Hike: Early Spring at Picchetti

Wednesday • March 4
Picchetti Ranch
10:30 am – 2:30 pm



Early spring at Picchetti Ranch, what could be more delightful? You’ll join docents Laura Levin, Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, and Kate Gudmundson to observe the early wildflowers, shrubs, and trees as they burst into bloom. This leisurely-paced, moderately difficult 4-mile hike includes a great lunch spot stop!

Creature Feature

Thursday • March 5
Edgewood County Park
10:00 am – 1:00 pm



What do dusky-footed woodrats look like? What are their stick houses like inside? How many live in one house? What do they eat? Who wants to eat them? How do they find mates and raise pups? Why are they also called packrats? Come ask docents Kathryn Strachota, John Wertzler, and Padma Satish lots of questions to learn about this keystone species. Children welcome! You’ll walk a 2.5-mile loop on the Sylvan, Serpentine, Franciscan, and Baywood Glen Trails at a moderate pace. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or February 19.**

Walk with a Doc

Saturday • March 7
Ravenswood
10:00 am – 11:00 am



Note: This is a program of the San Mateo County Medical Association offered in partnership with the District.

Enjoy a stroll with bilingual physician volunteers who can answer your health questions. All ages are invited to participate in this free community health program offered at various Preserves this spring and summer. Walkers receive a free pedometer, bottled water, and a healthy snack. Join in ... and take a step toward better health! **Sign-up at smcma.org/calendar/smcma-events/walk-with-a-doc-signup or by phone (650) 312-1623.**

Back Through Time

Saturday • March 7
Monte Bello
10:00 am – 1:00 pm



Travel down the Stevens Creek Nature Trail to learn about the evolutionary history of ferns and other plants with docents Debbie Mytels, Zack Miller, and Sara Witt. As you travel down the canyon, you’ll keep an eye out for a variety of ferns growing in the shady creek bed, and discuss how these delicate denizens pre-date the evolution of flowering plants. On the return route, you’ll stop at a sag pond and observe other ancient plants. Wear shoes with good tread since you may have to cross shallow creek waters. The hike will be about 3 miles.

Night Under the Redwoods

Saturday • March 7
Purissima Creek Redwoods
4:00 pm – 9:00 pm



Explore under the redwoods at night with docents Debby Brusco, Lynn Jackson, and Paul Billig. Who knows what you’ll discover? This easy but possibly muddy hike will cover about 4 miles. Bring dinner, ground cover to sit on, and a flashlight with a red filter/cellophane covering if you have it. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 19.**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • March 11
Windy Hill
10:00 am – 1:00 pm



Join docents Katherine Jen, Huey-Shin Yuan, and Louise Casey for a 4- to 6-mile, moderately-paced, exercise focused hike. Each quarter, “Scenic Aerobic” hikes will be offered in different Preserves. The route of each hike will be determined by the docents based on trail and weather conditions.

Purissima Spring Series

Wednesday • March 11
Purissima Creek Redwoods
10:30 am – 3:00 pm



Enjoy the monthly growth of plants in the understory of the redwoods – join one or more of three Wednesday hikes to follow the progression. On these 5-mile ambles along the creek and into Soda Gulch with docents Sam Berry, Judy Sullivan, and Susan Peterson, you’ll attempt to identify native and non-native species and note old growth and second growth characteristics of the redwoods. Afternoon discussions may also include an after-hike coast side restaurant visit with any who are interested.



Judy Kramer

Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve

Sunrise Hike

Thursday • March 12
Pulgas Ridge
7:00 am – 9:15 am



Warm up body and soul on an early morning hike with docents Greg Hughes, Huey-Shin Yuan, and Padma Satish. As you travel the 4-mile loop through the Preserve along the Pulgas Ridge, Blue Oak, Dick Bishop, Dusky-footed Woodrat, and Cordilleras Trails, you’ll keep a sharp eye out for early wildflowers and baby critters.



Randy Weber

Purissima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve



Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

Albert Lui

Top O' Mindego Morning

Saturday • March 14

Russian Ridge

Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot

9:45 am – 2:30 pm



Enjoy the spring green from the top of Mindego Hill! Join local docents Kim Borick and Sarah Schoen for this new out-and-back 5.5-mile total trek along the Mindego Hill Trail. You'll discover the historic uses of this land and its people and hear about the District's plans for the property. Some hikers will find trekking poles helpful along the hilly, rocky road section of the route.

