



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: January 13, 2016

MEMO TO: MROSD Board of Directors

FROM: Kevin Woodhouse, Assistant General Manager

THROUGH: Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager

SUBJECT: Update re: Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network wrapped up 2015 with the following significant developments:

1. All 19 Network agencies/participants have signed the Memorandum of Understanding. The final MOU is provided as *Attachment 1*.
2. The Network has successfully secured another round of grant funding to continue its efforts. Funding from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Stephen Bechtel Fund, and the Resources Legacy Fund, will enable the hiring of a Network Manager position for multiple years, fund a case study to document the model work of the Network in coordinating stewardship across a large region, and help launch Network priority initiatives. *Attachment 2* is a press release (released on January 7th) announcing the Network Manager position, the funding, and the background and purpose of the Network.
3. The Network has launched a web presence to provide information about the purpose of the Network: <http://www.scmsn.net/> *Attachment 3* is the homepage for the site.
4. Numerous other Network actions are underway, such as finalizing bylaws, developing a Story Map of Santa Cruz Mountains stewardship projects, identifying current stewardship projects that could benefit from increased collaboration between Network participants, and identifying strategies to build awareness and public information about landscape-level stewardship.

I will continue to provide updates as Network momentum builds throughout the year.

Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network

Preamble

The mission of the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network is to help cultivate a resilient, vibrant region where human and natural systems thrive for generations to come.

The Santa Cruz Mountains region has a long history as a place of significant cultural, biological, and environmental diversity which supports many native plant and animal species found nowhere else on Earth. Those who love and value this important region share a rare opportunity and responsibility to protect this unique ecological and cultural heritage and the ways of life it sustains.

The Santa Cruz Mountains region, as we define it, extends from the San Francisco Bay area, south to the Pajaro River and is bounded to the east by the Santa Clara Valley and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The region is comprised of a diverse array of ecosystems which include diverse natural features ranging from ridge tops to alluvial fans, old growth forests, saltwater lagoons, marshes, mudflats, and intertidal zones. Ownership and land use varies from park and open space preserves to privately held timber and agricultural lands interspersed with both rural and urban communities.

Good land stewardship occurs on both public and private lands, “preserved” and “working” lands. The act of stewardship toward land is based on the concept that landowners and land managers take good care of the land for its own sake and for the future, and not only for short-term personal gain. Effective stewardship of a large landscape or region requires an approach that promotes a wide range of beneficial uses or values, including but not limited to ecological, recreational, aesthetic, spiritual, cultural, and economic.

The Network will help coordinate stewardship efforts at the landscape and local scales. Some of the specific priority areas we agree are critical include:

- Enhancing Water Quality and Watershed Health
- Managing Invasive Plant and Animal Species
- Maintaining Biodiversity and Endangered Species
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Monitoring, Research and Education
- Access to Public Lands
- Strong Human Communities and Citizen Engagement

Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network

Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding establishes the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network, a region-wide and cross-sector collaboration of independent individuals and organizations who are committed to practicing effective stewardship on their own lands and coordinating their efforts with other land stewards to enhance stewardship on a regional level.

Stewardship Network participants agree that effective land stewardship on a regional level is characterized by:

- Emulating or enhancing natural ecosystem functions
- An active, varied, “mosaic” approach that promotes a wide variety of conservation benefits, including the generation of responsibly produced resources and livelihoods from working lands.
- Experimenting with a range of stewardship practices as appropriate
- Consistent monitoring and evaluation, adjusting land practices to improve results
- Co-operative efforts and the sharing of critical information
- Identifying and communicating the acceptable and unacceptable thresholds of threat or hazard from activities or events such as fire, and the consequences of action versus inaction
- Responsible and responsive regulation that does not unduly hamper stewardship efforts
- The availability of sufficient resources to achieve long-term goals

Accordingly, participants agree that their primary objectives for forming and joining the Stewardship Network are to:

