



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Questions and Answers

Coastal Open House

November 1, 2017

Senior Coastsider Building, Half Moon Bay

Question:

Great to have new trails on the agenda closer to the coast as there have been few. What is the possibility of partnering with POST and spend some of their lands for hiking on the coast.

Answer:

Midpen has been working with POST on planning regional and local trail connections to the coastal community. Examples of this trails partnership work include the Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail which Midpen has been working with POST and a private property owner on identifying a trail alignment that would connect from the Purisima Uplands property to the Coastal Trail as well as evaluating potential locations for a new public parking area to support this new trail use. Midpen is also working with POST on the Johnston Ranch property acquisition in Half Moon Bay, which includes planning for a pedestrian and bicycle trail connection within the Johnston Ranch property to Burleigh Murray State Park and to the Coastal Trail across Highway 1. In addition, Midpen and POST have been participating in the City of Half Moon Bay's Park Master Plan project as well as Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan project to coordinate on the regional and local trail connections. We hope that these partnership projects will endeavor to complete and open new trails for the coastal community.

Question:

The use of pesticides, hormones in cattle feces, does Midpen have any control over this?

Answer:

Midpen cattle grazing leases prohibit the use of pesticides (which includes herbicides and rodenticides) without authorization from Midpen. All use of pesticides must comply with Midpen's Integrated Pest Management Policies that are designed to protect the environment and public health. Limited use of herbicides is allowed for the control of invasive weeds. Cattle are excluded from areas sprayed with herbicides that can persist in their active form after digestion by cattle. Grazing leases require the use of vaccinations to keep cattle in good health. The use of hormones and antibiotics is not regulated in Midpen grazing leases. Cattle grazed on Midpen's lands are grass fed. Supplemental feed is allowed only to supplement natural grasses and forbs and can't be the primary food source. In general, grazing tenants provide cattle supplemental salt licks and minerals.



Question:

Please tell us about how Midpen manages the nonnative invasive plants?

Answer:

In 2014, the District's Board of Directors approved a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management Program. All vegetation management activities on Midpen lands must comply with this program. Midpen staff prioritize both invasive species and specific site locations for management using a project ranking system. The project ranking system takes into account safety (human and environmental health), how destructive is the invasive species, is the area's biodiversity threatened, and does the project provide for public engagement. A suite of treatment techniques are used to manage the invasive plants, including manual removal, mowing, grazing, chemical application, tarping, and green flaming.

Question:

Other than salmon and trout, what other wildlife and fish are protected to ensure ecological balance with ponds located on grazing land?

Answer:

Stockponds on Midpen lands provide habitat for a variety of native wildlife in addition to providing water for livestock grazing grasslands on those preserves. Midpen manages these ponds for several rare, threatened, or endangered native reptile and amphibian species that are found in many of these ponds. These are California red-legged frog, western pond turtle, and San Francisco garter snake. In addition to these species, these ponds also provide drinking water and habitat for many mammalian and avian species and also habitat for numerous other reptile and amphibian species.

Question:

Are the logs being anchored in creeks replacing trees that had been removed, or is this new construction?

Answer:

The log fish habitat structures installed within San Gregorio Creek are not replacing trees removed by Midpen or the prior landowner. There has been a long-term historic decline of wood in streams throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains due to a variety of factors. This reduction of wood has negatively impacted the stream habitat available to Steelhead rainbow trout and Coho salmon; habitat which they have evolved with for millennia in forested watersheds, including the San Gregorio Creek Watershed. The 2010 San Gregorio Creek Watershed Management Plan identified the lack of instream wood, and associated habitat, as a major limiting factor for Steelhead and Coho salmon success within the watershed. The fish



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habitat enhancement projects completed within San Gregorio Creek on Midpen Lands are designed to reverse the historic habitat decline within the watershed and to restore critical habitat for these threatened and endangered fish.