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Midpen board prioritizes open space projects, approves the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget and Action Plan

Los Altos, CA— At its regular meeting on June 9, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District board of directors adopted a \$89.6 million budget to support 117 projects for the fiscal year running from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. The budget and action plan prioritizes numerous time-sensitive and high-priority projects, such as:

- Implementation of Midpen’s newly developed Wildland Fire Resiliency Program that will increase our ecologically sensitive vegetation management work by approximately 600% over 10 years.
- Expansion of the trail systems within La Honda Creek and Bear Creek Redwood open space preserves to expand equitable outdoor access for all.
- Purchase of key coastal upland properties to advance regional trails, protect important agricultural lands, preserve rural character, and encourage viable agricultural use of land resources.
- Ongoing implementation of resource management policies and wildlife research priorities that will help protect ecologically sensitive habitats and the species that call those spaces home.
- Construction of Midpen’s new administrative office, which will be complete and ready for occupancy in March 2022.

“Over the past year, staff worked tirelessly to keep our preserves open to the public during the pandemic, while we kept expenses generally flat to account for economic uncertainty,” General Manager Ana Ruiz said. “While our visitation doubled at many preserves during the pandemic, the upcoming FY22 budget reflects a net increase of 6% over FY21, excluding the one-time Administrative Office project.”

About one-third of the projects (28) included in the FY22 Capital Improvement and Action Plan section of the budget are eligible for reimbursement through Measure AA, a general obligation bond funding source approved by voters in 2014. Action plan projects span across the four main program

areas supporting the District's strategic goals: Land Acquisition and Preservation (16%), Natural Resource Protection and Restoration (30%), Public Access, Education, and Outreach (30%), and Assets and Organizational Support (24%).

Total revenues and other funding sources are projected at \$90.1 million, which includes property tax revenues of \$63.3 million, bond reimbursements of \$5.6 million, and other funding sources, grants and transfers of \$21.2 million. Midpen receives the majority (92%) of its total revenues from property taxes, with grants, interest, rental, and other income (8%) making up the balance of the revenue sources.

The complete [budget and action plan](#) and the [budget in brief](#) overview are available at openspace.org/budget.

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The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. On the San Mateo County coast, our mission also includes preserving agricultural land of regional significance and rural character and encouraging viable agricultural use of land resources. Midpen has successfully protected more than 65,000 acres of public open space land in the Santa Cruz Mountains region since 1972.

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