Introductory Geocaching for Families

Saturday • March 14

Skyline Ridge

Meet: Russian Ridge

10:00 am – 2:00 pm



This fun and interactive outing is great for families and children (who can hike for 2- to 3-miles). Join docents Lyndall Erb, June Cancell, and Theresa Walterskirchen, and REI Outdoor School instructor Steve Wood to search for geocaches (hidden treasures), using GPS units supplied by REI (or you can bring your own units). Bring small trinkets to trade for objects you'll find in the caches. This activity is an introduction to geocaching and is geared toward the first-time geocacher. **(Note: This activity includes some off trail hiking; long pants are recommended.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 26.

History of Fremont Older Ride

Saturday • March 14

Fremont Older

10:15 am – 12:30 pm



Bring water and dress in layers for this intermediate mountain bike ride led by docents Linda and Glenn Wegner. During the "re-group" stops along the ride, you'll enjoy discussions about the rich history of the area. Single-track and fire road cycling experience is required for this 10- to 12-mile ride that includes 2,000 feet of climbing. Rain 24 hours in advance of the ride will cancel the activity.

A Walk with Gaspar de Portola

Saturday • March 14

Windy Hill

Meet: Skyline Boulevard parking area

11:00 am – 2:00 pm



The Portola Expedition of 1769 marks the beginning of European influence over California. What was this expedition all about? Join docents Ed Lange and Alisa Stutzbach, and walk to the summit of Windy Hill Preserve overlooking the turnaround point of Portola's trek. You'll hear about the nature and path of the expedition and its effects on California on this 4-mile, moderately-paced hike.

Devil's Canyon Waterfall

Sunday • March 15

Long Ridge

9:00 am – 12:00 noon



Explore tiny Devils Canyon waterfall on this 5-mile, moderately-paced hike through the clandestine Aquarian Valley with docents David Schwaderer, Huey-Shin Yuan, Ed Lange, and Dick Ophsal. Traversing the Peters Creek and Bay Area Ridge Trails, you descend into a magical, little-known paradise away from traffic and well-traveled trails.

Just Add Water

Sunday • March 15

Monte Bello

10:00 am – 1:00 pm



Join docents Susan Bernhard and Noa Doitel and engage your sense of discovery on a 3-hour, 3-mile loop kids-friendly hike along the White Oaks and Stevens Creek Nature Trails. You'll hike through forest, riparian and grassland habitats, with lots of opportunities to hear song birds, look for animal tracks, search for wildflowers, and see new growth on trees following the sparse winter rain.

Signs of Spring

Sunday • March 15

Pulgas Ridge

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm



Hike the trails of this Preserve with docents Liz Foreman and Christina Fusco while exploring the signs that spring is approaching, including viewing early blooming wildflowers and bushes. You'll travel along the Blue Oak and Dick Bishop Trails and also take in the views from the top of the Dusky-footed Woodrat Trail on this moderately-paced, 4.5-mile, round-trip outing. This hike includes hills and uneven terrain.

Spring to Black Mountain

Wednesday • March 18

Rancho San Antonio

9:00 am – 3:00 pm



Spring is almost here. Come and join docents Huey-Shin Yuan, Bruce Hartsough, and Vivian Neou for a "sprint" from this popular Preserve to Black Mountain summit in adjacent Monte Bello Preserve. You'll get a good workout as you travel 12 miles and a 2,500-foot total elevation gain along Hill, PG&E, Quarry, Black Mountain, Upper High Meadow, High Meadow, and Coyote Trails. You'll enjoy a well-deserved lunch after a heart-pumping climb to the summit. **(Note: Arrive early to find parking.)**

Explorer Hike: Sierra Azul in Spring

Wednesday • March 18

Sierra Azul

10:30 am – 2:30 pm



You'll enjoy early spring wildflowers on the headwaters of Guadalupe Creek with docents Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, and Laura Levin. This leisurely-paced, moderately difficult, 5- to 6-mile hike will stimulate all your senses!

Spring Up!

Friday • March 20

Edgewood County Park

10:00 am – 1:30 pm



Edgewood Park, designated a Natural Area Preserve, is home to a large variety of unique plant communities that thrive in serpentine soil. Some of the Park's wildflowers are rare or threatened. On this 4-mile interpretive walk with docents Marilyn and Bill Bauriedel, you'll learn to identify serpentine plants and appreciate their adaptation to the soil inhospitable to many other plants. The hike includes the Sylvan, Live Oak, Ridgeview, and Franciscan Trails. If so inclined, bring a camera to capture images for future reference.

