



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## LEGISLATIVE, FUNDING, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

R-20-70  
July 7, 2020

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### AGENDA ITEM

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Youth Outreach Plan

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

Review and provide input on the Youth Outreach Plan and consider forwarding, with Committee input incorporated, to the full Board of Directors for consideration.

#### SUMMARY

Based on earlier input in February 2019 from the Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC), staff has developed the attached Youth Outreach Plan to guide internal efforts in expanding youth outreach, engagement and education, furthering the Board of Directors' (Board) Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives. The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) recognizes the importance of engaging youth as the next generation of environmental leaders and champions. The creation of a formalized Youth Outreach Plan was a Public Affairs Department project listed on the Fiscal Year 2019-20 (FY20) Budget and Action Plan. Staff is bringing this plan to LFPAC for review and input prior to forwarding to the full Board of Directors for further consideration. Implementation would begin in FY21, based on available funds and budgetary savings.

#### DISCUSSION

The Board of Directors Strategic Plan includes a goal to: *Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision* that is accomplished by meeting the following objectives:

- *Refine and implement a comprehensive public engagement strategy, including the outreach to diverse communities and enhanced public education programs; and*
- *Expand opportunities to connect people to their public open space preserves consistent with a regional environmental protection vision.*

The District's 2017 Preserve Use Survey found that most preserve users are adults, with 49 years old as the mean age of all preserve users. With just 4.2% of all preserve users between 18-24 years of age, staff identified an opportunity to increase awareness of the District to youth and young adults through youth outreach, engagement and education initiatives. In the LFPAC meeting on February 5, 2019, Public Affairs staff presented a Youth Engagement briefing of the existing outreach activities targeting youth ages 4 to 21 that are led by the various departments

(Attachment 1, R-19-15). Based on Committee suggestions from that meeting, staff developed a Youth Outreach Plan (Attachment 2) that expands upon existing District programs and external partnerships. The Youth Outreach Plan's objective is to increase outreach, engagement and education to youth to foster knowledge and appreciation for nature, conservation and land management. The target audiences are youth ages 4 to 21 residing within District boundaries, particularly in under-resourced and low-income communities.

The Youth Outreach Plan includes five recommended strategies:

- 1) Expand external partnership opportunities to new youth organizations and continue existing partnerships that meet participation goals.
- 2) Expand emphasis on youth-related events when choosing community tabling and outreach opportunities.
- 3) Expand promotion of ongoing youth programming efforts.
- 4) Develop engaging youth outreach materials and presentations.
- 5) Maintain a list of potential ideas for future consideration.

These strategies were developed collaboratively across departments and include specific action recommendations (see attachment 2). Highlights of those recommended action items include:

- Pilot introductory outdoor program outings with four local youth groups.
- Increase youth-related community tabling events from 30% to 40%.
- Promote existing programming to raise awareness and increase participation.
- Increase connection opportunities beyond existing programming.
- Create a list of future youth outreach and programming ideas.

In addition to the strategies and actions identified in this Youth Outreach Plan, the District is forming two internal diversity, equity and inclusion staff committees that may present opportunities for increased youth engagement in under-resourced and low-income communities. The community outreach and new partnerships committee may help identify pathways to reach new, underserved, and diverse people not already engaged with the District. The recruitment, hiring process and staff development committee may develop avenues to broaden exposure to science and outdoor careers through internships, mentorships and other opportunities.

The General Manager seeks LFPAC input on the proposed Youth Outreach Plan and support to forward the plan, with Committee input incorporated, to the full Board of Directors for consideration. If approved by the Board, Public Affairs will work cross-departmentally to coordinate and implement the Youth Outreach Plan. Staff will work together to develop effective record keeping methods and provide the Board with a summary update every two years.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The costs associated with expanding youth outreach are itemized in the table below. Given budget constraints for FY21 in light of projected reductions in upcoming property tax revenue growth, the Youth Outreach Plan this fiscal year is currently planned to be implemented through operational budget savings. A budget adjustment may be brought to the Board at a future date in FY21 based on greater and favorable financial certainties about projected tax revenue growth. The anticipated costs for FY21 are listed below:

<b>Items</b>	<b>Anticipated Costs (FY21)</b>
Youth Group Pilot Programs	\$10,000
Social Media Promotion	\$ 1,000
Outreach Materials	\$ 9,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. No additional notice is required.

## **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Committee's approval, staff will forward the plan to the full Board of Directors. Upon Board approval, Public Affairs will work cross-departmentally to coordinate and implement the plan.

### **Attachments:**

1. February 5, 2019 LFPAC Report (R-19-15)
2. Youth Outreach Plan

### **Responsible Department Head:**

Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs Manager

### **Prepared by:**

Carmen Lau, Public Affairs Specialist I



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## LEGISLATIVE, FUNDING, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

R-19-15  
February 5, 2019

### AGENDA ITEM 4

#### AGENDA ITEM

Briefing on Midpeninsula Region Open Space District's Youth Engagement Opportunities

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *den*

1. Receive an informational report on the 2018 Youth Engagement Recap.
2. Review and provide recommendations to inform the goals, direction, and next steps for the Youth Outreach Plan.

#### SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) Board of Directors (Board) set a goal to expand educational programs to reach underserved communities. The District recognizes the importance of engaging youth as they are the next generation of environmental leaders. The development of a Youth Outreach Plan is a Public Affairs project on the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Action Plan.

Public Affairs staff determined that a strategic next step in developing the Youth Outreach Plan is to document the District's existing youth engagement activities. To set a benchmark, staff surveyed all the youth programs and outreach work currently underway at the District across all departments to understand the depth and breadth of this work, and identify gaps and potential new opportunities. Current programs target youth aged 5-21, in elementary school, middle school, high school, and college.

#### DISCUSSION

##### External Partnerships

Since 2012, the District has partnered with external organizations and agencies to engage students and young adults with the outdoors in a variety of ways. These external partnerships have reached approximately 2,200 youth.

##### **Eagle Scouts and Girl Scouts Service Projects (2012 to present)**

District staff have worked with Eagle Scouts and Girl Scouts to complete their service projects and Silver Awards. The majority of the projects have been at Deer Hollow Farm in the Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve. Staffing changes at the farm are underway, and the District will reevaluate the program model in 2019.

**Morgan Center (2016 to present)**

The Morgan Center is an autism support center that provides educational services for children and adults with autism. District Volunteer Program staff have partnered with the Morgan Center since 2016. About two times a month, the Morgan Center sends a group of autistic youth and their teachers to work together to clean and rake leaves at Deer Hollow Farm. The outings provide the students a regular opportunity to work as a team while spending time in nature. Students also have a chance to visit Deer Hollow Farm during their trips. This is an ongoing program that will continue in 2019.

**San Jose Conservation Corps & Charter School (2017 to present)**

San Jose Conservation Corps & Charter School (SJCCCS) is a San Jose-based non-profit that provides job training to local youth, ages 18-27, in a wide variety of environmental fields while they work to obtain their GED. In September 2018, eleven (11) SJCCCS students spent a week working alongside District staff to create a fuel break in a closed area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. The students had an opportunity to cultivate teamwork, learn new technical skills, and develop a passion for the natural world. In November 2018, the District collaborated with SJCCCS to train six students to plant native plants in a closed area of Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. District staff plan to continue collaborating with SJCCCS on at least three projects in 2019.

**Grassroots Ecology (2015 to present)**

Grassroots Ecology is a Palo Alto-based non-profit focused on engaging and educating the public to restore local ecosystems. They work with the District to provide stewardship and volunteer engagement services with youth and the community. In 2018, Grassroots Ecology facilitated 17 restoration projects with over 600 volunteers in District Preserves, focusing on the removal of invasive species and planting native plants at Windy Hill and Russian Ridge Preserves. The District plans to continue to partner with Grassroots Ecology in 2019.

**Student Conservation Association (2015 to present)**

Student Conservation Association (SCA) is a national youth agency that aims to build the next generation of conservation leaders through outdoor service experiences. SCA manages a GIS mapping program that recruits students from underserved schools to conduct field inventories using iPads and GIS collector applications. In summer 2018, the District's GIS Department worked with nine SCA students and two program leaders to collect GIS data on trailhead structures at various Preserve parking lots. Students received iPad training on GIS data collection and learned how to use the ArcGIS application, measuring tapes, measuring wheels, and laser rangefinder tools on site visits. The program helped the students build awareness of the many career paths in conservation field. The data collected was used by the GIS Department to inform map requests and enhanced the data collection of visitor amenities at District preserves.

In addition, a group of 10 SCA students worked with the Natural Resource Department to map invasive, non-native species in Purisima Creek Redwoods and Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserves. Natural Resource staff worked closely with students, providing training on GIS mapping. By the end of the program, the SCA students were provided stipends for their five weeks of work. The partnership provides an excellent opportunity for underserved students to experience the open space preserves, learn new technical skills, and develop an appreciation for the natural environment. The District will continue to partner with SCA in 2019.

**Save the Redwoods League (2015 to present)**

Interpretation and Education Program (Visitor services) staff have partnered with Save the Redwoods League (SRL) to offer high school students field trip excursions at Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. SRL is a San Francisco-based non-profit whose mission is to protect and restore coastal redwood forests and connect people with nature. With staff guidance, students worked together to measure the height and diameter of redwood trees, calculated the carbon storage of the tree, studied the effects of climate change on sword ferns, and conducted plant observations. Students also participated in a Bioblitz, a citizen science activity that documents as many different species as possible with the iNaturalist app. The District provides transportation reimbursement for these field trips. Approximately 120 students have participated in these field trips in the 2017-2018 school year. The District will continue to partner with SRL in 2019.

**Ranger Talks at Deer Hollow Farm (2018 to present)**

Deer Hollow Farm is a working farm located within Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve. In 2018, District rangers began partnering with Deer Hollow Farm to provide support to school life science programs, providing 15 educational presentations to students. The rangers discuss trail safety, everyday ranger duties, and environmental protection guidelines. In 2019, the District's ranger staff plans to continue to work with Deer Hollow Farm and find additional interpretive opportunities for youth programming.

**Environmental Volunteers (2018 to present)**

Environmental Volunteers (EV) is a Palo Alto-based non-profit whose mission is to promote environmental understanding through hands-on science education. The District's Interpretation and Education Program has collaborated with EV to offer educational field trips to students at various District preserves. In the 2017- 2018 school year, 1,200 students from three different schools have participated in field trips to Monte Bello, Los Trancos, and Windy Hill Open Space Preserves.