- Build trust and strengthen relationships within and across sectors and jurisdictional boundaries
- Value diverse perspectives and approaches to stewardship, exploring together what constitutes best current and future stewardship practices
- Sense and respond to emergent challenges
- Identify critical obstacles that hamper stewardship efforts and develop strategies for improving effectiveness
- Collaborate where individual and regional stewardship goals converge
- Leverage existing activities and resources and avoid duplication of stewardship efforts
- Share information in order to enhance knowledge and promote best practices that support long term sustainability
- Inform other landowners, the public at large, potential project funders, regulators, and legislators about the importance and value of effective stewardship for enhancing the health of the Santa Cruz Mountain region
- Recognize and support landowners and private businesses who are advancing stewardship goals and are using best practices
- Ensure adequate resourcing for long term stewardship efforts
- Educate and recruit future stewards of the land

The Undersigned, while not legally bound, share the intention to support the primary objectives of the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network as outlined above. Participating members of the Stewardship Network sign on behalf of their organization as an authorized representative, while also affirming and retaining the independence and autonomy of their organization, its mission, its authority, and its goals. Any participant may withdraw from this MOU at any time by providing written notice to the other participants within 30 days prior to their intended withdrawal.

Organization Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Name Terry Corwin Title Pres./CEO
Signed Terry Corwin Date 9/30/15

Organization Big Creek Lumber Co.
Name Janet Webb Title Pres.
Signed Janet M. Webb Date 9/30/15

Organization Sempervirens Fund
Name Laura McLendon Title Stewardship Manager
Signed Laura McLendon Date 9/30/15

Organization Peninsula Open Space Trust
Name Daniel Olstein Title Director, Land Stewardship
Signed Daniel Olstein Date 9/30/15

Organization RCD of Santa Cruz County
Name Chris Coburn Title Executive Director
Signed Chris Coburn Date 10/15/2015

Organization San Mateo County Resource Conservation District
Name Kellyx Nelson Title 9/30/15 Exec. Dir.
Signed [Signature] Date 9/30/2015

Organization Bureau of Land Management
Name Rick Cooper Title Central Coast Field Office Mgr.
Signed Rick Cooper Date 9/30/2015

Organization CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS
Name CHET M. BARDO Title DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
Signed [Signature] Date 9/30/2015

Organization Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Name Kevin J. Woodhouse Title Assistant General Manager
Signed [Signature] Date 9/31/2015

Organization Cal Poly Swanton Pacific Ranch
Name Brian C. Dietterick Title Director
Signed Brian C. Dietterick Date 10/26/2015

Organization Save the Redwoods League

Name Jessica Neff Title Land Project & Stewardship Manager

Signed [Signature] Date 9/30/2015

Organization Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Stanford University

Name Philippe S. Cohen Title Executive Director

Signed [Signature] Date 9/30/15

Organization Girl Scouts of Northern California

Name DAVID POOCK Title Senior Dir. Property

Signed [Signature] Date 9/30/15

Organization San Mateo County Parks

Name Marlene Finley Title Director

Signed Marlene Finley Date 10/6/2015

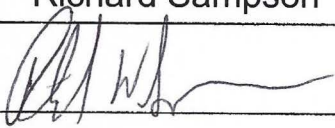
Organization Santa Cruz County Parks

Name Jeff Gaffney Title Director

Signed [Signature] Date 10/28/2015

Organization California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Name Richard Sampson Title Forester II

Signed  Date 11/18/2015

Organization UC Santa Cruz Natural Reserves

Name Gage Dayton Title Administrative Director

Signed *Gage Dayton* Date 10/18/2015

Organization _____

Name _____ Title _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Organization San Lorenzo Valley Water District

Name Jen Michelsen Title Environmental Prg. Mgr.

Signed *Jennifer Michelsen* Date 10/21/2015

Organization Amah Mutsun Land Trust

Name Valentin Lopez Title Board President

Signed *Valentin Lopez* Date 11/2/2015

Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network Seeks Network Manager

San Cruz, California, January 5, 2016. The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network has announced that it is seeking a qualified individual to serve as Network Manager to coordinate the network's activities.

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network was formed in 2015 as an inclusive, region-wide collaboration of 19 large landowners in the Santa Cruz Mountain region that extends from south of San Francisco to the Salinas Valley, east to the Santa Clara Valley, and west to the Pacific Ocean. The Network includes individuals and organizations representing local, state, and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, research institutions, private landowners, and community and tribal groups, nearly all of whom either own or are responsible for managing both protected and working lands throughout the region. The network is committed to working together to balance both ecological and economic goals to foster a resilient, vibrant regional ecosystem where human and natural systems thrive for generations to come.

