



VIEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS FROM THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT · SUMMER 2025



A yellowlegs among the pickleweed at Ravenswood Open Space Preserve. Midpen protects and manages Ravenswood and the Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area along the San Francisco Bay shore to support a unique community of plants and wildlife and provide for public education and enjoyment. (Frances Freyberg)

A Species Survives in Unexpected Places

Sharing the Bay with Snowy Plovers

At first glance, the salt flats and stormwater retention basins ringing the San Francisco Bay may seem stark compared to nearby tidal marshes. But a closer look reveals movement: a sand-colored blur scurrying along the salt-crust ground, making a distinctive “tu-wheet” call. This unassuming bird is the Western snowy plover (*Anarhynchus*

nivosus nivosus), a federally threatened shorebird whose survival is tied to these rare habitats.

Historically, much of their Pacific coast population nested on wide, unvegetated ocean beaches. However, in the Bay Area, plovers adapted to make use of the region’s network of former industrial salt evaporation ponds and stormwater retention basins. Today,

Midpen has partnered with artist and naturalist Obi Kaufmann to spread the word about how these threatened birds survive in the Bay Area, and what people can do to help them.

many of these lands are repurposed for conservation and restoration.

Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area, which Midpen manages with plovers in mind, is part of a larger stormwater retention basin for NASA’s Moffett Field. At Stevens Creek Shoreline, Midpen’s targeted habitat enhancement efforts are making a difference for plovers. By patrolling to prevent trespassing and placing oyster shells to aid in nest concealment, Midpen is creating the conditions that plovers need to breed and thrive.

To help educate the public, Midpen has partnered with artist and naturalist Obi Kaufmann, author and illustrator of the California Field Atlas series, to spread the word about how these threatened birds survive in the Bay Area, and what people can do to help them.

“Humans can have a significant impact on plover populations, even

unintentionally,” said Midpen Wildlife Biologist Karine Tokatlian. “Educating the public about the importance of staying on trails, keeping dogs leashed and respecting nesting areas is key to ensuring these birds have the space they need to survive.”

Natural predators like ravens, gulls, foxes and raptors as well as domestic and feral cats also pose constant threats to these ground-nesting birds. Plover breeding season begins in early spring and runs through the summer. Rather than building elaborate nests, snowy plovers make simple scrapes in the ground. Their eggs, speckled and small, blend in well with the bare earth. Often, they nest near oyster shells or other natural debris that further conceal their vulnerable clutches.

Western snowy plovers are masters of camouflage, perfectly suited to life in open, sandy terrain. Their plumage — white on their underbellies and tan across their backs — blends almost seamlessly with the pond bottoms, making them almost invisible against the dry ground.

Midpen is working to support their survival and their continued presence in our region.

Learn more and watch Midpen’s new animated snowy plover video at openspace.org/snowy-plover.



Snowy plover breeding season runs through the summer. These masters of camouflage nest on the ground and Midpen is working to improve their bayshore habitat. (Karine Tokatlian/Midpen)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Help Maintain Midpen Trails

A new volunteer program has launched inviting community members to assist with trail maintenance.

Kevin Gallagher

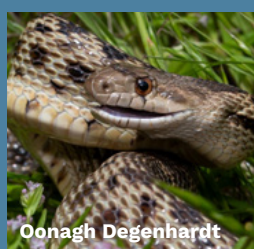


Photo Contest Turns 15

Participate in this beloved annual event by submitting photos or voting for your favorite shots online.

Oonagh Degenhardt



Free Docent Guided Activities

Midpen docent naturalists share their passion for nature with free activities throughout the summer.

John Green

Working for Wildland Fire Resilience



Ana María Ruiz

The devastating Los Angeles wildfires had a profound impact on wildland and urban life. Alongside the collective sense of grief and

loss from the fires was a wellspring of compassion and desire to help. At Midpen these stories and images continue to affect us, underscoring our critical work to promote healthy, resilient, fire-adapted ecosystems and reduce wildfire severity and risk.

Through Midpen's multifaceted Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, we are proactively working year-round to prevent, prepare and respond to fire. Our hard-working crews are maintaining hundreds of miles of fuel breaks and fire roads in the preserves, including those that act as emergency ingress and egress for neighbors.