***Internal Partnerships/Outreach***

The District offers youth opportunities to work directly with staff from different departments on a variety of special projects, offering insight into the large range of environmental career paths available. In addition, District staff conducts outreach via tabling at community events and presentations to libraries and schools. These internal outreach efforts have reached approximately 7,328 youth.

**Spaces & Species Program (2002 to present)**

Spaces & Species is a free field trip program designed for third- through fifth-grade students. The program offers 20 field trips every spring and fall and reaches about 750 students a year. Staff work with Outdoor Education Leader (OEL) docents to plan, schedule, and coordinate environmental education programming. OEL docents lead a group of about 30 students with adult chaperones on a guided walk at Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve, including a visit to the Daniels Nature Center. This program offers children a hands-on opportunity to learn about the natural world and understand the benefit of open space.

**Internships (2009 to present)**

In 2018, the District offered several internships across different departments. Two GIS interns worked closely with GIS staff to complete map requests. Two Natural Resources

interns helped conduct field research and assisted with department projects. A high school intern worked with Visitor Services Department to create a new electronic communication platform to bridge communication between staff and volunteers. In most cases, interns have a maximum of 1000 internship hours and are compensated for their work. The District will continue to offer internships across different departments.

#### **Daniels Nature Center (1996 to present)**

The Daniels Nature Center at Skyline Ridge is the District's only nature center facility. Open on weekends from April to October, the Nature Center offers interpretative information about local habitats, with emphasis on Alpine Pond. District docents host and greet visitors (more than 2000 each year), sharing natural history information, and wildlife viewing activities. Inside the Nature Center, there are pond strata mobiles, a large-scale natural community exhibits, pond food webs, and a skulls and skins display.

#### **Community Outreach Events (2011 to present)**

Since 2011, District staff have conducted community outreach at a variety of different public events. In 2018, Public Affairs staff have provided informational resources at 27 community events. Thirty percent (8 in total) of these events were targeted to children, youth, and families, including the Siena Youth Center Bike Rodeo, Half Moon Bay Kids Health and Wellness Fair, Saratoga Elementary School Earth Day, Wildlife & Harvest Day. Anecdotally, participants are typically interested in finding information on beginner hiking trails suitable for all age levels, so staff provides brochures, maps, and information to cater to new users, families, and youth. Staff will continue to table at community events that have a focus on youth and the outdoors.

#### **Youth Category in District Photo Contest (2018 to present)**

The District has hosted an annual photo contest since 2008. The photo contest encourages community members to visit a Preserve and submit photographs taken at the Preserves. In 2018, the Public Affairs department added a youth category (grades 6-12) and promoted the contest to middle school and high schools within the District via a flyer. Youth had the option to submit their photo entries through the District's website or through Instagram, and the District received 20 photo submissions from nine youth participants. The winner of the youth category of the photo contest was highlighted in the fall 2018 Views Newsletter. Public affairs staff will continue to offer the youth category in the 2019 photo contest and increase outreach efforts.

#### **Community Presentations**

District staff have provided many educational presentations to engage youth in 2018. District rangers have provided classroom visits on an ad-hoc basis, discussing the different duties of a ranger and offering tips on how to get started in the environmental field. These engagements are not typically tracked by ranger staff. In 2019, staff will work together to develop a method for tracking District staff's presentations and talks to youth.

In August 2018, Public Affairs staff provided an introductory presentation at Los Altos Library to 15 community members. In December 2018, Public Affairs staff provided an introductory presentation to 25 students in an environmental club at Menlo-Atherton High School. Staff plans to continue to connect to youth through presentations at local high schools and public libraries.

New Programs

In 2019, the District will be working closely with several partner agencies to offer new youth programming.

**Latino Outdoors Pilot Program (2019)**

In 2015 the District began collaborating with Latino Outdoors (LO) to bring families, youth, seniors, and new users to District preserves for outdoor programming, including family-friendly monthly hikes, an annual backpacking trip, and to participate in habitat restoration volunteer projects. In 2019, a new component of the partnership includes creating a pilot program focused on bringing youth and families from local community groups to District preserves. LO and District staff will facilitate several guided hikes for youth-focused community organizations within District's service area. The goal is to introduce these youth-focused community groups to the District's preserves, promote environmental stewardship, and foster a love for nature in young minds. LO staff will facilitate contact with the community groups and recruit participants. District staff will provide transportation services for the program. At the end of the year, staff will evaluate the pilot program and provide a summary report.

**District Grantmaking Program (2019)**

In 2007, the District began awarding Resource Management grants to local researchers to support the District's mission, enhances public education, and advance the understanding of natural processes while strengthening local partnerships. In 2019, the grantmaking program was expanded to \$250,000 annually and included additional funding categories; applied science, network and partnership support, and environmental education, interpretation, and access. The updated program aims to build a more communitywide approach to environmental stewardship by building the capacity of local academic, nonprofit, and community organizations. District staff will work to promote the grant program to local partners, community groups, and youth-focused agencies.

**Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Stewardship Program (2019)**

In 2014, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band was awarded a five-year grant to survey and map culturally significant plant species at Mt. Umunhum in Sierra Azul OSP. The Tribal Band is involving the next generation of tribal members to conduct land surveys, mapping, and document significant plant species.

In 2019, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band will be working with the District to develop a program to bring young members to Mt. Umunhum to work on a variety of restoration and land stewardship projects. This new program is a promising collaboration effort to develop local conservation stewards.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The costs associated with providing these youth engagement opportunities are listed below and were included in the FY2018-19 operating budget.

<b>External Partnerships</b>	<b>Contract Amount Budgeted in FY 18-19</b>
Eagle Scouts and Girl Scouts Service Projects	Staff time
Grassroots Ecology	\$47,956
Student Conservation Association	\$49,683

Save the Redwoods League	Staff and docent time
San Jose Conservation Corps & Charter School	\$33,422
Ranger Talks at Deer Hollow Farm	Staff time
Environmental Volunteers	Staff and docent time
Latino Outdoors	\$35,000
<b>Internal Programs</b>	<b>Contract Amount Budgeted in FY 18-19</b>
Internships	\$60,000
Spaces and Species Program	Staff and docent time
Daniels Nature Center	Staff and docent time
Community Outreach Events	Staff time
Youth Category in District Photo Contest	Staff time
Community Presentations	Staff time
District Grantmaking Program	\$250,000

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. No additional notice is required.

## **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Incorporating the Committee's input and recommendations, staff will work cross-departmentally to identify gaps and brainstorm opportunities to expand youth outreach. Public Affairs will compile a draft Youth Outreach Plan to present to the Committee for its review and consideration in forwarding the item to the full Board.

### **Responsible Department Head:**

Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs Manager

Prepared by:

Carmen Lau, Public Affairs Specialist I



# Youth Outreach Plan



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

## YOUTH OUTREACH PLAN

### **Objective:**

Increase youth outreach, engagement and education to foster knowledge and appreciation for nature, conservation and land management.

### **Target audiences:**

All youth ages 4 to 21 residing within Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) boundaries, particularly in under-resourced communities.

### **Background:**

Midpen provides a variety of youth outreach, engagement, and education programming that further the Board of Directors' (Board) 2020-21 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives, in particular:

- Goal 3: *Connect people to open space and a regional environmental protection vision*
- Obj. 2: *Refine and implement a comprehensive public engagement strategy, including the outreach to diverse communities and enhanced public education programs; and*
- Obj. 3: *Expand opportunities to connect people to their public open space preserves consistent with a regional environmental protection vision.*

Public Affairs' role focuses on outreach to youth through the promotion of Midpen preserves and raising awareness of Midpen through information sharing and outreach to new users. Visitor Services' role focuses on providing youth with environmental education and outdoor engagement experiences. Youth outreach, engagement and education primarily takes the form of external partnerships and internal programming. Midpen has partnered with local organizations to provide environmental education and outdoor experience opportunities to youth, reaching approximately 2,200 youth annually<sup>1</sup> through external partnerships with numerous groups, including Latino Outdoors, San Jose Conservation Corps and Charter School, girls and boys scout groups, the Morgan Center, Grassroots Ecology, Save the Redwoods League, Environmental Volunteers, Deer Hollow Farm, and the Student Conservation Association.

Midpen also provides direct student programming, events, and special youth conservation projects that are coordinated by staff. School field trips delivered by Midpen docents began in 1996 with the Spaces & Species environmental science education program. Other internal programming includes family visits to the Daniels Nature Center, volunteer stewardship and conservation projects, ranger talks at Deer Hollow Farm, natural resource internships, community outreach events and presentations, and the annual photo contest. Currently, Midpen reaches an approximately 7,300 youth each year through these programming efforts. Please refer to appendices for information on the geographic distribution and descriptions of these various programs and partnerships organizations.

### **Recommended Strategies and Tactics**

To identify additional opportunities for youth outreach, engagement, and education, staff collaborated to develop the following recommendations:

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<sup>1</sup>Summary information on youth outreach, engagement and education programming to date can be found in attachment 1, R-19-15

***1. Expand external partnership opportunities to new youth organizations and continue existing partnerships that meet participation goals.***

Midpen's partnership agreement with Latino Outdoors (LO) stands as an example of how Midpen can facilitate a path for diverse communities to explore the outdoors and engage in new experiences. In 2019, LO hosted six guided hikes on Midpen preserves, joined two Midpen volunteer restoration projects, participated in three joint community outreach tabling events and attended one weekend backpacking trip for beginners. These experiences allowed 746 youth and families to learn more about nature, many for the first time.

The LO partnership also spawned partnerships with the Siena Youth Center and Girls to Women organization. Girls to Women (G2W) is an East Palo Alto-based nonprofit that provides year-round programming for local girls to support healthy development. Midpen partnered with LO and G2W to offer a series of four nature experiences to a group of 35 youth in G2W's summer camp program. In the first week, Midpen and LO staff provided an introductory presentation on safety guidelines and things to be aware of when visiting the outdoors. In the following three weeks, the youth were taken to three different preserves and guided on an introductory, short hike. Midpen covered the cost of a shuttle bus to transport the students from East Palo Alto to the preserves. Siena Youth Center is a youth community center based in North Fair Oaks with a mission to provide essential services that help residents become self-sufficient members of the community. Midpen has been offering an outreach table at Siena's annual health fair and bike rodeo for the past three years and have made positive connections with their staff.

