



VIEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS FROM THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT • FALL 2023



CONTEST WINNER
Textured Marine Layer Sunset by Leor Pantilat of Woodside Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Midpen’s Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossing Project Moves Forward

The Public is Invited to Provide Comments This Fall

Highways are vital for connecting communities, but can also create significant barriers for both wildlife and people when they fragment vast stretches of open space and hinder safe passage. Highway 17 bisects the southern range of the Santa Cruz Mountains, posing a challenge to mountain lions, deer and other local wildlife and creating safety risks for drivers.

Midpen has been working to bridge this divide and is entering a critical stage in its Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossing Project. This fall, neighbors, community members and the public can actively participate by providing input on environmental documents. This project seeks to facilitate safe movement for both wildlife and trail users, while expanding regional trail connectivity.

“Although the purpose of a highway is to connect, ironically they often act as barriers for wildlife movement, inhibiting their access to food, mates

and essential habitats,” Midpen Senior Planner Jared Hart said. “As we care for these public open space lands, we’re working to address these challenges faced by wide-ranging local wildlife to help protect them into the future.”

The project aims to connect over 30,000 acres of protected public lands on both sides of Highway 17 by creating two independent crossings — a wildlife undercrossing and a recreational trail overcrossing.

In addition to providing a safer environment for both wildlife and drivers, the pedestrian overpass will connect more than 50 miles of

existing trails, including the regional Bay Area Ridge Trail and the scenic Los Gatos Creek Trail. The Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossing Project is a major undertaking for Midpen and our partners. By overcoming the impediments imposed by highways, we have an opportunity to foster a thriving ecosystem, protect native species and expand opportunities for regional outdoor exploration.

Sign up to receive updates and learn how to comment on the project at openspace.org/Hwy17.



2023 Photo Contest Winners Revealed

Throughout this issue, look for the winning entries, and hear from the photographers about the nature moments they captured in Midpen preserves.

“The captivating, wavy marine layer with North Ridge peeking out from the clouds, combined with sunbeams passing through the Douglas firs made this a magical moment. I’m grateful these incredible lands are preserved and available for public enjoyment.”
— Leor Pantilat

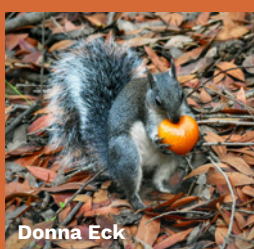


Mountain lion (Adobe Stock)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Bear Creek Redwoods Update
Staff are busy expanding access, restoring nature and improving wildland fire resilience in this forested preserve.



Free Docent Guided Activities
Midpen docent naturalists share their passion for open space with diverse activities in the preserves throughout the fall.



Community Science for Oaks
Volunteers in Midpen preserves gather critical data on sudden oak death for UC Berkeley scientists.

Learning From Nature and Building Resilience



Ana María Ruiz

Recently, the Midpen board of directors received an update from staff on progress toward our goal of reducing our operational greenhouse gas emissions 20% by 2022 as compared to our 2016 baseline levels. Aided primarily by the change in commute patterns due the pandemic, we were able to exceed our goal, reducing emissions by 30%.

Doing our part to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions is just one of the ways Midpen is committed to buffering the reality of a changing climate to build a more resilient Bay Area. Our mission is centered on preserving the ecosystem benefits of our lands and maximizing green infrastructure to balance the needs of people with the other species with whom we share our space.

First, preserving large swaths of undeveloped open space lands provides a host of benefits from the start. Rainwater that isn't diverted quickly away by concrete has time to be absorbed, recharging our groundwater systems and ensuring the clean water we all depend upon.

Trees and other plants are natural air filters, reducing harmful levels of pollution and carbon dioxide, the primary contributor to climate change in the past century. Grasses, trees and other vegetation on open space lands absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, creating a "carbon sink" that stores greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise contribute to climate change.

The hillside elevations and microclimates of our area offer refugia, allowing people, plants and animals to migrate

and adapt to warming temperatures and rising sea levels. Once protected, connecting large swaths of open space lands provides a deeper benefit, allowing wildlife to move between habitat areas to find food and mates. Perhaps you've been following the discovery of Santa Cruz Kangaroo rats in Sierra Azul or the return of purple martin nesting pairs to Mount Umunhum? We're learning more every year about how we can adaptively manage these lands for biodiversity.