Walk with a Doc

Saturday • March 21

Windy Hill

Meet: See text below

10:00 am – 11:00 am



(Please see the activity and program description for March 7.) **(Note: this activity will meet at an offsite location – directions will be provided when you sign-up). Sign-up at smcma.org/calendar/smcma-events/walk-with-a-doc-signup or by phone (650) 312-1623.**

Search for the Everlasting

Saturday • March 21

Picchetti Ranch

10:30 am – 3:30 pm



Join docents Bob Segalla, Gerri Tiernan, and Greg Azevedo to enjoy the excitement of this Preserve so close to home. You'll discover if the everlasting plant smells like maple syrup to you. A lovely view awaits you along the Orchard Loop and Zinfandel Trails as does the sound of Stevens Creek as you enjoy lunch at a Santa Clara County Park picnic area. Capable children can handle this moderately-paced, 4-mile hike with a couple of 200-foot climbs. A visit to the Picchetti Winery for tasting is optional (on your own) at the hike's end.



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

First Day of Spring Hike

Saturday • March 21

Monte Bello

Meet: Picchetti Ranch

10:00 am – 12:30 pm



Celebrate the first day of spring hiking the beautiful Waterwheel Creek Trail with docents Susan Bernhard and Maureen Draper. Delight all your senses observing the wildflowers and plants, and the insects at work pollinating them. On a clear day you can see over Skyline Ridge to the ocean as you walk approximately 3 miles on old ranch roads. Suitable for children 8 years and older. **(Note: Participants will carpool to trailhead.)**



Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

APRIL

Explorer Hike: Along the Ridge

Wednesday • April 1

Long Ridge-Skyline Ridge

Meet: Long Ridge

10:30 am – 2:30 pm



Enjoy a leisurely, leg stretching 4.8-mile hike with docents Kate Gudmundson, Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, and Laura Levin. You'll follow the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the Chestnut Trail between Preserves along the ridge on this out and back trek. You'll pass a chestnut orchard and tree farm, and hear some of the history behind these handsome trees.

Umunhum Barlow Explorer

Saturday • April 4

Sierra Azul

8:30 am – 1:00 pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo, David Schwaderer, and Huey-Shin Yuan for an uncommon hike around Mt. Umunhum via Barlow and Woods Roads. This 5-mile hike with many short breaks and wonderful views includes trail sections that are steep with varied surfaces. You'll begin hiking along Mt. Umunhum Road near the Bald Mountain trailhead and continue to Barlow Road to hike back to the Jacques Ridge parking lot. **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.)**

Spineless Wonders

Saturday • April 4

Windy Hill

5:15 pm – 10:00 pm



Docents Debbi Brusco, Jack Owicki, and Jan Hintermeister will guide you on a 3-mile invertebrate treasure hunt. You'll meander along the Spring Ridge and Betsy Crowder Trails with extended stops.

After dinner, you'll listen for night creatures. This hike is geared toward adults, but attentive kids 10 years and older are welcome. Bring dinner, ground cover to sit on, and a flashlight with a red filter/cellophane covering if you have it. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after March 19.**



Daniels Nature Center Season Begins!!

The David C. Daniels Nature Center, located on the edge of Alpine Pond at Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve, will open for the season on Saturday, April 4, 2015. Come by on opening weekend to take part in our annual celebration. Refreshments will be provided. The Nature Center will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00 noon until 5:00 pm during spring and summer, and 11:00 am to 4:00 pm in the fall.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday

April 4 and April 5

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



Spring weekends are here and so should you be...as the living is easy, especially on the edge of Alpine Pond. Bring family and friends to visit any Saturday or Sunday this spring between 12:00 noon and 5:00 pm. You can enjoy displays about natural communities, view larger-than-life pond strata mobiles, take a pond prowler, and perhaps have an opportunity to study live aquatic organisms "borrowed" from Alpine Pond with guidance from a docent. These adventures and more await you!

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • April 5

Los Trancos

2:00 pm – 4:30 pm



(Please see the activity description for March 1.)

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • April 8

Fremont Older

10:00 am – 1:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for March 1). **(Note: Arrive early to find parking.)**



El Corte de Madera Creek
Open Space Preserve

Purisima Spring Series

Wednesday • April 8
Purisima Creek Redwoods
10:30 am – 3:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for March 11.)

Wildflowers Under the Fir Trees

Wednesday • April 8
El Corte de Madera Creek
Meet: Skeggs Point
12:30 pm – 4:15 pm



Enjoy a spring hike and view a tafoni sandstone formation, redwood and fir trees, spring wildflowers, and ferns. Join docents Liz Foreman and Paul Billig to explore the variety of plants and trees in this popular Preserve as you hike along the Tafoni, Resolution, and Fir Trails. This moderately-paced hike will cover 6 miles with steep and uneven terrain, including several hills.

Sunrise Hike

Thursday • April 9
Pulgas Ridge
7:00 am – 9:15 am



(Join docents Greg Hughes, Padma Satish, and Steve Brugler, and please see the activity description for March 12.)

