



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-25-111  
Meeting 25-23  
August 26, 2025

## SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA ITEM 1

### AGENDA ITEM

Approval of Policy Statement Revisions to the Basic Policy to Specifically Incorporate the Coastsides Protection Area

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *se den*

As unanimously recommended by the Basic Policy Ad Hoc Committee, approve the proposed policy statement revisions to incorporate the Coastsides Protection Area into the Basic Policy in a manner consistent with the Coastal Service Plan.

### SUMMARY

On July 12, 2023, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Board of Directors (Board) approved the process for incorporating the Coastsides Protection Area into the Basic Policy in a manner consistent with the Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Area (Service Plan) and formed a Board Ad Hoc Committee to guide the process. Under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee, District staff and a consultant identified policy gaps and developed draft policy statement revisions for initial review by the full Board. On June 25, 2024, the Board reviewed the draft policy revisions at a special Board meeting in the City of Half Moon Bay and provided initial feedback. The Board directed staff to solicit feedback from stakeholders and the larger community prior to final Board approval. Between June 2024 and May 2025, staff conducted a robust stakeholder and public outreach process and obtained a wide range of comments. Based on feedback from the public engagement process, the policy statement revisions were updated as appropriate and are presented for final Board review and approval (Attachment 1).

### BACKGROUND

#### *Basic Policy*

The District was created in November 1972 by a voter initiative known as Measure R ("Room to Breathe"). In March 1974, the Board adopted its Basic Policy as the District's "constitution", providing the highest level of policy guidance on fulfilling the District's mission. The Basic Policy states the agency's primary purpose and strategic emphasis while also covering at a very high level the following five major policy areas:

- Open Space Land Preservation
- Open Space Management
- Administration
- Inter-Agency Relationships
- Public Involvement

Each policy area is accompanied by specific policy statements. Informed by and consistent with the Basic Policy, specific and more detailed Board policy documents, such as the Resource Management Policies, Agricultural Policy, and Good Neighbor Policy, provide more specific guidance. The last comprehensive Basic Policy update was in 1999.

*Coastal Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area*

In 2004, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) approved the District's Coastsides Protection Program, extending the District's boundaries to include San Mateo County Coastsides lands from Montara to the San Mateo-Santa Cruz county line. The Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area (Service Plan)(Attachment 2) and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR), certified as part of the Coastsides Protection Program, establishes the Coastal Mission for the District. The Service Plan and EIR also specify the services, goals, permanent policies, guidelines and implementation actions for preserving open space and agricultural lands, protecting natural resources, providing ongoing land stewardship, encouraging agricultural use of land resources, and developing public access in the coastal areas of San Mateo County.

The District's Coastal Mission is as follows (text in **bold** denotes additions to the basic Mission Statement):

*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 Service Plan includes policies to meet the coastal mission of preserving agricultural lands, encouraging agricultural use and preserving the rural character, and establishes Guiding Principles for the following eight policy areas:

- Land Acquisition
- Services and Funding
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Partnerships
- Representation
- Planning and Development
- Land Use

*Process to Revise the Basic Policy to Incorporate the Coastsides Protection Area*

While significant progress has been made to meet Service Plan commitments since its adoption in 2004, one Service Plan Guideline (G.6.1) remains outstanding, which states that the District will develop a Basic Policy for the Coastsides Protection Area. As the Service Plan has provided adequate policy guidance on the District's coastsides work over the past 20 years, the Board, at its July 12, 2023 meeting, approved a process to incorporate the Coastsides Protection Area into the Basic Policy in a manner consistent with the Coastal Service Plan. The process includes:

- Existing Policy Review and Development of Draft Basic Policies
- Board Review of the Draft Basic Policy language/edits for the Coastsides Protection Area

- Public Outreach and Input on Draft Basic Policy Language/Edits
- Incorporation of Public and Board Input into the Final Draft
- Board review and approval of Final Basic Policy Language/Edits

At this meeting, the Board also approved the formation of a Board Ad Hoc Committee to guide the Basic Policy update process.

#### *Process for Basic Policy Revisions*

The District retained 2M Associates (2M) to support the Basic Policy revisions. 2M was the prime consultant who assisted the District to develop the Service Plan in 2004. Their intimate knowledge about the Service Plan has been instrumental in the current Basic Policy update effort.

Staff and 2M first completed a thorough review of the Basic Policy and Coastal Service Plan and identified areas in the Basic Policy that require consideration and update to adequately incorporate and represent the District's overarching and fundamental principles and policies for the Coastsides Protection Area. These flagged areas were next reviewed and confirmed by the Ad Hoc Committee. Following concurrence by the Committee, staff and the consultant developed proposed policy statement revisions to address each area of concern. The Board reviewed the proposed draft changes at its June 25, 2024 special meeting on the Coastsides and provided initial feedback. The Board also directed staff to solicit community and stakeholder feedback on the proposed changes prior to returning for consideration of final Board approval.

## **DISCUSSION**

#### *Stakeholder and Community Engagement*

As directed by the Board, from July 2024 to May 2025, staff conducted a robust stakeholder and community engagement process to solicit public input on the proposed Basic Policy statement revisions. Staff reached out to the following organizations and individuals and received comments from the entities listed in **bold**:

- **San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, District 3 Supervisor Ray Mueller**
- City of Half Moon Bay (HMB)
- **San Mateo County Farm Bureau (SMCFB)**
- **San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee (SMCAAC)**
- **Pescadero Municipal Advisory Committee (PMAC)**
- San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD)
- **Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)**
- **Puente**
- Ayuando Latinos A Soñar (ALAS)
- Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative
- **Green Foothills (GF) - Lennie Roberts**
- **Grassroots Ecology**
- **Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance (SCVBA)**
- Sierra Club
- **Acterra**

Additionally, staff held two public workshops:

- Coastside Community Workshop at Half Moon Bay Library (April 24, 2025)
- Virtual Basic Policy Update Workshop (May 1, 2025)

Moreover, staff promoted the Basic Policy update effort at community tabling events and in the District's newsletters with invitations to comment online through the Basic Policy Project website.

The community engagement process generated approximately 100 comments. The feedback received includes comments that relate specifically to the Basic Policy update, as well as broader input involving District operations on the Coastside and throughout the District's Preserves. The main themes that are specific to the Basic Policy are as follows:

- General support for the proposed policy statement revisions from partner organizations such as POST, Green Foothills, Grassroots Ecology, and Acterra
- Questions regarding the definition of key terms in the District's Coastside Mission Statement, including:
  - Agriculture
  - Agricultural land of regional significance
  - Rural character
  - Viable agricultural use of land resources
- Recommendation to place greater emphasis on agricultural education
- A preference for a separate Coastside Basic Policy instead of integrating into a comprehensive Basic Policy that embraces both Coastside and Bayside areas
- Concerns about including agricultural land in the definition of open space
- Concerns that agriculture uses could lead to harmful practices that negatively impact the land, people, and natural resources
- Interest in expressing the District's equitable practices and support for agricultural workforce housing

The public comments received with detailed responses are provided in Attachment 3.

### *Basic Policy Revisions*

Subsequent to the regular Board meeting of June 25, 2024, the proposed policy statement revisions have been updated, where appropriate, in response to the public feedback received over the last year. Attachment 4 provides a summary of the proposed changes, including additions and deletions, as well as a key that links the changes to the relevant comment received.

The latest key Basic Policy revisions are as follows:

- Clarifying the definition of Open Space to include working agricultural land that remains protective of the natural resources, consistent with California Government Code
- Adding the District's Coastside mission
- Adding callouts to define key terms in the District's Coastside mission, including:
  - Agriculture (from the Resource Management Policies)
  - Agricultural land of regional significance (new)\*
  - Rural character (new)\*
  - Viable agricultural use of land resources (from the Agricultural Policy)

- Adding a statement describing the prohibition of eminent domain in the Coastsides Protection Area
- Replacing references to the obsolete Master Plan and Regional Open Space Study with the Open Space Vision Plan and Conservation Atlas Database
- Updating District policy related to timber harvesting for restoration forestry management
- Adding a policy statement supporting agricultural education
- Updating growth guidelines that are used to control administrative expenses

\*Recognizing that the proposed language for two term definitions is new, along with considering the proposed Basic Policy revisions, the Board is also asked to consider and approve the following two new definitions, which have been extensively discussed, studied, and refined by the Basic Policy Ad Hoc Committee:

***Agricultural Lands of Regional Significance** are either in active agricultural use or have the potential to support viable agricultural operations, including but not limited to lands designated as prime agricultural lands in the Coastsides Protection Area. The intent is to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity on the Coastsides.*

***Rural Character** refers to the combination of natural landscapes, open spaces, agricultural lands, minimal development, and scenic or cultural features that reflect a community's rural heritage or lifestyle. Rural character includes the patterns and scale of land use, the presence of farms and forests, and the overall sense of openness and connection to the natural environment.*

## FISCAL IMPACT

None

## PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Basic Policy, other key policies referenced in the Basic Policy, and the Service Plan previously came before the full Board of Directors at the following public meetings:

- **March 10, 1999:** Board final review and approval of most recent revisions to the Basic Policy ([R-99-41](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 5, 2003:** Board certification of the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Final Program Environmental Impact Report and related documents ([R-03-54](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **May 24, 2017:** Board review of the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area Service Plan and Commitments ([R-17-66](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **November 1, 2017:** Coastal Service Plan Community Workshop
- **April 27, 2022:** Board review of Coastal Management Plan ([R-22-53](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **June 13, 2023:** Legislative, Public Affairs, and Funding Committee (LFPAC) review of the proposed process for revising the Basic Policy ([R-23-60](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 12, 2023:** Board review and approval of the Basic Policy update process and formation of the Ad Hoc Committee ([R-23-77](#), [meeting minutes](#))

- **June 25, 2024:** Board initial review of draft policy statement revisions ([R-24-78](#), [meeting minutes](#))

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice of this meeting was provided as required by the Brown Act and to the Coastal interested parties list. Staff also directly notified organizations and individuals who provided comments during the stakeholder and community engagement process as appropriate.

## **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) COMPLIANCE**

This item is not subject to CEQA. The proposed policy statement revisions will incorporate existing content from the Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area (Attachment 2) and its associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

## **NEXT STEPS**

After the Board's final review and approval of the Basic Policy statement revisions, staff will post the revised Board-approved Basic Policy online and finalize the print version for general distribution.

### **Attachments:**

1. Proposed updated Basic Policy, with revisions shown in green text
2. Service Plan for the San Mateo County Coastal Annexation Area
3. Summary of comments and responses
4. Summary of Proposed Policy Statement Revisions
5. Midpen Coastside Agriculture Program Fact Sheet

Responsible Department Head:  
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Prepared by / Staff contact:  
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# BASIC POLICY of the MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Adopted by the Board of Directors On August XX, 2025

## INTRODUCTION

*“...to try to save for everyone, for the hostile and indifferent as well as the committed, some of the health that flows down across the green ridges from the Skyline, and some of the beauty and refreshment of spirit that are still available to any resident of the valley who has a moment, and the wit, to lift up his eyes unto the hills.”*

*-Wallace Stegner<sup>1</sup>*

## OPEN SPACE:

- Is land area that *retains conservation values and includes natural, restored, undeveloped, and working agricultural land.*
  - Protects areas of scenic beauty and preserves natural habitats necessary to sustain plant and animal life, especially native and endangered species.
  - *Protects biodiversity and natural resources*
  - *Protects natural and/or rural character\**
  - Offers opportunities to the public for education, recreation, and renewal of spirit.
  - Enhances public safety by preventing development of areas prone to landslides, earthquake damage, flooding, and wildland fires.
  - Establishes boundaries for urban growth, provides a respite from urban living, and enhances regional quality of life.
  - *On the Coastsides, supports viable agricultural uses of land resources.\*\**
- In short, open space is “room to breathe”.<sup>2</sup>

*\*“Rural character” refers to the combination of natural landscapes, open spaces, agricultural lands, minimal development, and scenic or cultural features that reflect a community’s rural heritage or lifestyle. Rural Character includes the patterns and scale of land use, the presence of farms and forests, and the overall sense of openness and connection to the natural environment.*

*\*\*The “viable agricultural use of land resources” is defined as uses that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, that support the agriculture operation, and that the agricultural use is economically viable over the long term.*

## MISSION STATEMENT

The District’s mission *outside of the Coastsides Protection Area* is:

*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.*

*The District’s mission within the Coastsides Protection Area is:*

*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.*

*\*\*\*“Agricultural Lands of Regional Significance” are agricultural or rangeland parcels that are either in active agricultural use or have the potential to support viable agricultural operations, including but not be limited to lands designated as prime agricultural lands in the Coastsides Protection Area. The intent is to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity on the Coastsides.*

## OBJECTIVES

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**1. Open Space Land Preservation:** The District seeks to purchase or otherwise acquire interest in the maximum feasible area of strategic<sup>3</sup> open space land within the District, including baylands, foothills, *skyline, and coastside*. The District seeks to link its open space lands with federal, state, county, and city parklands and watershed lands *and, on the Coastside, protects the rural character and open space values of working agricultural lands*.

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### Policies

#### District Purpose

- a. As an open space agency, the District's primary purpose is to preserve open space. Development of traditional park and recreation facilities is the responsibility of the cities and counties.<sup>4</sup> *On the Coastside, the District also works to preserve agricultural lands of regional significance.*

#### Strategic Emphasis

- b. The District uses its available resources primarily to acquire or otherwise preserve land outside the Urban Service Area boundaries of cities that has regionally significant open space value and that might be lost to development if the District fails to act.<sup>5</sup>

The District's goal is to acquire lands within its own boundaries and Sphere of Influence. Acquisitions outside the District's boundaries will be considered only if exceptional purchase opportunities arise that clearly support the District's mission.<sup>6</sup>

#### Open Space Acquisition

- c. The District acquires land most often through fee simple interest (outright ownership). Options and installment purchases may be employed to this end.

To conserve funding for preservation, *or to allow farmers and ranchers to retain ownership of working agricultural lands*, the District may seek to preserve open space without outright ownership of the land. The District may act as a land bank through acquisition of less than fee interest to accomplish the same results with less immediate expenditure of the District's funds. Examples include acquisition of a remainder interest following a life tenancy; open space, conservation, *agricultural*, or scenic easements; *or* purchase and leaseback arrangements. The District actively strives to acquire open space through gifts and matching grants. Gifts of land with life tenancy are encouraged. Other creative open space preservation techniques are explored and utilized when possible.<sup>7</sup>

The District desires to acquire open space from willing sellers. *State law prohibits the District from using eminent domain within the Coastside Protection Area. Elsewhere*, eminent domain will be used only in strict compliance with the District's eminent domain policies:



*“The District does not want to use eminent domain as a means of purchasing land unless the property concerned is an open space parcel of critical importance or is under some dire emergency, such as immediate destruction of natural resources, or clearing for development purposes. Even under such urgent circumstances, however, eminent domain would still be used only as a last resort. The District would continue to use negotiations as its objective in purchasing the land.”<sup>8</sup>*

#### **Vision Plan, Conservation Atlas Database**

- d. To guide the District’s open space preservation efforts, the District *developed a 40-year Vision Plan with extensive public engagement and maintains an accompanying Conservation Atlas and Geographic Information Systems database. The Vision Plan sets forth a regional vision for open space and identifies priority action portfolios and areas that guide District acquisitions. The Conservation Atlas further assists conservation efforts by showing the relative desirability of potential open space land acquisitions to enhance the greenbelt. These tools are updated on a regular basis.*

*The Vision Plan and individual Preserve Use and Management Plans show the general extent of planned use and management actions, including public access improvements and working agricultural lands.*

*Copies of proposed Plan Amendments, or new Preserve Plans, are provided to the counties, cities, and other public agencies, indigenous tribes, local organizations, and to the public for review and comment in order to ensure broad outreach, engagement, and input. These plans require Board review and approval at public meetings.*

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**2. Open Space Management: The District follows management policies that ensure proper care of the land, that provide public access appropriate to the nature of the land, and that are consistent with ecological values and public safety.<sup>9</sup>**

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#### **Policies**

##### **Resource Management**

- a. The District protects and restores the diversity and integrity of its *natural resources for their value to the environment, and the public. The District’s agricultural conservation work serves in part to protect many underlying natural resource values, such as wildlife connectivity, soil health, and groundwater recharge. The District* provides for the use of the preserves consistent with resource protection.<sup>10</sup>

##### **Public Access and Constraints**

- b. The District provides *ecologically sensitive* public access to the open space lands for recreational uses. The District’s highest priority is acquiring land to complete the greenbelt and to protect natural resources on open space land. *Ecologically sensitive* public access will be provided gradually to ensure that the higher priorities of acquisition and resource protection are maintained. *Measures are incorporated to reduce potential conflicts between public access and agricultural land uses as well as adjacent*

*private property.*

Developing facilities and managing public use activities while protecting natural resources *and open space values* and providing for public safety may require limits on access to some open space lands. Areas found to be vital wildlife or plant habitats are designated as *conservation management units*, and in these areas access will be severely restricted *or limited*. In addition to protection of sensitive natural resources, factors that may delay or limit access include *agricultural use*, the carrying capacity of the land, geologic features, restoration efforts, and the ability to plan and implement trails, parking, restrooms, map boards, signs, *fencing* and identification and mitigation of potential safety hazards.<sup>11</sup>

Because of the District's commitment to maximum open space preservation efforts, *the District relies heavily on dedicated capital funding sources, including grant funds, to complete recreational improvement projects and restoration activities.*

Agricultural, residential, and other limited revenue producing uses of the land may limit public access in certain areas. Where appropriate, access may be provided on a permit basis. The District strives to provide public access to its lands to everyone, regardless of place of residence, physical abilities, or economic status. (See Access Plan for Persons with Disabilities).

### ***Use and Improvements***

c. Improvements on District lands are generally limited to facilities (*e.g.* parking areas, trails and patrol roads, restrooms, map boards, *fencing*, and signs) for low-intensity recreational uses. Low-intensity recreation avoids concentration of use, significant alteration of the land, and significant impact on the natural resources or on the appreciation of nature *or on working agricultural lands.*<sup>12,13</sup>

The timing and level of access for low intensity public recreational use of District open space land will be evaluated for each type of use in terms of four basic criteria:

1. Protection of natural resources;
2. Preservation of the opportunity for tranquil nature study and observation;
3. Avoidance of significant user conflicts;
4. Availability of Board and staff time, funding, and/or other means, to plan and manage the use.

The District will plan for low intensity public access to ensure that these criteria will be met before use is provided, and will control use that does not meet the criteria, as interpreted by the Board. To protect open space qualities, the District will use a high standard in applying the criteria.

Access for hiking is typically unrestricted on District trails and lands. Wheelchair accessible trails and other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are provided to ensure access to a range of open space settings with wide geographic distribution. Safe and enjoyable access for hiking and for persons with disabilities may be given priority over other types of uses where significant conflicts are evident.<sup>14</sup>

The District is committed to working with different trail user groups to find practical solutions to recreational use issues with the understanding that some trails or preserves may not be open to all uses.

Special Use facilities, (*e.g.*, nature centers, historic structures, picnic tables, or backpack camps, *off-leash dog areas or farm stands*), and Special Use activities (*e.g.*, large *cultural* events, hang gliding, or *trail runs*), are considered on a *case-by-case* basis. In some cases, Special Use activities may require a permit. These types of uses may be allowed when they do not monopolize significant areas of natural land, do not significantly impact natural or aesthetic resources *or agricultural uses*, and provide benefits such as environmental *or agricultural* education, heritage resource protection, or public enjoyment and appreciation of nature. The cost of management and exposure to liability of these types of facilities and activities may be a factor in deciding whether to permit them on District lands.

### Public Safety

d. The District monitors and manages its preserves to provide a safe environment for visitors and neighbors.<sup>15</sup>

### Cultural Resources

e. Historic structures and sites will be considered for protection by the District where they are associated with lands acquired for overall open space values. Due to the high cost of evaluating, managing, and restoring such facilities, the District depends on grant assistance, public-private partnerships, and outside assistance to support these activities. Sites are evaluated for archaeological resources prior to any new use or improvement which might impact the site. Archaeological resources are evaluated, protected, and made known to the public as appropriate to ensure their preservation.<sup>16</sup>

### Agriculture\* and Revenue-Producing Use

f. The District supports the continued use of *viable agricultural* land *protected* for open space as an economic and cultural resource, including, but not limited to, grazing, orchards, row crops, and vineyards. The District requires sound agricultural management practices on land it manages or monitors, in accordance with its Resource Management Policies *and Agricultural Policy*.<sup>17</sup>

*\*“Agriculture” encompasses crop and livestock production, aquaculture, and fisheries for food and non-food production.*

*On a case-by-case basis, the District may purchase property or an easement that includes approved timber harvest plans. The District does not propose commercial harvest of timber on District-owned property that is solely for the purpose of revenue generation. The District may pursue individual timber harvest plans<sup>18</sup> for the purpose of managing the ecological values, wildfire resiliency, protecting public safety, or controlling disease within the property or watershed. In such cases, the timber may be sold with revenues used solely to fund land management work.*

*The District supports agricultural education that fosters public awareness, appreciation and stewardship of viable agricultural uses of land resources*

*that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, and that encourages support for locally grown food sources and sustainable agricultural practices.*

- g. Revenue-producing use of District land, such as rental residences, communications antennas, or special commercial use such as filming, may be allowed when it does not utilize significant areas of natural land, does not unduly impact natural or aesthetic resources, does not unreasonably restrict public access, and provides benefits or income to the District.

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### **3. Inter-Agency Relationships: The District works with and encourages private and other public agencies to preserve, maintain, and enhance open space.**

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#### **Policies**

##### **Cooperation**

- a. The District cooperates with and encourages cooperation between governmental agencies, community organizations, and individuals to preserve open space.<sup>19</sup>

The District works cooperatively with other governmental agencies and community organizations to facilitate development and management of recreation facilities and of public use. The District ensures that such development is consistent with protection of important natural values of the open space.

##### **Participation**

- b. The District participates in the public review processes of land use plans of other agencies and development proposals that affect the District's mission.

##### **Joint Projects**

- c. The District explores and engages in joint projects to maximize the opportunities for preservation of open space. Examples include inter-agency land management agreements, joint planning or research studies, and joint acquisition, improvement, or resource management projects.

##### **Research**

- d. The District supports the development of scientific knowledge about natural and cultural resources and management techniques through cooperative arrangements with *non-profit* educational and scientific institutions *addressing natural and productive agricultural resources*, and by supporting research on which to base its management and improvement decisions. Such studies shall not unreasonably restrict public access or significantly impact the environment.

##### **Advocacy**

- e. In order to better plan, acquire, and operate a regional greenbelt of open space preserves and trails, and to further cooperate in this effort with other jurisdictions, the District may encourage and advocate preservation

of open space by other governmental agencies. The District may support and encourage community groups, non-profits, and other conservation-oriented groups in their efforts to urge other agencies to take actions which will help accomplish the purposes and goals of the District.

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**4. Public Involvement: The District educates and makes clearly visible to the public the purposes and actions of the District, and actively encourages public input and involvement in the District’s decision-making process and other activities.<sup>20</sup>**

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**Policies**

**Public Information**

a. The District works through a variety of means and media to inform the public of the District’s goals and objectives, its short and long-term plans, the critical need for open space preservation, and the appropriate use of District lands. This information is disseminated as widely as possible throughout the District. Landowners and potential donors are adequately informed of the District’s purpose and goals, and of the possible methods of preserving land as open space.

**Meeting Procedures**

b. The District diligently follows the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act regarding open meeting procedures, and will be guided by its enabling legislation under the state Public Resources Code, Article 3, Division 5, Chapter 3, Section 5500. The District encourages and welcomes public participation at its meetings and make its actions, intents, and decisions clearly visible to the public.

**Public Input**

c. The District encourages and welcomes communication from the public by being as accessible to the public as possible and by regularly soliciting public comments about what the District should be accomplishing and how it should proceed.<sup>21</sup>

**Neighbor Relations**

d. In both the day-to-day conduct of its business and in the long-range planning for public open space preserves, the District makes every effort to cooperate with preserve neighbors, to take into account their perspectives, to fully address their concerns, and to engage and involve them in the process of making decisions regarding the preserves of which they are neighbors. Active management, patrol, maintenance, and public education are provided to minimize threats to public safety, fire hazards, litter, noise, erosion, unsound use of the land, disturbance of wildlife and vegetation, and trespassing.<sup>22</sup>

**Participation**

e. The District seeks to involve the public in the operation and decision-making of the District and in general planning for acquisition and future use of open space lands through special workshops, committees and task

forces, and public outreach activities. Through staff and volunteer programs, the District provides ecological and environmental education and fosters public appreciation of open space values.

### **Volunteerism**

- f. Through its volunteer programs, the District encourages active public participation in the maintenance, restoration, and protection of its natural resources. In addition, volunteers assist the District in scientific research, and providing cultural, historical, and environmental education opportunities to the public.

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**5. Administration: The staff administers the affairs of the District on behalf of the public so as to maximize accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the District within existing financial constraints.**

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### **Policies**

#### **Cost Constraints**

- a. Because the District is committed to *maintain a conservative fiscal outlook to ensure maximum support of its mission*, administrative expense growth is limited by *the growth in tax revenues, by evaluating the ratio of operating expenses*, and by utilizing the help of other governmental agencies, private entities, contractual services, and volunteers.

#### **Professional Organization**

- b. The District employs a highly capable and professional staff and provides them with the facilities and resources needed to run an efficient and responsible organization.

#### **Board of Directors**

- c. The Board of Directors is the governing body of the District and determines all questions of policy. The District is divided into seven geographic wards of approximately equal populations, each represented by an elected Board member.<sup>23</sup>

**FOOTNOTES:**

1. *The quote by Wallace Stegner was written prior to the initiation of the District's Coastsides Protection Program. Wallace Stegner donated the first parcels of land, which are now part of Long Ridge Open Space Preserve. A dedicated bench at the Preserve on which the quote resides faces west toward the coastsides and the Pacific Ocean.*
2. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3
3. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 2-6
4. Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F
5. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pg. 6
6. Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3
7. Land Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 5 - 10
8. *Land Acquisition Policies and Procedure, Pg. 13*
9. Resource Management Policies
10. Resource Management Mission Statement
11. Resource Management Policies
12. Resource Management Policies
13. Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F
14. Trail Use Policies
15. Good Neighbor Policy, District Land Use Regulations
16. Resource Management Policies
17. *Agricultural Policy and* Resource Management Policies, Goals *FM* and *ES*
18. *Agricultural Policy*
19. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 9, 10
20. Rules of Procedure, Notification Policies, Land Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 15, 16
21. Public Notification and Good Neighbor Policies
22. Good Neighbor Policy, Public Notification Policies, District Land Use Regulations
23. Public Resources Code, Section 5537

**NOTE:** The public may obtain policy documents by contacting the District office during regular business hours Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

*These policies are intended solely for the guidance of the Board in the exercise of its discretion and are not intended to give rise to private rights or causes of action in individuals or other persons. The Board shall be the final arbiter as to any question of interpretation of these policies. It is not the purpose of these policies to adopt any legal requirements. Failure to comply with these policies shall not affect the validity of any action taken by the District.*

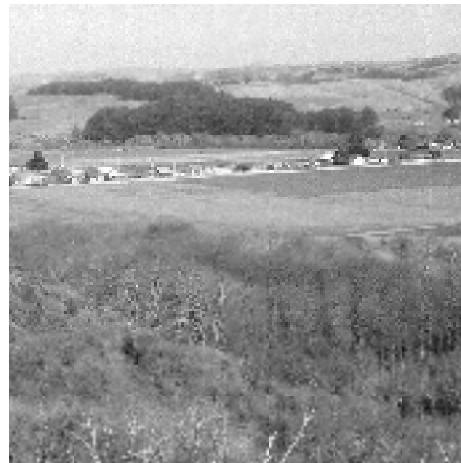


Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

**SERVICE PLAN**

FOR THE SAN MATEO COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA

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as approved by the District Board of Directors



## **PREFACE**

This document is the *San Mateo Coastal Annexation Area – Service Plan* of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (the District) as approved by the District Board of Directors on June 6, 2003. This Plan summarizes the services that would be provided by the District and the policies that would apply to District activities in the Coastal Annexation Area if that area is annexed.

The Service Plan includes mitigation measures identified in the Final Program Environmental Program Impact Report (FEIR) prepared pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Coastal Annexation. Mitigation measures recommended in the FEIR are included in the Service Plan section titled “Guiding Principles For The Coastal Annexation Area”. For ease of cross-referencing between the Final Service Plan and the FEIR, the mitigation measure codes as used in the FEIR are listed in parenthesis after the text of each applicable Policy, Guideline, or Implementation Action.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **PURPOSE OF THE SERVICE PLAN**

The purpose of the District's Service Plan is to outline the services that would be provided by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District in the Coastal Annexation Area. This Service Plan will allow the San Mateo County LAFCo to determine if annexation of the Coastal Annexation Area to the District would be consistent with the goals of the State to encourage orderly growth and development as set forth in the Cortese-Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.

### **THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA**

The proposed Coastal Annexation Area is illustrated in Figure 1 and is generally defined as follows:

- on the east by the existing District boundary and San Francisco watershed lands
- on the west by the Pacific Ocean
- on the north by the southern boundary of the City of Pacifica
- on the south by the San Mateo County / Santa Cruz County boundary

The proposed Coastal Annexation Area is located entirely within San Mateo County.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Definitions of key terms used can be found in Appendix A at the end of this report.

