



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-23-20  
Meeting 23-04  
February 8, 2023

## AGENDA ITEM 6

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50<sup>th</sup> Yearlong Anniversary Celebration Recap

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS *den*

Receive an informational report on activities related to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary public celebrations that occurred throughout 2022. No Board action required.

### SUMMARY

Throughout 2022, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) celebrated 50 years of open space and agricultural land preservation, natural resource protection and ecologically sensitive public access. The celebration was a major opportunity for the District to connect with community members, raise public awareness of and positive regard for the District, engage and celebrate the District's diverse partners, volunteers, board and staff, and commemorate 50 years of public support that has allowed the agency to achieve notable open space conservation accomplishments for the region. Staff produced public-facing events and online activities to spur community engagement and incorporated 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary messaging and branding into projects throughout the year. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations served as an opportunity for the District to experiment with several new outreach tools and techniques, which will help inform future communication strategies.

Although the Public Affairs department spearheaded the planning and execution of the celebration elements, District staff from all departments contributed to the success of the project by providing essential services, subject-matter guidance and other assistance. This report is intended as a comprehensive summary of each event/activity element, results and lessons learned. While each element had specific success metrics, overall, the yearlong 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration effort garnered a total audience of nearly 80 million, including in-person attendance of approximately 2,600.

### BACKGROUND

Planning for the celebration began in earnest two years in advance. In November 2020, staff presented a proposed scope for the yearlong activities to the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) for review and input. Celebratory priorities continued to take shape with input from the full Board of Directors at two regular meetings in December 2020, which included assigning teams of two Board members as liaisons to support specific elements. Throughout these discussions, the Board indicated a strong preference for a series of community and partner events to serve as cornerstones of the 50th Anniversary Celebration. These events,

along with other activities, were supported and extended with media outreach, advertising and ongoing social media campaigns.

Celebration events and activities were designed primarily to reach a target audience of people aged 20 to 40, a group identified as having lower awareness of the District in survey research completed in January 2020. For media and advertising purposes, the target audience age range was increased to 25 to 54 to better align with media demographic segmentation. Secondary target audiences reflect the District's commitment to equity and a desire to expand outreach to new audiences, including Black, Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC) and environmental allies (including existing partners and new potential partners), as well as staff and volunteers.

Through ongoing discussions and collaboration with the Board, four key objectives were identified and approved in fall 2021:

- **Commemorate** the District's 50 years from founding to present day;
- Connect the public to the District's work and mission, increasing **public awareness and positive regard**;
- Tell the **whole story of the District's legacy**, including why nature is essential, how open space is preserved, the role of rural and working lands and the partnerships involved;
- **Engage and celebrate** the District's **diverse public, partners**, volunteers, board, and staff for their collective accomplishments and ongoing support-

The Board approved the overall anniversary celebration plan (Attachment 1) and \$550,000 in funding on October 27, 2021. Following a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, Matter Unlimited (Matter) was selected to assist with the overall plan and provided creative direction and implementation for numerous key components, including event planning and execution. In addition, Digital Story Company (DSC), a multimedia production company known for the weekly television series *OpenRoad with Doug McConnell*, was selected to produce a 48-minute documentary commemorating the 50th Anniversary as a public outreach and education tool.

## DISCUSSION

Overall, the yearlong anniversary celebration achieved the Board-approved objectives, with each element contributing significantly to achieving a total audience of nearly 80 million. The events and special anniversary hike series attracted an estimated 2,600 participants, including at least 500 new-to-the-District community members, according to post-event surveys. The event partnership program forged more than a dozen new community partners and fortified existing partnership ties. Intentionally crafted celebration elements were designed to educate the public on the District's mission and accomplishments through online, print and broadcast channels. The audience for each element is estimated in the chart below:

<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Audience*</b>
Earned Media Outreach	70,000,000
Paid Media Campaign	8,000,000
Open Stories	87,400
Explore Challenge on OuterSpatial App	30,000
Love Letters	25,000
Spotted at Midpen Social Media Contest	130,000

<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Audience*</b>
50 to Forever Documentary Broadcast	Viewership data TBD
50 to Forever (YouTube link)	893
Bayside Family Festival Event	800 attendees
Coastside Community Celebration Event	1,200 attendees
Partner Reception	300 attendees
All Preserves Great & Small Docent-Led Hike Series	300 attendees
<b>Total</b>	<b>~ 80 Million</b>

\*Various mediums use different metrics to measure audience, including attendance, impressions, media circulation, page and post views.

Below, each element of the yearlong anniversary celebration is reviewed in detail, highlighting the goals and accomplishments, results and metrics, challenges and opportunities and learnings for the future.

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Launch and Brand Expression**

To build awareness for the yearlong celebration, the District rolled out a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary temporary logo in fall 2021. The logo was intentionally designed to evoke the District's official logo to ensure that awareness generated throughout the year carried over, connecting new audiences to the agency beyond 2022, and to ensure a seamless transition into and out of the celebration year. In January 2022, the commemorative logo replaced the standard agency logo on the website, email signatures, PowerPoint templates, standard letterhead, editorial publications and all 50th promotional materials.

The temporary logo was well-received by both internal and external audiences. In December of 2022, San Benito Agricultural Land Trust reached out to the District for permission to use a similar design for their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, which occurs in 2023. Marin County Parks celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022 and used a similar logo format.

Additional launch materials were developed featuring anniversary messaging and branding:

- **Wall calendar:** Staff produced a 2022 wall calendar with season-specific information about the preserves as an outreach tool throughout the year.
- **Timeline:** Staff reviewed tomes of historical records to develop a detailed interactive timeline, which takes users on a tour through the first 50 years of public open space preservation, protection, restoration, access and education. The timeline is available at [openspace.org/history](https://openspace.org/history).
- **Preserve Signage:** 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary collateral was included in trailhead sign boards. Banners and signage were replaced regularly to promote different cornerstone events and activities.
- **Staff Shirt:** A radiant orange commemorative t-shirt, featuring all District preserves and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo alongside historic District logos, was created for staff to wear at events for easy identification.
- **Giveaway and Store Items:** Staff also produced exclusive items with the 50<sup>th</sup> logo, such as first aid kits, water bottles, pins and patches for event and outreach giveaways, and for sale in the District's online store.

## Legislative Delegations Honoring the District's 50<sup>th</sup>

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary offered an opportunity to strengthen relationships with the District's legislative delegation. Staff coordinated with several legislative offices to produce multiple proclamations:

- **San Mateo County Board of Supervisors**, sponsored by Supervisor Don Horsley.
- **Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors**, sponsored by Supervisor Simitian.
- **State Joint Resolution** from Assemblymember Berman on behalf of the state delegation (Asm. Marc Berman, former Asm. Kevin Mullin, Asm. Mark Stone, Asm. Evan Low, Sen. Josh Becker, Sen. Dave Cortese and Sen. John Laird).
- **Certificate of Special Recognition from Congresswoman Eshoo** on behalf of the federal delegation (Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Congressman Ro Khanna, Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, Congresswoman Jackie Speier and Congressman Jimmy Panetta). Congresswoman Eshoo presented the certificate in person at the October 12 Board of Directors meeting.
- **Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority** also created a Board resolution honoring the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

These proclamations expanded awareness to new audiences and offered our governmental partners a chance to share in celebrating 50 years of success in open space preservation. Moving forward, engaging elected officials helps create an affinity toward the District's work and significantly expands the reach of communications and outreach. Additionally, by working closely and maintaining relationships with legislative offices, the District is made aware of opportunities to join community events and engage audiences less familiar with the agency.

## Open Stories

In January, a video interview with Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Chairman Valentin Lopez kicked off a weekly profile series designed to tell the story of District lands through the varied and diverse experience of 50 people over the past 50 years and how they played a role in the preservation and protection of open space. Former employees and board members, partners, volunteers, community members and open space advocates were profiled. The stories were posted weekly on the District website ([openspace.org/open-stories](https://openspace.org/open-stories)) and social media channels, in monthly *Plug Into Nature* e-newsletters and quarterly *Views* print newsletter.

Over 2,400 users visited the Open Stories web page throughout the year. The open stories social media posts received over 48,000 impressions and 1,300 interactions. By shining a spotlight on the work performed by groups such as Latino Outdoors, Saved by Nature, Vida Verde and others, this element helped strengthen existing partnerships. Former staff members were also heavily featured in the series and subsequently invited to a partner reception in December where they had a chance to reunite with former colleagues and meet newer staff.

While the series was well-received and partners were excited to participate, a lack of timely response to the interview questions challenged staff resources and required more time than initially estimated. Flexibility and staff collaboration were critical to ensuring profiles were completed each week. The telling of personal stories about individual connections to the land also required considerable thoughtfulness. Through this yearlong campaign element, staff learned that online content series with a more limited-duration keeps interest high while maximizing return on staff investment of time and effort.

## **Open Hearts/Love Letters**

In February, staff launched the Open Hearts campaign in which staff, visitors, fans and advocates were invited to write a short love letter to the District, their favorite preserve, or trail. Once shared through an online form, the love letters were formatted to a love-note style template and then posted on the webpage and social media channels.

The goals for this element included discovering and amplifying more diverse social media voices, especially those of younger audiences. Submissions were deeply moving, with several thanking the District for providing a refuge during the COVID-19 shutdown, sharing memories of times in preserves with loved ones and several poems about the beauty and peace found in the preserves. These positive testimonials continue to be used in other materials, such as grant applications and proposals.

The short, focused timeframe for this series created interest and engagement. In crafting this element, staff set a goal of receiving 50 love letters. At the end of the month, the campaign fell just short with 46 love letters received, however, the initiative was successful in reaching new audiences with 35% of submitters signing up for our *Plug Into Nature* email list or our *Views* mailing list. The Open Hearts web page saw 478 page visits and received over 24,000 impressions and 662 interactions on social media in one month.

To boost participation as the end of the month approached, staff included the activity at a tabling outreach event. Targeting preserve visitors while they are still at preserves proved so effective, staff intends to include writing love letters as a standard option for future outreach tablings.

## **Spotted at Midpen**

Spotted at Midpen was a social media photo contest created specifically for the 50th anniversary celebration. The competition launched in March and involved users posting photos in or of Midpen preserves to social media and tagging the photos with the hashtag #SpottedAtMidpen, with winners selected every two weeks. The goal of Spotted at Midpen was to create an interactive element that was broadly accessible to a wider audience than just preserve visitors, while also aiming to engage youth audiences over social media. Each winner of the competition received a \$30 gift card to the District webstore.

Running such a contest on social media was experimental, and to maximize staff capacity, Spotted at Midpen replaced the annual photo contest in 2022. To encourage broad participation, a low barrier to enter was set — a contestant needed only to include the hashtag #SpottedAtMidpen on a posted photo to be entered into the competition.