Walk with a Doc

Saturday • April 11
Pulgas Ridge
10:00 am – 11:00 am



(Please see the activity and program description for March 7.) **Sign-up at smcma.org/calendar/smca-events/walk-with-a-doc-signup or by phone (650) 312-1623.**

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
April 11 and 12
Daniels Nature Center
12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Explorer Hike: A View from on High

Wednesday • April 15
Windy Hill
Meet: Skyline Boulevard parking area
10:30 am – 2:30 pm



You'll enjoy spectacular views of bay and ocean from the upper reaches of this Preserve. Join docents Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, and Laura Levin for a leisurely-paced, moderately difficult 5- to 6-mile hike to viewpoints along the Lost Trail. Wildflowers will be an added bonus!

Finding Clues to Local History

Friday • April 17
Long Ridge
10:00 am – 1:00 pm



This 4.5-mile loop hike with docents Debbie Mytels and Farhana Kazi will follow the shady Peters Creek Trail, pass by the green "carpet" at Jikoji Pond, and stop for a snack while taking in a terrific view at the Wallace Stegner Bench on the Long Ridge Trail. Along the way you'll look for signs of this Preserve's colorful history, share a few stories of local lore, and look for spring wildflowers.

Introductory Geocaching Hike for Families

Saturday • April 18
Los Trancos
10:00 am – 2:00 pm



(Please join docents Sarah Schoen, Debbie Mytels, and REI Outdoor Instructor Steve Wood and see the activity description for March 14.) **(Note: This activity includes some off trail hiking; long pants are recommended.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 2.**

Redwood Oxygen

Saturday • April 18
Purisima Creek Redwoods
10:30 am – 3:00 pm



Find out why you'll be breathing some of the cleanest air in the world on this hike with docents Bob Segalla, Sam Berry, and Theresa Walterskirchen, on the Purisima and Craig Britton Trails. This moderately-paced, 5.3-mile, 500-foot elevation change hike is suitable for capable children and has a downhill return. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 2.**

Night Photography Hike

Saturday • April 18
Russian Ridge
Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot
6:00 pm – 9:30 pm



Join docents Vivian Neou, Jack Owicki, and Greg Hughes for a photography night hike. You'll start with the sunset and from there move on to fluorescing insects and finding other interesting photo subjects. If the skies cooperate, you'll end the evening with some astrophotography. This 5-mile round trip hike is intended for novice and experienced photographers – all levels are welcome. Be sure you are able to hike with your tripod/lenses, etc. and bring your camera's instruction manual for reference if needed. **(Note: Detailed instructions will be emailed to participants before the hike.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 2.**

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
April 18 and 19
Daniels Nature Center
12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

April Amble

Sunday • April 19
Windy Hill
9:00 am – 12:00 noon



Explore a variety of natural communities including grassland, oak woodland, and riparian habitats with docents Ann Reisenauer and Susan Bernhard. You'll hike past Sausal Pond on the Betsy Crowder Trail, through oak woodland on the Meadow Trail and explore the lower reaches of Hamm's Gulch. You'll learn about some of the spring wildflowers and majestic oaks you pass along the way.

Explore the West Side (Part 1)

Sunday • April 19

El Corte de Madera Creek

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm



The rugged west side of this Preserve is less familiar to many hikers. Join docents Bruce Hartsough and Huey-Shin Yuan to explore this beautiful area. You'll loop the South Leaf, Virginia Mill, Timberview, and Giant Salamander Trails at an aerobic pace while seeing the streams and forests on the west side of the Preserve. **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 2.**



Bouquet of Flowers

Friday • April 24

Russian Ridge

10:00 am – 2:30 pm



In most years there is no better place to see a large variety of native wildflowers than this Preserve. Join docents Bill and Marilyn Bauriedel to identify some of the less common species. If the conditions are right you might be able to see cream cups, Johnny jump-ups, tidy tips, checker-bloom, columbine, Indian paintbrush, and giant trillium. Bring a camera or a sketchpad to capture your favorite images. You'll walk approximately 3.5 miles along the Ridge, Alder Spring, and Ancient Oaks Trails.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday

April 25 and 26

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Loop to Ridge Line Vistas

Sunday • April 26

Long Ridge

9:00 am – 12:00 noon



Ascend to spellbinding Santa Cruz Mountain views with docents David Schwaderer, Bruce Hartsough, and Kandis Scott on this 4-mile, moderately-paced hike along the Long Ridge and Peters Creek Trails. This enchanted loop passes a peaceful pond with resident turtles that sometimes sun themselves on gently sloping logs. An optional side trip to Peters Creek provides a glimpse of nature's tranquility and maybe even apple blossoms.