### **CORTESE-KNOX-HERTZBERG LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2000**

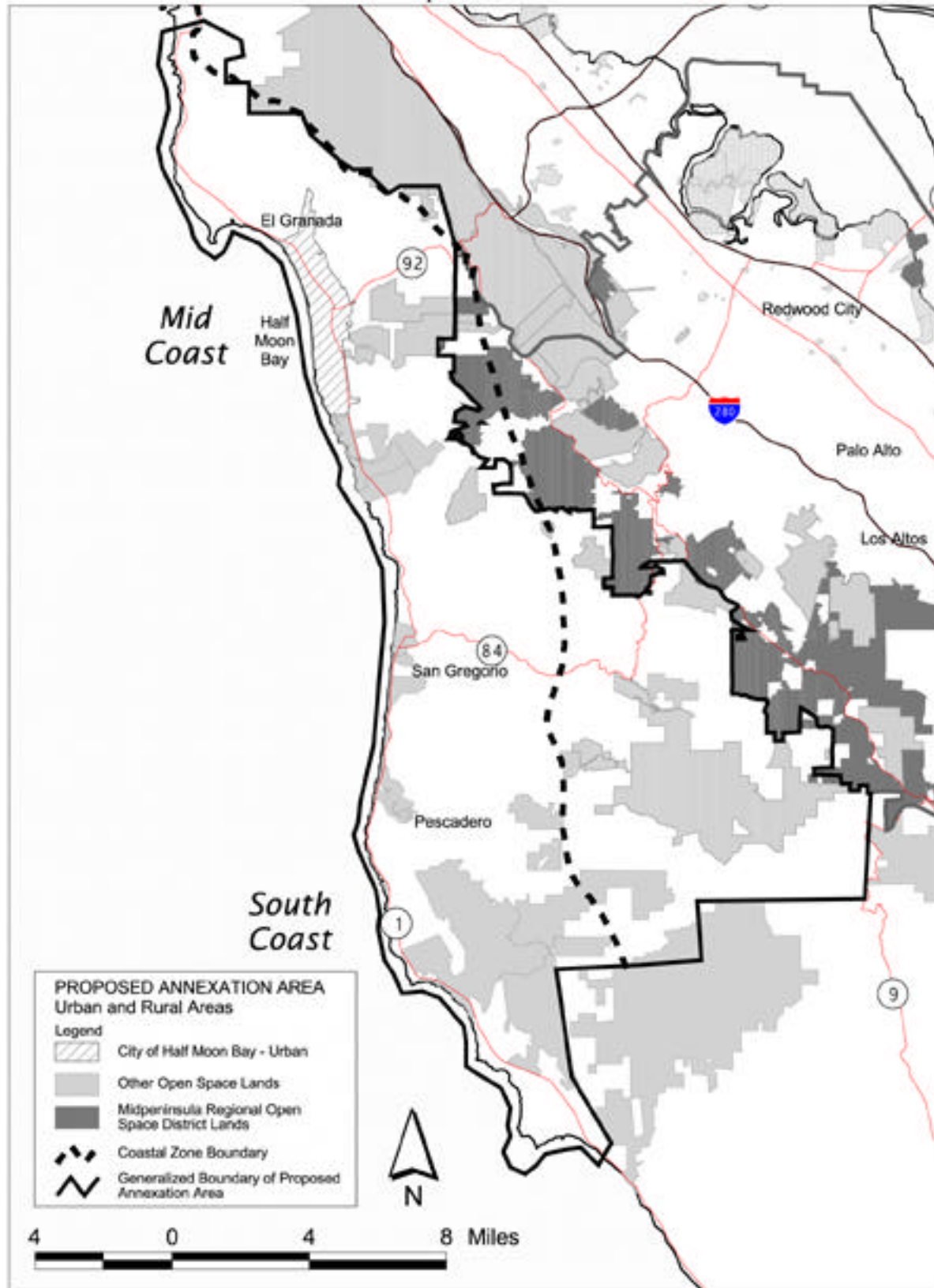
The District's annexation application is governed by the requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act).

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act was instituted by the California Legislature to recognize that the determination of local agency boundaries is an important factor in promoting the State's policy of encouraging orderly growth and development as essential elements to the social, fiscal, and economic well-being of the State. The Legislature further declared that the best mechanism for establishing community service priorities to promote orderly urban development was a single governmental agency, in this case the San Mateo County LAFCo, rather than several limited-purpose agencies.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act recognizes that establishing community service priorities involves two important dynamics. These are:

- 1) that urban population densities and intensive residential, commercial, and industrial development necessitate a broad spectrum and high level of community services and controls; and
- 2) that there is a need to carefully weigh urban growth patterns against the total financial resources available for securing community services.

FIGURE 1: Coastal Annexation Area Map



Typically, the thrust of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act in promoting orderly development is most applicable to the provision or expansion of traditional community services like water, sewer, and roads that support urban development. However, there is growing recognition that the preservation of open space as would be provided by the District is also an important community service.

Because the District is submitting an application for a change of organization, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act requires that a plan be presented to the San Mateo LAFCo for providing services within the affected territory, which in this case is the Coastal Annexation Area. This Service Plan must include, at a minimum, the following information:

- An enumeration and description of the services to be extended to the affected territory.
- The level and range of those services.
- An indication of when those services can feasibly be extended to the affected territory.
- An indication of any improvement or upgrading of structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other conditions the local agency would impose or require within the affected territory if the change of organization is completed.
- Information with respect to how those services will be financed.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Government Code Section 56377) requires that the San Mateo LAFCo consider the following policies and priorities in reviewing proposals that could reasonably be expected to induce, facilitate, or lead to the conversion of existing open-space lands to uses other than open-space uses:

- Development or use of land other than for open-space uses shall be guided away from existing prime agricultural lands toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless that action would not promote the planned, orderly, efficient development of an area.
- Development of existing vacant or nonprime agricultural lands for urban uses within the existing jurisdiction of a local agency or within the sphere of influence of a local agency should be encouraged before any proposal is approved which would allow for or lead to the development of existing open-space lands for non-open-space uses which are outside of the existing jurisdiction or outside of the existing sphere of influence of the local agency.

Note however that in this Service Plan the definition of “Prime Agricultural Land “ is based on the definition contained in the San Mateo County Local Coastal Plan (see appendix A). In addition prime agricultural land includes the Resource Agency categories of Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as mapped by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency.

Annexation of the San Mateo Coastal Area by the District and the acquisition and management of lands for open space purposes as defined by the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act is consistent with the above policies.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Government Code Section 56425) defines the purposes and responsibilities of the San Mateo LAFCo to plan and shape logical and orderly development and to coordinate local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the County and its communities. In determining the District's sphere of influence, the San Mateo LAFCo must consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

- The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.
- The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
- The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

As outlined in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Government Code Section 56668) the factors to be considered in the San Mateo LAFCo review of the District's Service Plan include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Population, population density; land area and land use; per capita assessed valuation; topography, natural boundaries, and drainage basins; proximity to other populated areas; the likelihood of significant growth in the area, and in adjacent incorporated and unincorporated areas, during the next 10 years.
- Need for organized community services; the present cost and adequacy of governmental services and controls in the area; probable future needs for those services and controls; probable effect of the proposed incorporation, formation, annexation, or exclusion and of alternative courses of action on the cost and adequacy of services and controls in the area and adjacent areas.
- The effect of the proposed action and of alternative actions, on adjacent areas, on mutual social and economic interests, and on the local governmental structure of the county.
- The conformity of both the proposal and its anticipated effects with both the adopted commission policies on providing planned, orderly, efficient patterns of urban development, and the policies and priorities set forth in Government Code Section 56377. These include that development or use of land for other than open-space uses shall be guided away from existing prime agricultural lands in open-space use toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless that action would not promote the planned, orderly, efficient development of an area.
- The effect of the proposal on maintaining the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands as defined by Government Code Section 56016.
- The definiteness and certainty of the boundaries of the territory, the nonconformance of proposed boundaries with lines of assessment or ownership, the creation of islands or

corridors of unincorporated territory, and other similar matters affecting the proposed boundaries.

- Consistency with city or county general and specific plans.
- The sphere of influence of any local agency which may be applicable to the proposal being reviewed.
- The comments of any affected local agency.
- The ability of the newly formed or receiving entity to provide the services which are the subject of the application to the area, including the sufficiency of revenues for those services following the proposed boundary change.
- Timely availability of water supplies adequate for projected needs as specified in by Government Code Section 65352.5.
- The extent to which the proposal will assist the receiving entity in achieving its fair share of the regional housing needs as determined by the appropriate council of governments.
- Any information or comments from the landowner or owners.
- Any information relating to existing land use designations.

#### **BACKGROUND OF THE ANNEXATION PROPOSAL**

Events and factors leading to the District's proposal to expand its boundaries to include the Coastal Annexation Area include:

- Resolutions, letters, and petitions sent to the District in 1997 requesting that the District explore ways to help permanently conserve the open space resources of the San Mateo Coast. The District may realistically acquire and manage open space land and provide low-intensity recreation opportunities only within its jurisdictional boundaries. To help protect agriculture, open space, and natural resources on the San Mateo County Coast, the District must amend its sphere of influence and boundaries through the LAFCo process. The District may legally acquire land outside its jurisdictional boundaries where related to accomplishing its statutory purposes. However, a series of pragmatic concerns discourage such acquisitions. These concerns include:
  - the potential for inefficient management where property is not adjacent to existing District land,
  - the desire to acquire lands which result in workable and efficient preserves which are integral units, and
  - the State "Open Meeting" law that prohibits the District Board from conducting meetings outside its boundaries, which, in turn, would not provide for local representation and would not encourage local participation in District programs.
- Discussions with other open space, recreation, and park service providers within the Coastal Annexation Area - including the National Park Service, the California Department of Parks

and Recreation, and the San Mateo County Parks Department - indicate that these agencies have a limited capacity to provide expanded open space preservation and management services, and that there is the need, therefore, for a local organization to provide these services.

- While local conservation organizations owning land in the Coastal Annexation Area will continue to be successful in acquiring land, they are not ordinarily structured to manage open space lands on a long-term basis. Thus these organizations have asked the District to manage natural resources and low-intensity public-use programs on some of their properties, as the District is the only locally represented public agency capable of providing this land management.
- Economic changes within the greater San Francisco Bay Area, and within San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties in particular, have caused dramatic changes in real estate dynamics. These dynamics involve the increase in personal income associated with the economic vitality of Silicon Valley and the subsequent increase in real estate development pressures on the rural coast.

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors agrees the agricultural and open space resources along approximately 40 miles of the San Mateo County coast are of national significance and deserve the highest level of stewardship possible. Further, the District Board believes that the continuation of active agricultural and ranching uses on the San Mateo County coast is very important in retaining the area's rural atmosphere and way of life.

Over the last two years and in a variety of forums, including two public opinion polls, an advisory election, and over twenty-five community advisory and informational meetings, the District received significant public comment about the Coastal Annexation Area and the role of the District in that area. Chief among the opinions expressed during this process is that to build confidence in the District's intent and to be the most effective overall in terms of long-term programs, the District should acquire lands from willing sellers only. Adopting a policy that prohibits the use of eminent domain would also aid the District in working with private property owners who, though they may not wish to sell their property, would be interested in cooperating in a variety of management programs that would benefit the natural and agricultural resources of the Coastal Annexation Area.

Additional sentiments expressed by the public about the significance of the Coastal Annexation Area and need for long-term conservation of open space resources include:

- the outstanding natural resources and ecological diversity present within the Coastal Annexation Area due to its mountain-to-ocean landscape;
- the integrity and dramatic visual character of the Coastal Annexation Area, its forested rural backdrop, coastal plains and valleys, continental edge, and the Pacific Ocean; and
- the proximity of the Coastal Annexation Area, being within a one-hour drive, or less, to literally millions of Bay Area residents.
- The importance of preservation of agricultural lands.



**ROLE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT IN THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA**

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a public agency that acquires and manages open space resources. Where appropriate, the District provides visitor-serving facilities for low-intensity recreation by the general public.

The District is not a land regulatory agency. Within the Coastal Annexation Area the District would only purchase property or easements from willing sellers and would not exercise the power of eminent domain. As a property owner, the District must work within the context of existing Federal, State, County, and City land use regulations and zoning designations. Approximately three-fifths of the 140,000-acre Coastal Annexation Area is within the Coastal Zone. All lands within the Coastal Zone are subject to local coastal policies adopted by San Mateo County pursuant to the California Coastal Act. No changes in land use designations or land use controls are associated with the annexation process or would be required as a result of any District activities.

The District strives to preserve open space in perpetuity, which would protect both the agricultural and the natural resources of the Coastal Annexation Area. Although the District is not an agricultural preservation district, and does not propose any agricultural subsidy programs, its Service Plan does recognize the importance of agriculture to the economy and heritage of the Coastal Annexation Area. Thus, the Service Plan defines program guidelines to conserve resources on District-owned lands that could be used for agriculture, and to encourage the sale or leasing of District properties for outdoor agriculture. The Service Plan also establishes guidelines for managing the impacts of District programs that could potentially affect adjacent agricultural operations. And finally, the Service Plan provides for the acquisition of conservation easements from willing sellers over private agricultural properties, to promote the economic vitality of continued agricultural operations. The Service Plan provides that the District shall actively pursue agricultural easements and leases,

Preservation and management of agricultural resources represents an important aspect of the District's mission for the Coastal Annexation Area. Annexation would provide an unparalleled opportunity for the District to apply its resources and proven land management expertise to the lasting protection of coastal agriculture. As the District extends its services to the Coast, agricultural preservation will play a larger role in the District's activities than it has within existing District boundaries. With collaborative efforts by District personnel and the agricultural community, together with the Guiding Principles adopted in this Service Plan, an effective and successful agricultural preservation program can be developed and funded.

The District's annexation of the Coastal Area would allow it to use currently available funding to acquire open space lands when willing-seller opportunities are presented to manage natural resources, and provide limited visitor-serving facilities for low-intensity public recreation.

If the District is to play a meaningful partnership role in acquiring and/or managing properties or easements in the Coastal Annexation Area, it would benefit from local input and an administrative presence in the area. If the Coastal Annexation Area is included within the District:

- District resources would be used to more formally involve residents of the Coastal Annexation Area in decision-making;
- the opportunity for one or more local residents to be elected to the District Board of Directors would be provided; and
- significant stewardship or resource management programs to the Coastal Annexation Area would be provided.

The District's annexation of the Coastal Area, based on the proposed Service Plan, would not in itself result in an assessment of Coastal Area residents. However, annexation would allow the District to work with local interests within the Coastal Annexation Area and within the existing District to identify a funding measure that, at a later time, could be submitted for voter approval. Proposal of a new tax and/or assessment district requires a deliberate research and analysis process to identify projected needs for funding, target uses for funds to be derived, and evaluate willingness to pay on the part of the voting constituency. A tax funding measure would currently require at least a two-thirds margin of approval by the voters. The term "voter-approved funding measure" is used in this document to refer to a funding measure that might be selected after this research and analysis process.

The District's Service Plan emphasizes working in partnership with other land conservation interests, both public and private, in acquiring land and conservation and agricultural easements. Fiscally, annexation will not result in the District purchasing a significant area of land without partnerships. The Service Plan emphasizes the District taking a leading role in land stewardship programs and, where appropriate, providing limited visitor-serving facilities that would generally be in the form of staging areas and trails.

In evaluating the District's potential role and how the District might best support long-term conservation in the Coastal Annexation Area, the following characteristics have become readily apparent:

- As numerous public agencies and private organizations are interested in conserving the resources of the San Mateo County Coast, the District views its role as that of a "partner" in a broad-based cooperative effort, rather than being "the" solution.
- The San Mateo County Coast remains relatively pristine today due in large part to:
  - 1) the many residents in the area who have continuously worked the land, in some cases for generations, and served as stewards of its resources; and

- 2) the many residents in the area who have recognized the value of the open space resources within the Coastal Annexation Area and have encouraged public and private protection of those resources.
- Many San Mateo County residents have been vigilant in urging San Mateo County to adopt strict policies in its Local Coastal Program and Skyline Area Plan that control and direct urban development and so help retain the rural character of these areas. The District would take advantage of the cumulative knowledge of these residents concerning the land, its resources, and its agricultural heritage, and the District would work with them in developing specific policies and stewardship programs for the Coastal Annexation Area.
  - While the rural lifestyle enjoyed by many residents in the Coastal Annexation Area involves a certain degree of self-reliance, it also involves a strong sense of community and a spirit of cooperation. The District wants to be a good neighbor in the way it establishes its priorities within the Coastal annexation Area and conducts its business, and thus will strive to develop positive relations with the residents of the Coastal Annexation Area in order to become a welcome member of the Coastal community.

Recognizing that the San Mateo County Coast is a distinct landscape with unique challenges and opportunities for land conservation, the District has developed a set of Guiding Principles as an integral part of its Service Plan for the Coastal Annexation Area. These Guiding Principles are to provide the basis for the annexation review process and to inform the public about the District's plans in the Coastal Annexation Area. More detailed and comprehensive policies consistent with the Guiding Principles will be developed with full public involvement following completion of the annexation process.

## **SERVICE PLAN**

### **PURPOSE**

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's enabling legislation (California Public Resources Code sec. 5500) allows it to acquire land, or rights in land, to operate and maintain a system of public ecological and open space preserves, trails, and other facilities for the use, education, and enjoyment of all the inhabitants of the District. Extending the District's boundaries to include the Coastal Annexation Area would allow the District to acquire lands and conservation easements, and to conduct stewardship programs to preserve and manage open space resources in the Coastal Annexation Area. These activities would be conducted by the District both on its own, and in partnership with other organizations and individual property owners.

The District would focus its efforts in the Coastal Annexation Area on the preservation and management of open space resources of its own lands or lands of other public or non-profit entities that request management assistance from the District in order to:

- protect watershed integrity and water quality;
- protect sensitive resources such as habitats for special-status species;
- provide key links to existing District and other public open space lands;
- provide visitor-serving facilities for low-intensity recreation;
- support development of an integrated regional trail system coordinated with the San Mateo County Trails Plan;
- provide opportunities for scientific research, resource conservation demonstration projects, outdoor environmental education programs, and interpretive programs; and
- preserve existing and potential agricultural operations in order to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production.

### **THE MISSION FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA**

The District's mission for the Coastal Annexation Area is: 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 District will accomplish this mission as a cooperative endeavor with public agencies, non-profit organizations, and individuals with similar goals.

This mission statement is incorporated into the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Service Plan for the Coastal Annexation Area.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA**

The District operates under a set of basic policies and related resource management, land acquisition, and recreation management policies. While many of the District's existing policies may apply to the Coastal Annexation Area, it is recognized that they do not necessarily reflect the particular

agricultural and open space resources of the San Mateo Coast or the particular needs of area residents.

The Guiding Principles provide a foundation for the District's development of more specific policies for the Coastal Annexation Area.

Guiding Principles for the Coastal Annexation Area are organized into three categories:

- **Permanent Policies**—Policy statements that the District has determined are critical to its ability to operate effectively within the Coastal Annexation Area and will be carried forth over time. Permanent Policies are preceded by a “P”, or in the case of Agriculture by a “PA”.
- **Guidelines**—Statements to guide decision-making and initial District programs within the Coastal Annexation Area. Guidelines indicate to the general public a clear commitment by the District. Guidelines are preceded by a “G”.
- **Implementation Actions**—Explain how the District will operate within the Coastal Annexation Area. These actions, procedures, programs, or techniques carry out related Permanent Policies and Guidelines. Implementation Actions apply to the set of Permanent Policies or Guidelines that immediately precede them. Implementation Actions are identified with code numbers that include an “(i)”.

The Guiding Principles incorporate all mitigation measures recommended in the Final Environmental Impact Report for the District’s annexation. Where applicable, the mitigation measure codes as used in the Final Environmental Impact Report are listed in parenthesis after the text of each applicable Principle.

The following Guiding Principles will apply to the activities of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District within the Coastal Annexation Area. Any or all of the Guiding Principles could be considered by the San Mateo LAFCo as permitted conditions of the District’s annexation.

### **Land Acquisition**

The following Permanent Policies have been adopted by the District Board of Directors based on comments made by the residents of the Coastal Annexation Area about land acquisition techniques within the Coastal Annexation Area.

#### **Permanent Policy P.1**

Within the Coastal Annexation Area, the District shall only acquire lands or interests in lands from willing sellers. The power of eminent domain will not be exercised by the District within the Coastal Annexation Area. This policy is a Basic Policy for the Coastal Annexation Area.

- Implementation Action P.1.A.(i)** This policy within the defined Coastal Annexation Area shall be a permanent policy of the District adopted by ordinance of the District Board of Directors. (Reference: Mitigation AGR-1c)
- Implementation Action P.1.B.(i)** This policy is a basic component of the District’s application to the San Mateo Local Agency Formation Commission. It will be a basic component of the Service Plan to be approved by LAFCo. The District will request that this policy be made a Finding by the San Mateo LAFCo in its decision.
- Implementation Action P.1.C.(i)** This policy will be adopted by the District as an ordinance, and through the District Board of Directors’ certification of the Coastal Annexation Area Environmental Impact Report, will serve as an agricultural impact mitigation measure pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Implementation Action P.1.D.(i)** This policy will be referenced in every governing document and proposal by the District in connection with the Coastal Annexation Area.
- Guideline G-L1** The District shall also review local, state, or federal government hazardous sites lists prior to acquiring a property to determine if the area is a hazardous materials site. The following resources and agencies can be consulted:
- Federal and state database information
  - Water Quality Control Board (San Francisco Bay Region)
  - San Mateo County Health Services Agency
- If a parcel is found to contain a hazardous materials site, trails, staging areas, or other facilities will not be constructed on the parcel until plans can be developed and implemented to either remediate the hazard or ensure that the public will not have access to hazardous areas.
- (Reference: Mitigation HAZ-1)

### **Services and Funding**

The following statements address how the District can assure that its activities within the Coastal Annexation Area will not compromise existing services and that sufficient funding will exist before the District takes on any new responsibilities.

**Guideline  
G.1**

The District shall only acquire lands or enter into management agreements with other public or non-profit entities where such agreement would not result in any negative significant impact to existing services.

**Implementation Action  
G.1.A(i)**

Following annexation, the District will work cooperatively with its constituents to develop appropriate District funding measures to augment existing funding sources for land acquisition and management within the Coastal Annexation Area.

See also Implementation Action G.5.C(i)

**Guideline  
G.2**

Prior to making any lands available to public access for low-intensity recreation in the Coastal Annexation Area, the District shall have personnel and equipment available to manage public access such that: there would be no significant negative impact on existing services; and adequate stewardship to protect natural and agricultural resources will be provided by qualified and experienced personnel.  
(Reference: Mitigation Measure AGR-3i)

**Implementation Action  
G.2.A(i)**

The District shall conduct a site assessment prior to entering into any acquisition and/or management agreements to assure that the District shall not undertake any project without sufficient resources to sustain that project.

**Agriculture**

Agriculture is a very important rural land use and open space resource within the Coastal Annexation Area. Consistent with the purpose of San Mateo County's policies and regulations related to agriculture, the Guidelines and Implementation Actions below are ~~to~~ directed at:

- preserving and fostering existing and potential agricultural operations in San Mateo County in order to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production, and
- minimizing conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses that may occur on District owned or managed lands.

**Permanent Policy  
PA.1**

When acquiring lands in agricultural use, the acquisition shall be subject to continued use by the owner or operator until such time as it is sold or leased pursuant to the use and management plan adopted for the property. All agricultural land which is not needed for recreation or for the protection and vital functioning of a sensitive habitat will be permanently protected for agriculture and, whenever legally feasible, the District will offer for sale or lease the maximum amount of agricultural land to active farm operators on terms

compatible with the recreational and habitat use. Lands that do not have significant recreation or sensitive habitat values and which can clearly support productive agricultural operations will generally be offered for sale while other agricultural lands will generally be offered for lease.

(Reference: Mitigation Measure AGR-3g)

**Permanent Policy  
PA.2**

The District shall actively work with lessees of District lands and with the owners of land in which the District has an agricultural easement interest to:

- a) Facilitate the provision of farm worker housing on District-owned lands by providing technical assistance in obtaining permits for such housing from the County of San Mateo.
- b) Seek grant funding for the continuation or establishment of viable agriculture through the California Farmland Conservancy Program and other agriculture grant programs.
- c) Provide technical assistance to secure water rights for the continuation or establishment of viable agriculture consistent with protection of sensitive habitats.

(Reference: Mitigation Measure AGR-3j)

**Permanent Policy  
PA.3**

The District shall actively pursue opportunities to enter agricultural easements and leases with interested farmers and ranchers. All agricultural easements and agricultural leases in the Coastal Annexation Area shall:

- a) Be tailored to meet individual farmers and ranchers needs while respecting the unique characteristics of the property;
- b) Specify uses that are unconditionally permitted pursuant to the easement or lease to provide certainty to the farmer or rancher entering the lease or easement with the District;
- c) Include terms that allow farmers and ranchers to adapt and expand their operations and farming practices to adjust to changing economic conditions;
- d) Include terms that ensure farmers or ranchers may provide farm labor housing as defined and approved by San Mateo County;
- e) Ensure compatibility of resource protection and management, low-intensity public recreation and viable agricultural operations; and
- f) In the case of leases, be for a sufficient period of time to gain a return on the investment in the agricultural operation.

(Reference: Mitigation Measure AGR-3k)



**Guideline  
G.3.1**

The District shall conduct its land management practices such that they do not have an adverse significant impact on the physical and economic integrity of prime agricultural lands on or contiguous to properties owned or managed by the District (e.g. establishing appropriate buffers on District lands, etc.).

**Guideline  
G.3.2**

Improvements or public uses located upon open space lands other than agriculture shall be located away from existing prime agricultural lands and Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as shown on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. All trails and other public facilities should be located so as not to fragment agricultural operations unless no feasible alternative is available. While trails that bisect grazing lands would not be likely to fragment grazing operations, trails that bisect cultivated crops could adversely affect the vitality of agricultural operations and should be avoided. If trails must traverse cultivated lands then they shall be permitted only if adequate buffers, signs, and other measures necessary to ensure that trail use does not interfere with the agricultural operations are implemented.”  
(Reference: Mitigation AGR-3a)

**Guideline  
G.3.3**

All lands acquired by the District within the Coastal Annexation Area will be inventoried to identify and prioritize resource management issues. Where there are critical issues, such as the presence of non-native invasive species which threaten the habitat of endangered species or the economic viability of an adjacent agricultural operation, resource management plans will be prepared for these areas even if they remain closed to the public.

The use and management plan shall include an agricultural production plan for District-owned agricultural lands or District lands adjacent to agricultural lands. For district-owned lands, the plan shall describe the crop and/or livestock potential for the property together with the management actions required to protect existing agricultural production (e.g., growing seasons, water requirements, pesticide, manure, and waste management) and the agricultural potential of the land. The plan shall consider the following factors:

- a) Availability of labor, including farm labor housing;
- b) Availability of farm support services and goods;
- c) Necessary capital improvements (e.g. water storage, fencing, land leveling)

- d) Farm operations, including erosion control, the season(s) and times of pesticide or herbicide usage, manure and waste management;
- e) Water use and availability;
- f) Access to transportation and markets; and
- g) Promoting agricultural production on District-owned land.

In the case of District lands adjacent to agricultural production, the agricultural production plan shall develop site-specific measures to prevent activities on District lands from interfering with adjacent agricultural production.

The development of use and management plans will include consultation with the current owner or operator of any agricultural operations on the land, adjoining landowners, the San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency in addition to other opportunities for public involvement.

(Reference Mitigation AGR-3h and BIO-3)

**Guideline  
G.3.4**

In areas where trails would pass potentially hazardous adjacent land uses (e.g., timber operations), trail structures such as fences, barriers, and signs shall be used to deter trail users from leaving the trail and encountering unsafe conditions. Temporary trail closures shall be employed during intermittent operations, such as agricultural spraying, that would jeopardize the safety of an otherwise safe trail. (Reference: Mitigation LU-1a)

**Guideline  
G.3.5**

No new buildings or staging areas shall be located on prime agricultural lands or on Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as shown on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. Ranger office/maintenance facilities and staging areas may not be located on prime agricultural lands or on Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as shown on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. (Reference: Mitigation AGR-1a)

**Guideline  
G.3.6**

Trails and habitat preservation areas shall either be located to avoid prime agricultural lands and Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as shown on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency or traverse such lands in a manner that does not result in interference with agricultural activities or substantially reduce the agricultural potential

of those lands. Owners and operators of agricultural lands shall be consulted to identify appropriate routes on those lands. The agricultural activities and the agricultural potential of traversed lands shall be protected and buffered from trail user impacts by means of distance, physical barriers (i.e., sturdy fences), or other non-disruptive methods.

(Reference: Mitigation AGR-1b)

**Guideline  
G.3.7**

The District shall provide private property signs where appropriate and provide trail users information regarding private property rights to minimize public/private use conflicts and trespassing. The District shall clearly sign trails adjacent to active agriculture and provide trail users with information regarding property rights to minimize trespassing and conflicts with agricultural users.