The contest received approximately 720 entries across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, with the vast majority of entries submitted over Instagram (over 500). From those, staff chose 36 winners and honorable mentions. These photos have been added to the photo library and will be used for outreach, social media, web content and more. On Instagram and Facebook, all posts promoting Spotted At Midpen amassed over 130,000 impressions over the course of the contest. Additionally, the engagement with the competition was almost entirely positive; the promotional posts as well as the posts announcing winners received many positive comments.

Staff also gained insight into how the District can successfully run photo competitions on social media, through regular promotion and individual outreach. Staff developed pre-scheduled promotional posts on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) to keep a steady

drumbeat of awareness up. Staff also geo-located pictures taken within preserves and messaged users of the photo contest and how to enter. One learning was that to make the most efficient use of staff time, requiring a web form for entry, as we do in our typical photo contests, would be recommended.

Overall, promoting a photo competition on social media proved an effective way to increase engagement. It can be made better by adjusting future competitions to increase efficiency. Typically, the annual photo competition runs from March through May, and averages 170 entries. Spotted at Midpen ran approximately three times as long and garnered more than four times the typical entries of the regular photo competition. However, a sizable majority (65%) of the submissions were made within the first four months of the contest, adding to staff's understanding of an ideal length running six months or less to keep interest high. Additionally, all photo submissions in our traditional photo contest were subject for our reuse, while only winning photos (and runner ups) were added to the photo library for reuse.

### **All Preserves Great & Small**

To meet the goal of including volunteers in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, docents were invited to create anniversary-themed hikes and activities throughout the year. Notably, docent naturalist and retired Ranger Frances Reneau created a docent-led hike series through each preserve, dubbed All Preserves Great & Small. The series visited all 26 preserves, including permit-only access at Miramontes Ridge and Tunitas Creek preserves, with nearly 300 hikers in total. Feedback expressed to docents both during the hikes and in follow-up surveys was extremely positive. These guided activities filled quickly and identified an opportunity for future hike series to explore the less-popular preserves and describe each preserve's unique attributes.

### **Media Outreach**

Staff, with support from Matter, created press releases and/or directly pitched 10 different stories to regional media outlets throughout the year on a variety of topics reflecting the breadth of the District's mission. The goals for this element were in-line with the overall anniversary goals with a focus on reaching new and diverse audiences through local, regional and BIPOC media publications. All 10 stories pitched throughout the year were picked up, resulting in 40 unique stories (21 print and online; 11 online-only; 4 television and 4 radio). Highlights include:

- **Initial launch press release** sent January 27, 2022, announcing celebration plans garnered robust regional print, online and TV coverage.
- **Four cover stories in regional print media outlets** were earned throughout the year in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Almanac*, *Los Altos Town Crier Magazine* and the *Palo Alto Weekly Times*.
- **Multiple stories published in Spanish and Chinese (Mandarin)** in regional television, radio, print and online media outlets.
- **Dozens of listings in regional media event calendars** for Bayside and Coastside events.
- **Earned media stories were amplified on social media** by both media outlets and sharing links to them via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Total estimated impressions of approximately 70 million for all print, online, television and radio earned media throughout the year (excluding calendar listings) was provided by our consultant Matter, based on circulations and/or information from [similarweb.com](https://www.similarweb.com), which gathers online user

traffic data. An impression is an interaction between an audience and content, for example, a person viewing a news website or getting a newspaper delivered to their home (whether or not they read each story). Staff feel confident that the earned media coverage throughout the year successfully reached new audiences with stories to help increase awareness.

Stories that earned the highest impression estimates, ranging from 1.2 to 27 million, came from those posted on regional online media outlets including *SFGate*, websites for large-circulation dailies including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Sing Tao Daily*, *East Bay Times* and *San Jose Mercury News*, and network television stations including *NBC Bay Area* and *Telemundo*. Stories shared through more community-focused media outlets such as *San Mateo Daily Journal*, *El Observador*, *Patch.com*, *Mountain Network News* and *KHMB Coastside Radio* provided impressions data ranging from 2,500 to 550,000.

This element highlighted the value of directly pitching stories to individual reporters via email and phone in addition to sending out press releases, a tactic staff already use, pending available capacity, to integrate more frequently into ongoing media relations work. The yearlong effort also underscored the general types of stories that receive regional versus local coverage. Half of the pitches received broad coverage with five or more different outlets covering the story. These stories appealed to broad audiences, had a clear news hook and offered something to the public beyond information. They included the initial anniversary kick-off press release and two events, the Grasshopper Loop Trail opening and the Cloverdale Ranch purchase.

Half of the pitches received more targeted, highly localized coverage. These stories generally had a narrower appeal to localized or specialized media outlets and were generally more informational in nature. They included pitches about the Bay Nature local hero award, climate action month, the volunteer and docent program and the Alma Cultural Landscape area opening. Both types of pitches, those that appeal broadly and narrowly, are valuable for reaching new audiences, including via media outlets in languages other than English in our service area.

## **Partner Engagement**

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary provided an opportunity to cement long-standing partner relationships, reinvigorate lapsed ones and develop new ties. Peninsula Open Space Trust and Green Foothills signed on early as presenting sponsors. Staff create a tiered partnership format for promotional partners (those who would amplify messaging by sharing with their audiences), participating partners (those who also appear at the Bayside and/or Coastside events) and presenting partners (those who also provided financial or organizational support). Matter set a goal of securing 10 corporate sponsors and met with multiple organizations, yet were ultimately unable to secure additional financial or in-kind support. Some of the companies approached indicated that the timing did not fit their planning cycles and they needed a longer lead time.

Public Affairs staff, with help from colleagues in Grants, General Manager's Office, Real Property and Planning, along with consultants from Matter, compiled a list of over 200 contacts for prospective partners that fall outside of the District's core partner list. These organizations were contacted to gauge interest in partnering with the District to amplify 50<sup>th</sup> messaging and participate in one of the community events. This aspect of the partnership program worked well and helped secure more than 60 participating partners for both the Bayside and Coastside community events. Approximately 15% of these partners were new relationships formed through the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Staff received feedback that this opportunity to reinvigorate or

create new partnerships was appreciated, particularly in light of the absence of in-person connections for two years during the pandemic.

### **Conservation Action Hero Award**

In March 2022, the Bay Nature Institute named District founder Nonette Hanko as its 2022 Conservation Action Local Hero Award, honoring her at its 12<sup>th</sup> annual event. Staff and current board members joined Ms. Hanko at the recognition event, and she was featured in the spring issue of *Bay Nature Magazine*. Staff successfully pitched the story to local media, including a cover story in the *Los Altos Town Crier's* magazine.

### **Bayside Family Festival**

The Bayside Family Festival on April 30, 2022 was the first public community event celebrating 50 years of open space preservation with community members and partners, and connecting new audiences to the mission. Event attendees explored the Ravenswood Preserve and Bay Trail, watched local performances, and participated in various activities throughout the day. The event was designed as a family-focused event, targeting audiences aged 25-54 with programming focused on engagement and education: wildlife and nature demonstrations, local music and educational talks. Food trucks and popsicle carts kept attendees well-nourished and 23 exhibitor booths hosted by our partners facilitated opportunities for deeper connection and engagement.

Overall, the event surpassed its attendance goal (300) by attracting more than 800 guests. A much larger and more diverse group of participants attended in part due to promotion by our partners, consultants, media calendars and internal channels.

A post-event survey of attendees, partners and staff showed overwhelmingly positive results from all three audiences. Of the 55 public responses, 90% rated the event good to excellent and 95% of respondents indicated they would “likely” or “definitely” visit Ravenswood, recommend it to a friend, or visit another preserve in the future. Additionally, the event was successful in reaching new audiences, exemplified by over 30% of public attendees indicating that they were unfamiliar with the District before the event. The survey also showed that the event was attended by the intended target audience in terms of age and ethnicity. Attendee ages according to our survey respondents showed:

- 30% were aged 25-44
- 40% were aged 45-64
- 27% were aged 65+

Hosting public events is often challenging due to the remote locations, lack of infrastructure, natural resource impacts and parking constraints at open space preserves, particularly for crowd sizes greater than 100. The timing and scale of the Bayside Family Festival added complexity around planning an event after the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders, which required considerable intention around safety measures and evolving local health guidance. Through the planning process, waves of COVID-19 infections ebbed and flowed creating uncertainty for attendance predictions.

### **Paid Media Campaign**

While the District leveraged earned media as key sources of amplification and awareness to extend to new audiences, staff worked closely with Matter and their subcontractors on



opportunities to incorporate paid social and digital advertising to raise awareness (measured through online impressions), and to facilitate engagement (measured in digital interactions: clicks, likes, comments, post shares, etc.).

Advertising at this scale was a new undertaking, as the District invested \$30,000 to target a younger, more diverse audience, and the professional media buyers recommended using digital platforms to best reach that target audience. Digital advertising also allowed for content optimization and boosting high-performing ads over lower-performing ones.

Advertising was split into three categories: Native programmatic display ads (which appear embedded on websites), social media (which appear as posts in users' newsfeeds) and video advertising (which play before videos). Facebook and Instagram were selected as hosts for social media advertising to maximize engagement and most effectively reach target audiences. Video advertising was done on YouTube and TikTok. All paid media creative assets were produced in three languages: English, Spanish and Chinese.

Overall, this project aspect exceeded set goals and provided experience and lessons that can be applied to future outreach efforts. Overall, the paid media element delivered nearly 8 million total impressions (3.4 million more than plan) and 772,000 video views. Notably, the event ads with a clear call-to-action (RSVP) drove more clicks than general awareness-raising ads. The programmatic ads that were embedded into other webpages performed better than social media or video ads, accounting for more than 86% of all landing page views. The Spanish-language ads had the highest click-through rate (CTR), though their higher cost meant their cost-per-click (CPC) was on par with English-language ads. Ads translated into Mandarin were the poorest performing, with the highest CPC and lowest CTR.

On social media, Facebook was the strongest performer, accounting for 12% of total landing page visits. Video ads on YouTube performed consistently with 403,000 views at a very low \$0.01 cost per view. Because the story is completely contained within the video, YouTube drove high awareness, but low click through and landing page visits. Spanish-language video ads had the best video completion rate.

In the first two weeks of the paid media campaign, where social media ads ran for the Bayside Family Festival, the most popular pages visited on the website were the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary overview and the Bayside event page. In the first full month of the paid media campaign, 99% of web traffic to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary page was driven by the paid media campaign.

This campaign element yielded desired results in terms of raising awareness and increasing the District's profile. Because paid media requires a deep understanding of and familiarity with paid advertising on digital channels, continual monitoring and quick decision-making, Matter subcontracted much of this work to an outside firm with significant experience in this field. Such expertise would be similarly required for future digital advertising programs.