Thanks to board approval of Midpen's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, over the last four years we have been able to dramatically expand our ecologically sensitive vegetation management efforts to reduce fuel loads for ecological health and public safety. Most recently, we removed 2.5 acres of eucalyptus near the Lexington Reservoir and were major partners in a collaborative project that resulted in the treatment of 1,000 acres of open space, park and watershed lands that primarily drain into Lexington Reservoir.



Midpen staff practice creating fire line by hand as part of their annual training needed to maintain their Wildland Firefighter certification. (Midpen staff)

Midpen's active conservation grazing program within parts of several preserves on the San Mateo County coast also plays a part in this effort by reducing 10,000 acres of fire fuel loads annually. This past fall, we reintroduced prescribed fire to our land management toolbox, conducting a prescribed burn in Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve in partnership with CAL FIRE and Santa Clara County Fire.

Midpen rangers, with their trucks outfitted with firefighting gear, tools, and water pumpers, are trained first responders to wildland fires. Equipment and Maintenance Officer staff can become readily available with larger Midpen water trucks to deliver greater quantities of water to fire incidents.

Detailed preserve maps that assist fire agencies with critical information such

as water sources, roads and sensitive resources are kept up to date by our GIS team. And during an active fire, Midpen biologists are on hand to help identify highly sensitive natural resources for their protection as suppression efforts are underway.

From Midpen staff to the 40 collaborating public agencies, Native American Tribes, professional organizations and nonprofits, we are all addressing this together. We are grateful for the support of the larger community and you in this work.

Learn more at openspace.org/fire.

Although fires rarely start within our preserves, our fire resiliency work is an all-hands-on-deck endeavor.

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
Katie Renz, Guided Activities Editor



Annie Burke/TOGETHER Bay Area

“The Right Relations Program is about shifting mindsets to think differently about relationships with people, the land and its original stewards. We are working on the same timescale as an oak tree or a redwood.”

—TOGETHER Bay Area Executive Director Annie Burke

the Kasha Band of Pomo Indians, spoke on their experience reconnecting to the land and advancing tribal sovereignty. Opportunities like these allowed participants to grow their network and share wisdom through peer-to-peer learning.

“Midpen saw the power and potential of our cohort-based, capacity-building program and they contributed to the program's success. The problems we're facing aren't going to be solved by any one organization, so we need to work together,” Burke said.

The program concluded with 75 attendees, representing 19 organizations presenting their internal action plans based on the knowledge gained in the program.

“Midpen is proud to have assisted with such an impactful movement,” said Midpen Senior Grants Technician Caitlin Amarillas. “Right relations require constant collaboration, conversation and education and TOGETHER Bay Area will continue to deepen the knowledge of members, new and old.”

To learn more about Midpen's Grantmaking Program visit openspace.org/grants.

Midpen Grant Expands Right Relations

Program Strengthens Relationships with Native Tribes

Every two years, Midpen provides grants to organizations and projects that enhance the understanding and protection of our natural world, strengthen scientific research, build partnerships, expand access to the outdoors and enrich public education.

A recent grantee, TOGETHER Bay Area, is a coalition of Native tribes, public agencies, nonprofits and other mission-aligned organizations collaborating for healthy lands, people and communities with projects that aim to advance climate resilience and social equity. The grant from Midpen helped to fund TOGETHER Bay Area's nine-month

Right Relations Program, which aligns with Midpen's priority to build capacity and partnerships that further regional conservation goals.

“The Right Relations Program isn't about telling a tribe's story or government-to-government consultation or telling anyone what to do,” explained TOGETHER Bay Area Executive Director Annie Burke. “The Right Relations Program is about shifting mindsets to think differently about relationships with people, the land and its original stewards. We are working on the same timescale as an oak tree or a redwood. Many participants said they have

changed the way they work because of what they experienced and learned in the program.”

Midpen's support allowed the program to expand. Trainings were co-developed with Redbud Resource Group, a Native American, women-led nonprofit organization that empowers tribal communities and fosters effective collaboration between tribes and non-tribal entities.

The program included workshops to educate participants on colonization, ecocide (mass destruction of nature), going beyond land acknowledgments and meaningful connection strategies. Field trips helped participants develop effective partnership skills and advance their understanding of work done by local tribal groups.