All of our efforts to care for these lands that care for us give me hope that together we can help plants, animals and people become more resilient.

physically, of course, but mentally and emotionally, too. We depend on nature for more than we sometimes recognize.

Because even in a region that embraces electric vehicles, tailpipe emissions make up a large share of the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, we're working on projects to encourage alternative modes of transportation to get to Midpen trails. Our changing climate, including last winter's record storms, provide important lessons that we are heeding to ensure our region remains resilient, healthy and thriving into the future.

Learn more at openspace.org/climate.

The green infrastructure we build helps build resilience, too. Our Alpine Regional Trail Improvement Project not only reconnects communities on the valley floor to a vast ridgeline trail network, it also reduces erosion to lessen sediment in Corte Madera Creek.

Networks like Midpen's 250 miles of trail for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment contribute significantly to human health and well-being,

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Midpen helps plants, animals and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region by preserving a connected greenbelt of more than 70,000 acres of public open space. Midpen is a public agency created in 1972 by a grassroots voter initiative to protect the green spaces in parts of Santa Clara, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties. We manage 27 open space preserves with more than 250 miles of trails for you to explore, free of charge, all year long.

Our Mission: To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.


Our mission on the San Mateo County Coast: To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

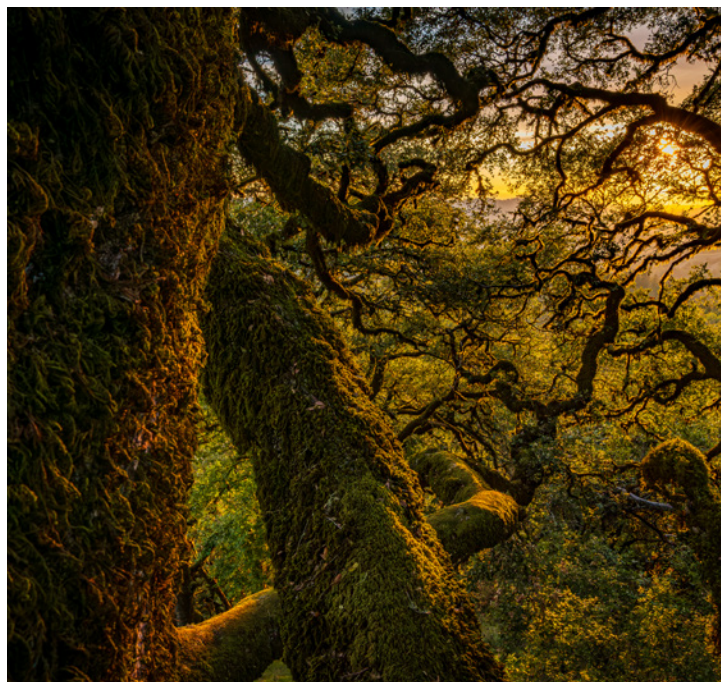
BOARD MEETINGS

Are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m. in-person and via Zoom. For details visit openspace.org/board-meetings.

Ana María Ruiz, General Manager
Leigh Ann Gessner, Open Space Views Editor
Ellen Tjosvold, Guided Activities Editor

2023 Photo Contest Winners Share Moments of Awe and Wonder in Nature

 They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Here, the winners of Midpen's 13th annual photo contest try to capture in just a few brief sentences the meaningful encounters in nature that made them stop in awe and reach for a camera. This year, Midpen received over 300 stunning submissions. These were narrowed down to four finalists in each category, and the winners were chosen by the public through Midpen's social media accounts.



Wildlife

Damselfly

by Mark Gerow of Menlo Park Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

"I went to Monte Bello Preserve hoping to photograph red-winged blackbirds at the little pond there. They were too quick and smart for me, so I stopped and took a moment to see what else was happening around me. That's when I spotted a lovely blue damselfly on a branch near the water's edge. Nature is my sacred place, and taking pictures like this makes me feel more connected to it, even when I can't be there in person."

People in Nature

Up Up and Away

by Erica Namba of Foster City Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

"We watched the marine layer rise up and turn bright orange on one of Midori's first hikes on the ridge. I think she was hoping the marine layer would continue to rise up! I'm happy to watch the fog roll in and share these moments with Midori as no two sunsets are exactly the same."

Aspiring Photographers

Lizard

by Owen Zimbauer of San Jose Fremont Older Open Space Preserve

"I stopped to capture this image because I saw the cool lizard just chilling there. I walked up to it, and it didn't run away, so I figured I would take a picture of it."

