



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District General Manager Steve Abbors Retiring

Los Altos, CA— The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's General Manager, Steve Abbors, announced his retirement yesterday after nearly a decade at the public agency's helm. He will stay on through the end of the year.

"Steve came aboard during a pivotal time for Midpen, and helped us change course, by continuing to preserve land while increasing our restoration and public access efforts," said Midpen's Board President Larry Hassett. "His leadership was critical in sustainably growing the organization to meet the needs of the public we serve."

Abbors arrived at Midpen in 2008 at the start of the economic downturn. One of his key accomplishments is growing the organization's long tradition of fiscal responsibility and creating financial sustainability with Measure AA, a \$300 million general obligation bond passed by voters in 2014. He was also instrumental in securing legislative approval of AB 612, improving Midpen's ability to repay debt making more money available to purchase land.

Abbors led the organization in the creation of a strategic plan charting a 40-year course forward with the help of the public. Under his tenure, Midpen grew from 98 to 163 fulltime staff. He oversaw the creation of a natural resources department to provide greater focus on land stewardship, and an engineering and construction department to complete long-awaited projects.

Abbors was also critical to the success of Midpen's largest project to date: opening the summit of Mount Umunhum to the public. He personally traveled to Washington DC and successfully lobbied Congress to fund the cleanup of an abandoned air force station atop Mount Umunhum. Midpen then restored the prominent South Bay peak and the project culminated in a public grand opening in September.

"I fell in love with nature as a young boy and have been lucky to work with so many wonderful people over the years to help protect it. My time among the talented and passionate staff at Midpen gives me great confidence that the life support system provided by nature will be well cared for," Abbors said.

Abbors earned a master's degree in biological sciences from California State University, East Bay. He then embarked on a career spanning 47 years. It all began in 1971 when he was hired as a naturalist for the East Bay Regional Park District. He went on to manage watershed lands for water quality and recreation at the East Bay Municipal Utility District for nearly 25 years before arriving at Midpen. Outside of work, Abbors hikes more than 2,100 miles annually on local trails, plays classical guitar,

makes wine and photographs anything that crawls, flies or slithers. In retirement Abbors will enjoy more time with his wife and best friend, Carlene, and their two grown daughters. He will continue his efforts in the community to protect our natural areas.

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Created by voter initiative in 1972, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of open space. The District is a California special district governed by an elected board of directors. The District's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land and agricultural land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

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