TOGETHER Bay Area also facilitated roundtable discussions where guests, including Chairman Reno Franklin from

Preserving History and Healing Nature

Unique Project Underway in Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve

Midpen is restoring an area of Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve with native plants that was once the manicured garden of a wealthy estate owner. The project is uniquely designed to highlight local cultural history while improving native plant habitat.

The Alma Cultural Landscape provides a unique experience among all other areas across Midpen's 27 preserves for its evident layers of cultural history.

The human history on the Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve landscape spans from Native People who stewarded the landscape for millenia, to the era of logging and lumber mills in the Santa Cruz Mountains, to elaborate estates of the wealthy and even the first Jesuit College on the West Coast.

"Combining this preserve's history with a native plant restoration project is such a unique opportunity. I can't

wait for visitors to experience the site as it evolves over time," said Midpen Resource Management Specialist Amanda Mills.

Midpen's efforts to rehabilitate the site include planting native species within the layout of historical gardens once present here, while continuously removing invasive species and monitoring progress.

This valiant effort aims to increase native species cover and biodiversity, improve pollinator habitats, maintain the openness of the historical cultural landscape and create a lawn-like effect with native species that are more drought tolerant and require minimal maintenance.

All seeds used in the restoration process have been collected locally in Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve and were propagated by Grassroots Ecology Native Plant Nursery. Various native



Yarrow is a native plant used in the restoration project at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. (Amanda Mills/Midpen)

"Combining this preserve's history with a native plant restoration project is such a unique opportunity."

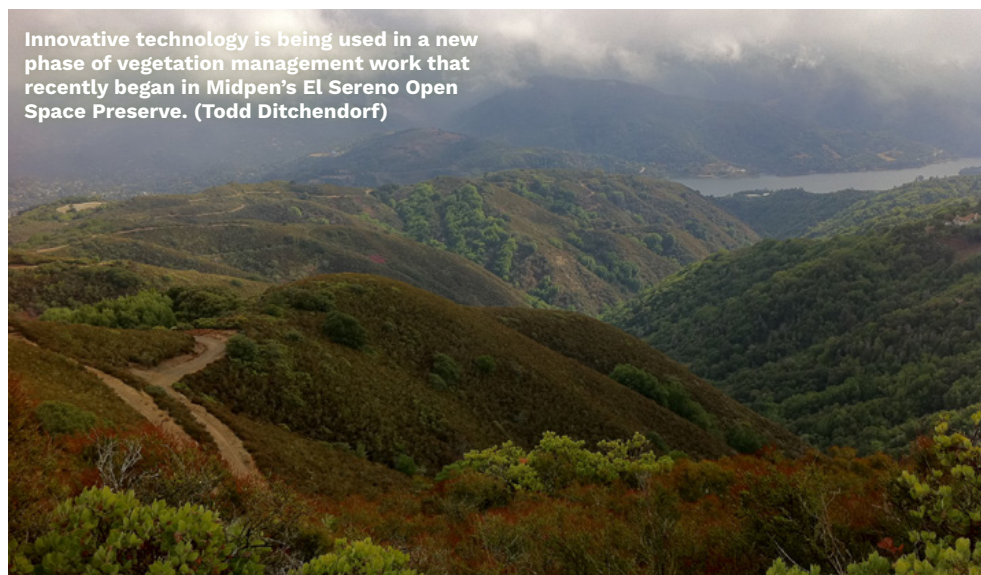
—Midpen Resource Management Specialist Amanda Mills

sedges, grasses, rushes and wildflowers as well as manzanitas, coffeeberry, California aster and black oak are being

planted. Wrapping up the second year of the project, Midpen field crews have installed an impressive 18,000 seedlings and acorns on site, with a final goal of 60,000.

"The project has already improved the look and feel of the site, especially with so many wildflowers in bloom," Mills said.

Learn more about this historical preserve and plan your visit at openspace.org/Bear-Creek-Redwoods.



Innovative technology is being used in a new phase of vegetation management work that recently began in Midpen's El Sereno Open Space Preserve. (Todd Ditchendorf)

New Chapter for Watershed Health

Collaborative Project Enters Next Phase Using Innovative Tools

Building on the successful treatment of more than 1,000 acres in the Los Gatos-Saratoga area, the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Collaborative has just launched the next phase of their forest health and wildland fire resilience work.