The Network Manager's primary responsibilities will be to cultivate collaboration between network members and to act as the network's organizational coordinator. The Network Manager will be responsible for connecting network members with each other and with other important contacts in the region, identifying and advancing opportunities for collaboration and information sharing between member organizations, helping to secure more resources for land stewardship, and educating the public about the importance of caring for land throughout the region. The Network Manager will work closely with the network's leadership team and report to the entire network.

"The position requires the exercise of several skill sets that are actually quite different in practice," said Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director of the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and member of the network's selection committee for the position. "On the one hand, the Network Manager must be a skillful facilitator who is capable of bringing people together and building consensus among sometimes divergent points of view. On the other hand, the same person must also have the capabilities of an effective office manager, who can manage the logistics of overseeing a diverse group of organizations and individuals, including budgeting and planning, as well as handling all aspects of internal and external communications. Finding this range of skills in a single individual may be challenging, but we are optimistic that there is someone out there with these capabilities who is attracted to this unique opportunity to work at the cutting edge of large landscape conservation."

The Network Manager position requires a two-year minimum commitment to ensure the continuity of the network as it evolves. Annual contract renewal thereafter will depend on additional funding. Initially, the Network Manager position will be funded in part by a grant awarded to the Stewardship Network in December 2015 by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the Stephen Bechtel Fund. The grant will also fund a case study to document the model for coordinating stewardship across a large region that the network is pioneering. The Stewardship Network and Network Manager position will also be supported by a grant awarded in November

2015 by the Resources Legacy Fund. The San Mateo County RCD will serve as the grant administrator for the Bechtel grant, and provide an office and administrative support for the Network Manager.

With the need for financial support for land stewardship increasing throughout the region and the effects of climate change becoming more evident, the members of the Stewardship Network have come together to coordinate activities, resources, and information in an attempt to leverage their collective capabilities and identify opportunities for greater efficiency among their stewardship efforts. Based on an understanding that the region's ecosystems function without regard to property boundaries, network members' intention is to work together to enhance water quality and watershed health, maintain biodiversity and endangered species, manage invasive plant and animal species, support climate change adaptation, provide access to public lands, monitor resources and conduct research, educate the public, and build citizen engagement and strong human communities throughout the Santa Cruz Mountain region.

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network was formed during a series of multi-day meetings in March, June, and September 2015. During the meetings, participants identified common interests and established agreements that would provide a basis for sharing information and resources to achieve common objectives in land stewardship. The Stewardship Network was founded on the agreement that effective stewardship of the region requires the promotion of a wide range of beneficial uses of the land, including ecological, economic, recreational, aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual.

The model of collaborative, large landscape stewardship that the network is developing is currently advocated by conservation scientists, practitioners, and policy makers as one of the most promising strategies for mitigating the effects of climate change and other potentially negative impacts to the natural environment. Impact networks like the Stewardship Network have proven to be powerful organizing mechanisms for addressing systems-level challenges that are too complex to be effectively addressed by any single stakeholder.

The Network Manager position includes medical, dental, and vision benefits, as well as PTO, a 401K, and a flexible workplace. The San Mateo Resource Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer. Candidates reflecting the social diversity of California are strongly encouraged to apply.

Individuals interested in applying for the Network Manager position with the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network should visit scmsn.net/apply for more information about the Network Manager position and instructions on how to apply. For additional questions about the Stewardship Network or the Network Manager position, contact David Ehrlichman at dce2020@convergeforimpact.com.

Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network

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Those who love and value this important region share a rare opportunity and responsibility to protect this unique ecological and cultural heritage and the ways of life it sustains.

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network is a region-wide and cross-sector collaboration of independent individuals and organizations who are committed to working together to balance both ecological and economic goals to foster a resilient, vibrant regional ecosystem where human and natural systems thrive for generations to come.

About The Network



Learn more about the purpose and primary objectives of the Network.

[About the Network](#) >

What Is Stewardship?



Learn what effective stewardship looks like on the ground.

[What is Stewardship?](#) >

Network Members



The Stewardship Network is comprised of 19 organizations including local, state, and federal agencies, nonprofits, academia, business, community, and tribal groups.

[Network Members](#) >