### **Pop-Up Preserve Tabling**

Throughout the year, staff set up outreach tables at various preserves to connect directly with visitors. The goal of this element was twofold: to increase awareness by speaking with preserve users about the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and to allow staff to become more familiar with each preserve and to connect with typical users. To maximize efficiency of time and effort, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary pop-up tabling opportunities were often paired with outreach for other projects.

Based on anecdotal feedback, these tabling opportunities led to meaningful interactions with many preserve visitors. For example, in February, staff set up a table at the Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, which coincided with a Latino Outdoors' event, Art for the Heart. Staff answered visitor questions and offered an opportunity to write a love letter to the District, resulting in approximately 100 meaningful interactions between staff and visitors.

While some tablings resulted in dozens to hundreds of interactions, other pop-ups, even those occurring at similar times, had far fewer public interactions. Moving forward, staff will continue to partner with other departments conducting outreach in preserves to maximize efficiency.

## Explore Challenge

The Explore Challenge was created to take advantage of a new feature on OuterSpatial, a smartphone trail-finder application. Launched in June, this challenge allowed participants to explore preserves either virtually through descriptions and images, or in person. Once a participant had visited a preserve (in-person or virtually), they could check-in on the OuterSpatial app and gain one entry per preserve to a raffle for a gift card to the webstore.

Designing this challenge also allowed staff to strengthen our partnership with OuterSpatial staff, and to explore new ways to use the OuterSpatial app. The main audience for this challenge was current users of the OuterSpatial app, as well as the District's social media followers. The Explore Challenge was consistently cross-promoted on social media platforms and tied in to the other 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary content that was posted throughout the year. On Instagram and Facebook, all of the posts promoting the Explore Challenge amassed 30,000 impressions. Additionally, the Explore Challenge was featured in the California Recreate Responsibly Coalition's August email newsletter. The California Recreate Responsibly Coalition includes more than 40 agencies, nonprofits and outdoor businesses.

Overall, the contest had 76 participants and accomplished the goal of creating an accessible way for constituents to learn about and interact with the preserves. However, the OuterSpatial platform caters to a niche audience of heavy outdoor recreationalists, which limits the overall usership base of this project element. A more broad-audience based effort would have been ideal to warrant the investment of staff time to create rich content.

## Bay Nature Magazine Insert

Staff worked with *Bay Nature Magazine* on an eight-page sponsored content section to create an informative, beautiful, printed outreach piece. Staff selected a range of stories, interviews and visuals highlighting the breadth and depth of the District's work and mission. The following stories were published in the Fall 2022 issue of Bay Nature Magazine, both in print and online:

- ***Caring for the Land That Cares for Us*** – A summation of the agency mission and purpose, and the history and high-level accomplishments of the past 50 years.
- ***The Amah Mutsun Are Dancing on Mount Umunhum Once Again*** – Chronicling the restoration of Mount Umunhum and our collaboration with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.
- ***Room to Roam: Habitat Connectivity*** – A deep dive into habitat connectivity work, spotlighting the proposed Highway 17 wildlife crossing and the three-year study of badgers and burrowing owls in preserve grasslands.
- ***The Revival of a Clear Creek*** – An exploration of how the District acquires heavily-used land and works to restore healthy watersheds and forest habitats.

- ***Coexistence: Cattle Ranching Meets Sensitive Species*** – Discussing the symbiotic relationships of cattle grazing and conservation efforts, particularly on the San Mateo County Coastside.

In addition to the initial exposure and awareness of the published articles, an additional 1,000 copies of the insert were printed. Staff handed them out at the September 10 Coastside Community Celebration, December 1 partner event and at various tablings and outreach events in the community. The stories featured were intentionally selected to remain relevant beyond the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities, and the remaining copies will continue to be used as a handout to help build awareness with new audiences and deepen existing audiences' understanding of the District's work. This element proved to be a successful strategy for physical collateral to support in-person outreach and could be used again strategically in the future.

### **Coastside Community Celebration**

The goal of the Coastside Community Celebration held at the Johnston House, adjacent to the Johnston Ranch property, on September 10 was to raise the visibility of the District and our coastside area mission to the Coastside community and our partners. The District's expansion into the San Mateo County Coastside also added additional goals to the event of introducing the agency to newer constituents and providing more education on the agency's mission and nearby work. The event was designed to be community-oriented, targeting neighbors along the Coastside, and therefore programming focused on partnerships, education and connecting with the region's agricultural roots. Local music and 39 exhibitor booths from organizations primarily based on the Coastside were included in the program.

Staff's goal of 800 attendees, set to match the success of the Bayside Family Festival, was surpassed with approximately 1,200 in attendance. The post-event survey sent to attendees and partners showed similarly positive feedback. Of the 93 public responses, 99% rated the event good to excellent and 96% of respondents indicated they would "likely" or "definitely" visit a preserve in the future. Surprisingly, Coastside event survey respondents were more familiar with the District as opposed to the Bayside event attendees (30% vs 16% respectively).

The event was successful in attracting local community attendance. While Coastside residents make up approximately 5% of the District's residents, 30% of event attendees lived within the Coastside protection area. Anecdotally, staff at the greeting table spoke to multiple families who saw signage hanging in downtown Half Moon Bay and decided to attend. According to survey respondents, attendee age ranges were:

- 23% were aged 25-44
- 38% were aged 45-64
- 39% were aged 65+

A positive working relationship with staff from the City of Half Moon Bay was critical to the success of the event. Staff met monthly with representatives from the City Manager's Office and Recreation Department to work through event logistics and permitting issues.

Choosing an optimal site for large community events is a challenging task. In general terms, event location planning must take into consideration: ease of access (including parking, public transit and bike network), high residential density, availability of local vendors, audience familiarity with the location and amenities (such as bathrooms, water fountains and electrical outlets). Because these necessities are not often present at open space preserves, staff must

consider the additional coordination and planning time needed to hold large events (200+) at locations not managed by the District. For smaller gatherings (100-200), staff recommend holding events on District-owned land for ease of efficiency and to bolster the connection between attendees and District lands.

### **Wrapping Existing District Projects in 50th Anniversary Messaging**

Staff used existing projects as opportunities to tie-in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary messaging. Overall, the strategy proved successful, was an efficient use of staff time and could be used again with future endeavors. The following projects were wrapped in 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary messaging:

- **June: Opening the new Grasshopper Loop Trail** in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. The main key message staff promoted for this event was that the District was marking 50 years and its 250<sup>th</sup> mile of trail. This message was reiterated in signage and remarks at the trail opening event, and created a successful news hook that garnered wide regional media coverage.
- **October: Opening the Alma Cultural Landscape** in Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. In addition to key messages focusing on the layers of history of the location, messaging included intertwining our history and acquisition of the preserve.
- **December: Cloverdale Ranch acquisition** was successfully pitched to regional media through a joint press release with Peninsula Open Space Trust, and many of the news stories included mention of the anniversary in their coverage.

### **Partner Reception**

The last major public event of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration was a partner reception that took place on December 1, 2022. Originally, this was intended to be a two-part event; a public open house for community members to visit the new administrative office at 5050 El Camino Real, followed by a partner reception to serve as a thank you to long-time community partners. Unfortunately, because of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, the building's interpretive elements were not fabricated and installed in time to host the public open house. Staff pivoted and planned exclusively for the partner reception. This was a new type of event for the District, and was intended to facilitate meaningful connections between current and former staff, community and agency partners and advocates.

Programming for the event was kept light in an effort to allow for networking time. A slideshow of historical photos and project graphics played in the background. Staff also led multiple building tours and walked through some of the building's sustainable features. Hors d'oeuvres and desserts were served and beer and wine for non-staff attendees was donated by POST. The partner reception portion of the event was originally planned for approximately 100 guests, however, the event attracted 300 attendees. In the post-event survey, respondents rated the event very positive and cited their appreciation for attendees to meet and connect for the first time. Partner-focused events of this nature are an excellent opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, community partners and volunteers while keeping workload on staff at a manageable level.

### **Documentary**

As a capstone to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, staff produced an hour-long broadcast documentary entitled *50 to Forever: Midpen's Mission to Preserve Nature and Open Space on the Peninsula*. The documentary is comprised of six segments exploring the District's origin story, the layers of human history in the preserves, the secret lives of local wildlife, restoring water resources, agriculture and the Coastside, and ongoing District programs.

The goal of the documentary was to reach new audiences, educate them about the District, showcase projects that highlight restoration work and create video assets that can be used far into the future. Our production partner was Digital Story Company, which also produces *Open Road with Doug McConnell*. Staff was familiar with the production team through its many years as a participant in Open Road segments, and the documentary provided a chance for new staff to develop video production and storytelling skills. The documentary was narrated by Doug McConnell, a recognizable figure in local environmental circles, and aired twice on NBC Bay Area: December 24, 2022, at 4 p.m. and December 25, 2022 at 10 p.m. Airing the documentary on a TV network with a wide reach allowed access to audiences that would not normally seek out District content. Additionally, NBC Bay Area reaches a wide number of people in the greater Bay Area, not just within the District boundaries. The documentary will continue to reach viewers through the District's YouTube channel, and the raw footage can be used to create further social media and website content. Additionally, many of the projects discussed in the documentary are ongoing, such as the Highway 17 crossing, and the video and interviews captured can be used to communicate about those projects for their duration. Viewership metrics are pending from NBC Bay Area

## Overall Takeaways

Like other projects of this magnitude and duration, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration required significant staff time and resources and included two years of upfront planning. While staff learned it is most efficient to keep the primary messaging and content creation in-house because employees are best-equipped to understand and convey the District's mission and story, consultant support to supplement staff resources was necessary at key times and for key elements. In addition, Board approval of a limited term staff position, was critical to the overall success of the celebration.

Key takeaways include:

- **Keeping special programs and contests short in duration**, 1-3 months, to be efficient with staff time and hold public interest.
- **Increasing direct media pitching** via email and phone to local and regional outlets.
- **Formulate event outcomes** including intended audience size and match to the best preserve. If the desire is to host a community event larger than the capacity of a preserve, ensure adequate time for permitting and relationship building with the owning entity.
- Creating a **variety of ways to participate for various levels** allows for participation across multiple populations.
- Paid media is an effective way to maximize exposure and awareness for non-English speaking audiences and requires considerable resources in terms of funding and industry expertise.
- **Adapt and be flexible** with ongoing campaigns to maximize expenditures of finite staff resources.

## FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendation.

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

This Project previously came before the Board of Directors at the following public meetings:

**December 9, 2020:** Board review and input on the proposed scope of the 50th Anniversary Celebration. (R-20-148, meeting minutes)

**May 12, 2021:** Board award of contract to Matter Unlimited to develop a vision, comprehensive plan, budget and implementation timeline for the 50th Anniversary Celebration. (R-21-61, meeting minutes)

**October 27, 2021:** Board review and approval of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration plan. (R-21-30, meeting minutes)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

## CEQA COMPLIANCE

The District previously made the appropriate findings under CEQA that the 50th Anniversary events were categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines section 15304(e), which covers minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment (e.g., temporary outdoor public gatherings); and CEQA Guidelines section 15323, normal operations of facilities for public gatherings.

## NEXT STEPS

Public Affairs staff is working with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) to conduct public survey research on constituent understanding and sentiment toward the District and its mission. FM3 conducted the 2020 benchmark survey and will be able to measure how our messaging and outreach have affected public awareness in the past three years and how the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration contributed to a change in perception.

Additionally, the Public Affairs department will use lessons learned from the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration to improve promotional and outreach activities moving forward.

### Attachment

1. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Comprehensive Plan

Responsible Department Head:  
Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs

Prepared by:  
Ryan McCauley, Public Affairs Specialist II, Public Affairs



# 50th ANNIVERSARY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ROUTING DRAFT V4

OCTOBER 5, 2021

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# 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION GOALS

## Key Objectives:

1. Commemorate Midpen's 50 years, from founding to evolution
2. Connect the public to Midpen's work and mission, **increasing public awareness and positive regard**
3. Tell the whole story of Midpen's legacy including why nature is essential, how open space is preserved, the role of rural and working lands and the partnerships involved
4. Engage and celebrate Midpen's diverse partners, volunteers, board and staff for your collective accomplishments

# AS IDENTIFIED IN OUR DISCOVERY

## Key Challenges:

- Creating a strong, clear connection between Midpen lands and individual, community, and regional quality of life in the Bay Area
- Communicating Midpen's rich history and future vision in a unified narrative – without getting lost in many discrete details and data points
- Standing out among a sea of land trusts, parks and environmental organizations in the region in order to distinguish what Midpen does (and doesn't do)
- Widening the tent to create meaningful new connections to groups who are unaware that these open space lands are here or that Midpen is the organization behind them

# AS IDENTIFIED IN OUR DISCOVERY

## Key Opportunities:

- Surfacing relatable human stories and hard-won triumphs over the past 50 years to help audiences recognize (and internalize) the quiet role Midpen has played in improving the quality of life in the Bay Area
- Using the 50th Anniversary as an opportunity to reach out and engage with new audiences and prospective partners within BIPOC, business and outdoor enthusiast communities
- Peeling back the curtain on the work of Midpen and its partners to reveal how much more goes into preserving, protecting and restoring these lands in order for them to continue to be a healthy, thriving, biodiverse greenbelt safely enjoyed by all

# ANNIVERSARY OVERVIEW



# 50th ANNIVERSARY PLAN

Attachment 1

## A YEAR LONG CELEBRATION

We take advantage of Midpen's anniversary to endeavor a two-pronged goal: drive awareness of the value of open space and of Midpen's work in protecting it. We propose to achieve this with:

### EVENTS

- A bayside family event at Ravenswood Preserve and Cooley Landing featuring local food trucks, a scavenger hunt, and nature-inspired prizes.
- A coastside event at Johnston Ranch featuring farm fresh food, local art and music, a guided walking tour, and a presentation detailing collaborations with the farming and ranching communities.
- An open house for the new administrative offices, followed by a reception of invited partners and dignitaries to celebrate the last 50 years.

### PARTNERSHIPS

- Broaden outreach to a range of targets in the mid-peninsula who aren't familiar with the work of Midpen but who benefit from it.
- Provide new partners with toolkits that would help them amplify their involvement with Midpen to their own audiences.
- Hold tabling events at selected preserves throughout the year designed to serve a cross-section of people.

### CONTENT SERIES / SOCIAL ACTIVATIONS

- A 50-year narrative is woven together by 50 different people telling their individual Midpen stories.
- A call for love letters! Midpen appreciators submit letters for a chance to win branded prizes. Letters can serve as social media content for years to come.
- A photo contest with the theme Spotted at Midpen can reward lucky winners with prizes and a feature on our social media feeds.

### PUBLICITY

- Leverage earned media to raise Midpen's profile and gain increased exposure to new young and diverse target audiences.
- Engage journalists / influencers routinely covering environmental, Silicon Valley work / life balance, as well as mental health issues.
- Send them press kits and pitch the mutual benefit of covering Midpen's anniversary year.
- Build tentpole press events throughout the 50th as well as maintain ongoing proactive pitching to the press.

## 50th Anniversary Narrative FROM 50 TO FOREVER

The peninsula dividing the ocean and the bay features a dense coat of green, sloping from its tree-lined spine to its craggy coast.

That land is Midpen, a 65,000-acre greenbelt, the second largest in all of California.

The land is protected, cared for by an ever-evolving crew of dedicated staffers, directors, board members, and volunteers who've been actively future-proofing this crucial ecosystem for what is now officially 50 years.

This 50-year mark is our chance to recognize the opportunity given to us by the Peninsula community and the land itself. We see our mission not as a way to protect land from people, but a way to protect it for people. We're proud to shape a future where people and land can rely on each other, and thrive on each other, in perpetuity.

**Midpen. From 50 to Forever.**

# ANNIVERSARY PLATFORM



# PLATFORM

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# From 50 to Forever

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# 50TH ANNIVERSARY BRAND EXPRESSION

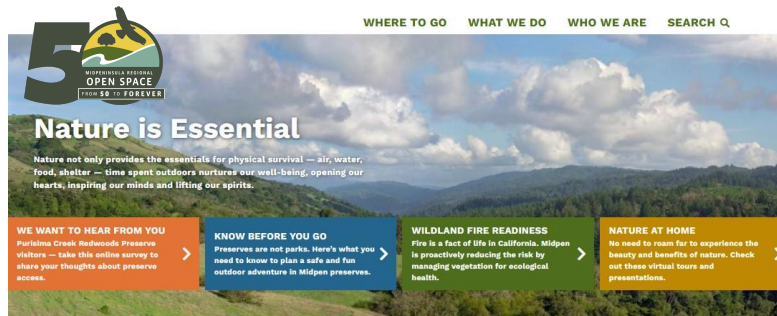


Attachment 1



Attachment 1

To build anticipation for the year-long commemoration, we'll be rolling out the 50th anniversary logo in pre-promotion this Fall. Beginning in January, the temporary commemorative logo could appear on the website, email signatures, publications and all 50th promotion. We've intentionally kept the design closely related to the core Midpen logo, to ensure a seamless transition into and out of the celebration year.



August 2021

August brings both blooms (still) and bugs to discover.

Read on to brush up on your Leave No Trace principles, find out about new grant funding available to organizations, learn about ongoing projects and get public meeting updates.

Nature in August: Fuchsias in Bloom

The grasses are golden and most wildflowers have faded and gone to seed, however, the California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*), is just beginning to show its brilliant red trumpet-shaped flowers.

This late-summer bloomer is an important food source for hummingbirds as they prepare to migrate south when the seasons turn and for pollinators such as butterflies and bumblebees. Look for it now through fall in dry, rocky soils at St. Joseph's Hill, Sierra Azul, Russian Ridge and many other Midpen preserves.



California fuchsia is an important late-summer food source for hummingbirds and other pollinators. (Lubor Plackec)



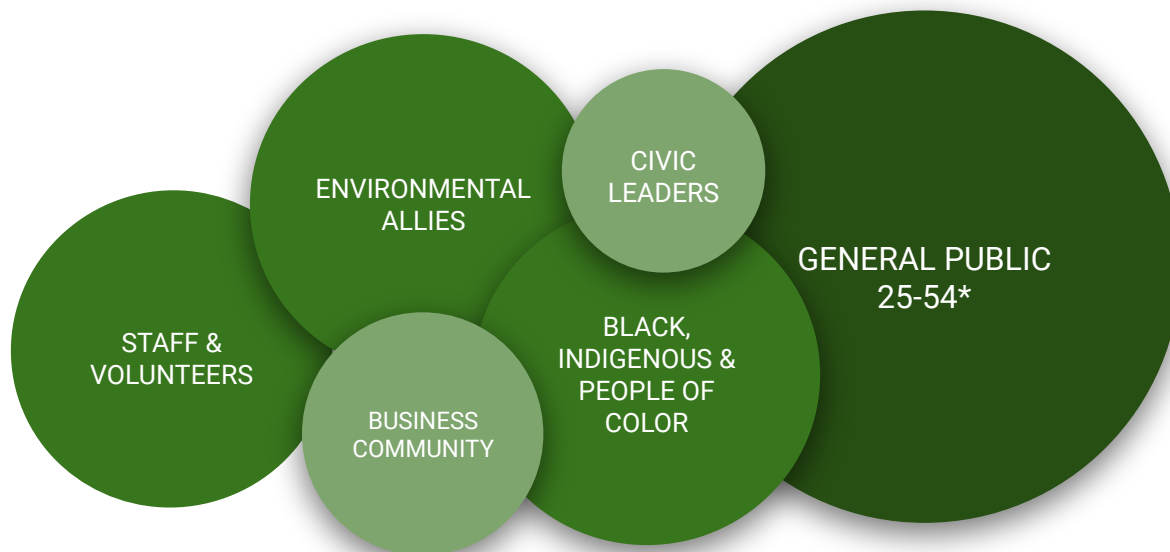
California fuchsia in bloom at Russian Ridge Preserve. (Leigh Ann Gessner)