Recognizing that the success of the partnership agreement with LO is likely related to the complementary missions of LO and Midpen, staff set out to identify other like-minded youth organizations operating within District boundaries that might be interested in replicating the program. After several months of research and investigation of 17 local youth groups, staff was unable to locate a group ready to launch such an initiative (see Appendix 2). However, staff was able to identify four local youth organizations interested in piloting outdoor programs to assess their constituency's interest and participation.

***RECOMMENDED ACTION 1 (cost ~ \$10,000):***

Staff recommends conducting a one-year outdoor program pilot with the following four youth groups to provide outreach, engagement and educational services to youth and families residing within District boundaries: Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY), Siena Youth Center, Puente, and Coastside Children's Programs (CCP). Public Affairs staff would coordinate the initial pilots, develop the relationships with the community partners, secure and manage agreements, and offer each group \$2,500 to cover programmatic materials, coordination and transportation expenses. With a mindset of collaboration, staff would work together and find a balanced approach to coordinate and deliver the outdoor engagement experiences with each youth group. Due to the current public health crisis, the planning and implementation of the pilot programs would begin after group activities are back in place. The pilot program's timeframe may be modified based on staff workload and priorities. A short description of each of the four youth organizations is provided below:

Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) – serving the Bayside

Founded in 2000, FLY is a nonprofit dedicated to breaking the cycle of violence, crime and incarceration of teens. FLY serves at-risk teens in Redwood City and East Palo Alto, among other areas, offering legal education, leadership training, and mentoring programs. FLY provides youth involved in the juvenile justice system with the motivation and support to remain productive members of society. As part of their mentor program, FLY offers an annual retreat at a campsite to provide teens and mentors a way to develop teambuilding skills and bond through experiences in nature. FLY is interested in exploring outdoor activities at Midpen preserves.

Siena Youth Center – serving the Bayside

Siena Youth Center is an after-school program that serves youth ages 10 to 17 from Redwood City and North Fair Oaks. Through mentorship and guidance, the Siena Youth Center offers academic support, arts, youth leadership, advocacy programs, biking clubs, and academic enrichment activities. Midpen has attended Siena Youth Center's community health fair and bike rodeo for the past three years. Siena has expressed an interest to doing group activities in the preserves, specifically group backpacking and bike rides.

Puente – serving the Coastsides

As the region's only Community Resource Center, Puente serves the south San Mateo County coastal communities of Pescadero, La Honda, Loma Mar and San Gregorio. Puente advocates for local Coastsides communities and leverages resources that promote individual and community health. The Puente office is located in Pescadero and has partnerships with Pescadero Elementary and Pescadero High School. Puente is interested in partnering with Midpen to offer the families and students of Pescadero an opportunity to visit a local Coastsides preserve.

Coastsides Children's Programs (CCP) – serving the Coastsides

Started in 1975, CCP's mission is to provide a safe and caring environment where children learn through experience, play and friendships. This nonprofit offers two preschools, three after-school programs, and annual summer camps for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. CCP is interested in organizing guided summer field trips for their elementary students to a local Coastsides preserve.

**2. *Expand emphasis on youth-related events when choosing community tabling and outreach opportunities.***

Typically, Midpen participates in approximately 31 tabling opportunities annually at various community events within our geographic boundaries. Midpen's participation in outreach events is generally balanced across all seven wards, and about 30% of the events are aimed specifically at children and families. Staff will add a "focus on youth" criterion when determining which events to participate in, with the goal of increasing attendance at youth-focused community outreach events by 10% (from 10 to 12 events). Staff will continue to balance participation across District wards.

Additionally, staff will remain focused on youth in weighing other outreach opportunities. For example, Midpen staff is partnering with Hidden Villa to offer a series of free, educational events for families and children highlighting natural resource topics, including mountain lion

awareness, the Highway 17 wildlife crossing, and habitat restoration projects to raise awareness of Midpen activities. Staff plans to provide community educational presentations along with an outreach table at Hidden Villa in calendar year 2020, should normal outreach activities resume.

***RECOMMENDED ACTION 2 (cost ~ \$0):***

Staff recommends continuing to emphasize youth-related events when choosing community tabling opportunities and increasing youth-focused events from 30% to 40% of total community outreach. Staff will evaluate event outcomes (participation, reach and youth engagement at Midpen table) on an annual basis. Additionally, staff recommends continuing educational events with Hidden Villa and other partner organizations that are aligned with Midpen's mission.

