

# Highway 17 Wildlife and Regional Trail Crossings



Midpen is working with Caltrans to develop wildlife and regional trail crossings across Highway 17. The crossings, near the Town of Los Gatos, **will connect over 30,000 acres of protected public lands**. To meet the needs of both animals and a variety of recreational trail users, two separate structures are recommended. Well-placed and appropriately designed crossings will enable wide-ranging animals like mountain lions to roam and help reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions.

This project was ranked as a Top 25 Priority in the Midpen 2014 Vision Plan. Partial funding of \$16 million of voter-approved Measure AA funds has been allocated to the project. Additional funding will be required for construction of the crossings and connecting trails. Midpen is leading this locally, regionally and nationally important project and will collaborate with many partners and stakeholders to fund this work.



Ken Hickman

## Project Goals

- Link over **30,000 acres of habitat and protected public lands** on either side of Highway 17 including Midpen preserves (El Sereno, St Joseph’s Hill, Bear Creek Redwoods) as well as Santa Clara County Parks (Lexington, Sanborn, and Almaden Quicksilver).
- **Improve motorist safety** by reducing the potential for collisions with wildlife (and recreational users).
- Maintain **healthy wildlife** populations.
- **Provide for safe movement** of wildlife and recreational trail users across Highway 17.
- **Connect over 50 miles** of existing trails—Bay Area Ridge Trail and Juan Bautista De Anza National Historic Trail.

## Project Timeline

Ongoing	2016 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2020 – 2022	2022 – 2024	2025
Partner development, stakeholder outreach, and funding	Feasibility Study and Report	Caltrans Project Study Report Regional Trails Connection Study	★ <b>Environmental Review and Permitting</b>	Plans and Specifications (Design)	Construction

## Key Stakeholders and Regional Partnerships

This project requires a high level of coordination and collaboration. Current partners on this project include: Caltrans District 4, Pathways for Wildlife, Bay Area Ridge Trail, National Wildlife Federation and Peninsula Open Space Trust. Midpen is continually working to develop additional partnerships and expects this list to grow as the project develops. Key stakeholders in this project include: Juan Bautista de Anza Trail (National Park Service), Santa Clara County Parks, Santa Clara County Roads and Airports, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, San Jose Water Company, and UC Santa Cruz Puma Project.



## Project Updates

For project updates visit [openspace.org/Hwy17](https://openspace.org/Hwy17)







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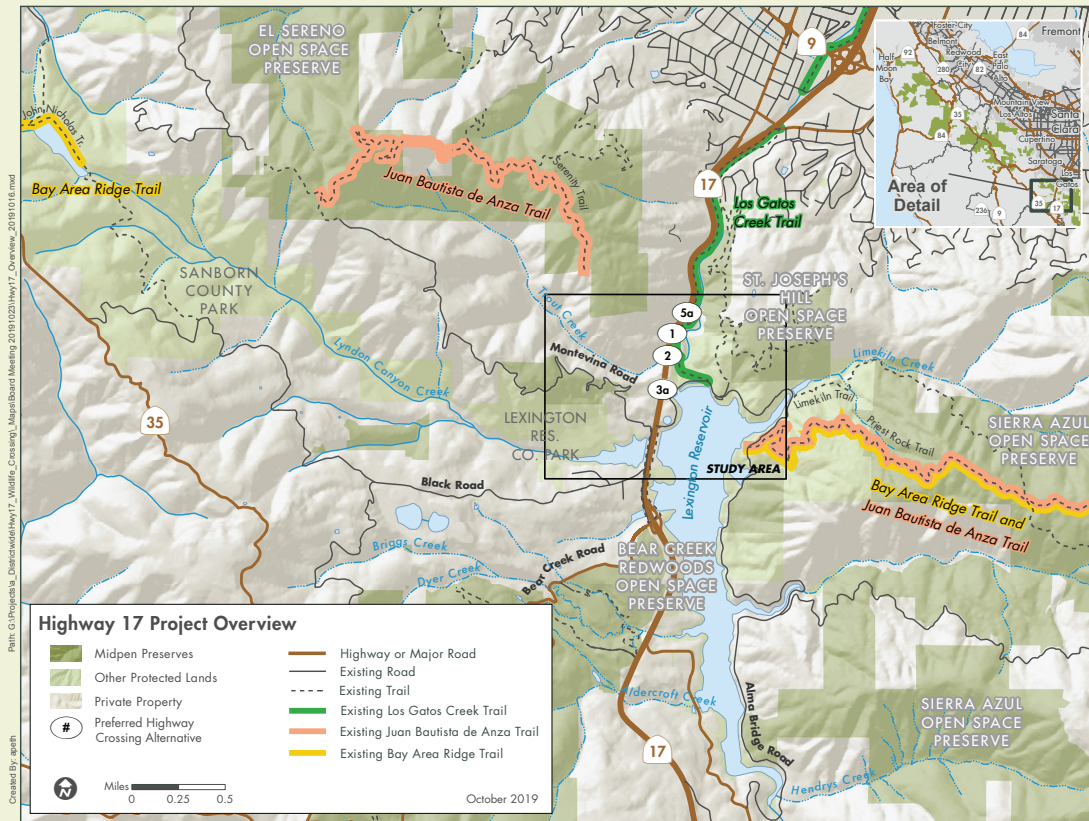
Randy Weber



Joel Silverman

## Potential Crossing Locations

Midpen has advanced four alternatives for Caltrans review.



### 1. Undercrossing at Ravine Culvert



From an opening in a steep-walled canyon on the west side of the highway, a crossing under the road would emerge on the east side of highway near a retaining wall along the Los Gatos Creek Trail. The extremely steep and rocky access to the west is not suitable for a trail.

### 2. Undercrossing at Trout Creek



From an opening on the west side of the highway at Trout Creek, a crossing under the road would emerge on the east side of the highway on an embankment above the Los Gatos Creek Trail. Mountain lions, deer and other wildlife frequently attempt to cross at this location, often unsuccessfully.

### 3a. New Overcrossing south of Trout Creek Canyon



From a level area above the west side of the highway a traditional recreational trail bridge would connect to a wide landing area on the east side of the highway that could be connected to the existing Los Gatos Creek trail.

### 5a. New Overcrossing north of Trout Creek Canyon



From a level area above the west side of the highway, a traditional recreational trail bridge would connect to the east side of the highway.

**Icon Legend:** Wildlife Crossing Trail Crossing



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Supported in part by Measure AA Portfolio #20

**South Bay Foothills:**

Wildlife Passage and Ridge Trail Improvements

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