SEASONS OF OPEN SPACE SERIES

# KEY AUDIENCES



# KEY AUDIENCES

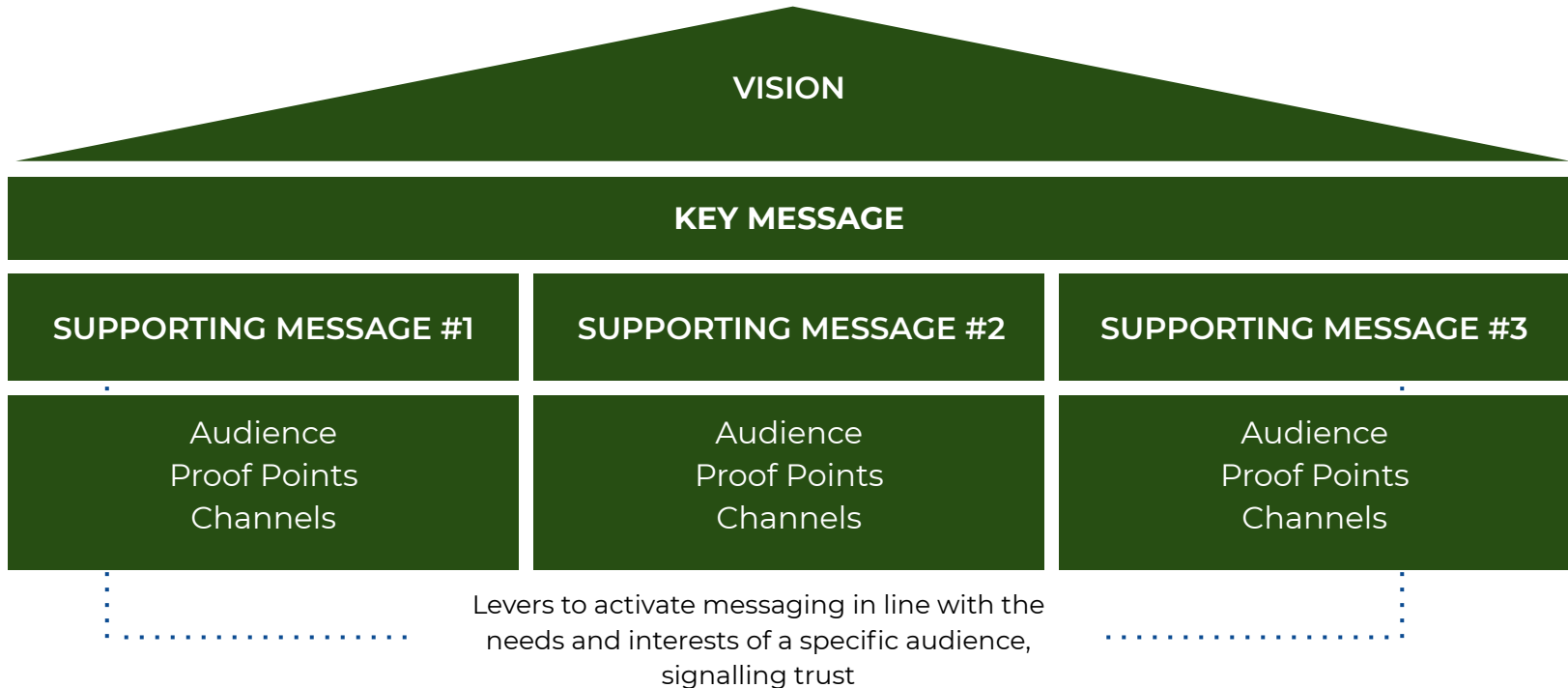


*\*increased range to align with media age brackets and reflect regional demographics of outdoor interested, environmentalist and tax paying audience groups*

# MESSAGING FRAMEWORK



# MIDPEN MESSAGING FRAMEWORK



# CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM





# CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM — OPPORTUNITIES

One of the key outcomes of this celebration is the widening of Midpen's circle of awareness and growing the community people and organizations who know and support the mission. To achieve this end, it will be important to use every communication touchpoint as an opportunity to build and deepen relationships.

Honoring the native intent of certain mediums and platforms to either connect, inform, inspire or amplify, we'll determine the right channel strategy and mix to deliver channel appropriate content and announcements that meet audiences in where they are.

For example, the Midpen website is a hub that will inform audiences of our events, while being featured in our partners' newsletters will help amplify our efforts of reaching more audiences outside of our reach.

## OWNED

- Website
- Social
- Newsletter
- Email
- Collateral
- On-site Signage
- Community Outreach and Programming

## EARNED

- Press Releases
- Media Pitches
- Event Coverage
- Word of Mouth
- Online Forums
- Activations

## PARTNERED

- Partner Events
- Partner Email
- Partner Newsletters
- Partner Social
- Partner Internal Comms

## PAID

- Documentary
- Paid Social
- Regional Magazines
- Regional News
- Community News
- Out of Home

# EVENTS PLAN



# BAYSIDE — RAVENSWOOD



## Attachment 1

### KEY FACTS

LOCATION: Cooley Landing, East Palo Alto

CHARACTER: Accessible, Inclusive, Festive

ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE: 125-220 People

SEASON: Spring

DATE: April 30, 2022 (Proposed)

### DESCRIPTION

In this family-focused event, we'll invite community members from around the peninsula to explore the Ravenswood Preserve and Bay Trail, and participate in festivities hosted at Cooley Landing and Ravenswood Preserve. Families could have the opportunity to complete scavenger hunts, spot an array of wildlife and connect to this remarkable resource just off 101. We can lean into 50th anniversary thematics with a range of potential tie-ins: scavenger hunt maps with 50 interesting and little known facts about the preserve, and commemorative prizes granted to the first 50 families who complete scavenger hunt, potentially giving away bikes or scooters to local families if a sponsoring partner or donor can be secured.

# RAVENSWOOD — LOGISTICAL MAP



# RAVENSWOOD — LOGISTICAL MAP



# BAYSIDE EVENT ——— KEY COMPONENTS

## ACTIVITIES MAY INCLUDE

- Outdoor Education & Partner Information Pop ups
  - possibly including, but not limited to SF Bay Trail, POST, Green Foothills, East Palo Alto
- Pick your protected species face painting (e.g. Mountain Lion, Dusky Footed Woodrat, Red Legged Frog)
- Scavenger Hunt
- Food Trucks
- Nature Themed Prizes & Giveaways

## VENDOR NEEDS

- Parking & Shuttle
- Water
- Sanitation
- Restrooms
- Trash, Recycling & Composting
- Clean Up Crew
- Food Truck(s) - 1-2 (1 Food Truck = 80-100 meals/hr)

## PERMITTING NEEDS

- Special Community Event Permit
- Tent or temp membrane Permit
- Temporary Event Coordinator Permit

## CONTINGENCY PLANS

- Contingency Date: Summer 2022
- Covid: Event staff, vendors and attendees must adhere to all county and state regulations and requirements. If required, mask wearing and social distancing will be enforced, and vaccination checkpoints will be established.
- In the case of vendor fall-outs, Matter will maintain a complete list of alternative vendors

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Matter could reach out to local outdoor companies for prize donations for the scavenger hunt (Midpen already partners with some of these: Strava, Alltrails, Santa Cruz bicycles, Camelbak, Mountain Hardwear, REI, Sports Basement, CLIF Bar, Marmot, Klean Kanteen, Hipcamp, etc.)

# COASTSIDE ——— JOHNSTON RANCH



## Attachment 1

### KEY FACTS

LOCATION: Johnston Ranch  
CHARACTER: Active, Future Forward, Hopeful  
SIZE: TBD  
SEASON: Fall  
DATE: September 10, 2022

### DESCRIPTION

In this “Connectivity” inspired event, guests will have the opportunity to engage with Midpen’s partners on site and learn more about collaborations with the farming and ranching community, and the importance of preserving our open spaces.

On stage, we could feature local music, and programming from partners in the community, highlighting the importance of conservation work and partnership with Midpen along the coast. Guests may be able to enjoy a guided walking tour of the area to learn more about agriculture on the Coastside and nearby open spaces. Booth spaces could potentially feature local partners, community organizations and perhaps local farmers and artisans with wares for sale.

# JOHNSTON RANCH — LOGISTICAL MAP





# COASTSIDE EVENT ——— KEY COMPONENTS

## ACTIVITIES MAY INCLUDE

- Partner Education and Information Booths
  - possibly including, but not limited to POST, Green Foothills, City of HMB, ALAS, Puente, Coastside Chamber, and more.
- Food
- Music
- Local Artists
- Guided Walking Tours

## VENDOR NEEDS

- Parking & Shuttle
- Water
- Sanitation
- Restrooms
- Trash, Recycling & Composting
- Clean Up Crew
- Food Booths

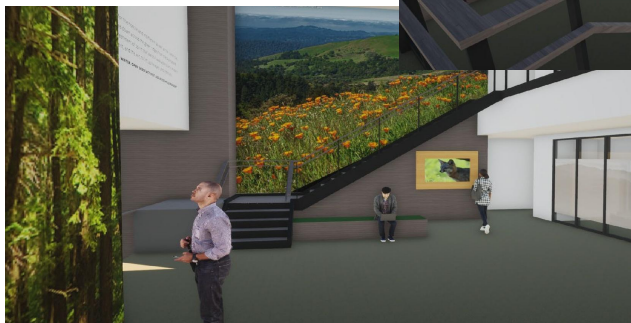
## PERMITTING NEEDS

- Special Community Event Permit
- Tent or temp membrane Permit
- Temporary Event Coordinator Permit

## CONTINGENCY PLANS

- Contingency Date: September 17, 2022
- Covid: Event staff, vendors and attendees must adhere to all county and state regulations and requirements. If required, mask wearing and social distancing will be enforced, and vaccination checkpoints will be established.
- In the case of vendor fall-outs, Matter will maintain a complete list of alternative vendors

# AO OPEN HOUSE ——— LOS ALTOS



## Attachment 1

### KEY FACTS

LOCATION: New administrative offices

CHARACTER: Warm, welcoming,  
commemorative, gratitude

SIZE: 200+ People

SEASON: Summer 2022

DATE: June or July, pending building  
completion

### DESCRIPTION

Invitation to the community to explore new building and learn more about Midpen, capped by an afternoon gratitude reception of invited partners and dignitaries to celebrate the people, partners and milestones of the past 50 years.

**NOTE:** Event layout and seating to be determined during execution phase.

# CAPSTONE EVENT

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## DOCUMENTARY



### Attachment 1

#### OVERVIEW

Capstone event will be the airing of the documentary, proposed for Thanksgiving weekend 2021 on NBC Bay Area.

#### DESCRIPTION

A broadcast television documentary will air that follows the process of making open space public using success stories from Midpen's 50 years of accomplishments. The 50 to 60-minute film will feature Midpen and the work we do, with partners, to protect natural resources by preserving open space lands, by caring for those lands using science to inform land management and restoration decisions and by educating our collective community to enjoy all the benefits of nature these lands provide.

# PARTNER, SPONSOR & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT





## **PARTNER AND SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT**

The 50th Anniversary provides an opportunity to cement long standing partner relationships, reinvigorate lapsed ones and ignite new ones. POST and Green Foothills will lead us into the year as presenting sponsors. Proactive pitching to prospective partners that fall outside of Midpen's core ally set can open the door to new audiences that aren't currently aware of Midpen or understand its tremendous value in the region -- a region that is bursting with environmental allies, corporate sustainability leaders, BIPOC organizations and civic leaders whose districts and constituencies have a vested interest in maintaining and protecting this regional gem of a greenbelt. Throughout the year, we will work together to widen the tent of allies and partners through proactive outreach and engagement to a range of mission-aligned targets. Our focus will be to secure short-term Anniversary Sponsorships, but more meaningfully, long-term alliances and partnerships.

## **PARTNER AMPLIFICATION**

Once desired panelists and partners have been identified, and the engagement terms confirmed, we recommend touting those commitments on social media and providing partners with a toolkit to promote the anniversary (and their participation) that they can share in their owned channels. This simple, yet compelling partner toolkit could include approved boilerplate language an overview of Midpen and the significance of the 50th anniversary, sample social post captions and relevant hashtags.