(Reference: Mitigation AGR-3b)

**Guideline  
G.3.8**

Trails shall either be located to avoid prime agricultural lands and Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as shown on Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency or traverse such lands in a manner that does not result in interference with agricultural activities or substantially reduce the agricultural potential of those lands. Operators of active agricultural activities on lands owned by or under easement to the District shall be consulted to identify appropriate routes on lands they cultivate. Owners and operators of agricultural lands adjacent to District lands used for non-agricultural purposes shall be consulted to identify routes that will avoid adverse effects on agricultural operations. The agricultural activities and the agricultural potential of traversed lands shall be protected and buffered from trail user impacts by means of distance, physical barriers (i.e., sturdy fences), or other non-disruptive methods.

(Reference: Mitigation AGR-3c)

**Guideline  
G.3.9**

The District lands or easements upon which trails are sited shall provide width sufficient for management and/or buffer space from adjacent uses so as not to preclude the viability of those uses. Buffers established to separate recreation and other open space uses from agricultural operations shall be designed and managed in accordance with the following standards:

- a) Buffers shall be designed in relation to the nature of the adjoining land use, potential land uses, and proposed public access;

- b) Buffers shall be designed in relation to the topography and other physical characteristics of the buffer area;
  - c) Buffers shall be designed with consideration of biological, soil, and other site conditions in order to limit the potential spread of non-native invasive species or pathogens onto agricultural lands;
  - d) Buffers shall be of sufficient width to allow agricultural use of adjoining agricultural lands including application of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals taking into account the likelihood and extent of potential pesticide drift;
  - e) All lands used for buffers should be on land or interests in land owned by the District; adjoining landowners shall not be required to provide land for buffers.
  - f) The District shall be responsible for the management and maintenance of all lands used as buffers.
  - g) If a specific buffer fails to resolve conflicts between a recreational use and adjacent agricultural uses the recreational use shall be moved to a different location.
  - h) All buffers shall be developed in consultation with the owners and operators of adjoining agricultural lands
- (Reference: Mitigation AGR-3d)

**Guideline  
G.3.10**

Where pesticides are used, including pesticides for control of noxious weeds, they must be handled, applied, and disposed of in such a manner that they do not adversely affect adjacent agriculture including organic agriculture. Pesticide use shall be guided by label restrictions and any advisories published by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) or the County Agricultural Commission. These chemicals shall only be applied by a person who is properly trained in their application.

(Reference: Mitigation AGR-3e)

**Implementation Action  
G.3.A(i)**

In acquiring lands and preparing site assessments, the District shall recognize that agriculture in the marketplace is dynamic and that agricultural use practices must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, relative to current marketplace conditions. On a case-by-case basis, the District shall determine how best to continue agricultural uses consistent with protection of rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species and their habitat.

See also Guideline G.6.3

**Implementation Action G.3.B(i)** The development of agricultural policies, preparation of site assessments and preparation of access plans for low-intensity public recreation by the District affecting prime agricultural lands shall include consultation with local agricultural interests such as the San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Resource Conservation District, and the local Farm Bureau, and will be subject to public review.

See also Guidelines G.6.3

**Implementation Action G.3.C(i)** Where the District acquires conservation easements on agricultural lands, the District will consider as a term of the easement on a case-by-case basis allowing all agricultural uses permitted by San Mateo County.

## **Forestry**

The intent of the following guidelines is to recognize that the District is not in the commercial forestry business but that in limited circumstances the removal of trees is in the best interest of managing the ecological health and public safety conditions of the site.

**Guideline G.4.1** The District shall not propose commercial harvest of timber on District-owned property except in the limited cases described in Guideline G.4.3 below.

**Guideline G.4.2** On a case-by-case basis, the District may purchase property or an easement that includes approved timber harvest plans.

**Guideline G.4.3** On rare occasions, the District may permit limited tree removal on District-owned property where a timber harvest plan does not previously exist, if such actions are shown to be in the best interest of managing the ecological values, protecting public safety, or controlling disease within the property or watershed. In such cases, the timber may be sold.

**Guideline G.4.4** The District shall conduct its land management practices such that they do not have an adverse significant impact on the physical and economic integrity of timberland preserves on or contiguous to properties owned or managed by the District and so that the safety of visitors to District preserves is not compromised by timber harvesting (e.g., establishing appropriate buffers on District lands).  
(Reference Mitigation AGR-3f)

**Representation**

Residents of the Coastal Annexation Area have asked that the District conduct its business one step at a time, that the local community be involved, and that the community's voice is represented in District decisions.

By law, special districts are limited to a maximum of seven wards, which represent roughly the same number of people. The District is composed of seven wards with approximately 100,000 people in each. Figure 2 illustrates the physical relationship between the existing District Wards and the Coastal Annexation Area. Based on the 2000 Census, the District reapportioned the Ward boundaries in 2002. Representation for the Coastal Annexation Area would also require the District to reapportion its boundaries. Since the population within the Coastal Annexation Area is below 100,000 a separate ward for the San Mateo Coast is not anticipated. The District could include the Coastal Annexation Area within one or more wards.

There are numerous existing agencies and government-sponsored community forums within the area that should be consulted. Doing so would avoid an additional layer of bureaucracy while assuring public input. The following guidelines outline how the District will conduct business and make sure that local viewpoints are respected.

**Guideline****G.5.1**

Upon annexation, the District shall institute appropriate forms of representation so that District planning and decision-making relating to the Coastal Annexation Area includes the input of Coastal Annexation Area residents. During the development of policies for the Coastal Annexation Area the District shall consider the formation of advisory committees as needed to address specific policy topics.

**Implementation Action  
G.5.A(i)**

The District Board shall conduct periodic meetings within the Coastal Annexation Area when appropriate and when significant agenda items specifically relate to the Coastal Annexation Area. All proposed Coastal Annexation Area policies will be reviewed by the full Board of Directors at public meetings held in the Coastal Annexation Area.

**Implementation Action  
G.5.B-1(i)**

To ensure that local viewpoints are considered in all significant District planning and decision-making relating to the Coastal Annexation Area, the District will consult with local elected officials, government agencies, and government-sponsored organizations within the Coastal Annexation Area.

**Implementation Action  
G.5.C(i)**

To further ensure recommendations representing local involvement are considered in all significant District planning and decision-making relating to the Coastal Annexation Area, the District shall directly notify community-interest groups, non-profit land trusts, elected officials, and other conservation-oriented organizations about District

Board meetings or other public meetings that involve subjects relating to the District’s activities within the Coastal Annexation Area.

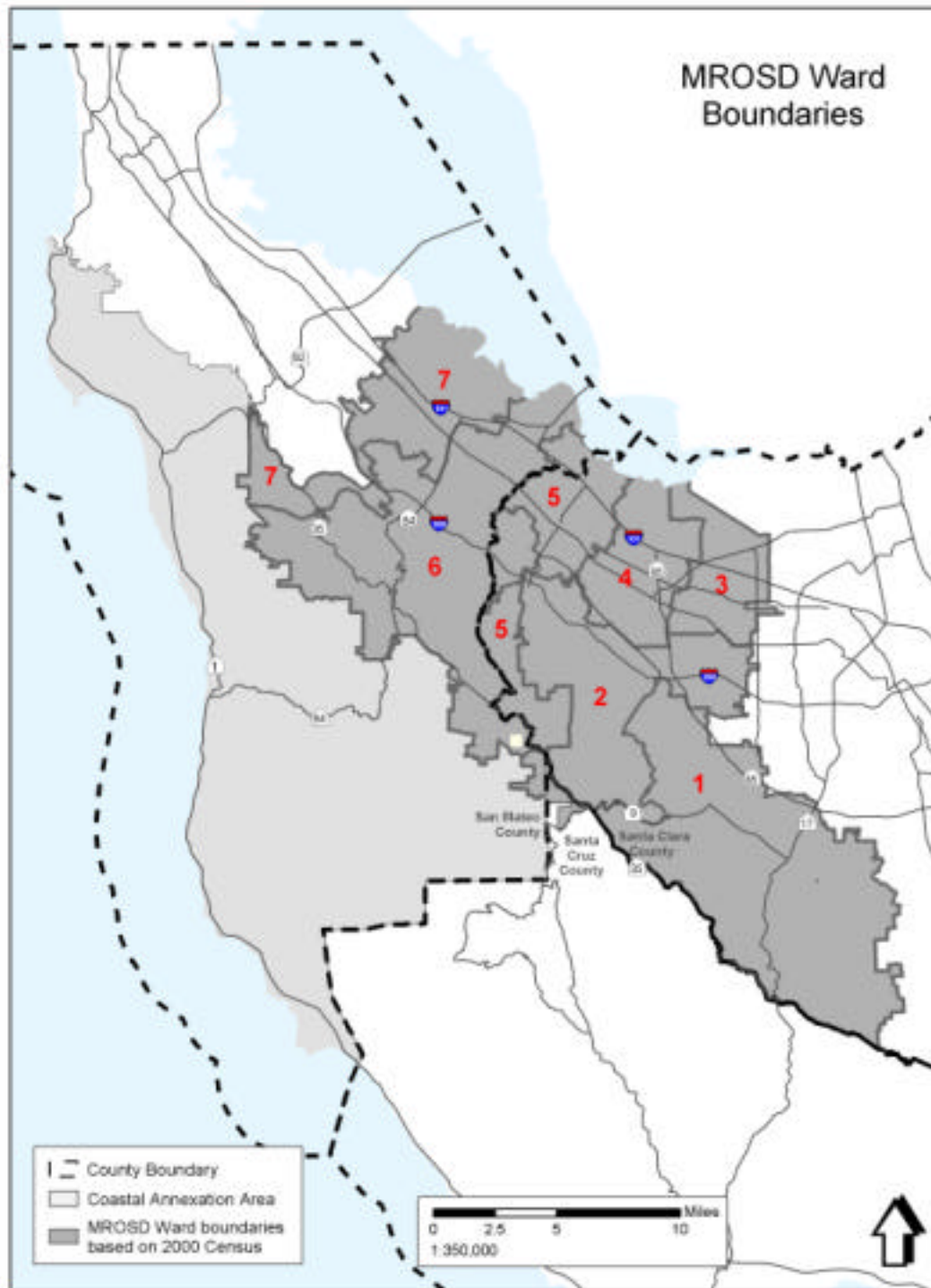
**Implementation Action**  
**G.5.D(i)**

The District shall notify owners of contiguous properties about public meetings where property acquisitions in the Coastal Annexation Area or any significant use or improvements proposed on District-owned lands in the Coastal Annexation Area are considered.

**Implementation Action**  
**G.5.E(i)**

Following annexation, no action regarding adoption of Coastal Annexation Area policies shall be taken by the District without consultation with elected officials, government agencies, and government-sponsored organizations within the Coastal Annexation Area.

**FIGURE 2: Proposed Annexation Area and Existing District Wards**





**Planning and Development**

District lands are managed to promote the long-term preservation of their natural and cultural resources, and at the same time provide low-intensity public recreation, environmental education, and agricultural use where possible. The District has established a planning process to ensure that these goals are met with full participation of the public. Each land use and resource management plan, policy update, acquisition project, and significant capital improvement project is subject to full review by the District Board. The Board typically holds regular meetings on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. The public is invited and encouraged to attend these meetings, and to participate in the discussions. All regular and special Board meetings are publicly noticed. In addition, neighbors of District preserves are notified of all projects that require Board attention, as are the individuals on the relevant interested parties lists maintained by the District.

The District can also obtain valuable assistance from the San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency (ESA). The ESA has staff familiar with agricultural production and the relationship between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in the Coastal Annexation Area. The Office of the County Agricultural Commissioner is also a part of the ESA. In order to take advantage of this expertise, the District will consult with the ESA in preparing use and management plans and in trail route planning for District lands in the Annexation Area. The ESA will receive public notice of all regular and special Board meetings, including where decisions are made to acquire lands or to approve use and management plans in the Coastal Annexation Area.

**Guideline  
G.6.1**

The District will develop a set of Basic Policies for the Coastal Annexation Area.

**Guideline  
G.6.2**

The District's existing Master Plan and Regional Open Space Study will be expanded to include the Coastal Annexation Area.

**Guideline  
G.6.3**

Inherent in the preservation of open space resources in the Coastal Annexation Area is the protection of: rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species; ecological systems; agricultural resources, water quality; visual resources; unique biological resources, including heritage and significant trees; and the unique cultural resources in the Coastal Annexation Area, including historic, archaeological and paleontological resources. Therefore, prior to making any lands available to low-intensity public recreational access, the District shall prepare and adopt a use and management plan, which, includes site-specific resource management and public access components for any lands acquired by the District or managed through contract for other public or private non-profit property owners. All lands acquired by the District within the Coastal Annexation Area will be inventoried to identify and prioritize resource management issues. Where there are critical issues, such as the presence of non-native invasive species which threaten the habitat of

endangered species or the economic viability of an adjacent agricultural operation, resource management plans will be prepared for these areas even if they remain closed to the public.

The use and management plan shall include an agricultural production plan for District-owned agricultural lands or District lands adjacent to agricultural lands. For district-owned lands, the plan shall describe the crop and/or livestock potential for the property together with the management actions required to protect existing agricultural production (e.g., growing seasons, water requirements, pesticide, manure, and waste management) and the agricultural potential of the land. The plan shall consider the following factors:

- h) Availability of labor, including farm labor housing;
- i) Availability of farm support services and goods;
- j) Necessary capital improvements (e.g. water storage, fencing, land leveling)
- k) Farm operations, including erosion control, the season(s) and times of pesticide or herbicide usage, manure and waste management;
- l) Water use and availability;
- m) Access to transportation and markets; and
- n) Promoting agricultural production on District-owned land.

In the case of District lands adjacent to agricultural production, the agricultural production plan shall develop site-specific measures to prevent activities on District lands from interfering with adjacent agricultural production.

The development of use and management plans will include consultation with the current owner or operator of any agricultural operations on the land, adjoining landowners, the San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency in addition to other opportunities for public involvement.

(Reference: Mitigation AGR-3h and BIO-3)

#### **Guideline G.6.4**

The following measures will be included in every future Use and Management Plan for parcels within the Coastal Annexation Area:

1. In areas where trail routes are immediately adjacent to private property, fencing shall be employed as necessary to deter users from leaving the trail. Specific fence, gate, and crossing designs will be determined in consultations with adjacent affected property owner(s) at the Use and Management Plan stage.

2. All new trails/facilities will be sited away from the edges of new preserves.
3. All new trails/facilities will be designed to preserve existing vegetation within new preserves and at the property lines so that preserve users will not be able to view land uses in adjacent properties.
4. Trail uses will be consolidated where safe within the same trail way, depending on the steepness, available right-of-way, safety, user frequencies, and other conditions. A type of use on a trail may be prohibited for safety or environmental reasons, such as erosion and water quality. Where a trail is restricted to a particular type of user, the trail shall be clearly designated as such and shall be equipped with use signs and appropriate barriers to discourage unauthorized use.

Trails shall be sited a minimum distance of 300 feet from occupied dwellings unless site-specific circumstances make this infeasible. Where a 300-foot setback is not feasible, Trails shall be set back a minimum distance of 50 feet. Potential noise and privacy impacts must be evaluated for any subsequent District action and shall be reduced by use of berms, fencing, landscaping, and other feasible and compatible means, if necessary.

(Reference: Mitigation LU-1b:)

**Guideline  
G.6.5**

The District will not permit access in places where the access would create a hazard due to a design feature such as a sharp curve or dangerous intersection.

(Reference: Mitigation PSI-1a)

**Guideline  
G.6.6**

A maximum speed limit of 15 miles per hour shall be placed on all trails that permit cyclists and other trail users (e.g., pedestrian, equestrian). Signs shall be located at trail entrances that indicate that a speed limit is in effect.

(Reference: Mitigation PSI-1b)

**Guideline  
G.6.7**

Where compatible with other trail characteristics, planners shall locate trail alignments and access points to allow trails to also serve as emergency access routes for patrol or emergency medical transport. Where feasible for more remote areas, emergency helicopter landing sites shall be provided.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2b)

**Guideline  
G.6.8**

The District shall limit trail use to low-intensity hiking, bird watching, bicycling, equestrian use, environmental education and other similar low hazard uses, and prohibit smoking, camping, picnic areas, fireworks and off-road vehicle use.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2e)

**Guideline  
G.6.9**

The District shall develop and maintain staging areas and trail heads to incorporate:

- a) Fenced parking areas paved with gravel or asphalt in a narrow configuration to discourage irresponsible vehicle use.
- b) Entrance and road shoulders designed to discourage parking and to facilitate emergency access.
- c) Gates that are at least 12 feet wide constructed of heavy materials with a protected locking system for District and fire service access.
- d) 10-foot radiuses paved with gravel around trailheads.
- e) Signage that describes prohibited uses and warns against fire hazards.
- f) Low ignition fuels, such as grasses, planted adjacent to trail heads and staging areas that shall be mowed annually as soon as 30 per cent of the light ground fuel is cured.
- g) Close trail access points on all predicted high fire response level days (Burn Index of 41, or higher) and post such closures on the District website.
- h) Periodic patrols by District staff.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2f)

**Guideline  
G.6.10**

Trail alignments and their associated facilities shall be sited and designed to be in harmony with surrounding natural and cultural settings and to retain natural appearances and values.

(Reference: Mitigation AES-1a)

**Guideline  
G.6.11**

Trail alignments across the face of open hillsides and near the top of ridgelines shall be sited to avoid creating new, permanent, noticeably visible lines on the existing landscape when viewed from points looking up at or perpendicular to the trail. Conditions to be considered when siting trails include, but are not limited to, avoiding excessive cuts in slopes that could not be effectively revegetated, and presence of native soil to support revegetation.

(Reference: Mitigation AES-1b)

**Guideline  
G.6.12**

Screening berms, perimeter planting, and parking area trees that provide a canopy shall be used at major staging areas to visually buffer views into the staging area from sensitive view points.

(Reference: Mitigation AES-1c)

**Guideline  
G.6.13**

All structures proposed that are located in scenic corridors shall be screened using native landscaping with plants indigenous to the localized area.

(Mitigation AES-1d)

**Guideline  
G.6.14**

Any utilities constructed within a State scenic corridor for District facilities shall be underground.

(Reference: Mitigation AES-1e)

**Guideline  
G.6.15**

Any new lighting as part of the proposed project will have light shields and other devices to ensure that no new light or glare will impact sensitive receptors.

(Reference: Mitigation AES-2)

**Guideline  
G.6.16**

Trails shall be sited to minimize potential water pollution and stream bank erosion. Equestrian trails shall not be sited parallel to “blue line” streams (as mapped on USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps) and major drainages (determined during the preparation of individual trail design) within 150 feet of the streambank in such watersheds. Where equestrian trails must cross streams or major drainages in water supply watersheds, the trail shall be sited perpendicular to the stream (to the extent allowed by topography and vegetation) through the 300-foot buffer zone (150 feet on each side). Equestrian trails shall not be located within 150 feet of the high water line of a drinking water reservoir. These measures may be modified on a case-by-case basis upon the advice of a qualified biologist or water quality specialist and the concurrence of the applicable water agency.

(Reference: Mitigation HYD-1a)

**Guideline  
G.6.17**

When acquiring new property, the District shall carefully evaluate existing roads and trails before adopting a Preliminary Use and Management Plan and opening them to the public to ensure that their design is compatible with resource protection and recreational uses. In some cases, the District may close and restore poorly designed roads and trails to restore the land to its natural conditions. Where roads exist in areas of geologic sensitivity (areas prone to landslides or earth movement), the District may conduct a roads assessment to identify corrective actions necessary to reduce sediment input into streams.

Trail surfaces appropriate to intended use shall be selected so as to minimize runoff and erosion problems. Trail designs shall conform to the County Surface Runoff Management Plan, County Excavating, Grading, Filling, and Clearing Regulations Ordinance, and the County Topsoil Ordinance, as defined in this chapter. Surface water shall be diverted from trails by outsloping the trail tread 3% where feasible. Where necessary, shallow ditches or water bars shall be used to divert water on running slopes greater than 5%. Other trail drainage techniques may include rolling dips, culverts, or ditches on sides of trails. Erosion control plans shall comply with erosion control policies in the County General Plan and Local Coastal Program.  
(Reference: Mitigation HYD-1c)

**Guideline  
G.6.18**

No large-scale grading shall be used for trail construction. The degree of cut allowed on a slope depends on the soil type, hardness, and surrounding natural resources. Ultimate cuts shall be contoured to blend with the natural slope. Steep areas shall be handled by limited terracing to avoid large-scale grading. Surface soil disturbance shall be kept to a minimum to reduce erosion and maintenance problems. Only those rocks, stumps, and roots that interfere with safe passage shall be removed.  
(Reference: Mitigation HYD-1d)

**Guideline  
G.6.19**

Culverts shall be designed so that they do not limit the ability of debris to pass. Structures over water courses shall be carefully placed to minimize disturbance and should be located 2 feet above the 100-year flood elevation or 2 feet above the Flood Hazard Flood Insurance Rate Map flood elevation. Maintenance of culverts and drainage structures shall be performed as needed to ensure proper functioning.  
(Reference: Mitigation HYD-2)

**Guideline  
G.6.20**

Biological resource assessments shall be conducted during preparation of Use and Management Plans. Assessments shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and will include surveys for sensitive habitats and special-status species in the appropriate seasons. These assessments will include recommendations to align potential trails to avoid impacts to sensitive habitats, special-status species, and heritage and significant trees. If any trail alignment may affect such resources, the District will consult with the appropriate agencies (e.g., California Department of Fish and game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, national Marine Fisheries Service) to ensure that impacts will be avoided or mitigation is adequate. (Reference: Mitigation BIO-1a)

**Guideline  
G.6.21**

The District shall protect sensitive habitat areas and other areas where special-status species may be adversely affected when planning trails and other facilities. To the maximum extent feasible, trail alignments and other improvements shall avoid impacts to sensitive habitats, including habitats for special-status plants and animals. All improvements shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a qualified biologist to identify impact avoidance measures or mitigation measures for biotic impacts. Consideration shall be given to:

- Relocating trails or other improvements
- Periodic closures
- Revegetation prescriptions
- Buffer plantings
- Discrete barrier fencing that accommodates wildlife passage
- Other appropriate measures

Removal of native vegetation shall be avoided as much as possible. The appropriate resource agencies shall be contacted regarding any trail alignments or other improvements that may impact sensitive habitats, special-status species, or their habitat. Plant replacement shall be native to the area and suitable for the site conditions.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1b)

**Guideline  
G.6.22**

In special-status species habitat areas, trail use levels shall be limited as appropriate to ensure protection of resources. Techniques for limiting use may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical access controls
- Seasonal or intermittent closures

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1c)

**Guideline  
G.6.23**

Existing access routes shall be used wherever suitable to minimize impacts of new construction in special-status species habitats. Realignments will be implemented where necessary to avoid adverse impacts on resources.  
(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1d)

**Guideline  
G.6.24**

Trail design shall include barriers to control trail use and prevent environmental damage. Barriers may include fences, vegetation, stiles, and/or fallen trees or branches.  
(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1e)

**Guideline  
G.6.25**

When parallel to a stream or riparian zone, trails shall generally be set back from the top of bank or from the outside edge of the riparian zone, whichever is greater, except where topographic, resource management, or other constraints or management objectives make such a setback not feasible or undesirable. Riparian setbacks may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis based upon advice of a qualified biologist and with the concurrence of reviewing agencies, where applicable.  
(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1g)

**Guideline  
G.6.26**

Trail crossings of streams and drainages shall be designed to minimize disturbance through the use of bridges, fords, or culverts, whichever is least environmentally damaging. Bridges and culverts shall be designed so that they visually and functionally blend with the environment and do not substantially interfere with the movement of native fish. Sufficient depth and velocity of water through the culvert shall exist in fish-bearing streams for passage of native fish and other native aquatic species during high and low flow conditions. All stream crossings shall be restricted at fish-bearing streams during critical times, such as during spawning, unless bridges and culverts are provided.  
(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1h)

**Guideline  
G.6.27**

Trails and other improvements shall avoid wetlands and other jurisdictional waters, including seasonal wetlands, seeps, springs, and farm ponds, whenever possible. A wetlands biologist will conduct reconnaissance-level surveys of all proposed improvements in areas with potential wetlands. Any improvements adjacent to wetland areas will be constructed so that fills avoid wetland impacts and minimum setbacks are allowed. Where feasible, setbacks from wetlands and other jurisdictional waters shall be a minimum of 50 feet for trails and 100 feet for staging areas and other improvements. A formal wetland



delineation will be required for any improvements that may directly impact wetlands.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1i)

**Guideline  
G.6.28**

Existing native vegetation shall only be removed as necessary to accommodate the trail clearing width. The minimum horizontal clearing width from physical obstructions varies based on the type of trail but should be no less than two feet from the outer limits of the trail tread and shall be determined on a case by case basis to protect special natural features. Maximum vertical distance from overhanging branches shall be 12 feet on trails open to equestrian or bicycle use. Maximum vertical distance from overhanging branches shall be eight feet on hiking trails. Clearing shall be determined on a case-by-case basis to protect special natural features.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1m)

**Guideline  
G.6.29**

The District shall minimize fragmentation of interior habitat, reduce barriers to wildlife movement within preserves, identify and protect established wildlife crossings to allow movement across existing roads, remove unnecessary fences and barbed wire from preserves, and seek to reduce barriers to wildlife movement on a more regional basis. The construction of new fences constructed on District owned or managed lands shall not restrict wildlife movement. Fence rails shall be designed with openings large enough for native mammals to pass through.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-2)

**Guideline  
G.6.30**

The protocol for determining if structures are of historic value is as follows:

1. The property and building types will be identified and evaluated by a qualified cultural consultant;
2. The cultural consultant will determine if the structures in question are currently included in a local register of historic resources, on the California Register of Historic Resources or on the National Register of Historic Places;
3. If it is determined that the structures in question are not currently included in a local register of historic resources, on the California Register of Historic Resources or on the National Register of Historic Places, a DPR 523 form issued by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) will be completed by the cultural consultant and the structural and building data sent to a qualified architectural historian;
4. If it is determined that the structures in question are currently on

the California Register of Historic Resources or if the building has been determined to be of historic value, there are two options that would mitigate any impact to the historic values:

- a) Retain and rehabilitate the building, rehabilitate it according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (U.S. Department of Interior 1990). New construction near this building should be consistent with its historic character; or
- b) Move the building to a different location on its current parcel or to a different parcel appropriate to its historic character.

(Reference: Mitigation CUL-1a)

**Implementation Action  
G.6.A(i)**

Upon completion of the annexation process and with public involvement through local groups, the District shall conduct hearings to develop its Basic Policies for the Coastal Annexation Area. These hearings shall address, at a minimum, the following topics: public participation; resource management; public access; recreational use; public safety; cultural resources; agriculture and timber production; inter-agency relationships; and public information.

See also Implementation Actions G.5.C(i) and G.5.E(i)

**Implementation Action  
G.6.B(i)**

Following adoption of Basic Policies for the Coastal Annexation Area, the District shall complete an expansion of its Master Plan for the Coastal Annexation Area. The Master Plan shall include guidelines for District acquisitions and show the relative desirability of lands as potential open space, without establishing a priority for land acquisition.

See also Implementation Actions G.5.C(i) and G.5.E(i)

**Implementation Action  
G.6.C(i)**

A District staff liaison will be assigned to the Coastal Annexation Area to work with local residents, property owners, government, and interest groups in developing recommendations to the District Board of Directors.

**Implementation Action  
G.6.D(i)**

The District will open a field office and maintenance facilities within the Coastal Annexation Area once the District has the need and funding for permanent management presence in the area.

**Implementation Action  
G.6.E(i)**

As a part of planning for public safety, the District will ensure that each preserve has adequate emergency access land and the paths and roadways of an open space area are documented and maps are

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6.F(i)**

distributed to local fire and police stations prior to opening a preserve to the public.

(Reference: Mitigation PSI-2)

During preparation of plans for specific facilities, the District shall:

- a) Review, in conjunction with the local fire protection services, available water resources. In consultation with the County of San Mateo Environmental Services Department and the California Department of Forestry, the District shall determine whether the construction of dry hydrants (as defined in the Final EIR at Page II-32) on specific lands acquired is feasible in order to provide additional remote area water supplies for fire suppression activities. The District shall purchase a 1,500 - 2,000-gallon maintenance -style water truck. The District-owned water truck shall be available for mutual aid calls during fire suppression activities.
- b) Select indigenous plant materials and/or seed mixes utilized at staging areas or along trails for their low maintenance and drought and fire resistant characteristics to minimize additional fuel available to wildland fires to the extent feasible.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2a)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6.G(i)**

In addition to continuing its current fuel management practices, as new lands are acquired, the District shall consult with the San Mateo County Fire Department and the California Department of Forestry in developing site-specific fuel modification and management programs for specific lands acquired, as part of its Use and Management planning process.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2d)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6.H(i)**

The District shall routinely monitor trails and provide regular maintenance to avoid public exposure to hazardous conditions. Trails or other facilities shall be closed for construction or repair, or when another hazardous condition exists (e.g. landslide during flooding or extremely wet weather) that renders trail use especially hazardous, or where adjacent land uses may present unsafe conditions that could affect open space users. Where use limitations or closures are in place, the area shall be clearly designated and shall be equipped with use signs and appropriate barriers to discourage unauthorized use. Missing or damaged signs, gates, fences, and barriers shall be repaired or replaced as soon as possible. Closure notices shall include the reason(s) for the closure, an estimate of how long the facility will be closed, and a telephone number to call for further information.