Plant Life

Ancient Oaks

by Jordan Gans of Palo Alto Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

"While hiking, I was drawn to these oak trees growing on the hillside that looks out towards the ocean. This unique perspective gave me the impression of being high up in the trees. I also felt that the orange light of the sunset coupled with the dark moss-covered trees fully encapsulated the dynamic and often contrasted nature of the forested hills."

Learn more about the contest at openspace.org/photo.



📷 CONTEST WINNER

**The Trail Less Traveled
Sunrise
by Alex Song of Foster City
Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve**

“During a hike in Pulgas Ridge Preserve, I spotted this oak tree sitting on the top of the hill and realized that it is a great spot to photograph the sunrise. On a winter morning when I foresaw a good sunrise, I arrived at the preserve entrance half an hour before sunrise when the parking area was just opened. I rushed up the hill and snapped this shot. It was truly a beautiful moment.”

Community Scientists in Preserves Help Midpen Protect Oak Trees

Sprawling branches, spiny leaves and plentiful acorns fill the oak woodlands that lay across the Santa Cruz Mountains and support one of the richest and most biologically diverse habitats in the state. However, spread of sudden oak death (SOD) is threatening the health of these ecosystems.

First detected in the Bay Area in the 1980s, SOD has spread dramatically since its discovery. In the past decade, it is estimated that the disease has killed more than one million oak and tanoak trees throughout coastal California and Oregon.

After the recent wet winter, this year’s surveying efforts will be particularly important in tracking the spread of the disease.

Since detecting SOD in Long Ridge Open Space Preserve in 2000, Midpen has committed to finding ways to treat and prevent the disease. Every year, Midpen partners with the University of California at Berkeley’s Forest Pathology and Mycology Lab, and volunteer community scientists, to monitor Midpen preserves for the presence of SOD as part of the larger SOD Blitz Survey Project.

“This community science project is a regional effort that tracks the distribution of the disease. The data generated helps inform researchers, land managers and the public, so we can all collectively manage the spread and impact of this disease to the greatest extent possible,” Midpen Ecologist Arianna Camponuri said.

SOD is caused by phytophthora ramorum, a waterborne pathogen that thrives in the cool, wet climates of coastal evergreen forests and spreads through moist winds, stream water and soil moisture. Though infections are typically only fatal in certain oaks and oak relatives, the pathogen can infect many plant species, including California bay laurels and redwoods, and use them as breeding grounds for the disease.

Since the disease spreads primarily through bay laurel and tanoak trees, Midpen volunteer community scientists spent one recent weekend learning to identify and collect infected leaves from these carriers at various preserves. The leaves are being processed in a diagnostic laboratory at UC Berkeley to confirm which samples are infected with SOD. The results will be used to produce detailed maps of disease distribution within the preserves and surrounding communities and will be released this fall.

Learn more at openspace.org/sod.

Reopening, Repairing and Expanding Access

Multiple Projects Are Underway at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

In August, Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve reopened to visitors after having been closed for nearly six months due to storm damage. The preserve sustained significant damage earlier this year and a sinkhole formed below Bear Creek Road, cutting off access to the preserve’s main parking area.

Santa Clara County installed a new culvert and repaired the road, and PG&E reenergized the preserve gate and pedestrian crossing safety beacons. Midpen crews worked to heal the land, removing hundreds of downed trees and repairing several landslides along the preserve’s trails.

With Bear Creek Redwoods open again after a long closure due to storm damage, we’re continuing efforts to expand public access into the northern portion of the preserve and continuing work to restore the health of its waterways.

The northern area of Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve is nearly 170 acres of oak woodlands, second-growth redwoods and California grasslands. It is also the site of several interconnected projects identified in Midpen’s long-term use and management plan for the preserve.

This plan, developed with extensive public input, serves as a roadmap for responsibly opening Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve to the public in phases, while preserving historic cultural resources and protecting and restoring diverse biological ecosystems.

This summer, Midpen began construction on several projects necessary to open two miles of trail. Before the trails can be opened to public access, crews are repairing and stabilizing the trail banks, installing two concrete bridges over creeks and restoring segments of the Briggs Creek channel to reduce erosion and regulate the creek’s flow. Construction is expected to last through the end of the year.