**SAMPLE PRIORITY OUTREACH TARGETS**

***ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIES***

Peninsula Open Space Trust  
Green Foothills  
Green Action East Palo Alto  
Nuestra Casa East Palo Alto  
Sustainable San Mateo County  
350 Silicon Valley  
350 Santa Cruz  
Women's Environmental  
Network (WEN)  
Eagle Scouts & Girl Scouts  
Environmental Volunteers  
Grassroots Ecology  
Hidden Villa  
Latino Outdoors  
Morgan Center  
PGM One Summit  
Save the Redwoods League  
Student Conservation Association (SCA)

***CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY  
LEADERS***

Google  
Facebook  
Apple  
Adobe  
Bank of the West  
CLIF  
The North Face  
REI  
Camelback  
Marmot  
Patagonia

***BIPOC ORGANIZATIONS***

Amah Mutsun Land Trust  
Inclusion Outdoors  
Diversify Outdoors  
California Outdoor Engagement Coalition  
Outdoor AFRO  
Outdoors Empowered Network (OEN)  
Melanin Basecamp  
Bay Area Wilderness Training  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
PGM One  
Youth Outside  
Latino Outdoors  
Puente  
Native Women's Wilderness  
Indigenous Women Hike

***CIVIC LEADERS***

Federal delegation  
State legislative delegation  
County supervisors  
City councils  
Community councils

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## SELECT MIDPEN PRESERVES TABLING



### Attachment 1

#### KEY FACTS

LOCATION: 12 MIDPEN PRESERVES  
 CHARACTER: INFORMATIVE, FRIENDLY, INCLUSIVE  
 SIZE: VARIES  
 SEASON: MONTHLY, YEAR ROUND

#### DESCRIPTION

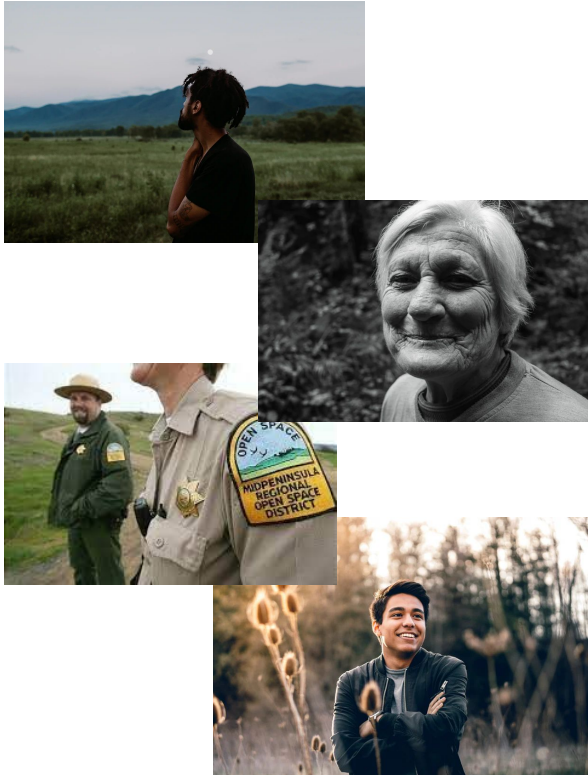
Midpen staff, board members and volunteers will set up a welcome table at selected preserves throughout the year. Day, hours and location will vary by preserve to serve a large cross-section of users, who will be invited to share their stories, questions and concerns while learning more about Midpen.

# CONTENT SERIES & SOCIAL ACTIVATIONS



# OPEN STORIES

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Through the anniversary celebration, we could tell the story of the lands through 50 people for 50 years. Over the course of the calendar year we would seek out diverse perspectives on what the land means to them. Whether they steward it, work it, protect it, play in it, think in it, create in it or simply love it. They are who we celebrate in this series #openstories

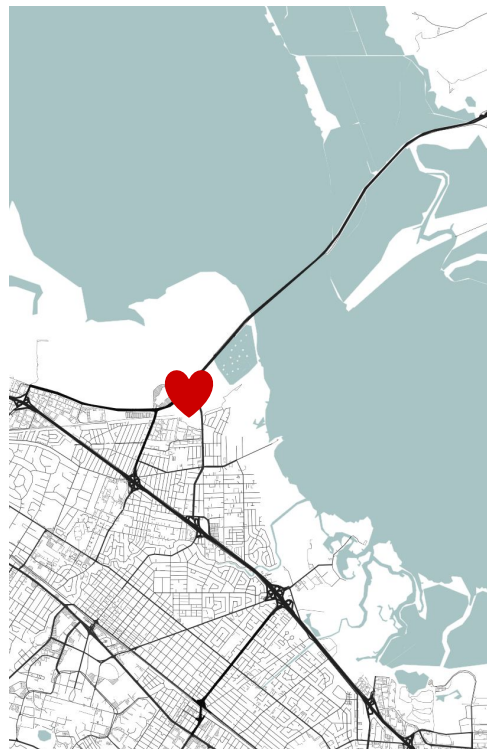
Some of these stories could be told through a simple social post with image and caption, others could lend themselves to an editorial article on the website. Others could be pitched to the media for profile pieces. Each of the individuals selected could be invited to as special guests to our two signature events where they could be given special recognition and a commemorative gift.

Examples may include:

- Descendant from the tribal representatives who lived on the land
- Long-serving Midpen rangers or docents/volunteers
- Differently abled person who accesses the park
- Tech exec or small business owner
- Parent and child
- Staff person
- Lead organizer of a biking, hiking or bird watching group

# OPEN HEARTS

## LOVE (THE LAND) LETTERS



*“Dear Midpen,*

*It was spring 2001, and I had just been told that my position had been eliminated as a result of the dot com bubble bursting. I left my office not knowing where my life was headed or what I was going to tell my family. I hiked up to Russian Ridge that afternoon and watched the sun set. I’ve never felt a greater sense of calm. It was in that moment that I knew that all would be ok. Thank you for giving me space to process and gain perspective. It saved me.”*

*With Love,  
-- Regina Jackson*

*“Dear Midpen,*

*I’m a science teacher at East Palo Alto Academy. Many of my students have never spent time connected to nature, despite living so close to it. This year, I’ve started leading field trips down to the Ravenswood Preserve. As soon as we hit the footpath, the kids seem to shed all their stress and come alive! They point out birds and listen for frogs. Some stare out at the water and reflect. It is the most alive I’ve seen them. Thank you for carving out this space for us.”*

*With Love,  
-- David Bingham*

Every person who spends time in these preserves comes to feel a certain sense of peace, connection and even, love for these open spaces. Every person has a story of the time when that moment of clarity or deep sense of gratitude overcame them. In this activation and content series kicking off in February, we’ll use Midpen’s owned channels to invite audiences to submit their love letters to Midpen about the preserve they love the most and why. Winners could receive a commemorative gift and their statements could serve as a rich repository of social media content for years to come.

# SPOTTED AT MIDPEN

Spotted at Midpen is a year-long program designed to engage community participation from a new, younger and more diverse target.

To kick off the program, we could publish a guide with plants and wildlife visitors can spot throughout the year and send to Midpen. This applies to animals, insects, plants, even summer fog #spottedatmidpen. What's nice about this handle is that it can also accommodate deeper, intangible benefits to Peninsula residents such as peace of mind or tranquility, #spottedatmidpen. Whether visitors send the tangible or intangible, the Midpen community management team can pick a favorite and send merchandise prizes.

We will explore leveraging a apps like Outerspatial and iNaturalist to support the #spottedatmidpen social engagement.



OuterSpatial

# LOCAL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

We'll provide local businesses partners with a creative asset that'll allow them to display and help us build our audience. Possible partners include:

- Local restaurants
- Gear retail
- Bookstores
- Coastside farmers market vendors

Attachment 1



# PR & COMMUNICATIONS



**MEDIA OUTREACH**

We'll leverage the power of earned media to raise the public profile of Midpen and gain exposure to the key audiences we've identified together. We'll begin this process by identifying key journalists and influencers who focus on climate resilience, climate justice, land preservation, intersectional environmentalism, outdoor exploration and even mental health. Once these target journalists and influencers have been identified and narrowed, we'll develop a pitch letter and press kit that includes an introduction to Midpen and its mission, an overview of the 50th Celebration and historical context, as well as a deeper dive into the relevant topical connection points between Midpen and the issue/beat they cover. Our PR efforts will feature key tentpole press events as well as ongoing proactive pitching throughout the year.

**SAMPLE TARGET OUTLETS****REGIONAL AND LOCAL NEWS (PRINT & DIGITAL)**

7x7  
 East Bay Times  
 Half Moon Bay Review  
 IMPACT Weekly (*Santa Clara County Office of Education's weekly education bulletin*)  
 Pacifica Tribune  
 Palo Alto Daily Post  
 San Francisco Bay Times  
 San Francisco Chronicle  
 San Mateo County Times  
 San Mateo Daily Journal  
 Santa Clara Weekly  
 Santa Cruz Sentinel  
 Silicon Valley Voice  
 SFGATE  
 SFist  
 The Almanac  
 The Mercury News  
 The Stanford Daily

**MAGAZINES (PRINT & DIGITAL)**

Alta  
 Bay Nature Magazine  
 The California Sunday Magazine  
 Outside  
 Outdoor California  
 Sierra Magazine  
 Silicon Valley Business Journal  
 Silicon Valley Magazine  
 Sunset  
 Wild Hope Magazine

**TV**

California Live  
 KGO (ABC)  
 KNTV (NBC)  
 KPIX (CBS)  
 KRON 4  
 KSBW Newsroom  
 KTVU (FOX)  
 KQED