***3. Expand promotion of ongoing youth programming efforts.***

Midpen's ongoing programming for students and families has been successful and remains vibrant. Due to the current public health crisis and future implications of COVID-19 on group gatherings, staff will work on assessing new methodologies and engagement strategies to provide meaningful programming in new ways. Ongoing programs and activities include:

- Spaces & Species is the free field trip program designed for third- through fifth-grade students and provides a hands-on, science-based learning experience focused on the natural world and the benefits of open space conservation. This Interpretation & Education Program (part of the Visitor Services department) has historically offered between 18–24 field trips every spring and fall, reaching between 500–750 students a year. These field trips are coordinated by Interpretation & Education Program staff and provided by volunteer Outdoor Education Docents. Staff are working to modify the program curriculum to better support teachers and schools to meet Next Generation Science Standards in the classroom. Midpen provides transportation reimbursement for these field trips as needed.
- Interpretation & Education staff has partnered with Save the Redwoods League (SRL) since 2015 to offer high school students redwood ecology and climate change field learning excursions at Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve. The students examine redwood trees and study the effects of climate change on plants. The field learning experiences are based on SRL curriculum and receive support from both Midpen and SRL staff. Approximately 80–100 students have participated annually. Midpen provides transportation reimbursement for these field trips as needed.
- The Daniels Nature Center at Alpine Pond, Skyline Ridge Preserve offers interpretive experiences and information about regional ecosystems and outdoor recreation opportunities at Midpen preserves. Under the direction of Interpretation & Education Program staff, Nature Center Docents greet visitors (more than 2,000 visitors each year) and share natural history information and activities. Inside the Nature Center, there are a variety of displays and exhibits including pond strata mobiles, a large-scale natural pond community exhibit, pond food webs and a skulls and skins display.
- Also, under the direction of Interpretation & Education Program staff, Midpen Docent Naturalists develop and offer guided interpretive hikes, many of which are suitable or

intended for families with children. Approximately 20% of all docent-led hikes are suitable for children.

- Midpen's Geocaching Program is an engaging introductory nature activity for youth and families. There are 22 Midpen preserves with Preserve Circuit geocaches. Children 16 years and younger who complete the Preserve Circuit Passport receive a special geocache limited edition cache tag. Interpretation & Education Program staff are evaluating new geocaching challenges and engagement opportunities for 2021.
- The Midpen Volunteer Program has worked with several partner organizations to offer outdoor service experiences to engage and educate youth in restoration and stewardship practices. These partner organizations bring youth from primarily Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. These experiences provide youth with leadership skills, education about the local ecosystem and job training in environmental fields. For the full list of partner programs, refer to Attachment 1.
- In 2007, Midpen began awarding resource management grants to regional researchers as a way to further support Midpen's mission, enhance public education and advance the understanding of natural processes, while strengthening local partnerships. In 2019, the grantmaking program was expanded to offer a maximum of \$250,000 with the additional funding categories: applied science, network and partnership support, and access, interpretation and education. The new grantmaking program helps to build the capacity of local academic, nonprofit, and community organizations. There are several current grantees with projects that involve youth outreach, engagement and education, including Vida Verde Education Center, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and Groundswell Coastal Ecology.

***RECOMMENDED ACTION 3 (cost~ \$1,000):***

Staff recommends increasing the promotion and awareness of Midpen's successful and popular programs via multiple communication channels (Midpen webpage, social media, e-news, *Open Space Views* newsletter, inserts and partner collaboratives) to raise awareness of Midpen's programs and to increase youth engagement.

***4. Develop engaging youth outreach materials and presentations.***

As outlined above, Midpen's youth outreach successfully reaches approximately 9,500 young people through both internal programs and external partnerships, and the ability to significantly expand those opportunities is contingent on expanding staff resources. What is more readily achievable is to increase connections through outreach and engagement.

***RECOMMENDED ACTIONS 4-9 (cost ~\$9,000):***

Staff recommends expanding initial connections through the following activities:

- Supplement current community outreach presentations by creating a specific youth-oriented master slide deck and work with local teachers and community groups to expand presentations to youth-focused audiences. Provide at least four youth-focused presentations to organizations within the District's jurisdiction annually.
- Increase number of posts on social media aimed at youth (ages 13 to 21) and families to build a community of followers. Provide one post per month aimed specifically at youth

on the topic of outdoor education. Test video posts to determine if videos garner more engagement from youth.

- Identify Midpen staff with subject matter expertise that can be shared with youth groups and create a list of speakers with readymade presentation topics. Identify at least one designated subject matter speaker from each department each year that can offer presentations aimed at youth audiences.
- Develop family-friendly games and activities that can be handed out at tabling events or downloaded online. Examples include a coloring sheet, word seek, scavenger hunt, nature bingo or I-Spy activity. Develop one new family-friendly activity each year.
- Continue to add family-friendly resources to Midpen's new Nature at Home webpage.
- Explore creating a specific category for youth in the *What To Do* section of *openspace.org* that promotes youth-friendly activities and introductory open space and nature content as the web redesign project moves forward.

#### **5. *Maintain a list of potential ideas for future consideration.***

A number of ideas generated in staff brainstorming sessions were deemed too labor intensive for current staffing situations. However, these should be captured in the event additional capacity is secured in future years.