Annual Fremont Older House and Garden Tours

Sunday • April 26

Fremont Older

9:00 am – 4:00 pm



Tours led by District docents are offered on a "first come first serve" call-in reservation basis. If you are interested, please call the District office at 650-691-2153 on **Friday March 27, 2015 beginning at 10:00 am. Reservations for the April 26 tours will not be accepted before the scheduled reservation call-in date and time (Friday, March 27 – 10:00 am). Group size limit is four (4) people.** A waiting list will be established. Please do not call the regular District office or activity reservation phone numbers for this annual tour offering.



Yadav Tripathi

Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

Top O' Mindego Morning

Sunday • April 26

Russian Ridge

Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot

9:45 am – 2:30 pm



(Join docents Kim Borick and Gerri Tiernan and please see the activity description for March 14.)

Explorer Hike: Wildflowers and Views

Wednesday • April 29

Russian Ridge

10:30 am – 2:30 pm



Discover spring wildflowers of grassland and forest with docents Laura Levin, Kate Gudmundson, Lynn Jackson, and Dennis Smith in one of the best places to see wildflowers in the Bay Area. While hiking the Ridge, Ancient Oaks, and Hawk Ridge Trails for 5 miles at a leisurely-to-moderate pace, you'll be awed by expansive views that form a backdrop for the exquisite flowers.



MAY

In Full Bloom

Saturday • May 2

Sierra Azul

10:00 am – 3:00 pm



Spring wildflowers are in full bloom. Join docents Sarah Schoen and Alisa Stutzbach to enjoy a 6-mile out and back hike on the Woods Trail. You'll learn about this botanically diverse area, including several locally unusual common plants.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday

May 2 and 3

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Ridgelines

Sunday • May 3

Long Ridge

10:00 am – 1:30 pm



Explore in early May along the ridge with docents Chris MacIntosh and Susan Bernhard on this 4.5-mile hike. Spring comes later here than in the cities below, so you may find late-winter flowers, as well as plenty of spring flowers in the sunny areas and turtles in Jikoji Pond. Birds will be returning to nest, while winter migrants have left. What you see will depend on how late and generous the winter rains are. Bring your curiosity!



Wingding Family Fest | Saturday • May 9, 2015

10:00 am – 3:00 pm | Skyline Ridge Preserve

For more information see back insert, or visit: www.openspace.org/wingding.

Flight of the Resolution

Sunday • May 3

El Corte de Madera Creek

Meet: Skeggs Point

10:00 am – 2:00 pm



Join docents Ed Lange, Susan Peterson, and Bruce Hartsough and hike the trail dedicated to the memory of the 1953 crash of airline "Resolution". Beautiful redwoods and a tafoni sandstone formation will be viewed on this 6-mile hike along the Resolution, Fir, and Tafoni Trails, and details of Resolution's flight will be discussed.

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • May 3

Los Trancos

2:00 pm – 4:30 pm



(Please see the activity description for March 1.)

Leisurely Loop

Wednesday • May 6

Windy Hill

10:00 am – 3:00 pm



Join docents Steve Brugler, Noa Doitel, and Greg Hughes for a leisurely-paced, moderate loop hike of about 7 miles to the top of Windy Hill and back. You'll climb about 1,000 feet at a relaxed pace on the Hamms Gulch Trail, enjoying the sights along the way. After lunch, the payoff will be a sweeping view from the summit. You'll then return down via the Spring Ridge and Betsy Crowder Trails.

Explorer Hike: Mindego Hill or Bust

Wednesday • May 6

Russian Ridge

Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot

10:30 am – 2:30 pm



Join intrepid docents Lynn Jackson, Dennis Smith, Laura Levin, and Kate Gudmundson as you make your way to the summit of Mindego Hill! You'll enjoy expansive views, spring wildflowers, and learn about the past and present uses of this unique area. This will be a moderately-paced, 5-mile hike with some steep and slippery sections.

Monte Bello Hills Ride

Saturday • May 9

Monte Bello

Meet: Picchetti Ranch

9:00 am – 12:30 pm



Join docents Linda and Glenn Wegner to ride 5 miles up the mainly paved Montebello Road and then onto fire roads and single-track trails of Monte Bello Preserve, including the Bella Vista and White Oaks Trails before heading back via the Stevens Canyon Trail. Experience with longer rides and single-track trails is required. This advanced ride covers 22 miles with approximately 2,000-feet of climbing. Bring a power snack and water. Faster riders/climbers can start the ride with Glenn at 9:30 am instead of 9:15 am.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday

May 9 and 10

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Side Door Loop

Sunday • May 10

Long Ridge-Saratoga Gap

Meet: Saratoga Gap

9:00 am – 12:00 noon



Enjoy lightly traveled trails and vistas in heavily forested back areas with docents David Schwaderer and Vivian Neou. While paralleling Highway 35, experience another world, away from traffic. You'll see both sides of the road above, each with its own special tranquility. This 4.5-mile hike will take you into two Preserves along the Skyline Toll Road, Achistaca, Bay Area Ridge, and Saratoga Gap Trails.