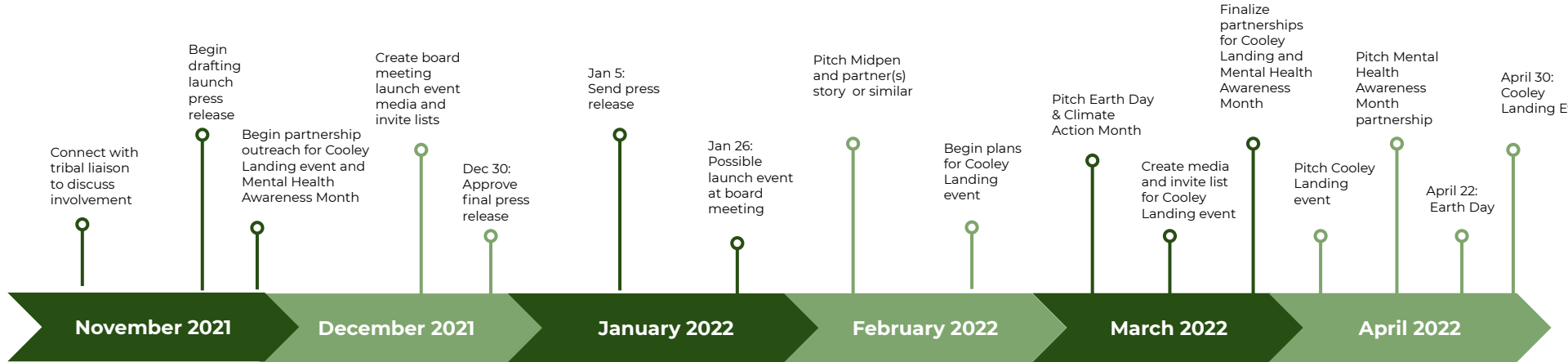
**BIPOC**

Asian Journal  
 El Tecolote  
 El Observador San Jose  
 India Post  
 La Opinión  
 Nikkei West  
 Sing Tao Daily  
 SF Bayview  
 World Journal  
 Telemundo 48

**RADIO**

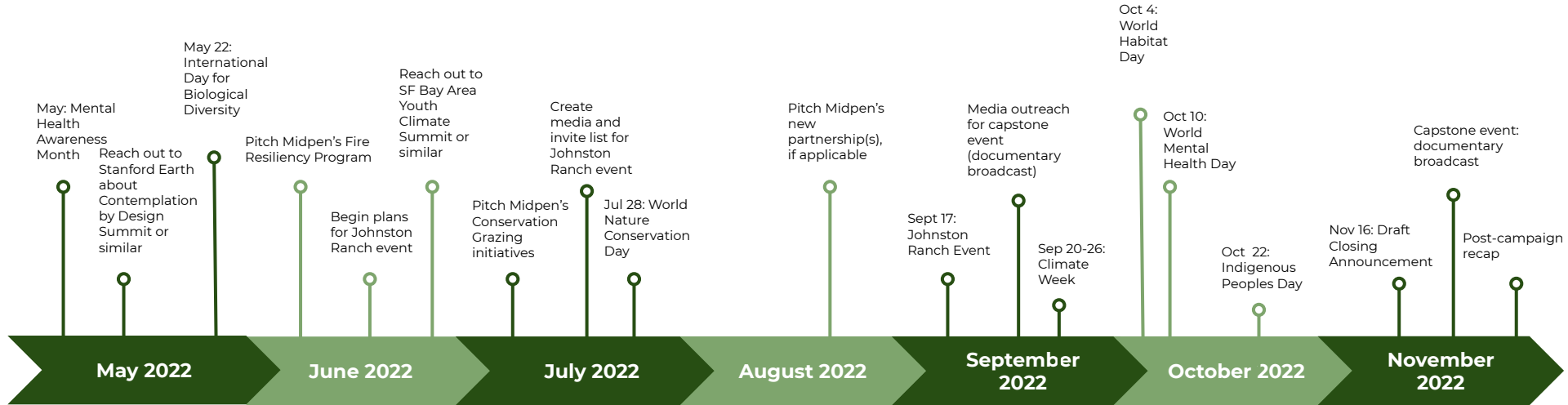
KGO  
 KCBS  
 KQED  
 KOIT  
 KCSM

# PR ROLLOUT



## Key Milestones

# PR ROLLOUT



## Key Milestones



#### PAID MEDIA

While we will leverage earned media as our key amplification and awareness engine to extend to new audiences outside of your current circle, we will consider key opportunities to incorporate paid social, print, magazine special sections (*Bay Nature* already planned), potential local out of home postings and digital advertising where necessary. Flight schedules plans, including duration, target audience profiles and goal impressions would be defined at the time of media planning once the comprehensive plan is approved. (November / December 2021).

## ORGANIC SOCIAL

Using Midpen's owned social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), we can inform, inspire and further connect existing audiences to Midpen's mission and anniversary activities throughout the year. We recommend a repeatable cadence of content organized into a number of series that seed prompts, provide inspiration and communicate clear and compelling calls to action to engage in the celebration. The examples below are a sample of what's possible. Not a definitive list.

### POSSIBLE CONTENT SERIES

#### **50 STORIES/50 YEARS**

In this weekly content series, we could tell the stories of the lands over the past 50 years. We might highlight past stewards, devoted staff and volunteers, little known difference makers, and visitors who have found refuge in the preserves.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

There's so much more to Midpen than most people know. In this educational content series we'll peel back the curtain for our social media followers with a Did-You-Know series. Topics could include Midpen history, word of the week (airshed, refugia) and details on what it takes to acquire, protect, maintain and preserve these open spaces.

#### **EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Milestone celebration events and announcements, will be featured in these informative posts, giving audiences the information they need to engage in the year-long schedule of activities.

#### **#SPOTTEDATMIDPEN**

Throughout the course of the year we'll invite members of the public to send us photos showing what they #spottedatmidpen. Photos could include everything from the tangible redwoods and butterflies to the more intangible benefits like: peace and tranquility. Midpen's team chooses periodic winner. We share their photo on our feed and send them Midpen prizes.

#### **INSPIRATION**

These simple posts (image, typographic inspiration) will provide some visual relief in the feed, while also providing some much needed inspiration. We'll tap into Midpen's library of beautiful imagery photographed at the preserves and possibly include quotes from Midpen staff and partner naturalists and conservationists to provide a dose of inspiration on what nature provides us.

#### **FEATURED PRESERVE**

Each of Midpen's 26 preserves features distinct physical and ecological features, and a rich story of how it came to be protected land. In this content series we'll shine a spotlight on each of Midpen's preserves, pairing key facts (acres, date acquired, etc.) with its most arresting and iconic imagery.

#### **LOVE LETTERS TO MIDPEN**

Every person who spends time in these preserves comes to feel a certain sense of peace, connection and even, love for these lands. In this activation and content series kicking off in February, we'll invite audiences to submit their love letters to Midpen about the preserve they love the most and why. Winners will receive a commemorative gift and their statements will serve as a rich repository of social media content for years to come.

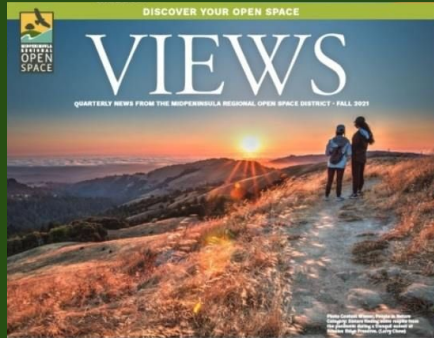
#### **CULTURAL & SOCIAL RELEVANCE DATES**

To connect the work of Midpen to culture and the broader themes and topics that define its work and mission, this content series will highlight key cultural and social relevance dates throughout the year (e.g. Biodiversity Day, World Habitat Day)



NEWSLETTERS & DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We'll leverage Midpen's existing quarterly newsletter distribution to over 13,700 households as well as the 23,500 monthly e-newsletter recipients to launch the celebration and keep people connected to the stories and events that are happening throughout the year. We also suggest staff send out an email to everyone in the existing Midpen database, announcing the Anniversary and inviting them to tune into the year long celebration. Any new newsletter or email signups that Midpen receives during the 2022 should be met with a welcome series of emails that foster community and encourage other ways to stay engaged over the course of the anniversary.



Taking the Long View

How a Recent Land Purchase Highlights Midpen's 50-Year Commitment to Community Conservation Goals

Since the 1970s, Midpen has protected the public's natural resources by preserving open space. Our conservation goals are to protect the public's natural resources by preserving open space. Our conservation goals are to protect the public's natural resources by preserving open space. Our conservation goals are to protect the public's natural resources by preserving open space.



The Open Space Trust purchased the San Jose, about 100 miles from San Francisco, to protect the public's natural resources by preserving open space. The Open Space Trust purchased the San Jose, about 100 miles from San Francisco, to protect the public's natural resources by preserving open space.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Forest Health: Midpen's commitment to protecting our forests.
- Open Space: Preserving our natural resources for future generations.
- Wildland: Protecting our wildlands and the species that live there.



AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR OF GROWTH

Reflecting on our first year that ended June 30, 2021, Midpen's role in public safety was front and center. As the pandemic waned, so we continued to practice protecting staff and visitors, so our presence could remain open to safe, outdoor spaces. We experienced record visitation, including many first-timers. We also brought nature closer to home with the interpretive values and a beautiful view at the Daniels Nature Center and Aljara Pond.



Midpen General Manager Ana Ruiz

As people marched in solidarity for racial and social justice, the Midpen board of directors passed a resolution reinforcing our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, affirming that nature is essential to all people. I thanked our staff members for their commitment to our outreach and partnership and recruitment, hiring and staff development to seek new ideas and strategies.

In the face of climate change, decades of the suppression, and another year of drought, Midpen is directing unprecedented staff and financial resources to protecting and preparing for increased fire risk. We developed our Wildland Fire Resilience Program that allows us to increase our ecologically sensitive vegetation management. We remain ready to respond to fire if the do-over when the CPX Lightning Complex fire burned on nearby lands, Midpen fire-trained staff assisted Cal Fire in holding the fire at Old Hill Road. Thank you to our lightning storm, Midpen engages antiquated fire law that spread on District lands.

Despite those challenges, it was a productive year in furthering our mission of land conservation, natural resource protection and ecologically sensitive public access. Midpen protected another 666 acres to perpetuity and expanded regional trail connections at several preserves; completing the trail-but-mythical San Francisco Bay Trail connection at Ravenswood Preserve and supporting the Serrano-to-the-Sea Trail. We increased recreational accessibility, barriers to improve access for people with different physical abilities, began evaluating potential a hike way, and explored new strategies to improve interpret, youth and education access to popular preserves.

Staff completed field work to improve native habitats and in support of the Highway 47 project to create safe trail and wildlife corridors. We worked with researchers to study key species and inform our land management decisions: the endangered marbled murrelet to restore forests, a migrating bird population at Sierra Azul Preserve, and two California species of special concern that depend on generalist grasslands, the harrowing rail and American bunting. We also began a multi-year study of mountain lions at preserves near urban areas.

We closed the year by exploring a new partnership with Santa Clara County for enforcing a legislative agreement that ensures Lathrop Quarry operations do not impact neighboring Rancho San Antonio County Park and Open Space Preserves. And last, but certainly not least, we received nearly 800 million in grant funding to research and acquire fields for delivering projects and services to the public.

For a full recap of our first year 2021 accomplishments, join us for the September 22 board of directors meeting.

Ana Maria Ruiz,  
 General Manager

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER

Get the latest information about Midpen preserves, outdoor activities, upcoming events and conservation news.