#### ***RECOMMENDED ACTION 10 (cost ~ to be determined):***

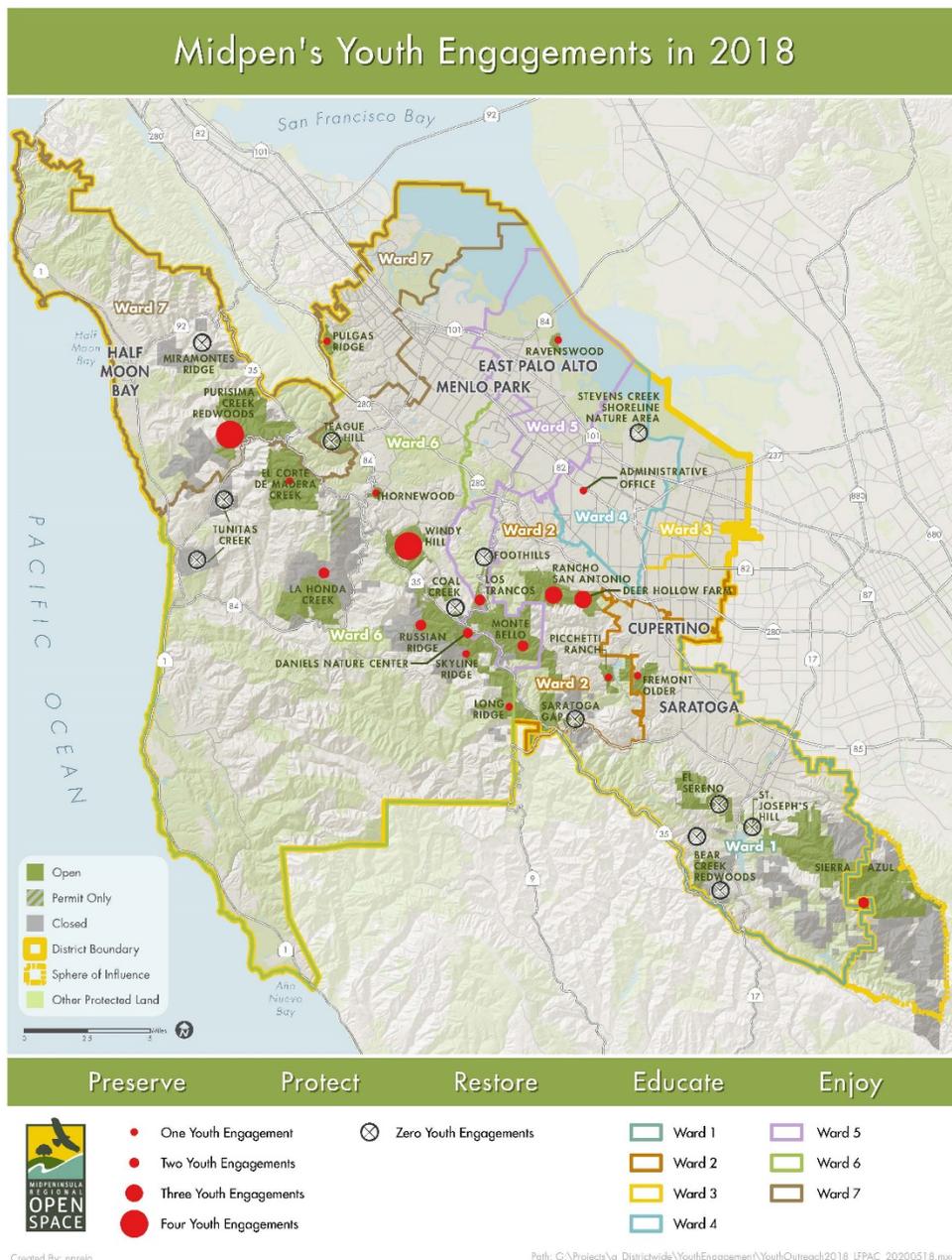
Keep a list of new ideas for future consideration, including:

- Create a job shadowing, internship and/or mentorship program for high school students interested in conservation, outdoor education and public lands management.
- Research the potential benefits and constraints of creating a youth advisory committee.
- Evaluate enhanced communication and coordination with county Offices of Education and associated school districts.
- Evaluate the potential to co-train youth as docents, along with adult docent partners.
- Consider modified outreach to reach new docents with bilingual abilities.
- Develop or collaborate on a new agricultural education program for youth on the Coastside.
- Track the time and staff contributions of Midpen's youth outreach efforts (new and existing youth programs).

#### **Tracking, Reporting, and Future Plan Updates**

Public Affairs and Visitor Services staff will work together to develop effective tracking and record keeping methods to assess the progress of the Youth Outreach Plan goals. Staff will provide a summary update to the Board every two years of progress made on meeting the Youth Outreach Plan goals that include significant accomplishments and milestones. As part of these reports, staff will identify any recommended updates or changes to the Plan and present these to the Board for approval. The first progress report is anticipated in September 2022.

APPENDIX 1



This map shows the internal and external youth engagement activities and programs that took place in Midpen preserves in the 2018 calendar year. Community outreach events occur outside of the preserves and are not highlighted on the map.