Purisima Spring Series

Wednesday • May 13

Purisima Creek Redwoods

10:30 am – 3:00 pm



(Join docents Sam Berry and Judy Sullivan, and please see the activity description for March 11.)

Illustration above by Shelly Monfort

Wisdom of the Watershed

Thursday • May 14

Bear Creek Redwoods

Meet: See text below

9:30 am – 12:00 noon



Join docents Kate Gudmundson, Jenny Whitman, and Laura Levin for a leisurely-paced 4-mile hike through a diverse watershed that includes grasslands, ponds, creeks, and forest. You'll see firsthand some of the intriguing ways nature moves, stores, and conserves water. You'll also delve into the roles played by plants, soils, geology, humans and other animals in keeping a watershed healthy. **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead. Directions will be mailed.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 30.

Sunrise Hike

Thursday • May 14

Pulgas Ridge

7:00 am – 9:15 am



(Join docents Greg Hughes and Liz Foreman, and please see the activity description for March 12.)

Butterflies of Picchetti Ranch

Saturday • May 16

Picchetti Ranch

10:00 am – 1:00 pm



Join docents Jan Hintermeister and Karen DeMello in exploring the wonderful and strange world of insects that taste with their feet and smell with their antennae. Learn to identify common butterfly species in their natural environment and understand why humans from the Stone Age to the Space Age have been fascinated with these delicate winged creatures. Many facts and flutters await you on this easy 2.5-mile walk along the Zinfandel and Orchard Loop Trails! Bring binoculars if you have them. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 30.**



Karl Gohl

Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve

**Stop In and Explore**

Saturday and Sunday

May 16 and 17

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Explore the West Side (Part 2)

Sunday • May 17

El Corte de Madera Creek

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm



The rugged west side of El Corte de Madera is less familiar to many hikers. Join Docents Bruce Hartsough and Huey-Shin Yuan to explore this beautiful area. You'll loop the North Leaf, El Corte de Madera Creek, Resolution, Fir, and Methuselah Trails for 6.3 miles at an aerobic pace while seeing the streams and forests on the west side of the preserve. **(Note: Participants will carpool to trailhead.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 30.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • May 20

Long Ridge

10:00 am – 1:00 pm



(Please activity description for March 11.)

Explorer Hike: South Route to Black Mountain

Wednesday • May 20

Monte Bello

Meet: Picchetti Ranch

10:30 am – 2:30 pm



Enjoy lovely views and wildflowers with docents Lynn Jackson, Dennis Smith, and Laura Levin as you hike along the Waterwheel Creek Trail and Monte Bello Road to Black Mountain. This will be a moderately-paced, 4.5-mile hike with lunch at the summit! You'll have occasional stops to enjoy the views and discuss natural topics along the way. **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.)**

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday

May 23 and 24

Daniels Nature Center

12:00 noon – 5:00 pm



(Please see the activity description for April 4.)

Introductory Geocaching Hike for Families

Sunday • May 24

Bear Creek Redwoods

Meet: See text below

10:00 am – 2:00 pm



(Please join docents Jenny Whitman, Collin Lim, and REI Outdoor Instructor Steve Wood and see the activity description for March 14.) **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.)**

Directions will be mailed.

This activity includes some off trail hiking; long pants are recommended.)

Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 7.

29th Annual Hike the Open Spaces

Monday • May 25

Monte Bello

Meet: Picchetti Ranch

8:30 am – 1:00 pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo and Bob Segalla for a 2.5-mile, leisurely-paced walk through a less-traveled section of this Preserve on the Waterwheel Creek Trail. If the weather is clear, expect to see some spectacular views of the Santa Clara Valley and portions of the Santa Cruz Mountains! This walk will include the history of the Preserve and the

Open Space District, and information about some of the plants, animals, and geology of the area.

Pace will vary with occasional stops. A short snack break is planned midway.

(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 11.