SIGN UP

NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES

- August 2021
- July 2021
- Summer 2021
- May 2021
- April 2021
- Spring 2021
- February 2021
- January 2021
- General Manager Message



August brings both blooms (left) and bugs to discover.

Head on to brush up on your Leave No Trace principles, find out about new grant funding available to organizations, learn about ongoing projects and get public meeting updates.

Nature in August: Fuchsias in Bloom

The grasses are golden and most wildflowers have faded and gone to seed, however, the California fuchsia (Epilobium caneri), is just beginning to show its vibrant red trumpet-shaped flowers.

This late-summer bloomer is an important food source for hummingbirds as they prepare to migrate south when the seasons turn and for pollinators such as butterflies and bumblebees. Look for it now through May in dry, rocky soils at St. Joseph's Hill, Sierra Azul, Russian Ridge and many other Midpen preserves.



California fuchsia is an important late-summer food source for hummingbirds and other pollinators. (Lauri Packard)



California fuchsia in bloom at Russian Ridge Preserve. (Lauri Ann Deason)

# ROLLOUT PLAN



# AT A GLANCE — Q4 2021

Attachment 1

OCT

NOV

DEC

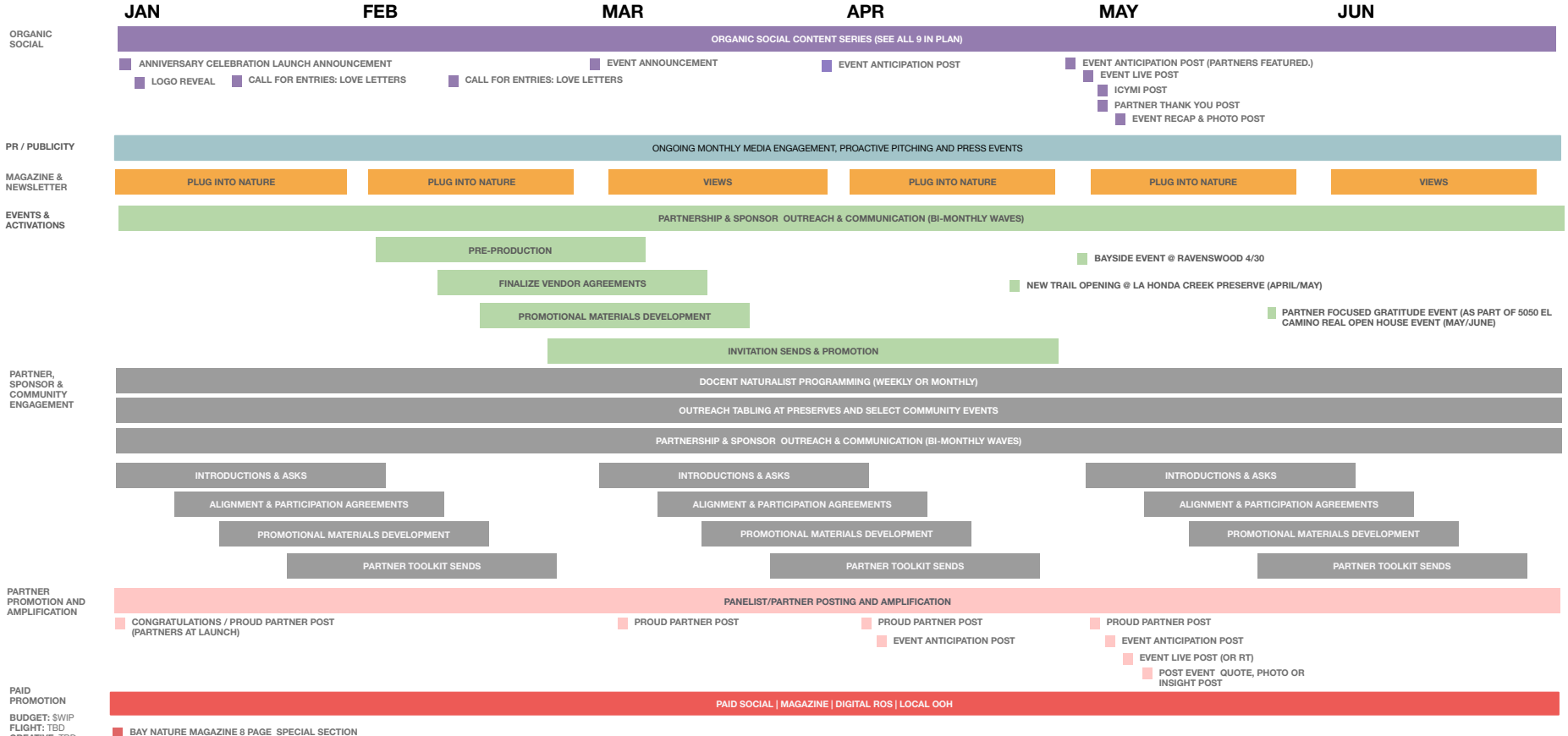
2022 CALENDAR RELEASE

ANNIVERSARY LOGO REVEAL (WEBSITE / VIEWS)

LANDING PAGE LAUNCH (WEBSITE)

# AT A GLANCE — H1 2022

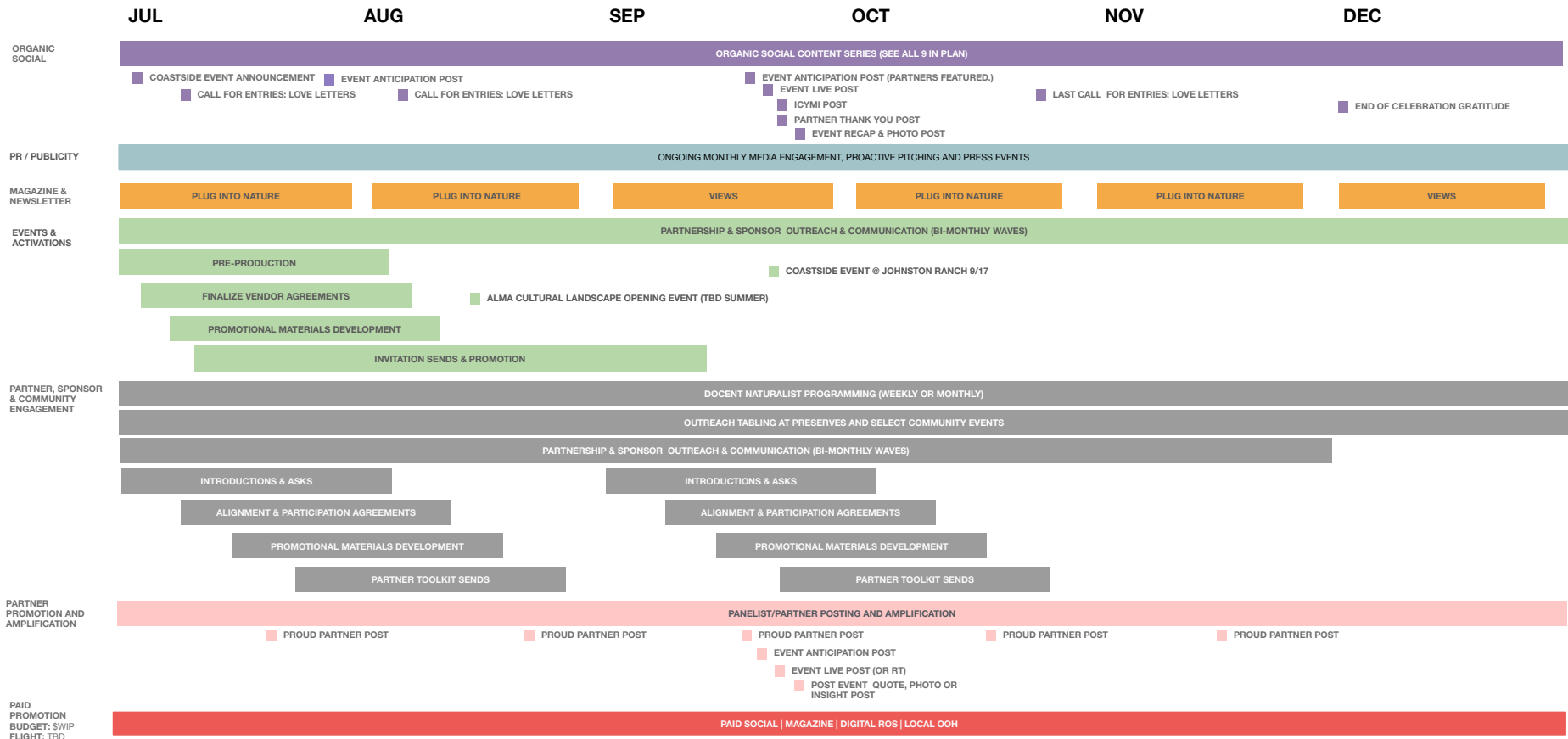
Attachment 1



BUDGET: SWIP  
 FLIGHT: TBD  
 CREATIVE: TBD  
 TARGETING: TBD  
 RESULTS: XMM IMPRESSIONS

# AT A GLANCE — H2 2022

Attachment 1



# BUDGET



A large graphic of a budget table with many rows and columns, rendered in a light green color against the dark green background. The table is positioned on the right side of the page and is partially obscured by the 'Attachment 1' header.



# BUDGET TOPLINE

SIGNATURE EVENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food &amp; Beverage</li> <li>• Parking, Trash, Water, Recycling</li> <li>• Equipment &amp; Activities</li> <li>• Invitation &amp; RSVP Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event Planning &amp; Production Staff</li> <li>• Insurance and Permits</li> </ul>	\$163,460
PR, ADVERTISING & COMMUNICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid Media Placements</li> <li>• Press Release Development (Min 4)</li> <li>• Monthly Proactive Pitching &amp; Press Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Design &amp; Production</li> <li>• Media Toolkit Development</li> <li>• Social Media Content Templates</li> <li>• 50 Stories Content Collaboration</li> </ul>	\$116,320
PARTNER, SPONSORSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target &amp; Key Contact List Development</li> <li>• Monthly Proactive Outreach</li> <li>• Briefing Meeting Coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner Programs Development</li> <li>• Partner Toolkit Development</li> <li>• Tabling, Signage, Event Fees</li> </ul>	\$45,720
SPOTTED @ MIDPEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Prompts and Campaign Kickoff</li> <li>• Campaign Creative / Design Execution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Platform and Tool Integrations</li> <li>• Digital Hosting</li> </ul>	\$24,140
COMMEMORATIVE GIVEAWAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sourcing &amp; Procurement</li> <li>• Mechanicals and Production Design</li> <li>• Shipping &amp; Fulfillment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example: Patch, Framed Preserve Print, Binocular, etc.</li> </ul>	\$16,560

Attachment 1

**M** THANK YOU

SAN FRANCISCO

NEW YORK