(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-3a)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6I(i)**

District preserve maps for the public shall be kept up-to-date to the extent feasible. Trail maps shall also provide trail use rules, emergency information, trail accessibility, other pertinent safety information and shall be available at all staging areas.  
(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-3b)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6J(i)**

The District shall insure that the following measures are included in all future construction contracts to control fugitive dust emissions:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily and more often during windy periods. Active areas adjacent to existing land uses shall be kept damp at all times, or shall be treated with non-toxic stabilizers or dust palliatives;
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand and other loose materials and/or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard;
- Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas for construction sites;
- Sweep daily (preferably with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites;
- Sweep streets daily (preferably with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets;
- Hydroseed or apply non-toxic soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas;
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily or apply non-toxic soil binders to any exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.);
- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.;
- Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways;
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible;
- Suspend excavation and grading activity whenever the wind is so high that it results in visible dust plumes despite control efforts.

(Reference: Mitigation AIR-1)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6K(i)**

Storm water quality BMPs as listed in this section shall be implemented to reduce potential water quality impacts. BMPs include:

1. Flow of runoff from drainage structures will be directed to vegetated areas, away from creeks and drainages as is practical.
2. Conduct any trail maintenance work during low flow periods
3. Use erosion and sediment control measures to minimize water quality impacts and ensure no sediment at heavily traveled trails

flows into creeks. These measures include:

- Silt Fences
- Straw Bale Barriers
- Brush or Rock Filters
- Storm Drain Inlet Protection
- Sediment Traps
- Sediment Basins
- Erosion Control Blankets and Mats
- The District shall prevent erosion on steep slopes by using erosion control material according to manufacturer's specifications.

4. If soil is to be stockpiled for any reason at creeksides, no run-off will be allowed to flow back to the creek.

(Reference: Mitigation HYD-1b)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6L(i)**

A particular trail or other facility may need to be closed during seasonal periods critical to special-status species, where overuse threatens resource values, or for other reasons to protect biological resources. Where a trail or surrounding habitat warrants special notice limiting trail use, the trail shall be clearly designated and should be equipped with use signs and appropriate barriers to discourage unauthorized use. Missing or damaged signs, gates, fences, and barriers shall be repaired or replaced as soon as possible. Closure notices shall include the reason(s) for the closure, an estimate of how long the facility will be closed, and a telephone number to call for further information.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1f)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6M(i)**

Revegetation and/or enhancement shall be undertaken where any sensitive habitat or special-status species habitat will be disturbed or destroyed by facility construction. Revegetation work shall be implemented prior to or concurrently with the development. The design of an appropriate revegetation program shall fully compensate for the lost habitat, with no net loss of habitat functions and values. Riparian and wetland habitat impacts will typically be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio for high quality habitat areas and at lower ratios where lower habitat quality justifies a lower ratio. A lower ratio may also be justified if habitat mitigation is implemented and verified as successful prior to the occurrence of impacts. Mitigation shall be based on in-kind replacement of impacted habitat with habitat of equal or better biotic value. The revegetation program shall be designed by a qualified biologist or ecologist and submitted to the appropriate regulatory or trustee agency for approval. At a minimum, the revegetation program shall include a description of

project impacts, mitigation calculations, the mitigation site, revegetation techniques, maintenance measures, a long-term monitoring program, and contingency measures. Native plant materials suited to the site will be utilized in all mitigation work.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1j)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6N(i)**

Periodic monitoring of known sensitive habitats adjacent to trails or other facilities shall be conducted to determine if unacceptable soil compaction or other adverse impacts are occurring. If monitoring reveals that undesirable soil compaction or impact to a sensitive habitat is occurring, barriers or other appropriate measures (such as trail rerouting) shall be employed as needed to discourage off-trail use. Brush or other aesthetically acceptable barriers can be used to cover illegal trails, abandoned trails, or shortcuts to discourage use until natural vegetation returns.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1k)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6O(i)**

Should sensitive habitat be impacted such that it necessitates permanently closing a trail or staging area, a management program to rehabilitate the area will be developed. Such a program shall include discing and replanting or other techniques appropriate to the habitat type to return the site to a natural condition and sufficiently blocking the trail with barriers to effectively prohibit use. Management shall include monitoring the site to ensure that it returns to a natural condition without the intrusion of invasive exotic plants. Management shall also include design elements, maintenance, and monitoring to ensure that erosion is minimized.

Construction and maintenance of trails will require the trimming and/or removal of vegetation along the trail route and staging areas.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1l)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6P(i)**

Good pruning practices should be followed when vegetation growth must be cleared. Ground cover plants and low shrubs should not be cleared beyond the original construction standards. The construction standard shall be defined as the trail tread width plus 1-2 feet from each side of the edge of the trail tread. Noxious plants (e.g., yellow star-thistle) shall be controlled along trails and the edges of staging areas in a timely manner.

(Reference: Mitigation BIO-1n)

**Implementation  
Action**

Short-Term/Construction activities may impact nearby historic properties. These impacts may include dust accumulation on building

**G.6Q(i)**

facades, and increased noise and vibration from construction equipment. Construction period impacts could be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by implementing the following mitigation measures:

1. Project specifications shall require the contractor(s) and any subcontractors to conform to the County's noise control requirements.
2. Project specifications shall require the general contractor and any subcontractors to control dust and exhaust emissions of particulates through water sprinkling during demolition and excavation activities; covering of stockpiles of soil, sand and other such materials; covering trucks hauling debris, soil, sand and other such materials; street sweeping of the streets surrounding excavation and construction sites; equipment maintenance to reduce emissions; and, prohibitions on idling engines when not in use.
3. Cleaning of the adjacent historic buildings may be necessary after construction activities to prevent long-term damage to the building fabric. The need for cleaning shall be determined by a qualified Historic Architect, shall follow the standards set by the Secretary of the Interior, and shall be completed in consultation with the Historic Architect.
4. A structural engineer shall inspect the buildings prior to construction to determine if the noise and vibration anticipated during construction will affect the buildings framework and fabric. The report, with any recommendations and mitigation measures, should be reviewed by a qualified Historic Architect

(Reference: Mitigation CUL-1b)

**Implementation  
Action**

**G.6R(i)**

Application of the Standard Protocol for Unexpected Discovery of Archaeological and Paleontological Cultural Materials (See Appendix A) will be applied.

(Reference: Mitigation CUL-2)

**Implementation  
Action**

**G.6S(i)**

Application of the Native American Burial Plan (See Appendix A) will be applied.

(Reference: Mitigation CUL-3)

**Implementation  
Action**

**G.6T(i)**

Surveys shall be conducted as part of trail route site planning to identify the occurrence of any potentially hazardous geologic conditions such as unstable slopes in landslide areas. Such areas shall be avoided or necessary construction design measures shall be incorporated into the trail design to assure that:

- Users will not be exposed to the identified hazard
  - Trails would not contribute to increasing the degree or extent of instability
  - Drainage from the trail would be routed away from the instability
- In no event shall a trail be routed across an instability that is actively supplying sediment directly into a channel within a watershed known to support anadromous fish species, unless the instability is stabilized.

(Reference: Mitigation GEO-1a)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6U(i)**

The District shall routinely monitor trails and provide regular maintenance to avoid public exposure to hazardous conditions.  
(Reference: Mitigation GEO-1b)

**Implementation  
Action  
G.6V(i)**

Where structures are proposed, a geotechnical evaluation shall be conducted to identify engineering methods to reduce the potential for structural failure due to geological hazards. All buildings shall be designed in a manner that reflects the geologic hazards on the site, and shall be consistent with local and Uniform Building Codes.  
(Reference: Mitigation GEO-1c)

**Guideline  
G.7**

In implementing any specific management or public access plans, the District shall obtain all necessary permits from appropriate Federal, State, and local land and resource regulatory agencies. Such agencies include, but are not limited to, San Mateo County, the City of Half Moon Bay, and the California Coastal Commission.

**Implementation  
Action  
G.7.A(i)**

The District shall coordinate with appropriate agencies, such as the County and the California Department of Forestry to formalize mutual aid agreements.  
(Reference: Mitigation HAZ-2c)

**Partnerships**

The following guidelines recognize that the District can successfully acquire and manage open space resources and provide visitor-serving facilities for low-intensity recreation if the District works with others in the community in developing and implementing such programs. Potential local public partners include, but are limited to: the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the California Coastal Conservancy, the San Mateo County Department of Parks and Recreation, the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District, the City of Half Moon Bay, the Midcoast Community Council, the Pescadero Municipal Advisory



Council, and the San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee. Potential private partners interested in land and resource conservation include, but are not limited to: the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), the Nature Conservancy, Save the Redwoods League, Save Our Bay, and the California Farm Bureau. The District could also benefit by working with individuals and groups of private property owners to develop site-specific stewardship programs.

The District would manage lands it acquires that are adjacent to land owned by another open space interest (e.g. POST, California Department of Parks and Recreation, San Mateo County Department of Parks), in a compatible way. This, for example, might involve developing trails where a logical trail connection exists or supporting other low-intensity recreation uses. However, the District would not permit intensive recreation development or active recreation on District property where it may exist on an adjacent open space property.

**Guideline  
G.8**

The District shall work with other public recreation and open space providers, conservation agencies, non-profit land trusts, and community organizations for the preservation and management of open space resources that are regionally significant. District participation, to the extent allowed by law, could include: partial financing for land acquisition; temporary receivership of property; coordination of technical planning and legal services relating to open space issues; joint grant proposals; co-sponsorship and participation in demonstration projects; and joint open space resource management training.

**Guideline  
G.9**

The District will encourage active public participation in: maintaining, restoring, and protecting natural resources; assisting in scientific research programs; and providing science and conservation education opportunities to the public.

**Land Use**

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is not a land use regulatory agency. There are no required changes in land use designations or land use controls if the annexation proceedings are completed. The purpose of the District presence in the Coastal Annexation Area is to acquire and manage open space resources and, where appropriate, provide low-intensity recreation opportunities for the general public.

As a property owner, the District must work within the context of existing County and City land use and zoning designations. It is likely that much of the land that may be acquired or managed by the District will be in one of the following San Mateo County General Plan land use designations:

- General Open Space
- Agriculture
- Timber Production

- Public Recreation

The following policy will direct District activities to assure that existing land use and zoning designations will be retained.

**Permanent Policy  
P.2**

Within the Coastal Annexation Area, the District will not initiate any activities that would require a General Plan amendment or zoning change  
(Reference: Mitigation LU-2; Mitigation AGR-2)

**Permanent Policy  
P.3**

The District shall secure County and other required agency permits on lands it owns or manages for open space and visitor-serving low-intensity recreation uses and for staff facilities. Such uses shall comply with all applicable County land use policies and regulations.

**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES TO BE EXTENDED TO THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA (AFFECTED TERRITORY)**

Services of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to be extended to the Coastal Annexation Area will implement the policies, guidelines, and implementation actions set forth in the Service Plan and will fulfill the District's mission for the San Mateo Coastal Annexation Area

District actions within the Coastal Annexation Area would be similar to existing District actions within its current boundaries, modified by the Guiding Principles for the Coastal Annexation Area. Services would include:

- Acquisition of lands and/or easements subject to availability of funding, based upon negotiations with willing sellers, and without the use of eminent domain.
- Management of lands acquired by the District or management of lands through contract with other property owners (e.g. the Peninsula Open Space Trust, State of California, and the like) involving stewardship programs and visitor-serving low-intensity recreation access. Contracts for ranger patrol, maintenance, and improvements to manage other property owners' lands would be subject to available District resources such that no significant negative impact to existing District services would result.
- Development and approval by the District Board of Directors of long-range plans to guide District programs. These plans would be in the form of: (1) revision of the District Master Plan to include the Coastal Annexation Area; and (2) revision of the Regional Open Space Study to include the Coastal Annexation Area.
- Potential sale or lease of District-owned lands for: (1) agricultural uses after conservation or public access easements or conditions are applied to the property based on the site-specific resource characteristics of the property; and (2) appropriate recreation uses sponsored by

public agencies, such as San Mateo County Department of Parks and Recreation, that would be consistent with applicable general plan and zoning regulations.

- Preparation of site assessments or use and management plans for individual properties that are either acquired by the District or managed by the District for other public or non-profit landowners.
- District activities will not degrade the economic potential of prime agricultural lands. The District will strive to assure that all prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture and that are not needed for the protection and vital functioning of a sensitive habitat will be protected for economically viable agriculture.
- The District will carefully plan and conduct its land management practices to minimize impacts to adjacent property.
- Parcels of 40 or more acres will typically be considered for purchase, however some smaller parcels may be sought for acquisition. These may include parcels that are key habitat, trail routes, inholdings, or parcels needed for service access.
- The land acquisition program of the District will be limited by the District's fiscal capability to manage lands.
- Acquisition of conservation easements will be an important part of the District's open space preservation program.
- District land acquisition will tend to emphasize properties that are contiguous with District lands along and west of Skyline Ridge.
- Eventual improvements the District would likely develop include a ranger office, maintenance facilities and related facilities to support stewardship activities, and visitor-serving facilities for public low-intensity recreation.

Improvements for low-intensity public recreation on District-owned or managed lands will be similar to existing improvements and use patterns now typical throughout much of the Skyline area. It is anticipated that publicly accessible trails would be provided at a ratio of approximately 7 miles per 1,720 acres of District-owned or managed lands. It is not anticipated that new trails would be built on lands managed under contract. No trails are assumed to occur on easement lands. It is anticipated that approximately one-third would be new trails built by the District, with the remaining two-thirds being existing ranch roads, fire roads, or trails. Staging areas would be provided at the same per trail mile ratio as they are in existing District lands, which is approximately one staging area per 18 miles of trail.

For management of public access and stewardship programs, it is anticipated that an average of one field staff person would be provided to manage every 1,720 acres of land purchased or managed under contract. Additional personnel would be required to manage lands with more than 10 miles of trails per 1,720 acres. Staff will also be added as District holdings on the Coast increase to meet corresponding resource management needs for more planning and administrative service. One planning staff person would be provided at the outset. It is anticipated that additional planning or

administrative staff would be provided at a ratio of one for every 3,440 acres purchased or managed under contract, and one for every 5,160 acres of conservation easement.

In the near term, temporary field staff offices will be provided in existing buildings owned or acquired by the District. A full field staff office and maintenance facility would only be economically justifiable and would be developed once the District manages approximately 15,000 acres of land within the Coastal annexation Area.

### **LEVEL AND RANGE OF SERVICES**

District services can feasibly be extended to properties within the Coastal Annexation Area following final approval of annexation by the San Mateo County LAFCo. Financing for services would be from existing District revenues augmented by other government and private funding. District services will emphasize land stewardship and management programs working cooperatively with agencies active within the Coastal Annexation Area, interest groups, and individual property owners. The acquisition of land or conservation easements would be a modest part of the District's Basic Service Plan.

The extent and level of the expansion of services, and in particular acquisition programs, will be dependent on a number of factors including: opportunities to acquire land offered by willing sellers without the use of eminent domain; additional funding opportunities from public or private sources to complement existing District resources for land acquisition grants; requests by other public or private non-profit property owners for land management expertise and services; and the potential for expanded District revenues through a voter-approved funding measure.

### **EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS**

The District is most interested in obtaining and/or managing "open space" properties. These are properties that typically have few or very limited existing improvements. Municipal sewer or water services are not normally sought by the District unless already available to the property.

Should the District acquire lands that contain existing structures, these structures may be maintained and improved for uses such as staff or caretaker housing or for rental to others. Rental preference would be provided to other open space or recreation providers, such as the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Department, and other public service workers, including teachers, where use of such facilities would benefit public recreation or open space programs and the community. Structures may or may not be retained depending on their condition and potential for compatible use. If retained, structures would likely not be expanded. Dilapidated or dangerous structures and other hazardous structures not of historic or scenic value may be demolished.

### **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Financing for construction of low-intensity public access improvements and operation of District services has typically been provided from District general revenues augmented by Federal and State

grant programs. Entry fees for public recreational use of District lands are generally not charged. On a case-by-case basis, the District receives income from commercial or agricultural leases and residential rentals. Lessees are assessed a possessory interest tax by the County in lieu of property tax.

District operations, stewardship and interpretive programs are funded from District general funds and interpretive programs are supplemented by Docents and other volunteers.

Following annexation, the District will work cooperatively with its constituents to develop appropriate voter-approved District funding measures to provide a higher level of services within the Coastal Annexation Area.

### **TIMETABLE FOR SERVICES**

District services will be provided within the Coastal Annexation Area effective immediately upon final annexation and would be implemented in a phased program that is reflective of the District's Guiding Principles for the Coastal Annexation Area.

### **BASIC SERVICE PLAN**

Table 1 presents an overview of the District's Basic Service Plan for land and easement acquisition, development, and management programs for fifteen years after annexation. The Basic Service Plan for the Coastal Annexation Area is based on funding from only existing District revenue sources, including grants and gifts, and emphasizes managing land acquired by others. The Basic Service Plan assumes that the acquisition of lands or easements by the District would be from willing sellers only without the use of eminent domain. The Basic Service Plan presents a general projection of the amount of land that could reasonably be anticipated to be acquired and/or managed based on a program involving no additional voter-approved funding measure.

District expenditures by the Board for the Basic Service Plan would primarily be directed to managing open space resources and public access for low-intensity recreation. District land acquisition within the Coastal Annexation Area would be limited to those properties presented by willing sellers and to funding available from government grants and private sources. Some new acquisitions would occur in the Coastal Annexation Area through the District's ongoing program to add land to the west from the existing Skyline area Open Space Preserves. The District would work in partnership with other public agencies and private non-profit land trusts to provide land management expertise where the District has the ability to do so. The District would also work with local agencies and organizations to develop a long-term funding mechanism for voter approval that would complement existing District funding programs.

### **OPTIONAL SERVICE PLAN SCENARIOS**

In years 1-5 of the Basic Service Plan, the District may consider placing a voter-approved funding measure on the ballot. For study purposes, Appendix B presents two optional scenarios for expanded District Services should a voter-approved funding measure sponsored by the District be enacted.

**TABLE 1: BASIC SERVICE PLAN FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA - LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Basic Service Plan Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; emphasis on land management funded from existing sources. <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Years 1-5</b>	<b>Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focused planning discussions with local interests to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Review for the Coastal Annexation Area</li> <li>Update of the District Master Plan and Open Space Study to include the Coastal Annexation Area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of existing District revenues; apply for public and private grants and gifts</li> </ul>
	<b>Land Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire approximately 1,000 to 1,200 acres / year via-existing District funding augmented by grants</li> <li>Acquire approximately 130 to approximately 240 acres of easements / year via existing District funding augmented by grants</li> </ul>
	<b>Land Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen partnership opportunities for resource and public access management</li> <li>Limited program expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 100 to 200 acres / year based on partnership opportunities and existing District funding</li> </ul>
	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(2)</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish District presence through ranger residency program in housing located on properties acquired by the District</li> <li>Few areas open to public access</li> </ul>

**Cumulative Total: End of Year 5**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>5-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>5-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	1,000	1,200	<b>5,000</b>	<b>6,000</b>
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	130	240	<b>650</b>	<b>1,200</b>
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	100	200	<b>500</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1,640</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>8,200</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>				
Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>14.3</b>	<b>19.0</b>
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**TABLE 1: BASIC SERVICE PLAN FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA - LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Basic Service Plan Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; emphasis on land management funded from existing sources. <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Years 6-10</b>	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate land use and management plans for District-owned property for public access</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Land Acquisition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire approximately 100 to 200 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts</li> <li>Acquire approximately 60 to 110 acres of easements / year based primarily on grants and gifts <sup>(1)</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>Land Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited expansion of resource and public access management by up to 150 to 200 acres / year based principally on partnership opportunities and existing District funding</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Improvements</b> <sup>(3)</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand District presence through ranger residency program in housing located on properties acquired by the District</li> <li>Initiate public access by opening / constructing minor staging areas, trails and related facilities based on site-specific resource management and public access plans</li> </ul>

**Cumulative Total: Years 6-10**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>10-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>10-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	100	200	5,500	7,000
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	60	110	950	1,750
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	150	200	1,250	2,000
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>10,750</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>				
Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			17.6	24.5
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			6.2	8.6
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>			1	1

**TABLE 1: BASIC SERVICE PLAN FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA - LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Basic Service Plan Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; emphasis on land management funded from existing sources. <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Years 11-15</b>	<b>Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue land use and management plans for District-owned property</li> </ul>
	<b>Land Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire approximately 50 to 100 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts</li> <li>Acquire approximately 8 to 10 acres of easements / year based primarily on grants and gifts <sup>(1)</sup></li> </ul>
	<b>Land Management</b> <sup>(3)</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 50 to 100 acres / year based principally on partnership opportunities and existing District funding <sup>(2)</sup></li> </ul>
	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(3)</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand District presence through Ranger residency program in housing on properties acquired by the District</li> <li>Expand public access by opening / constructing a major staging area, trails and related facilities based on site-specific resource management and public access plans</li> <li>Establish District field office and maintenance shop in facilities existing on properties acquired by the District</li> </ul>

**Cumulative Total: Years 11-15**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>15-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>15-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	50	100	5,750	7,500
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	8	10	990	1,800
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	50	100	1,500	2,500
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>8,240</b>	<b>11,800</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>				
Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			18.9	27.0
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			6.8	9.7
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>			2	2

- (1) Funding opportunities from grant programs for land acquisition vary significantly over time. Grant programs also vary in purpose, geographic area, and requirements for matching funds.
- (2) Assumes that preliminary use and management plans focus on site safety and resource protection, therefore few areas would be opened for public use and limited access would be provided to existing roads and trails.
- (3) Assumes the following:
- Approximately 7 miles of trail opened to public use per 1,720 acres of land owned or managed by the District; of these approximately 2/3 will be trails that either exist or are unpaved ranch/fire roads converted to trail use. Trails available for public use will not occur immediately upon the inclusion of lands into the District. Therefore trail mileages indicated are lower than the maximum that could be calculated based on the above formula; and
  - Staging areas are provided at a rate of one area per 18 miles of trails and will be evenly distributed between major and minor staging areas.

Note: For purposes of this plan, the cost of managing easements and managing fee title lands is equal.



## **APPENDIX A**

### ***SERVICE PLAN DEFINITIONS***

As used above, the following definitions apply:

**SAN MATEO COUNTY COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA:** is generally defined as follows:

- on the east by the existing District boundary and San Francisco Watershed Lands
- on the west by the Pacific Ocean
- on the north by the southern boundary of the City of Pacifica
- on the south by the San Mateo County / Santa Cruz County boundary

**AGRICULTURAL LAND:** means land currently used for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity for commercial purposes, land left fallow under a crop rotational program, or land enrolled in an agricultural subsidy or set-aside program.

source: SEC. 15. Government Code Section 56016 of the Government Code (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000)

**PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND:** The term “prime agricultural land” as used in this Service Plan is based on the San Mateo County Local Coastal Plan definition and means:

- a) All land which qualifies for rating as Class I or Class II in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service Land Use Capability Classification, as well as all Class III lands capable of growing artichokes or Brussels sprouts.
- b) All land which qualifies for rating 80-100 in the Storie Index Rating.
- c) Land which supports livestock for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- d) Land planted with fruit or nut bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a non-bearing period of less than five years and which normally return during the commercial bearing period, on an annual basis, from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than \$200 per acre.
- e) Land which has returned from the production of an unprocessed agricultural plant product an annual value that is not less than \$200 per acre within three of the five previous years. The \$200 per acre amount in subsections d) and e) shall be adjusted regularly for inflation, using 1965 as the base year, according to a recognized consumer price index.

In addition to the above, prime agricultural land includes the Resource Agency categories of Unique Farmlands or Farmlands of Statewide Importance as mapped by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency.

Reference: Mitigation AGR-1d

**NOTE:** There are several different definitions of Prime Agricultural Lands used under various legislative programs. Those definitions are provided below for informational purposes.

**Williamson Act Definition:** California Government Code section 51201(c) provides that “Prime agricultural land” means any of the following:

- 1) All land that qualifies for rating as class I or class II in the Natural Resource Conservation Service land use capability classifications.
- 2) Land that qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.
- 3) Land that supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture.
- 4) Land planted with fruit- or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes or crops which have a nonbearing period of less than five years and which will normally return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre.
- 5) Land that has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre for three of the previous five years.

**Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Act Definition:** California Government Code section 56064 provides that

“Prime agricultural land” means an area of land, whether a single parcel or contiguous parcels, that has not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use and that meets any of the following qualifications:

- 1) Land that qualifies, if irrigated, for rating as class I or class II in the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service land use capability classification, whether or not land is actually irrigated, provided that irrigation is feasible.
- 2) Land that qualifies for rating 80 through 100 Storie Index Rating.
- 3) Land that supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and that has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture in the National Handbook on Range and Related Grazing Lands, July, 1967, developed pursuant to Public Law 46, December 1935.
- 4) Land planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops that have a nonbearing period of less than five years and that will return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre.
- 5) Land that has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre for three of the previous five calendar years.

**San Mateo County Local Coastal Plan:** Section 5.1 Definition of Prime Agricultural Lands  
Define prime agricultural lands as:

- 1) All land which qualifies for rating as Class I or Class II in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service Land Use Capability Classification, as well as all Class III lands capable of growing artichokes or Brussels sprouts.
- 2) All land which qualifies for rating 80-100 in the Storie Index Rating.
- 3) Land which supports livestock for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- 4) Land planted with fruit or nut bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a non-bearing period of less than five years and which normally return during the commercial bearing period, on an annual basis, from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than \$200 per acre.
- 5) Land which has returned from the production of an unprocessed agricultural plant product an annual value that is not less than \$200 per acre within three of the five previous years. The \$200 per acre amount in subsections d. and e. shall be adjusted regularly for inflation, using 1965 as the base year, according to a recognized consumer price index.

**BASIC POLICIES:** an existing set of general policies adopted by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors that define open space, the District's purpose, and strategic planning goals. Basic policies provide guidance to District activities in the areas of: open space acquisition; planning; resource management; public recreational use and improvements; public safety; cultural resources; agriculture and revenue-producing use; interagency relationships (including cooperation, participation, and joint projects); research activities; public involvement (including public information, meeting procedures, public input, neighbor relations, participation, and volunteerism); and administration.

**BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP):** include:

- 1) Flow of runoff from drainage structures will be directed to vegetated area, away from creeks and drainages as is practical.
- 2) Conduct any trail maintenance work during low flow periods.
- 3) Use erosion and sediment control measures to minimize water quality impacts and ensure no sediment at heavily traveled trails flows into creeks. These measures include:
  - Silt Fences
  - Straw Bale Barriers\Brush or Rock Filters
  - Storm Drain Inlet Protection
  - Sediment Traps
  - Sediment Basins
  - Erosion Control Blankets and Mats
  - The District shall prevent erosion on step slopes by using erosion control material according to manufacturer's specifications.
- 4) If soil is to be stockpiled for any reason at creeksides, no run-off will be allowed to flow back to the creek."

**DRY HYDRANT:** water sources where engines can draft water from a standpipe connected to a pond, tank, or other forms of water storage. These can be stock watering holes, diverted water storage from creeks and water storage from active wells. The intent is to establish underground plumbing between the water storage and to a drivable area where the engine can back up to and draft water to fill its tank. The plumbing is usually a 2 1/2 –inch or 4-inch line connected to a 2 1/2 –inch standpipe that is placed above ground like a typical fire hydrant. These water sources can also be used as quail guzzlers and other wildlife drinking facilities. These sources should not be used in a case where groundwater supply would be affected

**IMPROVEMENTS:** Typical improvements the District might eventually develop within the Coastal Annexation Area would include a field office, maintenance facilities and related facilities to support stewardship activities, and visitor-serving facilities for public low-intensity recreation. Visitor-serving facilities typically would include: small, unpaved staging areas usually less than 1 acre in size; self-contained sanitary facilities; map boards; safety and regulatory signs; natural-surfaced trails; and patrol and emergency access routes. Minor staging areas would consist of 12 to 20 parking spaces. Major staging areas would consist of 40 to 60 parking spaces.

**LOW-INTENSITY RECREATION:** means recreation that avoids concentration of use, significant alteration of the land, and significant impact on natural resources or on the visitor's appreciation of nature. Criteria for evaluating types, timing, and level of access for low-intensity public recreational use of open space lands include:

1. Protection of natural resources;
2. Preservation of the opportunity for tranquil nature study and observation;
3. Avoidance of significant user conflicts;
4. Availability of Board and staff time, funding, and/or other means, to plan and manage the use.

source: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Basic Policy, March 10, 1999

**MASTER PLAN; REGIONAL OPEN SPACE STUDY:** To guide the District's open space preservation efforts, the District maintains a Master Plan and a Regional Open Space Study. The Master Plan sets forth guidelines for District acquisitions and shows the relative desirability of potential open space preservation without establishing a priority for land acquisition.

