



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-26-90
Meeting 26-17
June 24, 2026

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM

Community Partnership Highlight: Saved by Nature

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Receive an informational presentation on the partnership with Saved by Nature. No Board action required.

SUMMARY

Saved by Nature (SBN) is an environmental equity nonprofit focused on making nature accessible for all Bay Area communities. Since 2022, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) has partnered with SBN to support guided hikes and community events that reduce barriers to outdoor access by providing equipment, transportation, and education. This collaboration has engaged hundreds of local individuals and youth, advancing the Board's goal of increasing equitable access to open space. Staff recommends continuing this partnership to expand inclusive programming on District preserves.

DISCUSSION

Saved by Nature (SBN) is dedicated to making high-quality nature programming accessible to all Bay Area residents, with a special focus on communities historically underfunded and underserved. Founded in 2019, SBN has led over 3,000 community members on guided hikes across Bay Area parks and open spaces, provided nature-based experiences to more than 1,900 local youth, and connected with over 3,600 individuals through virtual programming. Their signature Community Nature Hikes program addresses financial, physical, and educational barriers by providing all necessary equipment and transportation, making outdoor experiences welcoming and accessible for local individuals, families, and youth organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula.

Since 2022, the District has partnered with Saved by Nature to support inclusive community events and guided hikes on District preserves. Early collaborations included sponsorships for the Coastside Community Celebration and SBN's annual BatFest, a family-friendly event celebrating local nocturnal species. In 2023, funding supported a guided hike and picnic lunch at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve for 30 participants, strengthening community connections to the natural environment.

Building on this foundation, the partnership expanded in 2024 and 2025 with \$15,000 in annual funding from the District to support six guided hikes each year through SBN's Community Nature Hikes Series. These events have engaged over 150 individuals, providing educational and

recreational experiences that promote mental, physical, and spiritual healing through nature. The program's inclusive approach aligns closely with the District's strategic goal of increasing equitable access to open space preserves by removing barriers and fostering confidence in outdoor participation. The partnership also benefits from Saved by Nature's deep connections to historically underfunded communities and their expertise in delivering culturally responsive programming, particularly for youth and families who face societal obstacles to outdoor access.

In November 2025, the District renewed its partnership with Saved by Nature (SBN) for a two-year term from January 2026 through December 2027. The contract supports SBN's Community Nature Hikes program, under which SBN will lead 12 themed nature walks, 6 walks each year, at various District preserves. These walks target new preserve users, with a focus on youth and adults aged 20 to 40 and include one event each year in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula. SBN's outings will continue to provide a range of experiences that address financial, physical, and educational barriers while offering meaningful connections to nature.

The renewed 2026-27 partnership will continue to provide inclusive, community-centered programming that supports historically underfunded communities. The goal is for participants to enjoy the experience of being in an open space preserve, while deepening their understanding of the District's mission to preserve, protect, and restore open space lands.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

None

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

The District will continue its partnership work under the current 2026-27 contract with Saved by Nature.

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