The collaborative is a partnership between Midpen, Santa Clara County Parks, San Jose Water, Santa Clara FireSafe Council and community partners including Lupin Lodge and Aldercroft Heights, working together at a landscape level to increase wildfire resilience and forest health through vegetation management.

This next phase of work, supported by a new \$6.9 million CAL FIRE grant, will expand the Collaboration's efforts by an additional 840 acres; 485 of those acres will be within Midpen's El Sereno, St. Joseph's Hill and Sierra Azul open space preserves. This multi-year effort is slated for completion in the fall of 2027, bringing the total treated area to over 1,800 acres.

"Our collaborative approach is essential. By working together across agencies, we can achieve a scale of impact that wouldn't be possible individually," said Midpen Field Resource Specialist Chelsea Young.

Adding a new dimension to this phase is the adoption of innovative equipment. The collaborative will be working with BurnBot, a local company that specializes in wildfire prevention through emerging technologies.

The initial 155 acres of work west

"It's our shared responsibility to ensure we are doing our part in bringing back the land's resilience to wildfire in a way that both improves the safety of our communities and the health of our local ecosystems."

—Midpen Field Resource Specialist Chelsea Young

of the Lexington Reservoir will be treated in-part using BurnBot's remote-controlled unit to reduce vegetation. This technology offers a lighter touch on the land and exceptional precision in managing vegetation, allowing for targeted fuel reduction in difficult terrain while preserving desired native plant species and minimizing impact on the surrounding ecosystem.

A cornerstone of this ongoing initiative is the deep commitment to ecologically sensitive practices. As with the first phase, all vegetation management will prioritize the long-term health and resilience of the landscape. This means carefully selecting treatment methods – from strategic hand-thinning to precise mechanical work – that minimizes soil disturbance, targets overgrown and dead vegetation and enhances habitat for wildlife.

Learn more at openspace.org/fire.

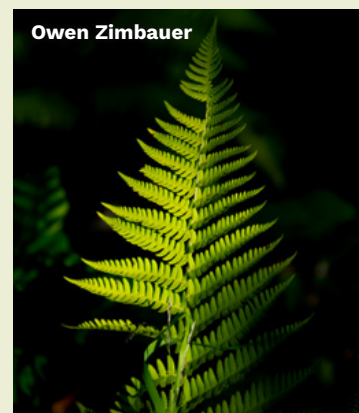
Capturing Awe and Wonder



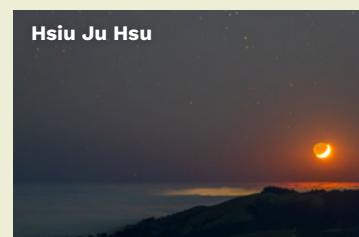
Whether you're a shutterbug or simply can't help but snap a cell phone photo when nature stops you in your tracks in Midpen preserves, we invite you to participate in our annual photo contest. Submissions are accepted online through June and the public will vote for the winners on social media in July.

We welcome photos from your visits to Midpen preserves in the following categories: Wildlife; Plant Life; Landscapes; People in Nature; Aspiring Photographers (students K-12); and The Trail Less Traveled. A winner from each category will receive a \$100 REI gift card and Midpen gear. Get all of the contest details at openspace.org/photo-contest.

2024 Contest Winners



Owen Zimbauer



Hsiu Ju Hsu



Divya Konda



Mallie Brathwaite

Summer 2025 Docent Naturalist Guided Activities

A sunset hike in Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. (Ann Reisenauer)

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 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. For accessibility inquiries, reach out to adacoordinator@openspace.org or by phone at (650) 691-1200 or by dialing the California Relay Service at 711.

June

Faultlines, Hippies & Flowers

Sunday, June 1

1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Los Trancos Preserve

2 miles **E**

Silent in the Sempervirens

Sunday, June 1

3 – 7 p.m.

Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve

4 miles **S**

Four Preserves, One Hike

Monday, June 2

9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Skyline Ridge Preserve

7.5 miles **S L**

Aerobic Views

Tuesday, June 3

8:45 a.m. – Noon

Rancho San Antonio Preserve

Meet: Lot 6

6 miles **S L**

Wonders of Cherry Springs

Wednesday, June 4

9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sierra Azul Preserve

Meet: Camden Park & Ride Lot

2.25 miles **R M L**

Explorer Hike: Nutmegs of Red Mountain

Wednesday, June 4

10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Long Ridge Preserve

Meet: Saratoga Gap Vista Point Parking Area

5 miles **M L**

Signs of Summer

Friday, June 6

9 a.m. – Noon

Pulgas Ridge Preserve

4 miles **M**

Frogs, Turtles & Dragonflies, Oh My!

Saturday, June 7

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

La Honda Creek Preserve

3.5 miles **M**

Hawthorns Area History Walk

Saturday, June 7

10 a.m. – Noon

Windy Hill Preserve

Meet: Directions emailed

2 miles **R E**

Hike to Black Mountain

Saturday, June 7

10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Monte Bello Preserve

7 miles **S L**

Trail Run: Landmark Tour

Sunday, June 8

9 – 11:50 a.m.

El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve

10 miles **S T**

Salt Marsh Shangri-La

Sunday, June 8

10 a.m. – Noon

Ravenswood Preserve

2.5 miles **E F W**



Karl Gohl

Tectonic Mountain Bike Ride

Sunday, June 8

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Monte Bello Preserve

8 miles **R S B**

Watershed Beauty

Monday, June 9

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Monte Bello Preserve

4 miles **M L**

Water Wonders

Monday, June 9

8:45 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve

11 miles **S L**

History Hike With Your Hound

Tuesday, June 10

6 – 8 p.m.

Thornewood Preserve

3 miles **R M D**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, June 11

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Windy Hill Preserve

Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area

5 miles **S**

Ranchlands to Woodlands

Thursday, June 12

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

La Honda Creek Preserve

5.5 miles **R S**

Brink of Summer Qigong

Friday, June 13

9:30 a.m. – Noon

Windy Hill Preserve

Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area

2.5 miles **M**

Butterflies of Sierra Azul

Friday, June 13

10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Sierra Azul Preserve

Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area

5 miles **M**

Get Crepuscular! Hike at Dusk

Saturday, June 14

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Skyline Ridge Preserve

1.5 miles **E F L**

Wildcard Ramble at Rancho

Monday, June 16

8:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Rancho San Antonio Preserve

Meet: Lot 6

7.5 miles **S L**

Farewell to Spring Frolic

Monday, June 16

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve

5 miles **S L**

Spring into Summer at Mt. Umunhum

Friday, June 20

9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Sierra Azul Preserve

Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area

8.5 miles **S L**

Coastside Ranching

Saturday, June 21

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

La Honda Creek Preserve

Meet: Event Center Permit Parking Area

6 miles **R S L**

Ohlone Medicine

Saturday, June 21

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Long Ridge Preserve

5 miles **M L**

Tails & Twilight Trails

Saturday, June 21

7 – 9 p.m.

Fremont Older Preserve

3 miles **R M D**

What's That Weed?

Sunday, June 22

9 a.m. – Noon

Thornewood Preserve

3 miles **M**

Sentinel in the Sky

Sunday, June 22

1 – 3 p.m.

Sierra Azul Preserve

Meet: Mount Umunhum Summit Parking Area

0.25 miles **M**

Morning Meander: Canyon to Chaparral

Wednesday, June 25

9 – 11 a.m.

Sierra Azul Preserve

Meet: Jacques Ridge Parking Area

2 miles **E**

Trail Trek Thursday

Thursday, June 26

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Teague Hill Preserve

Meet: Redwood Roadside Parking

6.25 miles **S**

A Cool Summer Retreat

Friday, June 27

10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Long Ridge Preserve

4 miles **M L**

A California Story

Saturday, June 28

8:30 a.m. – Noon

Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve

3 miles **M**



Keith Dilliplane

Scenic Skyline Sampler

Saturday, June 28

9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Skyline Ridge Preserve

7.5 miles **S L**

Cloverdale Ranch: Midpen's Newest Preserve

Saturday, June 28

10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Cloverdale Ranch

Meet: Directions emailed

4 miles **R M L**

July

Earthquake Walk

Sunday, July 6
1 – 3:30 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
2 miles **E F**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, July 9
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Saratoga Gap Preserve
Meet: Saratoga Gap Vista Point
Parking Area
5 miles **S**

Full Moon on Black Mountain

Thursday, July 10
6:30 – 10:30 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
6 miles **R S**

Summertime Birding at Sausal Pond

Friday, July 11
9 a.m. – Noon
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2 miles **E**

Restore, Hike, Discover: Oak Woodlands

Saturday, July 12
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Los Trancos Preserve
3 miles **R M L**

What's That Weed?