## APPENDIX 2

Staff researched the following youth-focused organizations in seeking to build upon the Latino Outdoors partnership agreement model:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Partnership Opportunity Notes</b>
Puente	Pescadero, La Honda, Loma Mar, and San Gregorio.	As the region's only Community Resource Center, Puente serves the San Mateo County South Coast communities of Pescadero, La Honda, Loma Mar, and San Gregorio. Puente advocates for local Coastside communities and leverages resources that promote individual and community health. Puente offices is located in Pescadero and has partnerships with Pescadero Elementary and Pescadero High School. Puente is interested in partnering with Midpen to offer the families and students of Pescadero an opportunity to visit a local Coastside preserve.
Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY)	Redwood City, East Palo Alto, San Bruno and South San Francisco	Founded in 2000, FLY is a nonprofit dedicated to breaking the cycle of violence, crime and incarceration of teens. FLY serves at-risk teens and offer legal education, leadership training and mentoring programs. FLY provides youth involved in the juvenile justice system with the motivation and support to stay out of trouble with the law, get engaged in school. As part of their mentor program, they offer an annual retreat at a campsite. This recreational event allows the teens and mentors to bond through nature experiences and develop teambuilding skills. FLY is interested in exploring outdoor activities at Midpen preserves.
Siena Youth Center	Redwood City	Siena Youth Center is an after-school program that serves youth ages 10-17 from Redwood City and North Fair Oaks. Through mentorship and guidance, the Center offers academic support, arts, youth leadership and advocacy programs, biking clubs and academic enrichment activities. Midpen has attended Siena Youth Center's community health fair and bike rodeo for the past 3 years. The Center is familiar with a few Midpen preserves and have an interest to doing group activities, specifically group backpacking and bike rides.
Coastside Children's Programs (CCP)	Half Moon Bay	Started in 1975, Coastside Children's Program's (CCP) mission is to provide a safe and caring environment where children learn through experience, play and friendships. This non-profit offer two preschools, three after-school programs and annual summer camps for children K - 5th grade. CCP is interested in organizing guided summer field trips for their elementary students to a local Coastside preserve.
Black Girls Hike Global	National	Black Girls Hike is community group with national chapters. Their mission is to make it possible for women around the globe to come together and enjoy outdoor adventures. They currently do not have an active local chapter.
YUCA (Youth United for Community Action)	East Palo Alto	YUCA is grassroots community organization created, led, and run by young people of color, majority from low-income communities. They provide a safe space for young people to empower themselves and work on environmental and social justice issues to establish positive systemic change. They are currently focused on community organizing and leadership development efforts.

Youth Community Service (YCS)	Palo Alto, serves whole Peninsula	YCS engages young people from diverse Mid-Peninsula communities in meaningful service-based learning. They help students build leadership and life skills, gain empathy for others, and build a sense of connectedness, purpose and efficacy while making a positive difference in the lives of others. Staff was unable to get a hold of a contact person from YCS.
San Mateo County Youth Commission	San Mateo	The San Mateo County Youth Commission increases awareness of and advocates for youth issues, advises the Board of Supervisors, presents policy recommendations, and creates projects that serve the community. The Commission consists of 26 members, which is a smaller audience group. Staff is interested in continuing conversations with this group.
Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI)	San Mateo, San Francisco, Marin	YLI's mission is to build communities where young people and their adult allies come together to create positive community change that promotes social justice and racial equity. YLI's San Mateo chapter is currently focused on issues such as transportation equality and smoke-free initiatives.
TransForm	San Jose, Oakland, Sacramento	TransForm promotes walkable communities with excellent transportation choices to connect people of all incomes to opportunity, keep California affordable, and help solve our climate crisis. Their main focus is on transportation equity and climate change. Their service area is outside of Midpen's jurisdiction.
Canopy	Palo Alto	Canopy's mission is to plant and care for trees where people need them the most, growing the urban forest and creating greener, healthier communities. Their focus is on growing trees in urban settings instead of open space. Missions are not strongly aligned.
Wild Child Freeschool	Santa Cruz	Wild Child Freeschool supports kids as they form deep connections with each other and the natural world. They are an after-school program that provides self-directed learning and inclusive programs as a way to provide powerful life lessons in social, emotional, and educational growth for every child. Their mission and the youth they serve is similar to Coastside Children's Programs (CCP). Midpen currently partners with Wild Child Freeschool to offer quarterly volunteer projects at various preserves.
Girl Ventures	Oakland	<p>Girl Ventures' mission is to create a world where girls and women lead inclusive, resilient communities, and where nature is accessible to everyone and conserved for future generations.</p> <p>They combine outdoor adventure with social emotional learning for adolescent girls, at a critical time in their lives. They build girls' confidence, skills, and leadership as they backpack, hike, kayak and rock climb in the Northern California wilderness. This organization is aligned with Midpen's mission but is located outside of Midpen's jurisdiction.</p>
The Morgan Center	San Jose	The Morgan Center's mission is to help children and adults with autism or other developmental disabilities maximize their potential in a dignified, positive and loving environment. Midpen currently partners

		with them to offer volunteer opportunities at Deer Hollow Farm twice monthly
Youth@Work	Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale	Youth@Work serves as an online employment database and resource operated by the NOVA Youth Employment Program. The NOVA Youth Employment office provides opportunities for young people ages 16-24 learn to conduct effective job searches, research careers, access job listings, and find volunteer opportunities. Their mission is focused on career and job resources.
Reach Potential Movement (RPM)	Sunnyvale	RPM's mission is to equip underserved youth and families with leadership, learning and life skills to strengthen the community. They focus on providing foundational skills and experiences for kids and families, with a focus on education and college readiness. Staff was unable to get a hold of a contact person from YCS.
Hands On Bay Area	Bay Area wide	Hands on Bay Area connects companies and people with volunteer projects through our extensive network of local nonprofits and schools in need. They are focused on their community calendar as a resource for youth. Staff can in continuing conversations with this group and provide them with Midpen resources.