The Regional Open Space Study shows the general extent of lands and public access improvements existing and under consideration by the District and other park and open space agencies to complete the District's mission. Both documents are subject to periodic review and modification by the Board of Directors after public hearings. The Regional Open Space Study is subject to periodic technical updates.

source: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Basic Policy, March 10, 1999

#### **NATIVE AMERICAN BURIAL PLAN (NABP)**

- 1) In the event of an inadvertent discovery of human remains and cultural items during project construction, the field crew supervisor shall take immediate steps, if necessary, to secure and

protect any remains and cultural materials. This shall include but is not limited to such measures as (a) temporary avoidance by construction until the remains and items can be removed; (b) posting a security person; (c) placement of a security fence around the area of concern; or, (d) some combination of these measures. Any such measures employed will depend upon the nature and particular circumstances of the discovery.

- 2) The County Medical Examiner (Coroner) shall be notified by the field crew supervisor or other designated District manager and informed of the find and of any efforts made to identify the remains as Native American. If the remains are identified as a prehistoric Native American by either a professional archaeologist under contract to the District or the Medical Examiner's forensic archaeologist, the Medical Examiner is responsible for contacting the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours of notification of the find. The Medical Examiner may choose to document and remove the remains at his/her discretion depending on the circumstances of the discovery. The NAHC then designates and notifies a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD has 24 hours to consult and provide recommendations for the treatment or disposition, with proper dignity, of the human remains and grave goods [Note: Other culturally affiliated Native Americans [Indians] may be consulted by the MLD during the consultation and recommendation process to determine treatment of the skeletal remains].
- 3) Each burial and associated cultural items shall be stored as a unit in a secure facility, which shall be accessible to the MLD and other Native American representative(s) or their designated alternates upon prior arrangement.
- 4) The remains and associated cultural items shall be reburied in a secure location as near as possible to the area of their discovery or at an off-site location acceptable to the MLD that has minimal potential for future disturbance. The reburial shall be done in a manner that shall discourage or deter future disturbance. Reburial shall be conducted by persons designated by the MLD, with the assistance, if requested, of the District's field crew. The location shall be fully documented, filed with the NAHC and the California Historical Resources Information System, Northwest Information Center, California State University, Sonoma and treated as confidential information.
- 5) If the NAHC is unable to identify a MLD, or the MLD fails to make a recommendation, or the District or designate rejects the recommendation of the MLD and mediation (as per Section 5097.94 subdivision (k)) fails, reinterment of the human remains and associated cultural items associated shall take place with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance.
- 6) For security reasons, no news releases, including but not limited to photographs, videotapes, written articles, or other such means that contains information about human remains or burial-related items of Native American origin shall be released by any party during the discovery, recovery and reburial unless approved by the MLD.
- 7) Any disputes that arise among the MLD and representatives of affected Native American groups and/or between the District or designate and the MLD concerning cultural affiliation or the ultimate disposition of Native American human remains and associated funerary objects and unassociated funerary objects shall be resolved according to the dispute resolution procedures in Section 5097.94 of the State of California Public Resources Code.
- 8) The Archaeological Data Recovery/Native American Burial Treatment Report(s) shall be prepared by professional archaeologists. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following: project overview; ethnographic section; previous archaeological research in the region

and on-site; circumstances of discovery; recovery procedures and techniques; artifact analysis; faunal analysis; osteological analysis and interpretation; and, conclusions. The MLD and other interested Native American representative(s) shall be provided an opportunity to review the report and submit comments within the same time period as accorded any other reviewers.

- 9) Objects not associated with the human remains and recovered from private land shall be transferred to the District. If curation of any objects is required, curation will be at repository approved by the District. Repositories can include the History Museums of San Jose collections, the Tiburon Archaeological Research Group, San Francisco State University and the Collections Facility, Department of Anthropology, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park.

**OPEN SPACE:** means any parcel or area of land or water which is substantially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use, and which is designated on a local, regional or state open-space plan as any of the following:

1. Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to: areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecological and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lake shores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.
2. Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to: forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of ground water basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.
3. Open space for low-intensity outdoor recreation, including but not limited to: areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for recreation purposes, including access to lake shores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open-space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.
4. Open space for public health and safety, including, but not limited to: areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs; and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

sources: Government Code Sections 56059 and 65560

**PROTOCOL FOR UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL CULTURAL MATERIALS:** In the event that any cultural resources are exposed during construction, work at the location of the find will halt immediately within 10 meters (30 feet) of the find. If an archaeologist is not present at the time of the discovery, the District will contact an archaeologist for identification and evaluation in accordance with CEQA criteria. A reasonable effort will be made by the District and archaeologist to avoid or minimize harm to the discovery until significance is determined and an appropriate treatment can be identified and implemented. Methods to protect finds include fencing,

covering remains with protective material and culturally sterile soil or plywood. If vandalism is a threat, 24-hour security shall be provided. During this evaluation period, construction operations outside of the find location can continue preferably with an archaeologist monitoring any subsurface excavations.

If the resource cannot be avoided, the archaeologist will develop an appropriate *Action Plan* for treatment within 48 hours to minimize or mitigate the adverse effects. The District will not proceed with construction activities that could affect the discovery until the *Action Plan* has been reviewed and approved. The treatment effort required to mitigate the inadvertent exposure of significant cultural resources will be guided by a research design appropriate to the discovery and potential research data inherent in the resource in association with suitable archaeological field techniques and analytical strategies. The recovery effort will be detailed in a professional report in accordance with current archaeological standards. Any non-grave associated artifacts will be curated with an appropriate repository.

**SERVICE PLAN:** Whenever a local government agency submits an application for a change of organization to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), the local agency submits a plan for providing services within the affected territory. The plan for providing services includes all of the following information and any additional information required by the Commission or the LAFCo executive officer:

1. An enumeration and description of the services to be extended to the affected territory.
2. The level and range of those services.
3. An indication of when those services can feasibly be extended to the affected territory.
4. An indication of any improvement or upgrading of structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other conditions the local agency would impose or require within the affected territory if the change of organization or reorganization is completed.
5. Information with respect to how those services will be financed.

source: Government Code Section 56653 (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000)

**SITE ASSESSMENT:** Prior to property acquisition or entering into management agreements with another public or private non-profit land owner, the District conducts basic research about legal and property conditions associated with the property. Using information that is gathered, issues that may affect use and management of the property are identified. This assessment would typically include, but not necessarily be limited to: resource management opportunities and constraints, public access opportunities and constraints; and the role of any prime agricultural lands on the site relative to current marketplace conditions. An assessment is then made about the District resources that would be needed to sustain a responsible level of use and management of the property and its resources.

**USE AND MANAGEMENT PLAN:** any Site Use and Management Plan, excepting the Preliminary Use and Management Plan, which is adopted at the time of acquisition and normally preserves the status quo site conditions pending adoption of a more detailed site Use and Management Plan for the property.

## **APPENDIX B**

### ***OPTIONAL SERVICE PLAN SCENARIOS***

This appendix presents two optional scenarios for District programs that may be possible but are not part of the District's Basic Service Plan. These scenarios are presented for general background information to the San Mateo LAFCo to characterize District activities should a voter-approved funding measure sponsored either within the Coastal Annexation Area alone (Optional Scenario #1) or District-wide (Optional Scenario #2) succeed. For purposes of analysis, the study assumes that a reasonably foreseeable tax rate would be approximately \$1 dollar per month or \$12 per household per year based on polling previously conducted by the District. This would generate an additional 300,000 to 400,000 dollars annually if limited to the Coastal Annexation Area only, or about 3 to 4 million dollars annually if the funding measure was approved District-wide.

**OPTIONAL SCENARIO #1** - Additional funding would be available from a voter-approved measure in the Coastal Annexation Area; emphasis on managing land acquired by others, plus a modest District acquisition program.

**Assumptions:** A new funding source is approved by a vote of Coastal Annexation Area residents. At a rate of \$1 per month or \$12 per year per parcel, \$300,000 to \$400,000 per year would be generated. The District could expand its program of managing land acquired by other agencies and organizations. In addition to current Skyline area acquisition and management programs, the District could have a modest acquisition program within the Coastal Annexation Area.

**OPTIONAL SCENARIO #2** - Additional funding from a voter-approved measure District-wide; emphasis of District programs balanced between managing land acquired by other agencies or organizations and on land acquisition by the District.

**Assumptions:** A new funding source is approved by a vote of District-wide residents. At a rate of \$1 per month or \$12 per year per parcel, \$3 to \$4 million per year would be generated. The Board would determine, with input from constituents, what proportion of the additional funding would be directed to Coastal Annexation Area programs. The District's program to manage lands, whether acquired by the District or by other agencies and organizations within Coastal Annexation Area, could be significantly expanded and the District could undertake a broader acquisition program of its own, in addition to ongoing acquisition activities in the Skyline area.



**TABLE B-1: OPTIONAL SERVICE PLANS FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA -  
LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Optional Scenario #1</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; land management funded from existing sources and new voter-approved funding from within Coastal Annexation Area. (1)	<b>Optional Scenario #2</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition from grants and new District-wide voter-approved funding; emphasis balanced between land acquisition and management. (1)
<b>Years 1-5</b> Note: same as Basic Service Plan	<b>Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focused planning discussions with local interests to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Review for the Coastal Annexation Area</li> <li>Update of the District Master Plan and Open Space Study to include the Coastal Annexation Area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focused planning discussions with local interests to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Review for the Coastal Annexation Area</li> <li>Update of the District Master Plan and Open Space Study to include the Coastal Annexation Area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of existing District revenues; apply for public and private grants</li> <li>Develop and place new District funding measure on ballot</li> </ul>	<b>Funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of existing District revenues; apply for public and private grants</li> <li>Develop and place new District funding measure on ballot</li> </ul>
	<b>Land Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire approximately 1,000 to 1,200 acres / year via-existing District funding augmented by grants</li> <li>Acquire approximately 130 to 240 acres of easements / year via existing District funding augmented by grants</li> </ul>	<b>Land Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire approximately 1,000 to 1,200 acres / year via-existing District funding augmented by grants</li> <li>Acquire approximately 130 to 240 acres of easements / year via existing District funding augmented by grants</li> </ul>
	<b>Land Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen partnership opportunities for resource and public access management</li> <li>Limited program expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 100 to 200 acres / year based on partnership opportunities and existing District funding</li> </ul>	<b>Land Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen partnership opportunities for resource and public access management</li> <li>Limited program expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 100 to 200 acres / year based on partnership opportunities and existing District funding</li> </ul>
	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(2)</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish District presence through ranger residency program in housing located on properties acquired by the District</li> <li>Few areas open to public access</li> </ul>	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(2)</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish District presence through ranger residency program in housing located on properties acquired by the District</li> <li>Few areas open to public access</li> </ul>

**TABLE B-1: OPTIONAL SERVICE PLANS FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA - LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Optional Scenario #1</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; land management funded from existing sources and new voter-approved funding from within Coastal Annexation Area. (1)	<b>Optional Scenario #2</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition from grants and new District-wide voter-approved funding; emphasis balanced between land acquisition and management. (1)
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**Cumulative Total: Years 1-5**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>5-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>5-Year High Total in System</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>5-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>5-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	1,000	1,200	5,000	6,000	1,000	1,200	5,000	6,000
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	130	240	650	1,200	130	240	650	1,200
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	100	200	500	1,000	100	200	500	1,000
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1,640</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>8,200</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1,640</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>8,200</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>								
Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			14.3	19.0			14.3	19.0
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			2.8	3.2			2.8	3.2
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>			1	1			1	1

**TABLE B-1: OPTIONAL SERVICE PLANS FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA -  
LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Optional Scenario #1</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; land management funded from existing sources and new voter-approved funding from within Coastal Annexation Area. <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>Optional Scenario #2</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition from grants and new District-wide voter-approved funding; emphasis balanced between land acquisition and management. <sup>(1)</sup>
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<b>Years 6-10</b>	<b>Planning</b> • Same as Basic Service Plan	<b>Planning</b> • Same as Basic Service Plan
	<b>Land Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 115-230 acres / year based on approved Coastside funding <b>Easement Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 65 to 110 acres of easements / year based on approved Coastside funding measure, augmented by grants	<b>Land Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 200 to 400 acres / year based on approved District-wide funding measure, augmented by grants <b>Easement Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 90 to 150 acres of easements / year based on approved District-wide funding measure, augmented by grants
	<b>Land Management</b> • Moderate expansion of resource and public access management by approx. 100 to 200 acres / year based on partnership opportunities with others and lands acquired by the District	<b>Land Management</b> • Expansion of resource and public access management by up to approximately 100 to 200 acres / year based on partnership opportunities with others and lands acquired by the District
	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(3)</sup> • Similar to Basic Service Plan except with proportionally more staffing and low-intensity recreation facilities provided	<b>Improvements</b> <sup>(3)</sup> • Similar to Basic Service Plan except with proportionally more staffing and low-intensity recreation facilities provided

**Cumulative Total: Years 6-10**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>10-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>10-Year High Total in System</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>10-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>10-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	115	230	6,575	7,150	200	400	7,000	8,000
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	65	110	1,525	1,150	90	150	1,650	1,950
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	100	200	1,500	2,000	100	200	1,500	2,000
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>9,600</b>	<b>10,900</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>10,150</b>	<b>11,950</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>								

**TABLE B-1: OPTIONAL SERVICE PLANS FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA -  
LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Optional Scenario #1</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; land management funded from existing sources and new voter-approved funding from within Coastal Annexation Area. <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>Optional Scenario #2</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition from grants and new District-wide voter-approved funding; emphasis balanced between land acquisition and management. <sup>(1)</sup>
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Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>		22.0	25.0		23	27.0
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>		8.4	8.6		8.6	9.0
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>		1	1		1	2

<b>Years 11-15</b>	<b>Planning</b> • Same as Basic Service Plan	<b>Planning</b> • Same as Basic Service Plan
	<b>Land Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 75 to 150 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts  <b>Easement Acquisition</b> • Acquire approximately 8 to 10 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts	<b>Land Acquisition</b> • Reduce acquisitions to approximately 175 to 350 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts  <b>Easement Acquisition</b> • Reduce easement acquisitions to approximately 40 to 50 acres / year based primarily on grants and gifts
	<b>Land Management</b> • Moderate expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 50 to 100 acres / year based on partnership opportunities with others and lands acquired by the District	<b>Land Management</b> • Expansion of resource and public access management by approximately 50 to 100 acres / year based on partnership opportunities with others and lands acquired by the District
	<b>Improvements<sup>(3)</sup></b> • Similar to Basic Service Plan except with proportionally more staffing and low-intensity recreation facilities provided	<b>Improvements<sup>(3)</sup></b> • Similar to Basic Service Plan except with proportionally more staffing and low-intensity recreation facilities provided

**Cumulative Total: Years 11-15**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>15-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>15-Year High Total in System</b>	<b>Low Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>High Yearly Acreage</b>	<b>15-Year Low Total in System</b>	<b>15-Year High Total in System</b>
Lands Acquired	75	150	6,950	7,900	175	350	7,875	9,750
Easements Acquired (or Monitored for Others)	8	10	1,575	1,800	40	50	1,850	2,200
Expansion of Lands Managed Under Contract	50	100	1,950	2,500	50	100	1,750	2,500

**TABLE B-1: OPTIONAL SERVICE PLANS FOR THE COASTAL ANNEXATION AREA - LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Approximate Time Frame</b>	<b>Optional Scenario #1</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition principally from grants; land management funded from existing sources and new voter-approved funding from within Coastal Annexation Area. <sup>(1)</sup>				<b>Optional Scenario #2</b> <b>Premise:</b> Funding for land acquisition from grants and new District-wide voter-approved funding; emphasis balanced between land acquisition and management. <sup>(1)</sup>			
<b>Cumulative Total All Lands</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>10,475</b>	<b>12,200</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>11,475</b>	<b>14,450</b>
<b>Facilities:</b>								
Existing Roads & Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>24.3</b>	<b>28.5</b>			<b>26.9</b>	<b>33.0</b>
New Trails <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>9.2</b>	<b>9.9</b>			<b>9.9</b>	<b>11.5</b>
Staging Areas <sup>(3)</sup>			<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

- (1) Funding opportunities from grant programs for land acquisition vary significantly over time. Grant programs also vary in purpose, geographic area, and requirements for matching funds.
- (2) Assumes that preliminary use and management plans focus on site safety and resource protection, therefore no areas would be opened for public use and no access facilities developed.
- (3) Assumes the following:
- Approximately 7 miles of trail opened to public use per 1,720 acres of land owned or managed by the District; of these approximately 2/3 will be trails that either exist or are unpaved ranch/fire roads converted to trail use. Trails available for public use will not occur immediately upon the inclusion of lands into the District. Therefore trail mileages indicated are lower than the maximum that could be calculated based on the above formula; and
  - Staging areas are provided at a rate of one area per 18 miles of trails and will be evenly distributed between major and minor staging areas.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors, District 3 Supervisor Ray Mueller	1. Supervisor Mueller highlighted Midpen's Coastsides Mission Statement, particularly the statement “to acquire and preserve agricultural land of regional significance” and expressed concerns that "regional significance" is not clearly defined and the potential for ag land to be changed to other uses.	<p>The term “Agricultural Land of Regional Significance” as used in the Service Plan equates to “prime agricultural land” and is identified in the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program Policies definition. Regional Significance also includes “Important Farmlands” as defined and mapped by San Mateo County that extend beyond the Local Coastal Area. These lands include soil units qualifying for Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data.</p> <p>For added clarity, a new definition is proposed to be included as a callout in the Basic Policy as follow:</p> <p><i>Agricultural Lands of Regional Significance are agricultural or rangeland parcels that are either in active agricultural use or have the potential to support viable agricultural operations, including but not be limited to lands designated as prime agricultural lands in the Coastsides Protection Area. The intent is to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity on the Coastsides.</i></p> <p>The Service Plan contains policies that preserve and foster existing and potential agricultural operations in San Mateo County to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production and minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses that may occur on Midpen owned or managed land.</p> <p>Moreover, the Coastal Service Plan purposefully includes specific policies that severely constrain Midpen’s ability to convert lands zoned for agricultural uses to other uses or to develop lands with prime agricultural soils. Only in extenuating circumstances would this potentially be considered and would require extensive public review and approvals from other public agencies, including the San Mateo County.</p> <p>The proposed updated language aims to bring the Basic Policy in alignment with the Service Plan, which has been providing policy guidance on Midpen activities and programs within the Coastsides Protection Area (CPA) over the last 20 years. The policy update elevates key policies in the Service Plan into the Basic Policy while recognizing that these policies are uniquely applied to the CPA. The Service Plan remains in effect after the Basic Policy Update and will continue to provide guidance</p>

**TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		on Midpen’s coastsides work as it contains other guidelines and implementation actions that are too specific to be included in the Basic Policy.
San Mateo County Farm Bureau (SMCFB)	1. Desire to keep Basic Policies separate for the Coastsides instead of integrating into a comprehensive set of Basic Policies for both Coastsides and Baysides areas.	<p>The Basic Policy is Midpen’s overarching foundational policy document that applies to all Midpen services, programs, and activities. Having one Basic Policy that covers all lands is essential for clarity and understanding of Midpen’s overarching policies as they apply across all lands and those that apply more specifically to coastsides agricultural lands.</p> <p>The Basic Policy update aims to bring the Basic Policy in alignment with the Service Plan, which has been providing policy guidance on Midpen activities and programs within the Coastsides Protection Area over the last 20 years. This effort elevates key policies in the Service Plan into the Basic Policy while recognizing that these policies are uniquely applied to the Coastsides Protection Area. The Service Plan remains in effect after the Basic Policy Update and will continue to provide guidance on Midpen’s coastsides work as it contains other guidelines and implementation actions that are too specific to be included in the Basic Policy.</p>
	2. Provide a real-life example of how the District applies the Basic Policies so the general layperson understands how these policies work at the ground level for people who don’t understand policies.	<p>Midpen’s Basic Policy states the agency’s purpose and provides overarching fundamental principles of how it governs and manages its lands, while more topic specific operating details are covered in subsequent Board and Administrative policies, which must remain consistent with the Basic Policy. As an analogy, the Basic Policy serves as the “Constitution” for Midpen, while other underlying policies serve as “laws” with more specificity in how actions are carried out and must remain within the framework and consistent with the constitution.</p> <p>The development of Use and Management Plans for preserves provides one example in how Midpen applies the Basic Policies. The Basic Policies set the fundamental framework for the types of uses, facilities, and management actions that are permissible for Midpen lands. The specific actions and allowances included in the Use and Management Plans must remain consistent with the Basic Policies.</p>
	3. Please provide information on District projects that have been done solely for agricultural preservation (and not integrated as part of a public access project on coastsides).	See Attachment 5 for information sheet related to Midpen’s work and investments on the Coastsides since expanding its boundaries to the San Mateo County Coast. Note, however, that certain improvements and investments do have dual benefits. In particular, major repairs to ranch roads that also function as access trails benefit the agricultural operations onsite and support public access goals. For example, significant repairs to Sears Ranch Road/Trail were completed in 2016/17 to maintain access to pasturelands across the property. This ranch road serves as the main access

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		road for onsite grazing operation and had suffered severe storm damage and landslides. At the same time, this ranch road is also the main pathway for the interior trail system that is used by hikers and equestrians.
	4. Reference the MOU between the District and the Farm Bureau	Comment noted. As Basic Policy is a high level policy document, inclusion of a third-party agreement is not appropriate. The MOU between the District and the Farm Bureau remains in effect separate from the Basic Policy.
	5. Need a definition of “rural character”	<p>Generally speaking, “rural character” refers to the combination of natural landscapes, open spaces, agricultural lands, minimal development, and scenic or cultural features that reflect a community’s rural heritage or lifestyle. It includes the patterns and scale of land use, the presence of farms and forests, and the overall sense of openness and connection to the natural environment. The Service Plan alludes to agriculture and limited development in several locations of the document as key components that make up rural character of the coastside (see pages 6, 9, and 13 of the Service Plan). This definition will be included as a callout in the Basic Policy to provide added clarity.</p> <p>The definition provided above is consistent with how rural landscapes are depicted under Midpen’s Agricultural Use Policy and the La Honda Creek Master Plan, which state:</p> <p>“The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors agrees the agricultural and open space resources along approximately 40 miles of the San Mateo County coast are of national significance and deserve the highest level of stewardship possible. Through these Agricultural Policies, Midpen endeavors to expand its central mission of natural protection to include agricultural practices that protect the land, its rural agriculture landscapes and way of life. [Source: Agricultural Use Policy section of Resource Management Policies]</p> <p>Preservation of the rural character of San Mateo County is important to both residents and visitors and is embodied in Midpen’s Coastside Protection Program mission. The character of rural San Mateo County comes from the open, working landscape as well as the lifestyles of rural residents. Historically, this was based largely on an agricultural way of life where many residents made their livings from the land. Ongoing integration of farming and ranching still plays a very strong role in preserving the identity of rural communities. Aside from the open space and views provided by working ranch lands, the presence of livestock in the landscape</p>



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		makes a significant contribution to the area's rural character and can be important to local residents. [Source: La Honda Creek Master Plan, Existing Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Report]
	6. Need a definition of "agriculture"	<p>The definition of agriculture is included in Midpen's Resource Management Policies' Glossary:</p> <p><b>Agriculture</b> - encompasses crop and livestock production, aquaculture, and fisheries for food and non-food products.</p> <p>This definition will be included as a callout in the Basic Policy.</p>
	7. Add a policy to focus more on agricultural education and advocacy. More education is needed for everyone on agricultural practices. Provide educational signage on trails about farming, pesticide use, etc.	<p>Comment noted. The following section is recommended to be added to the Basic Policy to address this comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under "Agriculture and Revenue-Producing Use" section, add the following language:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">g. The District supports agricultural education that fosters public awareness, appreciation and stewardship of viable agricultural uses of land resources that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, and that encourages support for locally grown food sources and sustainable agricultural practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the following modifications are recommended to further address the comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreational Use and Improvements, Special Use Facilities: Adding "agricultural uses" and "agricultural education" to the text.</li> <li>- Research, Item d: Adding "non-profit" to educational and scientific institutions.</li> <li>- Research, Item d: Adding "productive agricultural resources" to the text.</li> </ul>
San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee (SMCAAC)	1. Page 13 of PDF - Agriculture and revenue producing use. Item F. Who determines viable agriculture? How to determine viable ag?	<p>Midpen's Coastsides Mission includes acquiring and preserving agricultural land of regional significance, preserving rural character, and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources. As a subset of Midpen's Basic Policy, Midpen's Agricultural Policy states:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The "viable agricultural use of land resources" is defined as uses that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, that support the agriculture</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		<p>operation, and that the agricultural use is economically viable over the long term.</p> <p>The Service Plan contains policies that preserve and foster existing and potential agriculture operations in San Mateo County to keep maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production.</p> <p>Consistent with the Service Plan, the Agricultural Policy also contains a policy for continuing existing and introducing new agricultural operations within Coastside Protection Area in order to keep prime agricultural land in agricultural production while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural resources.</p> <p>Midpen consults with agricultural and grazing lessees in maintaining viable agriculture on Midpen lands that is consistent with the Service Plan and Midpen's mission regarding the protection of natural resources.</p>
	2. Regional significance should be removed. Does not add anything or potentially creates non productive debate.	<p>Comment noted. "Agricultural Land of Regional Significance" as used in the Service Plan equates to "prime agricultural land" and includes "Important Farmlands" as defined and mapped by San Mateo County that extends beyond the Local Coastal Plan Area. These lands include soil units qualifying for Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data.</p> <p>For added clarity, a new definition is proposed to be included as a callout in the Basic Policy as follow:</p> <p><i>Agricultural Lands of Regional Significance are agricultural or rangeland parcels that are either in active agricultural use or have the potential to support viable agricultural operations, including but not be limited to lands designated as prime agricultural lands in the Coastside Protection Area. The intent is to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity on the Coastside.</i></p> <p>The Service Plan contains policies that preserve and foster existing and potential agricultural operations in San Mateo County to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production and minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses that may occur on District owned or managed land.</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	3. If land is determined to be viable but not used for ag when you purchase the property, from a farmer perspective, there is no ag use. Is there a new process for Midpen to assess existing lands that are viable for ag? Or is that for new lands only?	<p>The assessment of Midpen open space lands for viable agricultural uses can occur during various phases of land acquisition, operations and management.</p> <p>At the time of acquisition, Midpen evaluates the property's existing and potential agricultural and grazing uses. Resource assessments are conducted to determine the suitability of existing and new agricultural uses or expanded agricultural areas on newly acquired properties. These assessments inform the development of a Preliminary Use and Management Plan (PUMP) for the property that defines the allowable uses for the land.</p> <p>Properties can be reassessed at a later time for new or expanded agricultural uses as part of subsequent plan reviews, including during the Comprehensive Use and Management planning process.</p> <p>All of these assessment and planning processes are consistent with <b>Board Policy 4.01 Open Space Use and Management Planning Process</b>.</p>
	4. Understand the Ag Policy is under the umbrella of Basic Policies. Take that info into account when you go through the Basic Policy.	Comment noted. Midpen agrees with the Commentor that the Agricultural Use Policy is one of the underlying policies that builds off the "Agriculture and Revenue-Producing Use" policies in the Basic Policy.
	<p>5. Well thought out proposed policy changes to preserve agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local crops and local production that are not meat or ranching - broccoli, asparagus don't travel well. Grow these and make available to local schools.</li> <li>A lot of people love the opportunity to start farming. Unaffordable to buy the land to farm.</li> <li>When there is opportunity to evaluate the land's viability for growing vegetables - include in overarching document, prioritize growing vegetables, and beef production would be second priority.</li> </ul>	<p>While the Basic Policy and Service Plan provide high-level guidance to District activities in the area of agriculture, these policies do not specify Midpen's evaluation of growing vegetable crops over cattle grazing.</p> <p>To date, Midpen has protected more than 19,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands on the coast, including more than 12,000 acres in conservation grazing leases in our Coastside Protection Area through our <a href="#">Conservation Grazing Program</a>. Midpen lands also contain row crops and orchards, including seven acres of cut flowers in Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve, 33 acres of agricultural fields in Miramontes Ridge Preserve, and a historic chestnut orchard and Christmas tree farm in Skyline Ridge Preserve.</p> <p>Midpen's nonprofit partner, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), plays a complementary role in agricultural conservation, working with farm owners and operators to preserve farmlands and the local agricultural heritage, thus protecting the</p>

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Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can do vegetable farming and production on land previously suitable for grazing</li> </ul>	underlying natural resources and open space values. Midpen does not typically acquire fee title to prime agricultural soils. Instead, Midpen partners with other entities to preserve prime soils suitable for agriculture production.
	6. 20 years ago on the coastside of SMC to City Limits of Santa Cruz. About 2,500 acres prime ag land (irrigated) taken out of production from the State or the open space group. Don't want that to happen.	<p>It is unclear from the Commentor which prime agricultural land was taken out of production and which open space group was involved.</p> <p>As specified in the Service Plan (see Agriculture policies PA.1, PA.2 and PA.3), Midpen would preserve existing and potential agricultural operations to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production.</p> <p>Please see Attachment 5 summarizing Midpen's efforts on San Mateo Coastside protecting agricultural lands and supporting agricultural uses.</p>
	<p>7. Service Plan Page 10, PURPOSE (last bullet point)</p> <p><i>preserve existing and potential agricultural operations in order to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production.</i></p> <p>Regarding "preserving existing and potential agricultural operations" - Add language that is specific to preserving Prime Ag lands on the coast.</p>	This statement is in the Coastal Service Plan, which lists policies that preserve prime agricultural lands (Agriculture Policies PA.1, PA.2 and PA.3).
Pescadero Municipal Advisory Committee (PMAC)	1. Was the Ag Advisory Committee supportive of the proposed Basic Policy modifications?	The Ag Advisory Committee members provided verbal comments to Midpen staff. They did not take any formal action regarding the proposed Basic Policy Update.
	2. When will Midpen open Driscoll Ranch (Event Center) to the public?	The Event Center property is currently open to the public via a permit system for hiking and horseback riding in lower La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, where

**TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

<b>Organization/ Individual</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
		visitors can secure the use permit from Midpen's webpage: <a href="#">Permits   Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District</a>
	3. When will Midpen repair the fallen fence at Red Barn property adjacent to Hwy 84?	The fencing along Highway 84 is on Midpen's maintenance work plan to replace and requires time for coordination with Caltrans due to its proximity within the state highway right-of-way.
	4. What percentage of Midpen-owned coastal properties in the Coastside Protection Area are in the Skyline region?	Approximately 19,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands have been conserved to date; all these lands are managed by the Skyline Field Office and are part of the Midpen's Skyline area.
	5. Would your Board consider holding their meetings in Pescadero on occasion?	Yes. In accordance with the Service Plan and Midpen's Good Neighbor Policy, the Board of Directors and/or Board committees hold at least one public meeting in coastal areas when they consider master plans and/or policies that may significantly affect coastal areas. Midpen will hold these meetings in locations such as Pescadero, Half Moon Bay, and La Honda. (See Implementation Action G.5.C(i))
	6. Supportive of Midpen doing timber harvesting to manage the forests properly and address fuel management	Comment noted.
	7. Would Midpen be a good neighbor and not stand in the way of a private landowner's timber harvest plans?	Midpen has no regulatory authority over private lands and cannot stop private landowners from harvesting trees under a timber harvest plan (THP). Midpen does provide public comments on THPs or other development plans that may impact adjacent Midpen preserves. These comments generally focus on improving projects and reducing impacts rather than stopping them.
	8. On an annual basis, how much does Midpen pay to the La Honda-Pescadero School District?	On February 28, 2024, Midpen's Board approved a Successor Agreement with the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District (LHPUSD) for a 15-year term whereby Midpen will continue to pay a tax compensatory fee to the school district that increases 2% annually. During the original 20-year term of the Agreement, Midpen paid a total of \$380,891 to LHPUSD in tax compensatory fees. The annual fees for Fiscal Year 2023-24 were \$84,969, and for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 were \$85,938.
	9. Beyond preserving farmland, how does Midpen ensure working farms are economically viable?	Lease fees are set to allow for farmers and ranchers to make a profit on their operations. Moreover, Midpen makes significant investments in agricultural infrastructure and site improvements to support ongoing agricultural operations, including brush reduction, new fencing, corrals, and water systems and distribution of which most tenants would not be able to afford on their own. Midpen also compensates tenants as contractors for improvements made to Midpen lands.
	10. Does a tenant on Midpen lands have flexibility to manage their ag operations?	While agricultural leases include some restrictions and guidelines for agricultural use on public lands, individual tenants have a great deal of lee way to manage their own operations.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	11. Why are you preserving open space when there is a need for housing for thousands of farmworkers on the coast. If Midpen does not develop housing on their lands, farmworkers do not have the opportunity to live in the area they work.	Midpen actively preserves open space to fulfill its mission of land conservation, resource protection, ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education, and on the coastside, to protect the rural character and viable agricultural uses. Typically, lands preserved by Midpen are zoned for open space or agricultural use, not for housing. Additionally, the site and environmental conditions of the open space lands (e.g. steep topography, sensitive natural resources, etc.) severely limit or prohibit residential development. Moreover, rural preserve lands typically lack or have minimal utilities (water, electricity & gas) to support housing.
	12. Since it is hard to develop housing on Midpen lands and Midpen is supportive of housing initiatives, who do we call to discuss this housing issue?	For follow up questions regarding housing on Midpen lands, please contact Visitor & Field Services Assistant General Manager Brian Malone at (650) 691-1200.
	13. Can you provide an example of Midpen's work on farmworker housing?	In 2019, Midpen completed the renovation of an existing tenant residence and designated it as agricultural workforce housing. The renovation work was partially funded by a forgivable loan under the San Mateo County Farmworker Housing Pilot Program. Midpen also provides market rate housing for two agricultural lessees. Separately, Midpen is exploring options to fund projects that are led by partners who are rehabilitating or building new housing for farm workers on the coastside
San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD)	RCD acknowledged the receipt of Basic Policy update information but did not provide comments directly related to the proposed policy changes.	No response necessary.
Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)	1. It looks like you all have undertaken a thorough and thoughtful process. The comments below, I think align with some already noted in the document. We appreciate the District's efforts to update the Basic Policy to align with other update policies including the District's Coastal Service Plan.	Comment noted.
	2. We are glad to see recognition of the important role that agricultural lands can play in preserving biodiversity, supporting climate resilience, and enhancing our communities. Including "working	Comment noted. <a href="https://codes.findlaw.com/ca/government-code/gov-sect-65560/">https://codes.findlaw.com/ca/government-code/gov-sect-65560/</a> section h.2

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Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	agricultural lands" in the definition of "Open Space" (Page 1) makes sense.	
	3. The definitional change above doesn't seem to carry through the entire document. For example on page 2, the suggested revisions to the District's Mission Statement for the Coastsides Protection Area calls out "open space land and agricultural lands of regional significance." Given that the District now includes ag lands within Open Space perhaps reword to say "open space land including agricultural lands of regional significance."	Comment noted. To clarify, Midpen's Coastsides Mission remains unchanged and was developed when Midpen expanded its boundary to the Coastsides. Agricultural lands of regional significance are specifically called out in this mission statement given the larger focus on preserving agricultural lands as open space land on the coastsides and their role in preserving the underlying natural resource values of the land.
Puente	<p>Our main point of feedback is that we of course support the protection of our beautiful coast and we support your endeavor to include agriculture in your policy. However, two main points that are more related to the "how" more than the "what" are:</p> <p>1. To make an effort to be inclusive of equitable practices when considering leasing land or selling it for agriculture by doing impactful outreach so those usually in disadvantaged (areas) know of existing opportunities.</p> <p>Basic Policy sections noted where equitable and effective outreach practices could be referenced include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open Space Definition</li> <li>- Coastsides Protection Area Mission Statement</li> <li>- District Purpose</li> <li>- Open Space Acquisition</li> <li>- Vision Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Comment noted. At Midpen, we believe open space is for all and equitable practices are embedded in everything we do. There are a number of statements in the Basic Policy that direct Midpen to conduct comprehensive, impactful outreach on all its activities. These are generally listed under the heading "Public Involvement". It is in following these policies that Midpen conducted a comprehensive public engagement process to solicit community feedback on updating the Basic Policy document.</p> <p>Specifically related to agriculture, the District's Agricultural Policy as a subset of the District's Basic Policy, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy AG-12</b> that directs the District to implement equitable outreach strategies and actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build relationships with community-based organizations that are rooted in and serve the farmworker community.</li> <li>- Provide opportunities to lease District agricultural properties to people who have not traditionally owned or operated ranches and farmlands.</li> <li>- Work with partners to provide training opportunities on (1) environmentally sustainable and resource protective farming and ranching operations and (2) navigating the request for proposals process, for the purpose of enhancing equitable access to lease opportunities.</li> <li>- Provide non-English translations when appropriate or re-requested.</li> <li>- Ensure community-based organizations are notified when District leases are up for renewal or when accepting new applications.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resource Management</li> <li>- Agriculture and Revenue-Producing Use</li> <li>- Public Involvement</li> <li>- Participation</li> <li>- Professional Organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy AG-13</b> Expand partnerships with local and regional organizations to expand the scale of agricultural land conservation to further protect the surrounding natural resource values.</li> </ul>
	<p>2. Also, there is no section to add our thoughts on housing. Agriculture on its own will not sustain if those who work the land do not have a place to live. Preserving the housing already on site and perhaps pursuing any possible housing permitted by the current regulations for agriculture purposes, in our opinion, should be included.</p>	<p>As a subset of the District's Basic Policy, the District's Agricultural Policy addresses agriculture-related housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy AG-3</b> directs the District to retain current District agricultural housing and expand agricultural housing opportunities when feasible to further District goals and to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider opportunities to partner with and support local organizations that provide affordable regional agricultural workforce housing when such partnerships help further District goals.</li> <li>- Consider partnerships to develop and manage agricultural workforce housing on District lands in appropriate locations that do not conflict with natural resource protection and/or ecologically sensitive public access goals. In general, open space lands do not provide sustainable housing development locations and new housing would be limited to specific circumstances in disturbed areas with existing infrastructure.</li> <li>- Prioritize the leasing of District residences that are needed to support an agricultural operation located on District lands to the grazing operator/lessee or farm/ranch worker who is actively farming or grazing on the land unless otherwise essential for operational needs as District employee housing. (Board Policy 4.11: Housing Policy4)</li> <li>- Farm Worker Housing- Provide discounted rates for District housing that is occupied by a non-lease holding farm/ranch employees who support an agricultural operation on District land.</li> <li>- Agricultural Operator (Lease Holder) Housing- Rent District housing at prevailing rental market rates for lease holders (Board Policy 4.11: Housing Policy).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		<p>In addition, the Service Plan that remains as the guiding document for District operations in the Coastal Protection Area after the adoption of the Basic Policy update, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Permanent Policy PA.2</b> that states the District shall actively work with lessees of District lands and with the owners of land in which the District has an agricultural easement interest to: facilitate the provision of farm worker housing on District owned lands by providing technical assistance in obtaining permits for such housing from the County of San Mateo.</li> <li>• <b>Permanent Policy PA.3</b> that directs the District to actively pursue opportunities within the Coastal Protection Area to enter into agricultural easements and leases with interested farmers and ranchers that shall include terms that ensure farmers or ranchers may provide farm labor housing as defined and approved by San Mateo County.</li> </ul>
	3. Open Space Acquisition Amend to proposed wording to read: To conserve funding for preservation, or to allow farmers and rancher to “ <i>obtain or</i> ” retain ownership of working agricultural lands . . .	Comment noted. No change is recommended as this section involves land acquisition using public funds. Midpen utilizes tools such as agricultural easements to allow farmers and ranchers to retain ownership of working agricultural lands but would not purchase lands for private individuals.
	4. Public Access and Constraints Amend to proposed wording to read: The District provides “ <i>ecologically sensitive</i> ” public access to the open space lands for low-intensity recreational uses..	Comment noted, “ecologically sensitive” has been included in the text.
Ayuando Latinos A Soñar (ALAS)	No comments received.	No response necessary.
Sustainable Pescadero Collaborative	No comments received.	No response necessary.
Committee for Green Foothills (CGF) - Lennie Roberts	1. Table 1, (page 9 of my printout). Current Policy Statement reads: “Developing facilities and managing public use activities while protecting natural resources and providing for public safety may require limits on access to some open space lands.” Proposed change is to delete “natural	Comment noted. The text has been edited as follows, retaining the intent that open space values includes natural resource values: “natural resources and open space values”

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	resources” and substitute “open space values”. I disagree with the suggested deletion of “natural resources” and recommend keeping it while adding “open space values” which would provide a stronger and clearer statement.	
Grass Roots Ecology	They have no comments because "it seems like most of the changes are in relation to your new preserves on the coastside, where Grassroots Ecology is not active."	Comment noted.
Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance (SCVBA)	1. SCVBA would like to register our concern with the potential of encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources to allow uses that are harmful to the land and its people and natural resources, and due to potentially contaminated runoff, also to Pacific Ocean resources. The word "viable" has an economic, rather than conservation, focus - and we see it as incompatible with the overall mission of MROSD. Along the coast we would like to see MROSD allowing intensive agriculture (row crops) land to go fallow, or be restored to natural coastal shrub land.	<p>Comment noted. Midpen’s Coastsides Mission includes acquiring and preserving agricultural land of regional significance, preserving rural character, and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources. Fallowing agricultural land would not be consistent with Midpen’s Coastsides Mission.</p> <p>As a subset of Midpen’s Basic Policy, Midpen’s Agricultural Policy defines “viable agricultural use of land resources” as uses that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, that support the agriculture operation, and that the agricultural use is economically viable over the long term.</p> <p>This is a more holistic definition that, while including economics, also assures the protection of natural resources.</p>
	2. This remains a concern for SCVBA, as Viable agriculture without language to include ecological constraints has inherent conflicts with land stewardship and conservation. Viable Agriculture may support ecosystems, but also has the potential to destroy habitat, pollute land and water resources and degrade human and environmental health.	Comment noted. See response to Comment #1. In response to the comment, the Basic Policy Update will include a callout to clarify the definition of “viable agricultural uses of land resources”.
	3. Please edit? it seems that the first sentences are missing? What happened to the language "Master Plan, Regional Open Space Study d.	The comment is correct that some proposed text is missing in the version provided for review. Midpen’s Master Plan and Regional Open Space Study were superseded by the Board’s adoption of the “Vision Plan” and creation of the Conservation Atlas*. The Atlas itself is a living document of spatial data sources from Midpen and its

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	To guide the District's open space preservation efforts, the District produces a master plan...?	<p>conservation partners, as well as other publicly-available information that informed the Vision Plan and has since been continuously serving as a resource for land protection and stewardship coordination.</p> <p><b>The policy title and introductory text have been added back in.</b></p> <p><small>*Midpen's 2014 Vision Plan Conservation Atlas  <a href="https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Conservation_Atlas.pdf">https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/Conservation_Atlas.pdf</a></small></p>
	4. There are no examples in other sections of this document. I think the intent is to highlight the good aspects of agriculture, but it mask these inherent conflict between protection of land and biodiversity, and intensive chemically-dependent monoculture	Comment noted. The purpose of the Basic Policy is to provide general guidance for Midpen in the conduct of its operations and programs, not to address potential impacts of agriculture that would occur from not adhering to Midpen's Basic Policy and other policies, including those identified in its Agricultural Policies.
	5. Is there a definition for "gradually"? It seems to me that Midpen has been very aggressive in providing access in the past 5-6 years.	The pace of providing new public access opportunities depends on available funding and resources, which varies from year to year. The Basic Policy clearly places public access as secondary to the goals of "acquiring land to complete the greenbelt and to protect natural resources on open space land". Any public access and related site features on District lands are subject to the preparation of detailed and site-specific plans. Each site plan is informed by surveys, inventories and analysis of the sensitive and significant natural resources to ensure that proposed actions are protective of these resources. Moreover, any proposed change to the natural environment requires an environmental review, which also evaluates the potential effects to the natural resources and specifies any special protection measures or mitigation required to protect sensitive resources.
	6. We are concerned with the substitution of "Natural Resources" with the ambiguous "Open Space Values". Please retain "Natural Resources". You may use "natural resources and open space values" if you like, but please do not delete natural resources, and do not use "or open space values" that makes the protection of natural resources optional. Protection of Natural resources must continue to be the core of Midpen policies.	Comment noted. The text has been edited as follows, retaining the intent that open space values includes natural resource values: "natural resources and open space values"

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	7. Redundant. No need to add “or limited” to this sentence referencing facilities development and public use activities: <i>Areas found to be vital wildlife or plant habitats are designated as <u>conservation management units</u> <del>refuge area</del>, and in these areas, access will be severely restricted <u>or limited</u>.</i>	Comment noted. The purpose of adding “or limited” allows for a variety of management measures to be implemented other than simply closing off areas to public access which some would consider a severe restriction. Examples of more limited access considerations include, among other actions, seasonal closures, buffer areas around management units, limited programming, partially restricting trail use to specific users, or limitations on group size.
	8. Can you explain the principles of how Midpen prioritizes grants to apply for? how staff is allocated to identify funding sources, implementation, maintenance, monitoring etc.? I think this needs more clarity.	The Basic Policy when taken in its entirety directs Midpen to emphasize grant funding where possible versus relying on general funds. Grants are opportunistic in nature based on the grant sources available at an given time and based on the eligibility of Midpen projects. In general, Midpen’s 3-year Capital Improvement and Action Plan identifies the projects in the pipeline over the near-term. Staff use this project list to seek grant programs that are good matches to help secure outside funds.
	9. Is hang gliding permitted? considered?	Yes. Paragliding and hang gliding do occur at Midpen’s Windy Hill Open Space Preserve under a special use permit. Access and permits are managed through the Wings of Rogallo, a chapter of the United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association.
Sierra Club	Sierra Club acknowledged receipt of draft documents but did not provide any comments.	No response necessary.
Acterra	1. I have reviewed the Draft Basic Policy Statement Revisions (Table 1) and the existing Policy Statements, the Related Service Plan Statements and the Change Considerations to Basic Policy. I think it a good update and suggest no changes other than a quibble with the Mission Statement modification.	Comment noted.
	2. The Service Plan update including agriculture not only as a "compatible use" but also as working lands for "the managed production of resources" logically follows the "intent...to maintain agriculture in perpetuity on the coastside." Including working agricultural land within the open space definition fits the character and history of the San Mateo County coast.	Comment noted.

**TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

<b>Organization/ Individual</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
	3. The Mission Statement modification for outside and inside the Coastsides Protection District is clear if not a little bit awkward. I would suggest "Bayside" and "Coastsides" as terms that fit our Midpeninsula quite well.	Comment noted. While we appreciate the suggestion, the Coastsides mission, Coastal Service Plan and associated policies, guidelines, and implementation actions are specifically applied to the Coastsides Protection Area as defined in the Service Plan. Using "Bayside" and "Coastsides" do not fully reflect the Service Plan.
	4. I applaud the keeping of the Wallace Stegner quote intact and the inclusion of the footnote. I am certainly not alone from deriving continued health and refreshment of spirit from lifting my eyes unto the hills.	Comment noted. Midpen appreciates the affirmation of retaining the quote.
Coastsides Community Workshop at HMB Library	1. What is the definition of "Viable Agriculture"?	As a subset of Midpen's Basic Policy, Midpen's Agricultural Policy defines "viable agricultural use of land resources" as uses that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, that support the agriculture operation, and that the agricultural use is economically viable over the long term.
	2. Raised concerns about changes to contract terms mid-stream (perception based on policy updates), and transparency about changes that will impact tenants. Discussed the importance of building trust with neighbors, and excitement about opportunities (like this event?) to collaborate.	Comments noted. Informed commentators at the workshop that this policy update aims to align the Basic Policy with the Service Plan. Midpen's commitment to support agriculture does not change and the proposed Basic Policy Update does not affect individual lease terms.
	3. Concerned about expanding the open space definition to include ag land as ag land is not open space land.	Non-intensive agricultural lands are considered a type of open space. These include rangelands, row crops, orchards, and tree farms, which are all agricultural uses that work the land and retain the inherent open space values of the land. These inherent open space values include groundwater infiltration, wildlife connectivity, soil conservation, and scenic vistas.
	4. Participants (Coastsides on Bikes) believes in the Mission. Thinks the public should access the land.	Comment noted.
	5. Fencing between cattle/people desired. Only on-trail use. Support NO to dog access	Midpen's Grazing and Rangeland Management Plans include recommendations for grazing infrastructure such as cattle fencing, which shall be employed as necessary to deter trail users from leaving the trail.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		We understand the Commentor's preference for no dog access within coastal properties that include grazing. Midpen consults with grazing tenants to evaluate any proposed dog use within grazed areas to prevent conflicts. Midpen strives to find the balance between ecologically sensitive public access while also continuing to protect natural and agricultural resources.
Virtual Basic Policy Update Workshop	1. When expanding at the Coast, the voting public extended up to Pacifica, but Midpen's land doesn't extend north of Hwy 92 - Ie. Shamrock Ranch is up for sale and seems to fit in with the Open Space District	The Coastside Protection Area extends to the southern city limits of the City of Pacifica. To date, Midpen has not made any purchases north of Hwy 92. Specifically for Shamrock Ranch, other public land management agencies such as National Parks, Golden Gate Parks Conservancy, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, California State Parks, and San Mateo County Parks have resources in much closer geographic proximity to conserve and steward lands south of Pacifica and north of Hwy 92.
	2. Encourage staff to interact with other agencies to further connective corridors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnering with State/County/City parks to lace together open space/park lands</li> <li>SFPUC has land north of 92, GGNRA has land near Miramontes Open Space Preserve</li> <li>Midpen could be more dog-friendly; consider Johnston Ranch trails</li> <li>Pedestrian trails parallel to Hwy 92 will be appreciated</li> <li>Farmers know where to put trails</li> </ul>	Midpen agrees with the Commentor on the importance of engaging in strategic partnerships with other public land managers such as California State Parks, San Mateo County Parks, and City of Half Moon Bay to conserve and manage a regional greenbelt of open space areas. As stated in the Basic Policy's Open Space Land Preservation Objective, "[t]he District seeks to link its open space lands with federal, state, county and city parklands and watershed lands." Other comments provided are noted.
	3. Want to enjoy hiking; Ag uses seem to be compatible with hiking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Midpen strives to encourage conservation grazing and public access</li> <li>Identified specific trail connections from the ridgeline to the coast, trail alignments which are designed to minimize conflict</li> </ul>	Comment noted.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active Coastal Community Facebook pages document nocturnal wildlife activity, especially around busy Hwy 1</li> </ul>	
	4. Question about the 140,000 acres in the Coastsides Protection Area and how it relates to Midpen's jurisdiction.	Midpen currently owns approximately 19,000 acres within the Coastsides Protection Area. Midpen policies only apply to lands that we own and operate. Partner agencies who own and manage open space lands in the region include San Mateo County Parks, National Park Service, California State Parks, and San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.
	5. Question related the conversion of ag areas to open space.	<p>The Coastal Service Plan contains policies that preserve and foster existing and potential agricultural operations in San Mateo County to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production and minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses that may occur on District owned or managed land.</p> <p>Moreover, the Coastal Service Plan purposefully includes specific policies that severely constrain Midpen's ability to convert lands zoned for agricultural uses to other uses or to develop lands with prime agricultural soils. Only in extenuating circumstances would this potentially be considered and would require extensive public review and approvals from other public agencies, including the San Mateo County.</p>
	6. Comment regarding timber harvesting such as removing eucalyptus trees to prevent wildfires.	At the public workshop, staff explained the benefits of limiting fire risk by removing eucalyptus trees. Staff also discussed forest management actions planned at La Honda Creek Preserve to reduce fire risk and promote higher quality forest habitats and higher rates of carbon sequestration.
	7. A representative from Supervisor Mueller's office discussed the importance of the agricultural community and expressed concern that legacy farmers/ranchers could lose their lease.	Comment noted. Consistent with Midpen's Agricultural Policy, the selection of grazing tenants for new long-term grazing leases sufficiently recognizes existing tenants in good standing without fully voiding the ability to keep the solicitation process open and competitive.
	8. Question about historical significance when it comes to structures.	For any proposed maintenance, improvements and re-use of Midpen structures that may be eligible for historic listing, Midpen follows the <i>Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties</i> to evaluate and preserve historic resources in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition, as required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Midpen also evaluates the potential impacts on historically significant structures for any proposed



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		project or action, and identifies the avoidance and mitigation measures necessary to address these potential impacts.
	9. A tax related question in regards to the coast side concerning the tax burden due to Midpen increasingly being in the area.	While government agencies are exempt from property taxes, Midpen pays a fee to the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District (LHPUSD) to offset the loss of tax revenue. On February 28, 2024, Midpen's Board approved a Successor Agreement with the LHPUSD for a 15-year term whereby Midpen continues to pay a tax compensatory fee to the school district that increases 2% annually. During the original 20-year term of the Agreement, Midpen paid a total of \$380,891 to LHPUSD in tax compensatory fees. The annual fees for Fiscal Year 2023-24 were \$84,969, and for Fiscal Year 2024-25 were \$85,938.
Lucy White	<p>1. In an overview of the Draft Basic Policy Statement Revisions, it appears that Midpen is trying change the intent of the Service Plan, to dilute the segregation and productivity of Agricultural Lands, to homogenize Open Space and Agricultural Lands to operate under a commonality. It is plainly stated in the Coastal Protective Area Service Plan, developed from the Final Program Environmental Impact Report   FEIR, and the subsequent MOU, that Agricultural Lands are not Open Space Lands, they both may be Midpen District lands, but exist and operate under different principles, while each might overlap by nature and the goal to protect each of them. Service Plan Reference Guideline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guideline G.6.3</li> </ul>	<p>The Service Plan accurately reflects the importance of agriculture to the Coastsides community as developed through 16 Community Advisory Committee meetings held on the Coastsides and 11 other public review meetings, most of which were held on the Coastsides to arrive at a "Draft" Service Plan. That Draft Service Plan then went through a Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) public review process conducted under the California Environmental Quality Act. All these meetings occurred between 1999 and 2003. The Service Plan indeed calls out agriculture as one important part of Midpen's operations on the Coastsides.</p> <p>Amending Midpen's Basic Policy to incorporate the direction outlined in the Coastal Service Plan does not change the intent, objectives, or function of the Service Plan. Midpen's Basic Policy does not change the Service Plan's policies, guidelines, or mitigation measures. The Service Plan is binding on Midpen as was required by LAFCO in its authorization for Midpen to expand its jurisdictional boundaries. The Service Plan remains in place. The Service Plan is the operating document for Midpen in the Coastsides Protection Area.</p> <p>Similarly, the referenced Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the San Mateo County Farm Bureau and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District memorializes parts of the Service Plan and associated environmental review mitigation measures and requires consultation with the Farm Bureau on site-specific use and management plans and agricultural production plans on the Coastsides. Amending the Basic Policy does not override that MOU.</p> <p>The goal within Midpen's Basic Policy update is to recognize agriculture as an important use on Midpen's open space preserves. While agriculture has always been a</p>



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
		component of Midpen’s system of open space preserves (the Skyline Ranch Christmas Tree Farm and Ridge Winery vineyards as examples), including agriculture in the Basic Policy definition of open space elevates the importance of agriculture within Midpen’s mission on the Coastside and, indeed, throughout Midpen. This also recognizes that agriculture is one component of open space.
	<p>2. <b>Coastal Agricultural Lands are NOT OPEN SPACE they are AGRICULTURAL LANDS.</b> Reference to California Code – GOV § 65560 is utilizing a broad reference of lands and land uses. <b>FEIR, Coastal Protection Area Service Plan, and MOU specify clearly Open Space Lands and Agricultural Lands. Following are excerpts from the SERVICE PLAN:</b></p> <p>Service Plan References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspective / Definition</li> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Permanent Policy PA.1</li> <li>• Guideline G.3.2</li> <li>• Guideline G.3.9</li> <li>• Guideline G.63</li> </ul>	Please see Response to Comment #1
	<p>3. <i>Midpen’s mission within the Coastside Protection Area.. “...provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education,”</i> should not be connected with Agricultural Lands. That phrase <b>should be moved up</b> before preserving rural character.</p> <p><b>Midpen ... “encourage viable agricultural use of land resources,” should be along the lines of “ <u>protect existing agricultural production and the agricultural potential of the land.</u>”</b></p> <p>Service Plan References:</p>	Opportunities for ecologically-sensitive public enjoyment and education are provided where there is compatibility and suitability based on existing conditions, including the surrounding natural resources and existing agricultural uses. The Coastal Service Plan includes numerous policies and guidelines that direct how public access is permitted within agricultural lands to avoid or minimize potential impacts to the agricultural operations.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission Statement</li> <li>• Guideline G.3.1</li> <li>• Guideline G.3.9</li> <li>• Guideline G.6.3</li> </ul>	
	<p>4. This attempt to reference - "...definition of open space above." <u>The definition of which is in conflict with the guiding documents. <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS ARE NOT under OPEN SPACE LANDS</b>, they are identified separately.</u></p>	Please see Response to Comment #1
	<p>5. <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS do not belong under</b> "1. Open Space Land Preservation." Those Acquisitions should be separate and specific. <b>1b. Agricultural Land Protection.</b></p> <p>FEIR, SERVICE PLAN and MOU are documents that protect the Coast from the overreach of land acquisitions. It was the agreement with MOU that in fact the acquisitions were to be limited in acreage. Currently that acreage has been exceeded, considerations should be made for the sale of lands to better support the local community.</p> <p><i>Midpen, "The District seeks to link its open space lands with federal, state, county, and city parklands and watershed lands and, on the coastside, protect the rural character and open space values of working agricultural lands."</i></p> <p>The reference to "link its open space with ...." is aggressive and unnecessary. "complement" is a better word. Each land designation should have its containment and purpose. They may or may not be</p>	<p>The Service Plan remains intact and is not in conflict with the proposed revisions to the Basic Policy. The Service Plan does not limit the acreage that Midpen can acquire on the Coastside but does require Midpen to only acquire lands and/or easements within the Coastside Protection Area (CPA) from willing sellers, which is a foundational principle that is also now embedded in the Basic Policy Update.</p> <p>The goal to link open space lands, where possible, is an overarching goal with multiple benefits, including protecting habitat and wildlife connectivity to prevent fragmentation, opening opportunities for regional trail connections, and to make possible the expansion of agricultural production, including expanded grazing units, for improved agricultural viability. In any case as mentioned above, any land purchases within the CPA requires willing sellers.</p> <p>Please also see Responses to Comment #1 and #6</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>connected now or in the future. To have a purpose to “LINK” assumes that Midpen is attempting to use that term to land grab private lands. Midpen is allowed to operate according to guiding documents, with limits of influence and power over the coastal culture, lands and operations. The Service Plan will always stand above the Basic Policy to protect the Coastal Lands. The Basic Policy should be clear where its policies do not apply accordingly. Water Assets on Acquisitions should be valued and protected, including wells. Wells have a particular value which can be accessed as a primary or secondary source of water.</p>	
	<p>6. <b>Midpen’s Primary Purpose is to preserve OPEN SPACE, and it should focus Open Space values to those lands which are NOT AGRICULTURAL LANDS.</b>  <b>As Midpen states</b>, “Development of traditional park and recreation facilities is the responsibility of the cities and counties.” <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS are an economic backbone</b> on the Coastal Lands, a <b>cultural legacy</b> which has endured for more than 100 years. Ranchers and Farmers’ goals are to protect and enhance the lands for grazing, farming, and other agricultural uses. Agricultural Lands are compatible with Open Space Lands, each with significant land masses. <b>Agriculturally managed lands</b> create the environments where livestock graze, crops are grown, with the purpose of production.</p>	<p>Non-intensive agricultural lands are considered a type of open space. These include rangelands, row crops, orchards, and tree farms, which are all agricultural uses that work the land and retain the inherent open space values of the land. These inherent open space values include groundwater infiltration, wildlife connectivity, soil conservation, and scenic vistas. The commentor also notes similar benefits that agricultural lands provide to the environment.</p> <p>In the CPA, Midpen is required to purchase lands from willing sellers. The Coastal Service Plan includes the provision for leasing agricultural lands to farmers/grazers and has made significant investments to sustain agricultural production into the future.</p> <p>While agricultural leases include some restrictions and guidelines for agricultural use on public lands, individual tenants have a great deal of lee way to manage their own operations.</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>Subsequentially, Agricultural Lands provide habitat for wildlife creatures, and beneficial fire break areas which are extremely valuable, especially when next to Open Space Type Lands, which are minimally managed. Agriculture by its very nature works the lands, adapting to various ever-changing elements. Ranchers and Farmers have a vast array of knowledge which translates into intuitive decisions, with the goal of having optimizing the lands potential, and productivity of livestock and crops. The Leasers of Midpen lands need the autonomy to operate with integrity, and the ability to develop and protect their agricultural assets. Midpen has brought benefits to the leasers, relieving financial and maintenance aspects of land management, but they have also imposed overreaching powers of control, hindering optimal production.</p> <p>The COASTAL PROTECTIVE AREA SERVICE PLAN laid the groundwork for Midpen to focus on preserving Open Space. Allowing the Acquisition of Agricultural Lands under a different focus of protecting that land use and production.</p>	
	<p>7. This attempt to reference - "...definition of open space above." <u>The definition of which is in conflict with the guiding documents. <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS ARE NOT under OPEN SPACE LANDS</b>, they are identified separately.</u></p>	Please see Response to Comment #1.
	<p>8. The SERVICE PLAN was written specifically for the Coastal Area as the</p>	The Strategic Emphasis of the Basic Policy states: "[t]he District uses its available resources primarily to acquire or otherwise preserve land outside the Urban Service

