



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 23, 2019

Contact: Leigh Ann Gessner

650-691-1200, lgessner@openspace.org

Midpen Open Space to acquire final Coastside property in decades-long vision to connect Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve to the sea

Los Altos, CA— Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District reached an important milestone in Coastside open space protection this week by approving the transfer of 240 acres south of Half Moon Bay. The transfer will complete a contiguous landscape of protected open space and agricultural land from Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve to the Pacific Ocean.

“This property is the final link in the long-term vision to connect Santa Cruz Mountain forests to the coast in support of agriculture, wildlife and people,” Midpen General Manager Ana María Ruiz said. “We now have a wonderful opportunity to plan and build the Measure AA-funded Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail, linking the Bay Area Ridge Trail along the Skyline corridor with the California Coastal Trail along the ocean bluffs.”

The property, encompassing steep hillsides and grassy ridgeline, will transfer to Midpen in June from the Giustis, a prominent Coastside farming family. The Giustis retain the lower farm fields where Brussels sprouts, artichokes, beans, pumpkins, peas and hay are grown.

Midpen will restore the area by cleaning up abandoned oil wells and improving nearby ponds and stretches of creek for wildlife habitat. Midpen will also explore the feasibility of reintroducing cattle grazing to the property. The next step is working with the public to plan the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail in a way that considers the needs of neighboring farmers and ranchers, local residents and open space visitors.

These restoration, grazing and public access projects are funded in part by Measure AA, a \$300 million bond passed by local voters in 2014, supporting open space projects in Midpen’s community-supported Vision Plan.

Midpen works in public-private partnership with the Peninsula Open Space Trust to protect and steward open space and agricultural land on the Coastside. POST, a nonprofit land trust, began protecting the Purisima-to-the-Sea properties in 1998. Midpen began acquiring these lands from POST in 2006, shortly after Midpen’s boundaries expanded to include the San Mateo County coast. Midpen purchased an additional Purisima-to-the-Sea property from the University of California in 2009.

In all, Midpen has added five properties totaling 1,493 contiguous acres to Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve, supporting agriculture, protecting a corridor for wildlife and creating an opportunity to build the long-envisioned Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail. Today, Midpen stewards more than 10,000 acres on the San Mateo County Coast, where its mission is 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.

###

www.openspace.org