The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) is a regional greenbelt system in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is comprised of over 63,000 acres of land in 26 open space preserves protected for public enjoyment making a preserve system of diverse and unparalleled beauty in one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country. Preserves include redwood, oak, and fir forests, chaparral-covered hillsides, riparian corridors, grasslands, and wetlands along the San Francisco Bay.

Preserves, ranging from 55 to over 18,000 acres, are open to the public free of charge, 365 days a year. Visitors will find over 245 miles of trails, ranging from easy to challenging terrain.

History
Midpen was founded in 1972 to preserve the regional greenbelt in northwestern Santa Clara County. The voters expanded Midpen in 1976 to include southern San Mateo County and again in 1992, to add a small portion of Santa Cruz County. In 2004, through the Coastside Protection Program, Midpen’s boundary was extended to the Pacific Ocean in San Mateo County.

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.

Board of Directors
Midpen is governed by a seven-member elected board of directors. Each board member is elected to serve a four-year term and represents a geographic ward of approximately equal populations. The Board holds its regular public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m., at Midpen’s administrative office: 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA.

Staffing

Funding
General funding is provided by a small share of the annual total property tax revenues collected within Midpen boundaries, except on the San Mateo County Coastside. The FY2018-19 Midpen revenue estimate totals $58.8 million with 92% coming from property tax receipts. Other revenue sources may include federal and state grants, interest and rental income, donations, land gifts, and note issues.

Measure AA
In June 2014, voters passed Measure AA, which authorized Midpen to issue up to $300 million in bonds over the next 20–30 years for specific capital projects. The increase in tax rate will not exceed $3.18 per $100,000 of assessed property value within Midpen’s entire jurisdiction.

Volunteer Opportunities
Approximately 1,000 volunteers assist Midpen each year ranging from one-day projects to ongoing natural history education, trail patrol, maintenance, and restoration programs. Programs are described online at www.openspace.org/volunteer.