Memorial Day Meander

Monday • May 25

Los Trancos

9:30 am – 1:00 pm



On this family friendly 4-mile Memorial Day hike with docents Bill and Marilyn Bauriedel, you'll learn about the many creatures that call Los Trancos their home, including the Dusky-footed woodrat and its "entourage" of birds, insects, other mammals, and reptiles. This Preserve has everything from grasslands to oak woodlands to chaparral and riparian areas. If it's a hot day, you'll enjoy walking on the cooler woodland trails and deep shade at the bottom of the canyons. You'll hike along the Franciscan Loop, Lost Creek Loop, and Page Mill Trails on a moderately-paced hike with about 500-foot elevation change. Suitable for capable children.



Jack Geschwind

Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve

Workout with Clean Air

Wednesday • May 27

Purisima Creek Redwoods

10:00 am – 3:00 pm



Do you get more energy with clean air during your workout? Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan, Bruce Hartsough, and Vivian Neou for a fast-paced exploration of giant redwoods, which produce more oxygen than other trees. This is a 10-mile, 1,500-foot elevation gain workout along the Purisima Creek, Craig Britton, Harkins Ridge, North Ridge and Whittemore Gulch Trails with a refreshing lunch break. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 13.**



HEALTHY
PARKS
HEALTHY
PEOPLE
BAY AREA

From Running in Ravenswood to Hiking in Pulgas Ridge: Local Youth Discover the Wonders of Nature

Last October, a running club was started in East Palo Alto by the staff of College Track, a nonprofit that provides educational support to over 200 high school students in local underserved communities. Every Tuesday, a small group of students gather at Ravenswood Open Space Preserve for fresh air, exercise, friendship, and a good run. This club quickly evolved into a group called Outdoor Endorphins, and has expanded to include other outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, biking, and camping. These outings are run by three College Track staff who volunteer their free time to organize events as well as fundraise for gear and snacks for the youth.



Students Enjoying A Hike Organized by the Outdoor Endorphins Group

Outdoor Endorphin's goal is to involve youth in outdoor activities that help them de-stress, bond with one another, build healthy habits, and establish a lifelong appreciation for nature. Once a month, the three founders — David Zuckerman, Lauren Ficklin, and Ania Alam — take a group of as many as 15 youth to explore a local park or preserve. In addition to their weekly trips to Ravenswood, the group also heads out to other Midpen preserves for their weekly outings. Many of the students may not have hiked through a redwood forest or seen natural wildlife habitats before. These encounters with the outdoors are their first, and will hopefully be one of many exposures to nature.

You can follow the youth's outdoor adventures on their blog at www.outdoorendorphins.com 🌿

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Father and Daughter Bond Over Stewardship

Several years ago, Tim and Anna Teske, a father/daughter duo, attended their first volunteer event. Anna had a school assignment requiring volunteer hours for a community cause. Sharing an appreciation for the outdoors, Tim and Anna signed up to volunteer with the District. Discovering that the volunteer events were personally rewarding and inspirational, they have continued to volunteer even after completing Anna's school assignments.



Anna Taking in the View at La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

"As volunteer program lead for the District, I spend time with people who have chosen to give their time to help restore the natural environment of our preserves," explains staff member Ellen Gartside, "It is especially rewarding when people return after their first volunteer event and become regulars."

Anna and Tim have pulled French broom at La Honda and Harding grass at Sierra Azul. They helped mulch and remove vinca at the El Corte de Madera Creek parking lot and have participated in the annual Earth Day wildflower survey at Sierra Azul. The project at La Honda Creek stands out as being particularly special for them. Cindy Roessler, senior resource management specialist, attended the project to educate the group about the local flora as they pulled invasive French broom. "This gave us a sense of how our time and effort makes a real difference to the preserve. There was a feeling of excitement and satisfaction when Cindy pointed out a grove of a rare shrub called Kings Mountain manzanita that would benefit from our efforts."

In their own words: "Volunteering for MROSD is just as much of a social experience as it is a community service. Rangers, event coordinators, and fellow volunteers always make everyone feel welcome and fully included. MROSD volunteer events provide a great opportunity to meet people of a kindred spirit who wish to make a difference together."

Big thanks to Anna and Tim, and all the District volunteers!

For more information about volunteering with the District visit www.openspace.org/volunteer 🌿



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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Photo on front page, La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Midpen Joins Forces for Local Resource Management

Submitted by Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director of the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

75 years ago visionary farmers in coastal San Mateo County formed the very first resource conservation district in the State of California and one of the first in the nation.

The Dust Bowl crisis of the 1930s had just destroyed millions of acres of cropland by drought and subsequent soil loss. In response to the terrible crisis, the federal government established the Soil Conservation Service. Local counterparts were set up across the nation to ensure that the service was responsive to local needs. Thus were born resource conservation districts, or RCDs. From the Dust Bowl crisis and farmers of yesteryear, to climate change and new partners like park and open space districts today, RCDs have been partners to public and private landowners who wish to best manage their natural resources.