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>Coastal Protection Area Service Plan. The SERVICE PLAN is <b>NOT</b> more broad-reaching alluding to work and/or approvals within the City of Half Moon Bay!!!!</p> <p>The <b>Coastal Area Protection Area Service Plan</b> is almost exclusively related to lands, <b>OUTSIDE</b> the City of Half Moon Bay, more specifically to rural coastal lands of San Mateo County. The <b>COASTAL PROTECTION AREA SERVICE PLAN</b> is based on the FEIR which was done <b>specifically to allow Midpen to operate and acquire lands</b> on the Coastal region of San Mateo County. The Service Plan's purpose was for Midpen's Coastal Annexation Area, it is the <b>Guiding Document for Midpen operations.</b></p>	<p>Area boundaries of Cities that has regionally significant open space value and that might be lost to development if the District fails to act.”</p> <p>As a result, Midpen agrees with the Commentor that the Service Plan is primarily focused on conserving lands outside of the Cities. However, in accordance with the Service Plan, Midpen outreaches and coordinates with coastal jurisdictions that include the City of Half Moon Bay, County of San Mateo, State of California, and federal agencies to ensure conformance with local General Plans and to secure any necessary local land and resource agency permits as needed to implement its preserve plans.</p> <p>Guideline G.7 states: <i>In implementing any specific management or public access plans, the District shall obtain all necessary permits from appropriate Federal, State, and local land and resource regulatory agencies. Such agencies include, but are not limited to, San Mateo County, the City of Half Moon Bay, and the California Coastal Commission</i></p>
	<p>9. <b>The SERVICE PLAN clearly states that EMINENT DOMAIN may not be used on Coastal Areas.</b></p> <p>Service Plan ReferenCes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eminent Domain (Pages 6 and 7)</li> <li>• Land Acquisition (Page 11)</li> <li>• Permanent Policy P.1</li> <li>• Description of Services (Page 40)</li> <li>• Basic Service Plan (page 43)</li> <li>• Description of Services</li> <li>• Strategic Emphasis</li> </ul>	<p>Midpen agrees with the Commentor, and Midpen has upheld its commitment that it would acquire land offered by willing sellers without the use of eminent domain within the Coastside Protection Area. The Basic Policy Update includes a statement to this effect: “By ordinance, the District is prohibited from using eminent domain within the Coastside Protection Area.</p>
	<p>10. This attempt to reference - “...definition of open space above.” <u>The definition of which is in conflict with the guiding documents.</u> <b><u>AGRICULTURAL LANDS ARE NOT under OPEN SPACE LANDS, they are identified separately.</u></b></p>	<p>Please see Response to Comment #1</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>11. <b>Midpen</b> d)... <i>"The Vision Plan and individual Preserve Use and Management Plans show the general extent of planned use and management actions, including public access improvements and working agricultural lands."</i></p> <p><b>Public access should be restricted from AGRICULTURAL LANDS. Midpen's primary goal is to preserve OPEN SPACE LANDS where public access and improvements should be focused.</b></p> <p>The Coastal Protective Area Service Plan [based on the Final Program Environmental Impact Report   FEIR] is clear.</p> <p>Service Plan References;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Guideline G.3.2</a></li> <li>• Guideline G.3.3</li> </ul>	<p>The Coastal Service Plan recognizes that low-intensity public recreation can be compatible with agricultural lands and agricultural uses, and identifies specific policies and guidelines to ensure that trails and other public access facilities are sited appropriately to avoid or minimize impacts to agricultural uses. Midpen applies these Service Plan policies and guidance when planning for low-intensity public access trails and parking areas, such as the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area at Verde Road. In addition to the Commentor's identification of Guidelines G.3.2, and G.3.3, Midpen also applies Guideline G.3.9 which specifies: The District lands or easements upon which trails are sited shall provide width sufficient for management and/or buffer space from adjacent uses so as not to preclude the viability of those uses. Buffers established to separate recreation and other open space uses from agricultural operations shall be designed and managed in accordance with the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffers shall be designed in relation to the nature of the adjoining land use, potential land uses, and proposed public access;</li> <li>• Buffers shall be designed in relation to the topography and other physical characteristics of the buffer area;</li> <li>• Buffers shall be designed with consideration of biological, soil, and other site conditions in order to limit the potential spread of non-native invasive species or pathogens onto agricultural lands;</li> <li>• Buffers shall be of sufficient width to allow agricultural use of adjoining agricultural lands including application of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals taking into account the likelihood and extent of potential pesticide drift;</li> <li>• All lands used for buffers should be on land or interests in land owned by Midpen; adjoining landowners shall not be required to provide land for buffers.</li> <li>• Midpen shall be responsible for the management and maintenance of all lands used as buffers.</li> <li>• If a specific buffer fails to resolve conflicts between a recreational use and adjacent agricultural uses the recreational use shall be moved to a different location.</li> <li>• All buffers shall be developed in consultation with the owners and operators of adjoining agricultural lands.</li> </ul>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>12. <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS need to be kept independently from Open Space, where the potential of lease and/or sale are held with the integrity of the lands and operations.</b></p> <p>This attempt to reference - "...definition of open space above." The definition of which is in conflict with the guiding documents. <b>AGRICULTURAL LANDS ARE NOT under OPEN SPACE LANDS</b>, they are identified separately.</p> <p>Service Plan References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Agriculture (Page 13)</li> <li>• Permanent Policy Pa.1</li> <li>• Guideline G.3.2</li> </ul>	<p>Please see Response to Comments #1 and #6</p>
	<p>13. The Legacy Ranchers and Farmers are responsible for the Coastal lands, which today are the viable resources for the agricultural productivity. Fencing, ditches, soil and water enhancements, roads, ponds, invasive weed control, erosion control, pest and predator control have all contributed to the protecting the agricultural lands and productivity. The Grazing and Farmlands naturally create wildlife habitats and flora. Open Space Lands adjacent to Agricultural Lands reap the benefits of Agricultural Land Values of promoting a healthy environment.</p> <p>Midpen's priority is preserving Open Space Lands to protect and restore the natural diversity and integrity of their natural resources. Agricultural Lands have always done that in a productive way. Most</p>	<p>The specific comments raised by the Commentor are specific to the Conservation Grazing Program. Midpen values the contributions of grazers and farmers to protecting the ecological and natural resource values of the surrounding agricultural lands. Midpen understands that continuing the agricultural practices on the coastside in a sustainable manner will benefit the natural environment and preserve the open space values of the region, which is why the coastside mission includes agriculture. It is also why the District maintains a robust conservation grazing program and has made significant financial investments in agricultural infrastructure and site improvements to sustain agricultural operations within its lands. It is also the reason why Midpen continues to lease significant acreage to agricultural tenants. Recognizing Midpen's role in also protecting its native wildlife, Midpen has numerous measures in place to account for potential predation from coyotes and mountain lions, including reducing market rental rates for grazers and reimbursing for confirmed predation losses. Midpen is also actively researching tools and techniques that can help deter wildlife-livestock conflicts as another measure to support agriculture while protecting native wildlife populations.</p>

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>Ranchers and Farmers have dedicated most of their lives to Agriculture. There is a hierarchy on Agricultural Lands in order for them to be viable and productive. Grass on grazing lands is mandatory, the soil needs to be worked, amended, seeded, water is essential, as well as land management, including erosion control.</p> <p>USDA   <b>Common Conservation Practices Grazing Grasslands</b>  <a href="https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/EQIP-Common_Practices_Grazing_SD-FS-67.pdf">https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/EQIP-Common_Practices_Grazing_SD-FS-67.pdf</a></p> <p>The Farmer Insider   <b>Best Grazing Practices for Preventing Overgrazing and Erosion</b>  <a href="https://thefarminginsider.com/grazing-practices-to-prevent-overgrazing/">https://thefarminginsider.com/grazing-practices-to-prevent-overgrazing/</a></p> <p><b>Midpen has halted many of the Ranchers practices and the grasses have declined in nutrients and quantity. That has resulted in the lands supporting fewer cattle... and diminished fees paid to Midpen.</b></p> <p><b>Midpen has not managed the Mountain Lion</b>, despite every Rancher having problems and concerns. In one case, with losses of 20% in 2024 which had escalated every year since 2007, from zero in 2004. That is unsustainable for the Rancher. That is the loss of valuable resources in the cattle industry of protein and numerous products.</p>	



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	<p>Wildlife Damage Management   <b>Mountain Lion Damage Prevention and Control Methods</b> <a href="https://wildlife-damage-management.extension.org/mountain-lion-damage-management/">https://wildlife-damage-management.extension.org/mountain-lion-damage-management/</a></p> <p><b>Open Space Values for Open Space Lands. Agricultural Values for Agricultural Lands.</b></p>	
	<p>14. This attempt to reference - "...definition of open space above." The definition of which is in conflict with the <u>guiding documents</u>. <b><u>AGRICULTURAL LANDS ARE NOT under OPEN SPACE LANDS</u></b>, they are <u>identified separately</u>.</p>	Please see Response to Comment #1.
	<p>15. <b>Public use</b> "All trails and other public facilities should be located so as not to fragment agricultural operations" Service Plan References;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Guideline G.3.2</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Guideline G.3.3</a></li> </ul>	Midpen applies the Service Plan policies and guidance when planning for low-intensity public access trails and parking areas to avoid and reduce potential impacts to agricultural operations. Please refer to Response to Comment 11.
	<p>16. <b><i>SERVICE PLAN   Guideline G.3.9 The District lands or easements upon which trails are sited shall provide width sufficient for management and/or buffer space from adjacent uses <u>so as not to preclude the viability of those uses.</u> Buffers established to separate recreation and other open space uses from agricultural operations...:</i></b></p>	Midpen applies the Service Plan policies and guidance when planning for low-intensity public access trails and parking areas to avoid and reduce potential impacts to agricultural operations. Please refer to Response to Comment 11.
	<p>17. Midpen has benefitted and thwarted efforts of Ranchers to be efficient and productive. Land Ownership comes with Land Management. Timber harvesting should be part of good land and resource</p>	The proposed changes to the Basic Policy include allowing timber harvest plans on a case-by-case basis.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
	management for a healthier forest, which also generates revenue and jobs. Service Plan Reference; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Guideline G.4.2</a></li> </ul>	
	18. The Coastal culture has been established through the use of its resources, which could be destroyed with non-productive lands, limited potential inhabitants and economies, along with non-taxable lands which could prove to be a liability.	Comment noted. The intent of the Service Plan is to protect agricultural lands and agricultural uses.  Please also see Response to Comment #6
J.T. Averre (online public comment)	Please make some provisions for allowing dogs in some of your locations so dog owners can use them.	Midpen lands support, protect, and conserve wildlife and nature alongside low-impact recreational uses. Some preserves contain more vulnerable natural resources that can be negatively impacted by the presence of dogs. Also, in certain agricultural areas, dogs can pose a conflict to agricultural operations. Midpen strives to find the balance between public access while also continuing to protect sensitive habitats and support existing agricultural operations. Preserve visitors and their canine companion are invited to experience many dog-friendly trails at eleven of our preserves: <a href="#">Dogs   Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District</a>
Jim Sullivan (online public comment)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider expanding MROSD's coastside acquisitions North of Ca 92. Specifically consider purchase of the currently for sale Shamrock Ranch property . <a href="https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/100-Shamrock-Ranch-Rd-Pacifica-CA-94044/111378315_zpid/">https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/100-Shamrock-Ranch-Rd-Pacifica-CA-94044/111378315_zpid/</a></li> <li>2. Partnering with private landowners,SFPUC,National, State,County and City agencies to connect open space lands by trail or fireroad when opportunities arise.</li> <li>3. Johnston Ranch Uplands property, Dog walking ,where it does not conflict with Ag fields or Cattle ranching, should be included on this property. Johnston Ranch</li> </ol>	Please see above responses to comments received from virtual public workshop.

**TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

<b>Organization/ Individual</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Uplands borders the HMB city limits,dog walkers are currently regular visitors to the property that surrounds the Johnston home. Thanks again for the excellent presentation yesterday.	
Ed Swain (online public comment)	People over 62 years old should be able to ride a pedal assist bicycle to help them get out into nature, no throttle only helping them peddling up hill, there should be a registration system and a small plate or sticker allowing them to access the forest, many senior citizens have bad knees and can not walk on uneven surfaces but peddling is smooth and no impact, I feel that the ban on senior citizen using a pedal assist bicycle is age discrimination, we all have been paying tax for these open spaces over 48 years, voted for it but are being discriminated against by your board of directors, you have hundreds of rangers, how about giving us access, this type of discrimination hopefully will bring a massive lawsuit forcing your power hungry board of directors to listen, after all we the people own the open space, tax payers not the board of directors	<p>Midpen accommodates recreational opportunities for people of all ages with mobility disabilities by allowing the use of other power-driven mobility devices (“OPDMD”) in areas where they can be operated safely, without posing risk of serious harm to natural and cultural resources, and in conformity with federal land management laws and regulations.</p> <p>Under federal law OPDMD means any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines—whether or not designed for use by individuals with mobility disabilities—that is used by individuals with mobility disabilities for the purpose of locomotion, including golf cars, electronic personal assistance mobility devices (EPAMDs), such as the Segway PT, or any mobility device designed to operate in areas without defined pedestrian routes (defined pedestrian routes are those routes that are required to be wheelchair and disability accessible such as routes from parking to restrooms and public facilities), but that is not a wheelchair. Under the OPDMD policy persons with a mobility disability may use an ebike as an OPDMD wherever manually powered bikes are authorized.</p> <p>Please see <a href="#">OPDMD policy</a> for additional guidelines.</p>
Sue Conde (online public comment)	Not policy comment. Just want to comment as a person who can no longer hike. I love all the educational videos posted. Something to consider, perhaps a volunteer can videotape next to a docent on your public hikes. I am so thankful for your organization. Looks like private property will be safest in the future for Mother Nature. Our newest government will be trying their best to reclaim parkland for financial gain. I am not a person of means but will do my best to support you.	Comment noted. The Midpen Youtube Page, other Midpen social media platforms, and the Quarterly Views Newsletter host a variety of interesting stories and information related to our preserves that are available to the public.

TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Organization/ Individual	Comment	Response
Samuel Herzberg (online public comment)	Please provide camping and low cost accommodations on the San Mateo County coastside. There is a high demand, and low inventory. MROSD should join other park and open space providers in providing a hut to hut experience involving the CA Coastal and Ridge Trails.	<p>Midpen has been participating with other public land managers such as San Mateo County Parks, National Park Service, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and California Coastal Conservancy in discussions about visitor amenities that support long-distance regional trail connections like the Bay Area Ridge Trail and California Coastal Trail. To adhere to the Service Plan Guideline G.6.8, which prohibits camping within the Coastsides Protection Area, Midpen would only be allowed to provide overnight camping uses along regional trails on preserve lands outside of the Coastsides Protection Area or in partnership with another agency off Midpen lands.</p> <p>As part of the development of the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study, Midpen received public interest in overnight camping at Purisima Creek Redwoods if located outside of the Coastsides Protection Area. Midpen can continue to explore partnership opportunities with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and other entities to evaluate camping opportunities on the coastside.</p>

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> “...to try to save for everyone, for the hostile and indifferent as well as the committed, some of the health that flows down across the green ridges from the Skyline, and some of the beauty and refreshment of spirit that are still available to any resident of the valley who has a moment, and the wit, to lift up his eyes unto the hills.” - Wallace Stegner	PERSPECTIVE / DEFINITION: The introduction statement was written before the District expanded its jurisdiction to the coastside. It is inscribed at Long Ridge Open Space Preserve in a plaque dedicated by Wallace Stegner’s wife on May 19, 1996*. The perspective not necessarily inclusive of the view from the coastside extending from the Skyline to the Pacific Ocean.  * The Valley of Hearts Delight – True Tales from Around the Bay. Page 45.	Leave quote intact.  Add footnote:  <u>1. The quote by Wallace Stegner was written prior to the initiation of the District’s Coastside Protection Program. Wallace Stegner donated the first parcels of land, which are now part of Long Ridge Open Space Preserve. A dedicated bench at the Preserve on which the quote resides faces west toward the coastside and the Pacific Ocean.</u>	Acterra #4
<b>OPEN SPACE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is land area that is allowed to remain in or return to its natural state. Open space lands may include compatible agricultural uses.</li> <li>Protects areas of scenic beauty and preserves natural habitats necessary to sustain plant and animal life, especially native and endangered species.</li> <li>Offers opportunities to the public for education, recreation, and renewal of spirit.</li> <li>Enhances public safety by preventing development of areas prone to landslides, earthquake damage, flooding, and wildland fires.</li> </ul>	PERSPECTIVE / DEFINITION: The Basic Policy statement recognizes agriculture as a compatible open space use and, under “Agriculture and Revenue-Producing Use“ (see below), agriculture is supported. However, the objective of the Service Plan goes further in “preserving and fostering existing and potential agricultural operations in San Mateo County in order to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and all other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production”. The Service Plan includes agriculture as open space not only as a compatible use. The intent is to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity on the Coastside. Additionally, agriculture is not a “natural state”. Agricultural lands are working lands for the managed production of resources.	Amend to read:  <b>OPEN SPACE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is land area that <del>is allowed to remain in or return to its natural state. Open space lands may include compatible agricultural uses.</del> <u>retains conservation values and includes natural, restored, undeveloped, underdeveloped, and working agricultural land.</u></li> <li>Protects areas of scenic beauty and preserves natural habitats necessary to sustain plant and animal life, especially native and endangered species.</li> <li><u>Protects biodiversity and natural resources</u></li> <li><u>Protects natural and/or rural character.</u></li> <li>Offers opportunities to the public for education, recreation, and renewal of spirit.</li> </ul>	SCVBA #1,#2 SMCFB #1, #5, #6, POST #2 SMCAAC #1 Coastside Community Workshop #1 Lucy White #1, #2, #4, #7

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
	Open space by definition is many things including agriculture (reference: California Code, Government Code - GOV § 65560).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances public safety by preventing development of areas prone to landslides, earthquake damage, flooding, and wildland fires.</li> <li><u>On the Coastside, supports viable agricultural uses of land resources.</u></li> </ul>	Puente #1
<b>MISSION STATEMENT</b> The District's mission is: <i>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.</i>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy does not include preserving agricultural land of regional significance, preserving rural character, and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources.</p> <p>It is noted that the Service Plan Mission Statement seemingly refers to agricultural land as differentiated from open space land. That may be an internal inconsistency in the Service Plan. See also definition of open space above.</p>	<p>Modify and expand to read:</p> <p><b>MISSION STATEMENT</b>            The District's mission <u>outside of the Coastside Protection Area is:</u>  <i>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.</i></p> <p><u>The District's mission within the Coastside Protection Area is:</u>  <u>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.</u></p>	Rep. Mueller #1 SCVBA #1, #2 SMCFB #8 POST #3 Puente #1 SMCAAC #1 Acterra #3 Lucy White #3

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<b>OBJECTIVES</b> <b>1. Open Space Land Preservation:</b> The District seeks to purchase or otherwise acquire interest in the maximum feasible area of strategic <sup>2</sup> open space land within the District, including baylands and foothills. The District seeks to link its open space lands with federal, state, county, and city parklands and watershed lands.  <small>2. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 2-6</small>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy was adopted long before the Service Plan when, at the time, it was appropriate to reference only “baylands and foothills”. This is a very specific perspective excluding the Coastsides ocean front, agricultural plains, and the Santa Cruz Mountains.</p> <p>The Basic Policy objective is also silent on preserving an existing or potential agricultural operation / land. See also definition of open space above.</p>	<p>Revise to read:</p> <p><b>1. Open Space Land Preservation:</b> The District seeks to purchase or otherwise acquire interest in the maximum feasible area of strategic<sup>3</sup> open space land within the District, including baylands, foothills, <u>skyline, and coastsides</u>. The District seeks to link its open space lands with federal, state, county, and city parklands and watershed lands <u>and, on the Coastsides, protects the rural character and open space values of working agricultural lands</u>.</p> <p><small>3. Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 2-6</small></p>	Lucy White #5
<b>Policies</b> <b>District Purpose</b> a. As an open space agency, the District’s primary purpose is to preserve open space. Development of traditional park and recreation facilities is the responsibility of the cities and counties. <sup>3</sup>  <small>3. Master Plan/Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3; Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F</small>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy does not include a District of preserving existing and potential agricultural operations in order to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture in agricultural production.</p> <p>See also definition of open space above.</p>	<p>Change to read:</p> <p><b>Policies</b>  <b>District Purpose</b>  a. As an open space agency, the District’s primary purpose is to preserve open space. Development of traditional park and recreation facilities is the responsibility of the cities and counties.<sup>4</sup></p> <p><u>On the Coastsides, the District also works to preserve agricultural lands of regional significance.</u></p> <p><small>4. <del>Master Plan/Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3; Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F</del></small></p>	Lucy White #6 Puentes #1



**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<b>Strategic Emphasis</b> b. The District uses its available resources primarily to acquire or otherwise preserve land outside the Urban Service Area boundaries of cities that has regionally significant open space value and that might be lost to development if the District fails to act. <sup>4</sup>  <small>4. Master Plan/Open Space Acquisition Policies, Pg. 6</small>	GAP/CONFLICT: The Service Plan is more broad-reaching alluding to work and /or approvals within the City of Half Moon Bay. However, this is also very specific to one jurisdiction, which would only apply to certain projects and activities. Therefore, mention of the City of Half Moon Bay may be more appropriate for the Service Plan versus adding to the Basic Policy.	No change required. Use of the word “primarily” for acquiring or otherwise preserving land outside Urban Service Areas does not limit occasional District actions within Urban Service Areas.	Lucy White #8
The District’s goal is to acquire lands within its own boundaries and Sphere of Influence. Acquisitions outside the District’s boundaries will be considered only if exceptional purchase opportunities arise that clearly support the District’s mission. <sup>5</sup>  <small>5. Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3</small>	No change required.	No change required.	
<b>Open Space Acquisition</b> c. The District acquires land most often through fee simple interest (outright ownership). Options and installment purchases may be employed to this end.  To conserve funding for preservation, the District may seek to preserve open space without outright ownership of the	GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy emphasizes fee simple acquisition and alludes to other methods; the Basic Policy language may be considered vague in terms of conserving the coastside agriculture. The Service Plan instead places strong emphasis on agricultural easements.	Change to read:  <b>Open Space Acquisition</b> b. The District acquires land most often through fee simple interest (outright ownership). Options and installment purchases may be employed to this end.  To conserve funding for preservation, <u>or to allow farmers and ranchers to retain ownership of working agricultural lands,</u>	Lucy White #9 Puente #3



**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>land. The District may act as a landbank through acquisition of less than fee interest to accomplish the same results with less immediate expenditure of the District's funds. Examples include acquisition of a remainder interest following a life tenancy; open space, conservation, or scenic easements; and purchase and leaseback arrangements. The District actively strives to acquire open space through gifts and matching grants. Gifts of land with life tenancy are encouraged. Other creative open space preservation techniques are explored and utilized when possible.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>6. Land Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 5 - 10</p>		<p>the District may seek to preserve open space without outright ownership of the land. The District may act as a landbank through acquisition of less than fee interest to accomplish the same results with less immediate expenditure of the District's funds. Examples include acquisition of a remainder interest following a life tenancy; open space, conservation, <u>agricultural</u>, or scenic easements; <del>and</del> <u>or</u> purchase and leaseback arrangements. The District actively strives to acquire open space through gifts and matching grants. Gifts of land with life tenancy are encouraged. Other creative open space preservation techniques are explored and utilized when possible.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>7. Land Acquisition Policies, Pgs. 5 - 10</p>	

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>The District desires to acquire open space from willing sellers. Eminent domain will be used only in strict compliance with the District’s eminent domain policies:</p> <p><i>“The District does not want to use eminent domain as a means of purchasing land unless the property concerned is an open space parcel of critical importance or is under some dire emergency, such as immediate destruction of natural resources, or clearing for development purposes. Even under such urgent circumstances, however, eminent domain would still be used only as a last resort. The District would continue to use negotiations as its objective in purchasing the land.”</i><sup>7</sup></p> <p>7. Policies Regarding Use of Eminent Domain, Ordinance No. 86-1</p>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Service Plan specifically eliminates any use of eminent domain and requires the Board to adopt it by ordinance and be referenced in every governing document and proposal by the District within the Coastsides. Amendment required. The Service Plan states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>“Within the Coastal Annexation Area, the District shall only acquire lands or interests in lands from willing sellers. The power of eminent domain will not be exercised by the District within the Coastal Annexation Area. This policy is a Basic Policy for the Coastal Annexation Area.”</i></li> </ul>	<p>Change to read:</p> <p>The District desires to acquire open space from willing sellers. <u>State law prohibits the District from using eminent domain within the Coastsides Protection Area. Elsewhere</u>, eminent domain will be used only in strict compliance with the District’s eminent domain policies:</p> <p><i>“The District does not want to use eminent domain as a means of purchasing land unless the property concerned is an open space parcel of critical importance or is under some dire emergency, such as immediate destruction of natural resources, or clearing for development purposes. Even under such urgent circumstances, however, eminent domain would still be used only as a last resort. The District would continue to use negotiations as its objective in purchasing the land.”</i><sup>8</sup></p> <p>8. <del>Policies Regarding Use of Eminent Domain, Ordinance No. 86-1</del> <u>Land Acquisition Policies and Procedure, pg 13.</u></p>	<p>Lucy White #9</p>