Saturday, July 12
9 a.m. – Noon
Ravenswood Preserve
2.5 miles **E W**

Discovering Dragonflies

Saturday, July 12
9:30 a.m. – Noon
Skyline Ridge Preserve
2 miles **E**

Ohlone Footsteps

Sunday, July 13
9:30 a.m. – Noon
Skyline Ridge Preserve
Meet: Russian Ridge Parking Area
2.5 miles **M**

Tectonic Mountain Bike Ride

Sunday, July 13
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
8 miles **R S B**

Among the Trees, Bushes & Flowers

Monday, July 14
9 a.m. – Noon
Thornewood Preserve
3.5 miles **M**

Explorer Hike: Looking for Leopard Lily

Wednesday, July 16
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
Meet: Skeggs Point Parking Area
4.5 miles **S L**

Wandering the Hawthorns Area

Thursday, July 17
10 a.m. – Noon
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Directions emailed
2 miles **R M**

Summertime Birding on the Coastside

Friday, July 18
9 a.m. – Noon
La Honda Creek Preserve
2 miles **E**

Tails & Twilight Trails

Saturday, July 19
7 – 9 p.m.
Fremont Older Preserve
3 miles **R M D**

Bat Sit & Spot

Saturday, July 19
7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve
1 mile **R E L W**

California Beautiful

Sunday, July 20
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
7 miles **R S L**

Sentinel in the Sky

Sunday, July 20
1 – 3 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Mount Umunhum Summit
Parking Area
0.25 mile **M**



Frances Freyberg

Behind the Gate

Tuesday, July 22
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
La Honda Creek Preserve
Meet: Allen Road Permit Parking Area
4 miles **R S L**

Morning Meander: Follow the Creek

Wednesday, July 23
10 a.m. – Noon
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
2 miles **R E**

Trail Trek Thursday

Thursday, July 24
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
6 miles **R S L**

Redwoods: Water, Life, Resilience

Friday, July 25
9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve
5.5 miles **S L**

Banana Slugs in Summer

Saturday, July 26
9 a.m. – Noon
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
3 miles **R E F L**

Cloverdale Ranch: Midpen's Newest Preserve

Saturday, July 26
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Cloverdale Ranch
Meet: Directions emailed
4 miles **R M L**

Moth Night

Saturday, July 26
8:30 – 11:55 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
0 miles **R E**

Framing the Foothills

Sunday, July 27
9 a.m. – Noon
Monte Bello Preserve
4 miles **M**

Ramble at Rancho

Monday, July 28
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot 6
7 miles **S L**

Wonders of Cherry Springs

Wednesday, July 30
9:20 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Camden Park & Ride Lot
2.5 miles **R M L**

Sense & Sensibility

Thursday, July 31
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Long Ridge Preserve
Meet: Sempervirens Point Parking Area
4 miles **M**

August

Lizards & Clarkia

Saturday, August 2
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Edgewood County Park
Meet: Clarkia Trailhead on Cañada Rd.
2 miles **E F L**

Tectonic Mountain Bike Ride

Saturday, August 2
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
8 miles **R S B**

Sunrise Hike: Every Day is a New Day

Sunday, August 3
5:30 – 8 a.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Bald Mountain Parking Area
1.5 miles **R E**

Explorer Hike: Redwood Ramble

Wednesday, August 6
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
5 miles **R S L**

Soaking in the Quiet

Thursday, August 7
9 a.m. – Noon
Thornewood Preserve
3.5 miles **M**

Signs of Late Summer

Friday, August 8
9 a.m. – Noon
Pulgas Ridge Preserve
4 miles **M**

Bat Night

Friday, August 8
7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Skyline Ridge Preserve
Meet: Russian Ridge Parking Area
2.5 miles **R E**

Sentinel in the Sky

Sunday, August 10
1 – 3 p.m.
Sierra Azul Preserve
Meet: Mount Umunhum Summit
Parking Area
0.25 mile **M**

Ramble at Rancho

Monday, August 11
9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot 6
5.5 miles **M**



Midpen

Early Morning Meanderings

Wednesday, August 13
7:30 – 10 a.m.
Thornewood Preserve
3 miles **M L**

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday, August 13
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
5.5 miles **S**

What's That Weed?