Those who live and farm on the San Mateo County coast know that it is a special place that balances the demands of many competing interests. Because so many care about conservation efforts, local resource management involves a wide variety of stakeholders, from private and public land owners and managers to government agencies, residents, and interest groups. The RCD often serves as a critical liaison between these disparate groups, aiming for win-win solutions in service to the community.



Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve



Volunteers Pulling Slender False Brome

Since the establishment of the first RCD in San Mateo County, RCDs have provided non-regulatory, free assistance to private and public landowners wishing to accomplish countless practical, hands-on conservation projects every year, including soil and water conservation, wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration, control of exotic plant species, watershed restoration, conservation planning, education, rural road improvements, and much more. RCDs often provide practical advice to local farmers and landowners based on real research conducted on the ground at many of our nation's universities, and sometimes they are able to bring in federal funds or grant dollars to help.

The RCD and MROSD have joined forces on many projects, including the fight against slender false brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*). This aggressive perennial grass threatens the health of our local redwood forests by displacing tree seedlings and the native forest understory. It has also been observed spreading down creek corridors and can impact grazing land values, as it is undesirable forage for cattle.

Together the two districts are removing the invasive plant to protect natural areas on Thornewood and La Honda open space preserves, private lands, and local watersheds. While MROSD works to eradicate the weed on its preserves, the RCD is working with adjacent private property owners in the Woodside and Portola Valley areas where some of the best local redwood forests provide habitat for native plants and animals. Through this partnership we stand our best chance of controlling the insidious weed across approximately 200 acres before it grows to a bigger problem and threatens redwood forests throughout the state.

Slender false brome is a perennial grass with dark green drooping leaves that have a fringe of hairs along their edges. To the untrained eye, it may look like some native grasses. If you think you may have this weed on your property, let us know! Contact Alex Beakes at alex@sanmateorcd.org. For more information about the San Mateo Resource Conservation District, visit www.sanmateorcd.org

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OPEN SPACE
NEWSLETTER
SIGN-UP NOW

Photos above from left to right:
Rancho San Antonio OSP by
Steve Abbors; Fremont Oder OSP
by Jack Gescheidt; Rancho San
Antonio OSP by Sue Gale; and
Purissima Creek Redwoods OSP
by Karl Gohl.



DIGITAL PHOTO CONTEST

Last Call for Entries, Submit Your Photos

Midpen is seeking compelling digital images of wildlife, plant life, natural landscapes, weather, or people interacting with nature or enjoying our open space lands. Top selections will be featured in the summer 2015 issue of *Open Space Views*.

Winners will be selected in each of the five categories:

- People
- Wildlife
- Plant Life
- Natural Landscapes
- New Media (taken with a mobile device)



2011 Photo Contest Entry by
Judy Kramer, Windy Hill OSP

So, grab your camera or your smartphone and visit the preserves this season. Early spring can provide some amazing and unique shots. Remember to check trail conditions and be prepared for all kinds of weather before venturing out.

Please remember: all photo submissions must be taken in areas of District preserves that are open to the public.

Photo Submission Deadline is 11:59 p.m. PDT on Tuesday, March 31, 2015.

Please read the complete rules, terms, and condition before submitting your photos at: www.openspace.org/contest



2014 Photo Contest Entry
by Larry Turino, Foothills OSP



2014 Photo Contest Entry by Ken Lunder,
Rancho San Antonio OSP



2014 Photo Contest Entry by
Carolyn Genirberg, Monte Bello OSP



Fremont Older House and Garden Tours

Sunday, April 26, 2015 | Fremont Older Preserve

Each spring, "Woodhills," the historic home of Fremont and Cora Older, is opened for public tours providing local history enthusiasts an opportunity to learn more about the legacy of Fremont Older and tour the historic home and gardens. **Tours require advanced reservations. See page 10 for more information.**



Wingding Family Fest

A Celebration of Spring

Saturday | May 9, 2015 | 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Skyline Ridge Preserve | Equestrian Parking Lot

Join Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and co-sponsor Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society for a "winged-wonders" festival in a beautiful spring setting. Celebrate birds, butterflies, bats and more – a FREE family event with fun for everyone! Activities include: guided nature walks (buzz, tweet, chirp and whirl down the trails...) and bird-themed geocaching hikes, hands-on science stations, live animal presentations, conservation organization exhibitors, arts and crafts, and food vendors. No advance reservations required – some activities do need to be signed-up for on the day of the event.

For more information and updated schedule, visit: www.openspace.org/wingding



EXPLORE

Discover



DANIELS NATURE CENTER AT SKYLINE RIDGE OSP



Opens for the Season on April 4, 2015

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors

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