Additionally, Midpen is also working on a regional connection to Lexington Reservoir County Park, and by extension, Midpen’s St. Joseph’s Hill and Sierra Azul open space preserves. Midpen is also determining the final alignment for a planned multiuse trail that would be accessible to hikers, cyclists and equestrians.

An additional new parking area is also in the planning stage, in order to accommodate potential increased visitation as the preserve’s trail system

expands and connects to surrounding trail networks.

Midpen is committed to providing ecologically sensitive recreational opportunities for the community while fortifying the long-term health of the land. Before any work begins, cultural, botanical and wildlife surveys are completed to ensure all construction activities are aware of rare species or sensitive habitats and areas.

As you plan your next trip to Bear Creek Redwoods, please keep in mind that the preserve may look different in places than it did before last winter’s storms, which brought an unprecedented amount of rainfall that saturated the soil and trails.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to work to improve Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.

Learn more about the projects at openspace.org/phase-2-bcr.



A treated area of forest. (Midpen staff)

Forest Health Project Reaches Milestone

The Los Gatos Creek Watershed Forest Health Project at Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve has reached 200 acres treated, and counting. Midpen joined forces with the San Jose Water Company, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council and Santa Clara County Parks in 2020 to collaboratively carry out this regional project, which is funded by a \$7.5 million grant from Cal Fire. The project’s purpose is to holistically enhance forest and ecosystem health, wildland fire resilience and public safety throughout the Los Gatos Creek Watershed.

Staff oversee the work done in Midpen preserves, including thinning dense underbrush and removing low tree limbs. Before work begins, biologists perform botanical and wildlife surveys to ensure rare species and sensitive habitats are protected. Recently, a Midpen biological monitor spotted a hawk’s nest and postponed treatment in that area. Over the next two years, the project will continue across a total of nearly 1,000 acres, including more than 350 acres on Midpen lands in areas of Bear Creek Redwoods, Sierra Azul, Saratoga Gap and Long Ridge open space preserves.

Learn more at openspace.org/fire.



A worker installs a retaining wall to stabilize a trail and patrol road in Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve as part of a current project that will open new trails to the public in 2024. (Zachary Alexander/Midpen)



Hima Tammineni/Midpen

Fall 2023 Docent Naturalist Guided Activities

Are you ready to explore and enjoy the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves? We invite you to discover these extraordinary places that include many thousands of acres of permanently protected open space, from redwood forest to bay shoreline. All guided activities are developed and provided by docent naturalists who have completed an extensive training program. These docents volunteer their time to enrich your experiences and share knowledge with you about natural and cultural history.

To pique your interest, take a look here at the list of guided activities and then refer to our website [openspace.org/guided-activities](https://www.openspace.org/guided-activities) for all additional needed details. The activities are FREE and only some require reservations. Please note that some preserves have more than one access point and some activities meet at a preserve or location other than where the guided activity will occur. If there is no special where to meet information then the activity meets at the preserve's main parking area.

September

Going on a Grass Hunt

Friday, September 1
9 a.m. – Noon
Saratoga Gap Preserve
4 miles **E**

Earthquake Walk

Sunday, September 3
1:30 – 4 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2 miles **E F**

Labor Day Sunset

Monday, September 4
5 – 7:30 p.m.
Russian Ridge Preserve
Meet: Mindego Parking Area
4 miles **M**

Explorer Hike: Lichens 101

Wednesday, September 6
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Long Ridge Preserve
4.8 miles **F M L**

Workout With a View

Friday, September 8
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Willowbrook-Alpine Roadside Parking
8.3 miles **S L**

Arachnophilia!

Friday, September 8
5:15 – 11 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
4 miles **M R**



Karl Gohl

Merry Berry Hike

Sunday, September 10
9 – 11 a.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2 miles **E F**

Bay Trail Boardwalking

Sunday, September 10
10 a.m. – Noon
Ravenswood Preserve
2.5 miles **E F W**

Earthquake 101

Sunday, September 10
1 – 4 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2 miles **E**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, September 13
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
4 miles **M**

Surviving Paradise

Friday, September 15
9 a.m. – 12 Noon
Edgewood County Park
Meet: Clarkia Trailhead
3.5 miles **M**

Wonders of Cherry Springs

Sunday, September 17
9:25 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Directions emailed
2.5 miles **M R**

Ramble at Rancho

Monday, September 18
9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot Six
5 miles **M**