Friday, August 15
9 a.m. – Noon
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
2.5 miles **E**

Bats!

Friday, August 15
7:30 – 9:15 p.m.
Skyline Ridge Preserve
Meet: Russian Ridge Parking Area
2 miles **R E F**

Framing the Foothills

Sunday, August 17
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve
5 miles **S L**

Hike by the Old Mill Stream

Monday, August 18
10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve
Meet: Purisima Creek Road Parking
Area
6 miles **R S L**

Geocaching Hike

Saturday, August 23
9:30 a.m. – Noon
Picchetti Ranch Preserve
2 miles **R M L**

Cloverdale Ranch: Midpen's Newest Preserve

Saturday, August 23
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Cloverdale Ranch
Meet: Directions emailed
4 miles **R M L**

Aerobic Views

Tuesday, August 26
8:45 a.m. – Noon
Rancho San Antonio Preserve
Meet: Lot 6
6 miles **S L**

Nature's Bounty: Berries & Galls

Tuesday, August 26
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Windy Hill Preserve
Meet: Lower Windy Hill Parking Area
2 miles **E F**

Trail Trek Thursday

Thursday, August 28
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Monte Bello Preserve
Meet: Skyline Ridge Circle Parking Area
7 miles **S L**

History on Two Wheels

Saturday, August 30
8:45 – 11:30 a.m.
Fremont Older Preserve
10 miles **S B**

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.
- B Bike Intermediate:** Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; able to climb and descend steep and moderately rough trails. Recreational ride at a moderate/brisk pace; 8+ miles on a wide range of fire roads and single-track trails. For experienced riders in very good physical condition with good endurance.
- T Trail Run:** Trail run on single-track trails and/or fire roads. Terrain and pace vary; visit website for more details.
- 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 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.



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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Stay Connected to Your Open Space

Sign up to receive Midpen's print or electronic newsletters, and email updates on preserves and projects.

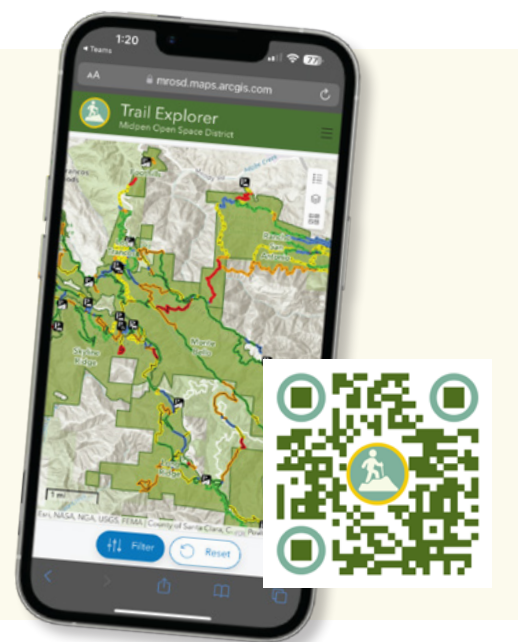
openspace.org/opt-in

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Try Midpen's New Award-Winning Online Trail Explorer

Midpen's expert map-makers recently released a new and improved interactive online tool allowing you to filter for 10 different criteria and find the Midpen trails that are best suited to you. Midpen's more than 250 miles of trail offer a wide range of experiences from contemplative nature study to easy-access trails a family can enjoy together and more challenging routes for outdoor exercise and more. Check it out at openspace.org/maps.



Community volunteers can now help maintain Midpen trails through the new Volunteer Trails Program. (Midpen staff)

New Volunteer Program Launches to Assist with Trail Maintenance

Public participation through volunteerism has always been an integral part of the work Midpen does, and a great way for community members to get an inside-look at stewarding open space preserves. Volunteer programs at Midpen range from staff-led, single-day environmental restoration efforts to long-term commitments patrolling trails or leading the public on guided activities as a trained docent naturalist.