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p><b>Master Plan, Regional Open Space Study</b></p> <p>d. To guide the District’s open space preservation efforts, the District produces a master plan and a regional open space study. The master plan sets forth guidelines for District acquisitions and shows the relative desirability of potential open space land acquisitions. The regional open space study shows the general extent of lands and public access improvements existing and under consideration to complete the District’s greenbelt mission. Both documents are subject to periodic review and modification by the Board of Directors after public hearings. The regional open space study is subject to periodic technical updates.</p> <p>Both documents are submitted to the counties, cities, and other conservation-oriented local, state, and federal agencies and organizations for review and comment in order to encourage coordination with their planning and policies.</p>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: Specific reference to agriculture is missing. See also discussion related to the definition of “open space”. References to the Master Plan and Regional Open Space Study are obsolete</p>	<p><del>Master Plan, Regional Open Space Study</del> <u>Vision Plan, Conservation Atlas Database</u></p> <p>d. To guide the District’s open space preservation efforts, the District developed a 40-year Vision Plan with extensive public engagement and maintains an accompanying Conservation Atlas and Geographic Information Systems database <del>produces a master plan and a regional open space study</del>. The <del>master plan</del> <u>Vision Plan</u> sets forth a regional vision for open space and identifies priority action portfolios and areas that guide <del>guidelines for</del> District acquisitions. <u>The Conservation Atlas further assists conservation efforts by showing</u> <del>shows</del> the relative desirability of potential open space land acquisitions <u>to enhance the greenbelt</u>. <del>The regional open space study</del> <u>These tools are updated on a regular basis.</u></p> <p><u>The Vision Plan and individual Preserve Use and Management Plans show the general extent of planned use and management actions, including public access improvements and working agricultural lands. show the general extent of lands and public access improvements existing and under consideration to complete the District’s greenbelt mission. Both documents are subject to periodic review and</u></p>	<p>SCVBA #3 Lucy White #11 Puente #1</p>

Color indicates ~~language removed~~ and language added

Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY			
BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
		<p><del>modification by the Board of Directors after public hearings. The regional open-space study is subject to periodic technical updates. Both documents are submitted</del></p> <p><u>Copies of proposed Plan Amendments, or new Preserve Plans, are provided to the counties, cities, and other conservation-oriented local, state, and federal public agencies, indigenous tribes, local organizations, and to the public for review and comment in order to ensure broad outreach, engagement, and input. encourage coordination with their planning and policies. These plans require Board review and approval at public meetings.</u></p>	
<b>OBJECTIVES</b> <b>2. Open Space Management:</b> The District follows management policies that ensure proper care of the land, that provide public access appropriate to the nature of the land, and that are consistent with ecological values and public safety. <sup>8</sup>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy does not reference the continuation of agricultural uses that protect natural resource and open space values.</p> <p>See also definition of open space above.</p>	<p>No change required as working agricultural lands are included in the definition of open space above.</p>	Lucy White #12
<p><sup>8.</sup> Resource Management Policies</p>			

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<b>Policies</b> <b>Resource Management</b> a. The District protects and restores the natural diversity and integrity of its resources for their value to the environment, and the public, and provides for the use of the preserves consistent with resource protection. <sup>9</sup>	GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy does not reference how in preserving agricultural lands, the District is also protecting natural resource and open space values.  See also definition of open space above.	Change to read: <b>Policies</b> <b>Resource Management</b> a. The District protects and restores the <del>natural</del> diversity and integrity of its <u>natural</u> resources for their value to the environment, and the public. <u>The District's agricultural conservation work serves in part to protect many underlying natural resource values, such as wildlife connectivity, soil health, and groundwater recharge. The District</u> provides for the use of the preserves consistent with resource protection. <sup>10</sup>	SCVBA #4 Puente #1
9. Resource Management Mission Statement		10. Resource Management Mission Statement	
<b>Public Access and Constraints</b> b. The District provides public access to the open space lands for low-intensity recreational uses.	GAP/CONFLICT: The Basic Policy does not reference the avoidance of impacts to agricultural uses from public access	<b>Public Access and Constraints</b> b. The District provides <u>ecologically sensitive</u> public access to the open space lands for <del>low-intensity</del> recreational uses.	Lucy White #15 Puente #4
The District's highest priority is acquiring land to complete the greenbelt and to protect natural resources on open space land. Public access will be provided gradually to ensure that the higher priorities of acquisition and resource protection are maintained.  Developing facilities and managing public use activities while protecting natural resources	activities, as well as the avoidance of public access impacts to surrounding private lands. A number of Service Plan statements provide greater detail in avoiding agricultural lands and protecting private property.	The District's highest priority is acquiring land to complete the greenbelt and to protect natural resources on open space land. <u>Ecologically sensitive</u> public access will be provided gradually to ensure that the higher priorities of acquisition and resource protection are maintained. <u>Measures are incorporated to reduce potential conflicts between public access and agricultural land uses as well as adjacent private property.</u>  Developing facilities and managing	SCVBA #5, #6, #7 CGF #1 Lucy White #16

Color indicates ~~language removed~~ and language added

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>and providing for public safety may require limits on access to some open space lands. Areas found to be vital wildlife or plant habitats are designated as refuge areas, and in these areas, access will be severely restricted. In addition to protection of sensitive natural resources, factors that may delay or limit access include the carrying capacity of the land, geologic features, restoration efforts, the ability to plan and implement trails, parking, restrooms, map boards and signs, and identification and mitigation of potential safety hazards.<sup>10</sup></p> <p><sup>10.</sup> Resource Management Policies</p>		<p>public use activities while protecting natural resources <u>and open space values</u> and providing for public safety may require limits on access to some open space lands. Areas found to be vital wildlife or plant habitats are designated as <u>conservation management units</u> <del>refuge area</del>, and in these areas, access will be severely restricted <u>or limited</u>. In addition to protection of sensitive natural resources, factors that may delay or limit access include <u>agricultural use</u>, the carrying capacity of the land, geologic features, restoration efforts, and the ability to plan and implement trails, parking, restrooms, map boards, signs, <u>fencing</u>, and identification and mitigation of potential safety hazards.<sup>11</sup></p> <p><sup>11.</sup> Resource Management Policies</p>	
<p>Because of the District's commitment to maximum open space preservation efforts, expenditure guidelines will be established for the amount of funding available for recreational improvement projects and restoration activities.<sup>11</sup></p> <p><sup>11.</sup> Average Seven Percent Growth Guideline for District Operating Expenses and Annual Budget</p>	<p>Staff Note: Although not directly related to the Service Plan, the Basic Policy language is outdated with a need to update the growth guidelines that are used to control administrative expenses.</p>	<p>Because of the District's commitment to maximum open space preservation efforts, <del>expenditure guidelines will be established for the amount of funding available for recreational improvement projects and restoration activities.</del> <u>the District relies heavily on dedicated capital funding sources, including grant funds, to complete recreational improvement projects and restoration activities.</u></p> <p><sup>11.</sup> Average Seven Percent Growth Guideline for District Operating Expenses and Annual Budget</p>	SCVBA #8

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>Agricultural, residential, and other limited revenue producing uses of the land may limit public access in certain areas. Where appropriate, access may be provided on a permit basis.</p> <p>The District strives to provide public access to its lands to everyone, regardless of place of residence, physical abilities, or economic status. (See Access Plan for Persons with Disabilities).</p>	No change required.	No change required.	
<p><b>Recreational Use and Improvements</b></p> <p>c. Improvements on District lands are generally limited to facilities (i.e. parking areas, trails and patrol roads, restrooms, mapboards, and signs) for low-intensity recreational uses. Low-intensity recreation avoids concentration of use, significant alteration of the land, and significant impact on the natural resources or on the appreciation of nature.<sup>12, 13</sup></p> <p>_____  12. Resource Management Policies  13. Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F</p>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: No reference in the Basic Policy to improvements related to public access and active agriculture. Avoidance of existing prime agricultural lands, unique farmlands, farmlands of statewide importance, or fragmenting agricultural operations are not referenced in the Basic Policy.</p> <p>Staff Note: If the listing of special use facilities in the Basic Policy is the totality of facilities versus examples, the policy should use “e.g.,” not i.e.”)</p>	<p><b>Recreational Use and Improvements</b></p> <p>c. Improvements on District lands are generally limited to facilities (<del>i.e.</del> <u>e.g.</u>, parking areas, trails and patrol roads, restrooms, mapboards, <u>fencing</u>, and signs) for low-intensity recreational uses. Low-intensity recreation avoids concentration of use, significant alteration of the land, and significant impact on the natural resources, <del>or on</del> the appreciation of nature,<sup>12, 13</sup> <u>or on working agricultural lands.</u></p> <p>_____  12 Resource Management Policies  13 Land Acquisition Policies, Pg. 3, Par. F</p>	Lucy White #17 Puente #1

Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY			
BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>The timing and level of access for low intensity public recreational use of District open space land will be evaluated for each type of use in terms of four basic criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protection of natural resources;</li> <li>2. Preservation of the opportunity for tranquil nature study and observation;</li> <li>3. Avoidance of significant user conflicts;</li> <li>4. Availability of Board and staff time, funding, and/or other means, to plan and manage the use.</li> </ol> <p>The District will plan for low intensity public access to ensure that these criteria will be met before use is provided, and will control use that does not meet the criteria, as interpreted by the Board. To protect open space qualities, the District will use a high standard in applying the criteria.</p> <p>Access for hiking is typically unrestricted on District trails and lands. Wheelchair accessible trails and other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are provided to ensure access to a range of open space settings with wide geographic distribution. Safe and enjoyable</p>	No change required.	No change required.	



**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>access for hiking and for persons with disabilities may be given priority over other types of uses where significant conflicts are evident.<sup>14</sup></p> <p>The District is committed to working with different trail user groups to find practical solutions to recreational use issues with the understanding that some trails or preserves may not be open to all uses.</p>			
<p>Special Use facilities, (i.e. nature centers, historic structures, picnic tables, or backpack camps), and Special Use activities (i.e. large recreation events, hang gliding, or off-leash dog areas), are considered on a case by case basis. In some cases Special Use activities may require a permit. These types of uses may be allowed when they do not monopolize significant areas of natural land, do not significantly impact natural or aesthetic resources, and provide benefits such as environmental education, heritage resource protection, or public enjoyment and appreciation of nature. The cost of management and exposure to liability of these types of facilities and activities may be a factor in deciding whether to permit them on District lands.</p>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Service Plan prohibits camping.</p> <p>Staff Note: If the listing of special use facilities in the Basic Policy is the totality of facilities versus examples, the policy should use “e.g.,” not i.e.”)</p>	<p>Change to read: Special Use facilities, (<del>i.e.</del> <u>e.g.</u>, nature centers, historic structures, picnic tables, or backpack camps, <u>off-leash dog areas or farm stands</u>), and Special Use activities (<del>i.e.</del> <u>e.g.</u>, large <del>recreation</del> <u>cultural</u> events, hang gliding, or <del>off-leash dog areas</del> <u>trail runs</u>), are considered on a <u>case-by-case</u> basis. In some cases, Special Use activities may require a permit. These types of uses may be allowed when they do not monopolize significant areas of natural land, do not significantly impact natural or aesthetic resources <u>or agricultural uses</u>, and provide benefits such as environmental <u>or agricultural</u> education, heritage resource protection, or public enjoyment and appreciation of nature. The cost of management and exposure to liability of these types of facilities and activities may be a factor in deciding whether to permit them on District lands.</p>	<p>SCVBA #9 J.T. Averre Jim Sullivan #3</p>

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BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p><b>Public Safety</b> d. The District monitors and manages its preserves to provide a safe environment for visitors and neighbors.<sup>15</sup></p> <p><b>Cultural Resources</b> e. Historic structures and sites will be considered for protection by the District where they are associated with lands acquired for overall open space values. Due to the high cost of evaluating, managing, and restoring such facilities, the District depends on grant assistance, public-private partnerships, and outside assistance to support these activities. Sites are evaluated for archaeological resources prior to any new use or improvement which might impact the site. Archaeological resources are evaluated, protected, and made known to the public as appropriate to ensure their preservation.<sup>16</sup></p>	No change required.	No change required.	
<p><b>Agriculture and Revenue-Producing Use</b> f. The District supports the continued agricultural use of land acquired for open space as an economic and cultural resource, including, but not limited to, grazing, orchards, row crops, and</p>	GAP/CONFLICT: The Service Plan allows for options other than fee-simple acquisition including selling back some agricultural lands or securing easements rather than acquisition.	The District supports the continued <del>agricultural</del> use of <del>acquired and</del> <b>viable agricultural</b> land <b>protected</b> for open space as an economic and cultural resource, including, but not limited to, grazing, orchards, row crops, and vineyards.	SCVBA #1, #2 Coastside Community Workshop #1 Lucy White #18 Puente #1

Color indicates ~~language removed~~ and language added

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
vineyards.			
<p>The District does not consider commercial logging as agriculture. The District requires sound agricultural management practices on land it manages or monitors, in accordance with its Resource Management Policies.<sup>17</sup></p> <p><sup>17</sup>. Resource Management Policies, Goals 10 and 11</p>	<p>GAP/CONFLICT: The Service Plan allows limited logging when in the best interest of managing the ecological values, protecting public safety, or controlling disease within a property or watershed. The Service Plan also allows purchase of property or an easement with an approved timber harvest plan. Nonetheless, the District does not consider commercial logging that is solely for the purpose of revenue generation as a form of allowable agriculture. Limited logging is considered on a case-by-case basis when the purpose is forest health.</p>	<p>Change to read:  <del>The District does not consider commercial logging as agriculture.</del> The District requires sound agricultural management practices on land it manages or monitors, in accordance with its Resource Management Policies <u>and Agricultural Policy.</u><sup>17</sup> <u>On a case-by-case basis, the District may purchase property or an easement that includes approved timber harvest plans. The District does not propose commercial harvest of timber on District-owned property that is solely for the purpose of revenue generation. The District may pursue individual timber harvest plans<sup>18</sup> for the purpose of managing the ecological values, wildfire resiliency, protecting public safety, or controlling disease within the property or watershed. In such cases, the timber may be sold with revenues used solely to fund land management work.</u></p> <p><sup>17</sup>. <u>Agricultural Policy and Resource Management Policies, Goals <del>10</del> FM and <del>11</del> ES</u>  <sup>18</sup>. <u>Agricultural Policy</u></p>	<p>PMAC #6 Lucy White #17</p>

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BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
		g. The District supports agriculture education that fosters public awareness, appreciation and stewardship of viable agriculture uses of land resources that do not deplete natural resources, such as water and soil, and that encourages support for locally grown food sources and sustainable agricultural practices.	SMCFB #7
g. Revenue-producing use of District land, such as rental residences, communications antennas, or special commercial use such as filming, may be allowed when it does not utilize significant areas of natural land, does not unduly impact natural or aesthetic resources, does not unreasonably restrict public access, and provides benefits or income to the District.	No change required except numbering	<del>g.</del> h. Revenue-producing use of District land, such as rental residences, communications antennas, or special commercial use such as filming, may be allowed when it does not utilize significant areas of natural land, does not unduly impact natural or aesthetic resources, does not unreasonably restrict public access, and provides benefits or income to the District.	
<b>3. Inter-Agency Relationships:</b> The District works with and encourages private and other public agencies to preserve, maintain, and enhance open space.  <b>Policies Cooperation</b> a. The District cooperates with and encourages cooperation between governmental agencies, community organizations, and individuals to preserve open space. <sup>18</sup>	No change required		

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<p>The District works cooperatively with other governmental agencies and community organizations to facilitate development and management of recreation facilities and of public use. The District ensures that such development is consistent with protection of important natural values of the open space.</p> <p><b>Participation</b></p> <p>b. The District participates in the public review processes of land use plans of other agencies and development proposals that affect the District’s mission. Joint Projects</p> <p>c. The District explores and engages in joint projects to maximize the opportunities for preservation of open space. Examples include inter-agency land management agreements, joint planning or research studies, and joint acquisition, improvement, or resource management projects.</p>			
<p><b>Research</b></p> <p>d. The District supports the development of scientific knowledge about natural and cultural resources and management techniques through cooperative arrangements with educational and scientific institutions,</p>		<p><b>Research</b></p> <p>d. The District supports the development of scientific knowledge about natural and cultural resources and management techniques through cooperative arrangements with <u>non-profit</u> educational and scientific institutions <u>addressing natural and productive agricultural</u></p>	SMCFB #7

Color indicates language removed and language added

Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY			
BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
and by supporting research on which to base its management and improvement decisions. Such studies shall not unreasonably restrict public access or significantly impact the environment.		<u>resources</u> , and by supporting research on which to base its management and improvement decisions. Such studies shall not unreasonably restrict public access or significantly impact the environment	
<p><b>Advocacy</b>  e. In order to better plan, acquire, and operate a regional greenbelt of open space preserves and trails, and to further cooperate in this effort with other jurisdictions, the District may encourage and advocate preservation of open space by other governmental agencies. The District may support and encourage community groups, non-profits, and other conservation-oriented groups in their efforts to urge other agencies to take actions which will help accomplish the purposes and goals of the District.</p> <p><b>4. Public Involvement:</b> The District educates and makes clearly visible to the public the purposes and actions of the District, and actively encourages public input and involvement in the District’s decision-making process and other activities.<sup>19</sup></p> <p><b>Policies</b>  <b>Public Information</b></p>	No change required.		Jim Sullivan #2 Puente #1

Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY			
BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>a. The District works through a variety of means and media to inform the public of the District’s goals and objectives, its short and long-term plans, the critical need for open space preservation, and the appropriate use of District lands. This information is disseminated as widely as possible throughout the District. Landowners and potential donors are adequately informed of the District’s purpose and goals, and of the possible methods of preserving land as open space.</p> <p><b>Meeting Procedures</b></p> <p>b. The District diligently follows the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act regarding open meeting procedures, and will be guided by its enabling legislation under the state Public Resources Code, Article 3, Division 5, Chapter 3, Section 5500. The District encourages and welcomes public participation at its meetings and make its actions, intents, and decisions clearly visible to the public.</p> <p><b>Public Input</b></p> <p>c. The District encourages and welcomes communication from the public by being as accessible to the</p>			

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<p>public as possible and by regularly soliciting public comments about what the District should be accomplishing and how it should proceed.<sup>20</sup></p> <p><b>Neighbor Relations</b></p> <p>d. In both the day-to-day conduct of its business and in the long-range planning for public open space preserves, the District makes every effort to cooperate with preserve neighbors, to take into account their perspectives, to fully address their concerns, and to engage and involve them in the process of making decisions regarding the preserves of which they are neighbors. Active management, patrol, maintenance, and public education are provided to minimize threats to public safety, fire hazards, litter, noise, erosion, unsound use of the land, disturbance of wildlife and vegetation, and trespassing.<sup>21</sup></p> <p><b>Participation</b></p> <p>e. The District seeks to involve the public in the operation and decision-making of the District and in general planning for acquisition and future use of open space lands through special workshops,</p>			



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<p>committees and task forces, and public outreach activities. Through staff and volunteer programs, the District provides ecological and environmental education and fosters public appreciation of open space values.</p> <p><b>Volunteerism</b></p> <p>f. Through its volunteer programs, the District encourages active public participation in the maintenance, restoration, and protection of its natural resources. In addition, volunteers assist the District in scientific research, and providing cultural, historical, and environmental education opportunities to the public.</p> <p><b>5. Administration:</b> The staff administers the affairs of the District on behalf of the public so as to maximize accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the District within existing financial constraints.</p>			

**Table 2: DRAFT BASIC POLICY STATEMENT REVISIONS – COMMENT KEY**

BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p><b>Cost Constraints</b></p> <p>a. Because the District is committed to maximum preservation efforts, administrative expense growth is limited by following an average annual operating expenses growth guideline, and by utilizing the help of other governmental agencies, private entities, contractual services, and volunteers.<sup>22</sup></p> <p><sup>22</sup>. Average Seven Percent Growth Guideline for District Operating Expenses and Annual Budget</p>	<p>Staff Note: Although not directly related to the Service Plan, the Basic Policy language is outdated with a need to update the growth guidelines that are used to control administrative expenses.</p>	<p>Change to read:</p> <p><b>Policies</b></p> <p><b>Cost Constraints</b></p> <p>a. Because the District is committed to <u>maintain a conservative fiscal outlook to ensure maximum support of its mission</u>, administrative expense growth is limited by <del>following an average annual operating expenses growth guideline</del> <u>the growth in tax revenues, by evaluating the ratio of operating expenses</u>, and by utilizing the help of other governmental agencies, private entities, contractual services, and volunteers.</p> <p><del><sup>22</sup>. Average Seven Percent Growth Guideline for District Operating Expenses and Annual Budget</del></p>	
<p><b>Professional Organization</b></p> <p>b. The District employs a highly capable and professional staff and provides them with the facilities and resources needed to run an efficient and responsible organization.</p> <p>c. The Board of Directors is the governing body of the District and determines all questions of policy. The District is divided into seven geographic wards of approximately equal populations, each</p>	<p>No change required.</p>	<p>No change required.</p>	<p>Puente #1</p>

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BASIC POLICY STATEMENT	RELATED SERVICE PLAN STATEMENTS	CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS TO BASIC POLICY	Comment Key
<p>represented by an elected Board member.<sup>23</sup></p> <p><sup>23</sup> Public Resources Code, Section 5537</p>			



# Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Work on the San Mateo County Coast

## Introduction

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a public agency created by voters in 1972; the result of a grassroots effort by local citizens who wanted to preserve “room to breathe” after seeing the Santa Clara Valley filled in by development.

Decades later, as development pressure threatened the San Mateo County coast’s scenic beauty, rural character and agricultural heritage, residents expressed their support for extending Midpen’s boundaries to include the coastal area.

In 2004, Midpen’s boundaries expanded to include the San Mateo County coast. The area is called Midpen’s Coastside Protection Area and has a unique mission statement associated with it that includes agriculture.



## 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.*



To date, Midpen has **protected more than 19,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands** on the San Mateo County coast that contribute to the area’s rural identity, natural beauty, quality of life and agricultural heritage. Of these lands,

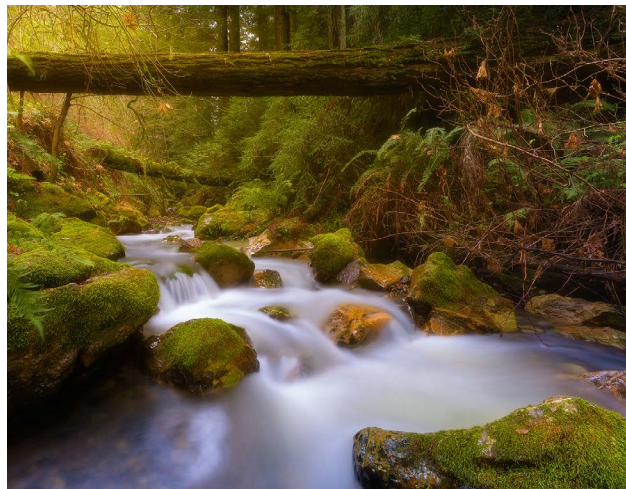
- More than **15,000 acres leased to ranching tenants** under Midpen’s Conservation Grazing Program.
- Midpen has **protected more than one-third of the remaining ranchlands** on the San Mateo County coast.

# Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Work on the San Mateo County Coast

## How Midpen Works on the Coastside

Midpen's **Coastside Protection Area Service Plan**, developed in collaboration with Coastside residents and the agricultural community, guides our work in the region. Through the plan, Midpen is committed to:

- Protecting watershed integrity and water quality.
- Protecting the natural environment, including sensitive habitats for rare plants and wildlife.
- Preserving existing and potential farming and grazing operations to keep the maximum amount of prime agricultural land and other lands suitable for agriculture in production as local food sources.
- Protecting the rural and agricultural heritage of the San Mateo County coast.
- Linking public open spaces and park lands for habitat and trail connectivity.
- Providing opportunities for low-intensity recreation and supporting an integrated regional trail system.
- Providing opportunities for scientific research, resource conservation demonstration projects, outdoor environmental education programs and interpretive programs for the public.



## Investing in the Coastside

Local voters, including Coastsiders, passed Midpen's Measure AA in 2014. This 30-year, \$300 million bond supports open space projects in Midpen's community-supported Vision Plan, including dozens of Coastside preservation, restoration and public access projects. Coastside property tax-payers contribute to Measure AA. Midpen's remaining funding comes from a small share of property tax on ridgeline and bayside properties within our service area.

To date, more than **\$16 million in Measure AA funding has been invested in Coastside open space and agriculture projects**. These include land preservation, habitat restoration, watershed protection, conservation grazing and ecologically sensitive public access projects at Purisima Creek Redwoods, La Honda Creek, Miramontes Ridge, Tunitas Creek and Cloverdale Ranch preserves.

### Midpen Agriculture and Ranching Investments, 2009-2025

Total: \$4.4 million

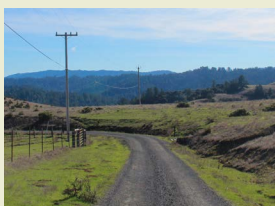
**Brush**  
\$779,180



**Fences**  
\$1,657,300



**Road/Trail**  
\$691,544



**Structure**  
\$774,740



**Water**  
\$444,719





# Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Work on the San Mateo County Coast

## Conservation Grazing and Agriculture

**Midpen's Agricultural Policy**, which was updated in 2023 through a public process, defines Midpen's role in agriculture on the San Mateo County coast in alignment with our mission.

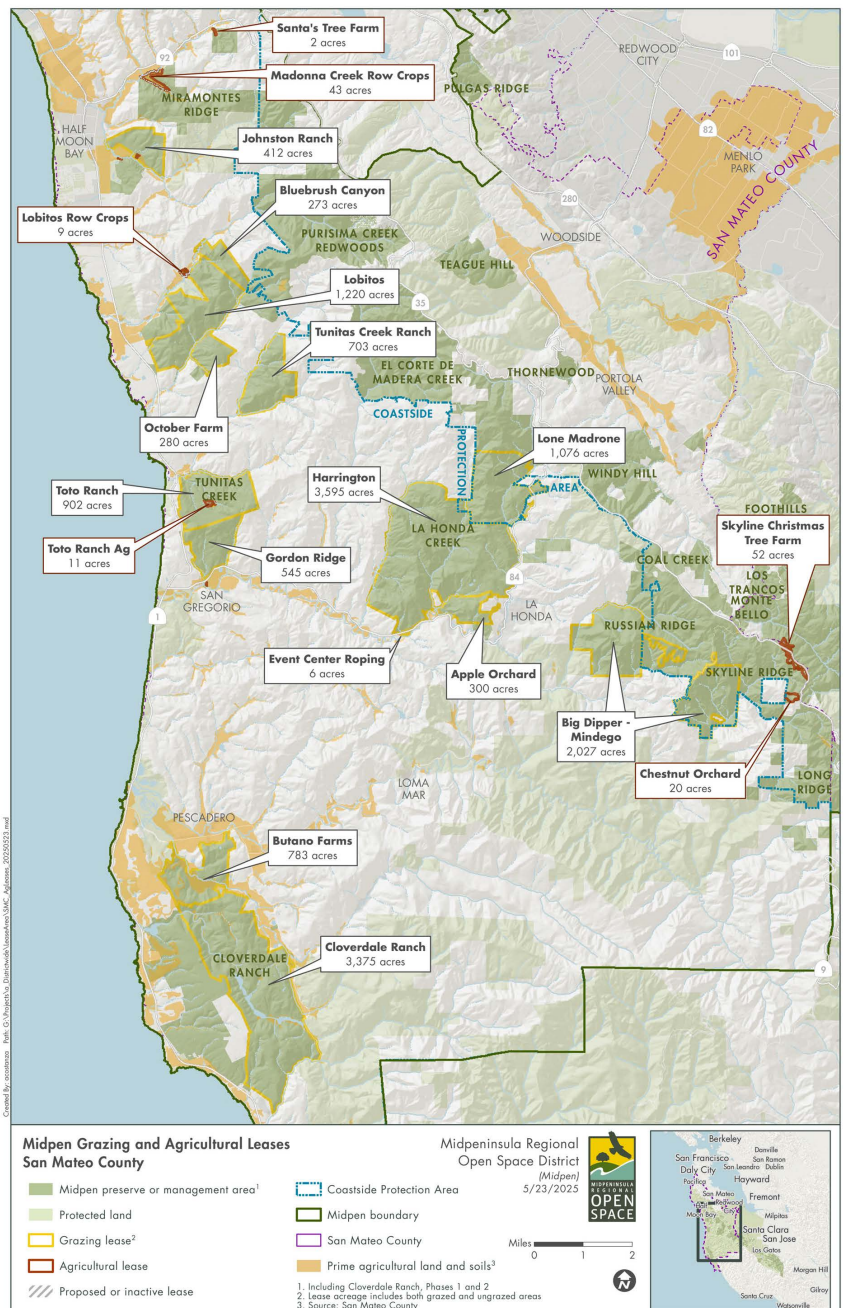
**Midpen's Conservation Grazing Program** is a collaboration with small-scale, local ranchers accomplishing multiple goals that align with our coastal mission, including

- Maintaining and restoring coastal grasslands and their unique biodiversity
- Managing vegetation to reduce wildland fire risk
- Supporting agriculture on the San Mateo County Coast

There are also some row crops within Midpen's coastal-area preserves, including seven acres of cut flowers in Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve, 33 acres of produce in Miramontes Ridge Preserve and a historic chestnut orchard and Christmas tree farm in Skyline Ridge Preserve.



Cloverdale Ranch corral replacement: before (top), and after (below).





# Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Work on the San Mateo County Coast

## Agreements With South Coast Schools and Fire

As a tax-exempt public agency, Midpen does not pay property tax. However, since expanding to the Coastside in 2004, Midpen has had an agreement in place to provide the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District and San Mateo County fire services with property tax compensation payments to keep their funding whole when Midpen protects open space land within their jurisdictions.

## Partnerships

Midpen works in partnership with Peninsula Open Space Trust, San Mateo Resource Conservation District and others to balance viable agricultural and open space conservation goals on the San Mateo County coast.



## Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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