Explorer Hike: Bald Mountain & Beyond

Wednesday, September 20
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area
4 miles **M L**

Equinox at Turtle Rock

Friday, September 22
3:30 – 7 p.m.
Long Ridge Preserve
Meet: Hickory Oaks Roadside Parking
5 miles **S L R**

A Hidden Redwood

Saturday, September 23
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
La Honda Creek Preserve
Meet: Allen Road Permit Parking Area
2 miles **E F R**

Legend

- E Easy Hike/Walk:** Flat to gently rolling hills. Total elevation gain less than 200 feet. Leisurely pace. Frequent stops. Usually less than 3 miles.
- M Moderate Hike:** Steeper or more frequent uphill grades. Total elevation gain 200 to 600 feet. Leisurely to moderate pace. Usually between 3 and 5 miles.
- S Strenuous Hike:** Steep hills and/or long distances. Total elevation gain greater than 600 feet. Moderate to vigorous pace. Usually more than 5 miles.
- L Meal/Snack Break:** Bring a lunch, dinner or snack as appropriate.
- F Family Friendly:** Suitable for children; must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. See the activity description for any additional information.
- W Wheelchair Accessible**
- D Dogs:** All dogs must be on a leash, well-behaved and socialized. Please bring water for your dog and be prepared to carry out dog waste.
- R Online Reservations Required:** [openspace.org/guided-activities](https://www.openspace.org/guided-activities) will accept reservations two weeks in advance of an activity date and allow a maximum of four people per reservation. No walk-up participation allowed. Please cancel your reservation if you can no longer attend.



Karl Gohl

Visit the Daniels Nature Center

Midpen's David C. Daniels Nature Center in Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve is open Saturdays and Sundays through November 19. The nature center reopens in April 2024. Plan your visit at openspace.org/nature-center.

Morning Meander: Orchard to Creek

Wednesday, September 27
9 – 11 a.m.
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
2 miles **E**

Trail Trek Thursday

Thursday, September 28
9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Saratoga Gap Preserve
5.75 miles **S L**

Dogs & Winding Trails

Friday, September 29
5 – 6:30 p.m.
Fremont Older Preserve
2.5 miles **E D**



Karl Gohl

Wildland Knowledge of Native Peoples

Saturday, September 30
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Skyline Ridge Preserve
4 miles **F M L**

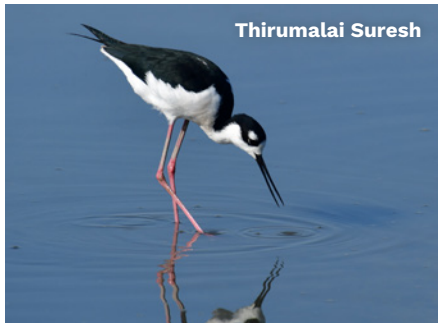
October

Watershed Wonders

Sunday, October 1
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
3 miles **E F**

Earthquake Walk

Sunday, October 1
1:30 – 4 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2 miles **E**



Thirumalai Suresh

Explorer Hike: Bayside Birding

Wednesday, October 4
10:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.
Ravenswood Preserve
3 miles **E F L**

Another Grassy Knoll

Saturday, October 7
9 – 11 a.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Directions emailed
2 miles **M R**

Trail Detectives

Saturday, October 7
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Long Ridge Preserve
3 miles **E F L**

Autumn Qi Gong

Monday, October 9
1 – 3:30 p.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2.5 miles **E**

Ranchlands to Woodlands

Wednesday, October 11
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
La Honda Creek Preserve
5 miles **M L R**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, October 11
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Saratoga Gap Preserve
5 miles **M**

Ipiwa Views

Friday, October 13
9:30 a.m. – Noon
Skyline Ridge Preserve
Meet: Russian Ridge Parking Area
3 miles **F M**

Geocaching Hike

Saturday, October 14
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2.5 miles **F E L R**



Liv Ames

Explorer Hike: Fall Along the Fault

Wednesday, October 18
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
4 miles **M L**

Peacocks at Picchetti

Thursday, October 19
10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
4 miles **M L**

Umunhum Explorer

Sunday, October 22
9:45 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area
4 miles **M R**

Geology: Moving Mountains

Sunday, October 22
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
5 miles **M**

Morning Meander: Panorama to Forest

Wednesday, October 25
9 – 11 a.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area
2 miles **E**