After joining Midpen earlier this year, Volunteer Program Lead Judd Volino has been busy behind the scenes. Volino developed the Trails Program by coordinating with the expert trail-building staff in Midpen's Land Stewardship and Trails Department and scouting potential trail segments. The projects offer community volunteers the opportunity to feel a deeper sense of connection to Midpen's preserves and

its extensive network of more than 250 miles of trail.

"As a former Midpen volunteer myself, I'm excited to share the sense of accomplishment that comes from participating in trail work events," said Volino.

Volunteering is proven to enhance personal well-being and foster a sense of community. Volunteers working on Midpen's trails are contributing to the stewardship of their local public open spaces, gaining new skills and learning about the trail system and natural environment.

While the new program's main focus is trail projects, other elements include collaboration with partner agencies on joint events and coordinating with local scouts and other community groups on special projects.

"We're thrilled to announce the new Trails Program as a opportunity for volunteers to get their hands dirty assisting with trail maintenance."

—Midpen Volunteer Programs Manager
Jennifer Williams

Trails Program projects do not require advanced training or knowledge. While some projects may include elements more appropriate for a returning volunteer, the majority of the work is geared toward beginners and all of the necessary training and equipment will be provided at the start of each project. New projects are posted online the first Wednesday of every month.

Learn more and sign up for projects at openspace.org/volunteer.

Remembering Jay Thorwaldson

Former Local Journalist Played a Role in Midpen's Formation

Midpen staff are remembering the former local journalist, Jay Thorwaldson, with gratitude for his often unseen role in igniting the creation of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Thorwaldson grew up in Los Gatos below what is now Midpen's El Sereno Open Space Preserve and learned to ride a horse as a child. He rode the ridges and valleys of the Santa Cruz Mountains, exploring from Mount Umunhum to the former town of Alma, now underwater in the Lexington Reservoir. Growing up with near-unlimited access to these hillsides instilled in him the importance of permanently protecting the land for future generations.

With such a beginning, it's not surprising that Thorwaldson played a key role in the formation of Midpen. Working as a cub reporter for the now-defunct Palo Alto Times, he created a beat for himself covering the region's parks, open spaces and baylands.

When Nonette Hanco, a Midpen founder and former board director, expressed to Jay her concerns about losing the wild places she knew as a child, he sparked an approach she hadn't considered.

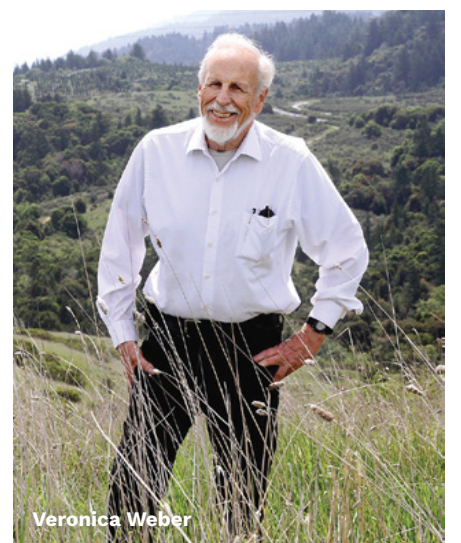
"I told her environmentalists needed to do what they did in the East Bay in 1933, in the depths of the Great Depression, and form a park district to buy the land at fair market value in order to safely preserve it in perpetuity," Thorwaldson recalled.

Thorwaldson shared that conversation with his editor, Alexander Bodi, who asked him to draft an editorial which published on February 16, 1970. That editorial gave Hanco the push and the path she needed to organize others toward a lasting solution.

"For me there are three takeaways," Thorwaldson said at the time of Hanco's retirement in 2019. "A knowledge of history is important in mapping future choices. The press has a vital role to play in terms of presenting information and ideas that can generate the all-important responses from individuals and, as Margaret Mead once observed, one person working with others can make a huge difference."

Thorwaldson retired in 2011 after a 50-year career in journalism. He passed away in February of this year.

Read Thorwaldson's 1970 editorial at openspace.org/hanco.



Veronica Weber