



## For Immediate Release

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

### **Midpen Open Space celebrates conservation and new trails at Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve**

**LOS ALTOS, Calif. [June 7, 2019]** — Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and local environmental leaders held a ribbon-cutting today at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve near Los Gatos to celebrate opening the preserve.

The event recognized conservation partnerships that protected this desirable property, restoration work being done to return its redwood forests to health and completion of the preserve's first public access trails. Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve opens to the public daily beginning June 8. Visitors will be able to enjoy redwood forests close to home and discover local history.

“Thanks to local voters who approved Measure AA in 2014, Midpen has been able to move forward with this project, restoring the land and opening this first phase of public access,” Midpen General Manager Ana María Ruiz said. “Bear Creek Redwoods is one of our truly special places, and now the public can connect with nature in its cool redwood forests and discover its rich history.”

People have been drawn to Bear Creek Redwoods for centuries including native Ohlone, gold rush-era loggers, wealthy estate owners and Jesuit seminarians. The 1,432-acre property was slated to become a golf course and luxury homes during Silicon Valley's first tech boom until a public-private partnership, led by Midpen and the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), protected it in 1999.

Now that Bear Creek Redwoods is preserved forever as public open space, Midpen is restoring its creeks and once clear-cut redwood forests to health for wildlife, plants and people. In partnership with Valley Water, Midpen is removing harmful invasive plants like English ivy and French broom so that spring wildflowers, rare salamanders and many other native species can thrive. Midpen is also improving water quality in the preserve's many creeks, streams and ponds by converting old and eroding logging roads into recreational trails. And, with the help of researchers and citizen scientists, Midpen is working to protect the area's forests from sudden oak death.

New visitor amenities include an ADA-accessible path around the historic Upper Lake, interpretive information about the site's natural and cultural history and 6 miles of new hiking and equestrian trails through the forested slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains. For more information visit [www.openspace.org/bcr](http://www.openspace.org/bcr).

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*Created by voter initiative in 1972, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of public open space. Its mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.*