Trail Trek

Thursday, October 26
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
Meet: Skeggs Point Parking Area
6 miles **S L**

Following in Ohlone Footsteps

Saturday, October 28
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Skyline Ridge Preserve
7.5 miles **S L**

Sleeping Beauties

Saturday, October 28
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2 miles **E**



Vaibhav Tripathi

Sunset and Moon Rise

Saturday, October 28
4 – 7 p.m.
Russian Ridge Preserve
3.4 miles **M R**

Untold Stories of the Oaks

Sunday, October 29
1 – 4 p.m.
Russian Ridge Preserve
Meet: Mindego Parking Area
4 miles **M**

Ramble at Rancho

Monday, October 30
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot Six
7.5 miles **S L**

November

Signs of Fall

Wednesday, November 1
9 a.m. – Noon
Pulgas Ridge Preserve
4.2 miles **M**

Explorer Hike: Redwood Autumn

Wednesday, November 1
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
4 miles **M L**

Fall Bird Migration

Saturday, November 4
9 a.m. – Noon
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2 miles **E**

Redwood Majesty

Saturday, November 4
10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
3 miles **F M L**

Earthquake Walk

Sunday, November 5
1:30 – 4 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2 miles **E**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, November 8
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
5 miles **S**

Following in Ohlone Footsteps

Friday, November 10
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area
8.5 miles **S L**

Exploring the Hawthorns Area

Friday, November 10
10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Directions emailed
2 miles **M R**

Ferns and Other Ancient Plants

Saturday, November 11
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
3.5 miles **M L**

A Sense of Place and Season

Saturday, November 11
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
4 miles **F M L**

Explorer Hike: Annual Turkey Trot

Wednesday, November 15
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot Six
4 miles **M L**

Fall Frolic in the Redwoods

Friday, November 17
10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
Meet: Skeggs Point Parking Area
5.3 miles **S L**

Geology: Moving Mountains

Saturday, November 18
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
5 miles **S**

Geocaching Hike

Saturday, November 18
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Skyline Ridge Preserve
Meet: Russian Ridge Parking Area
2.5 miles **F M L**



Karl Gohl

Ramble at Rancho

Monday, November 20
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot Six
7.5 miles **S L**

Throw Off That Turkey Torpor

Friday, November 24
10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
4.5 miles **M L**

Morning Meander: Meadow to Farm

Wednesday, November 29
9 – 11 a.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot Six
2 miles **E**

Signs of Fall

Wednesday, November 29
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Pulgas Ridge Preserve
4.2 miles **M**

Trail Trek Thursday

Thursday, November 30
9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve
6 miles **S L**



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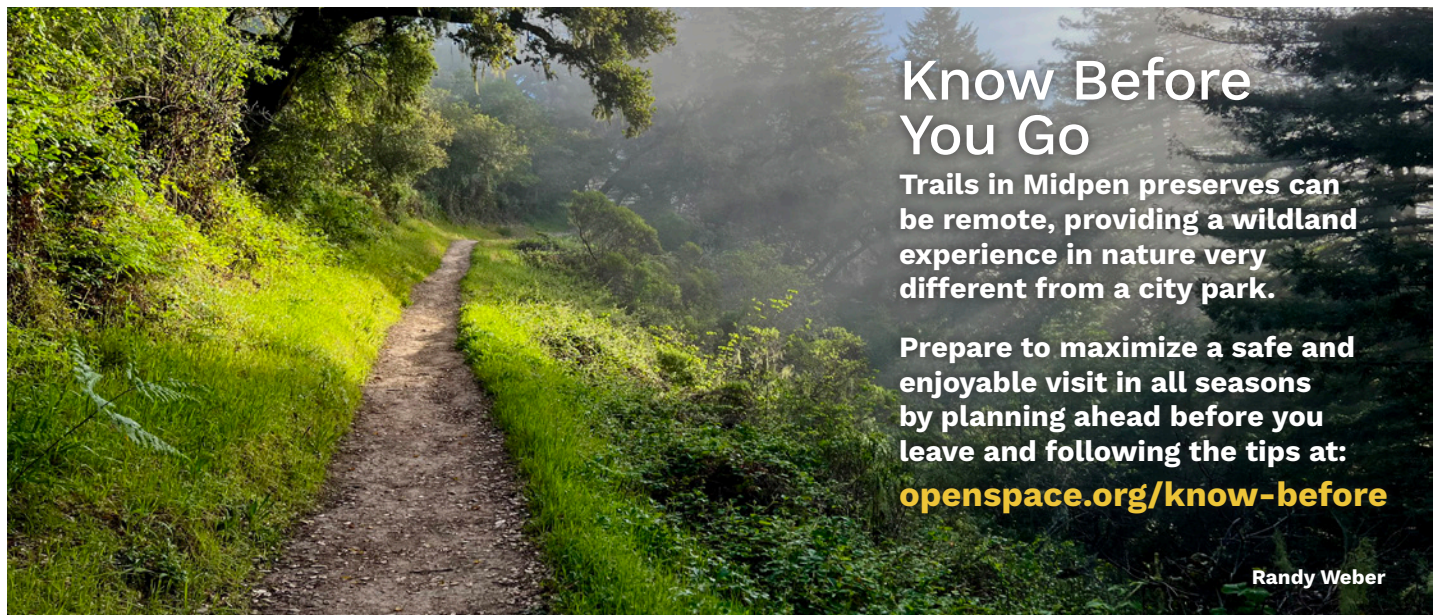
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Stay Connected to Your Open Space

Sign up to receive Midpen's monthly e-newsletter, this quarterly print newsletter and updates on preserves and projects.

openspace.org/opt-in

Follow us on social media:



Know Before You Go

Trails in Midpen preserves can be remote, providing a wildland experience in nature very different from a city park.

Prepare to maximize a safe and enjoyable visit in all seasons by planning ahead before you leave and following the tips at:

openspace.org/know-before

Randy Weber



Midpen staff repair a landslide along the Whittemore Gulch Trail in Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve. (Erik Viik/Midpen)

Work Continues Towards Reopening Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve

While we're already preparing for the next rainy season, there is still much work to be done repairing the unprecedented damage to open space and trails caused by last winter's heavy rainfall. A grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for \$8 million is helping to offset the costs of this additional and unexpected work.

Thankfully, the majority of Purisima Creek Redwood Preserve's 23-mile trail system remains open and is accessible.

The good news is San Mateo County began soliciting bids to repair the roadway in August, and is expected to begin the roadwork this fall. Once the county reopens the roadway, Midpen can safely reopen the parking area and the lower trailhead for public use again. Thank you for your patience and understanding. In the meantime, Midpen crews are hard at work inside the preserve, repairing trails that were damaged last winter.

Please be aware that the open parking areas along Highway 35 fill early during busy times in this beloved and popular preserve. Midpen is currently planning to expand trails and parking at this preserve.

Get the latest updates at openspace.org/Purisima-Creek-Redwoods.

New Partnership Connects Coastside Youth to Nature

South Coast-Based Puente and Midpen Collaborate

The sun beamed down on a caravan of cars pulling into the gravel parking lot at Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve after a long drive from the San Mateo County coast. Midpen Docent Naturalists Roberta and Jaime Cavazos and Nick Yatsko greeted the arrivals, a group of two dozen high school students, as they stepped out into the late morning sun and stretched their cramped legs.

The meeting marked a new collaboration between Midpen and Puente, a nonprofit that promotes equitable access to education, health and economic security for all members of the San Mateo County South Coast community, to offer a docent-led youth program.

"We led this hike to encourage young people to enjoy and protect these spaces. I was excited to share my love for nature, and I think we reached some of the students to respect and be in awe of it."

— Midpen Docent Naturalist Roberta Cavazos

"We decided on Ipiwa Trail because it shows different habitats that are around us – oak woodland, grassland, chaparral and riparian. It has a sampling of habitats but also a great view of how these habitats connect,"



Michael Chan

Midpen Docent Naturalist Roberta Cavazos said.

As they hiked along the trail, the students were encouraged to immerse themselves in their surroundings and pay attention to how nature made them feel. Roberta pointed out wildflowers blooming in the shade and clusters of branches near hollow trees that could be home to dusky-footed woodrats, introducing the students to native flora and fauna.

After passing vistas of forested hills and hiking through dry chaparral, the group reached their destination – Horseshoe Lake in Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve. The cool breeze of the lake washed over the students as they watched the surface ripple from the paddling of a noisy family of ducks.

Midpen docent naturalists are trained volunteers who not only deliver programming with our partners, but also provide guided activities to the general public in many preserves.

For a full list of Midpen activities visit openspace.org/events.