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Public-Private Partnership Secures Key Open Space Lands for Wildlife and Public Access

*Two purchases preserve and protect important South Bay watershed lands,
Connect multiple parks and preserves*

PALO ALTO, Calif. (June 4, 2018) – [Peninsula Open Space Trust](#) (POST), [Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District](#) (Midpen), and the [Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority](#) (Authority) today announced the purchase of two properties that for the first time, link more than 31,000 acres of protected lands in the heart of the Santa Cruz Mountains. These properties, located just south of Almaden Reservoir, establish a permanently protected corridor between Midpen's Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve and the Authority's Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve; and they expand the network of open space that includes Calero and Almaden Quicksilver County Parks. (Please see map at end of release.) These purchases are supported by significant grants from the [Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation](#), Measure AA bond funds and POST donors.

POST, in partnership with the Authority, has purchased a 326-acre property which provides drinking water for San Jose, contains almost all of the Barrett Creek watershed with more than a mile of largely intact stream and includes 60 acres of beautiful coast live oak forest. The property will require significant clean-up and restoration prior to being opened to the public. As part of its conservation efforts, POST will remove unused and uninhabitable structures on the property to reduce any threats to the Barrett Creek watershed. POST has entered into a license and management agreement with the Authority and is contracted to transfer the land to them within two years.

Midpen has concurrently purchased a connecting 154-acre parcel as an addition to its Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. The property serves as an important wildlife corridor connecting adjacent open space lands and features oak woodland, grassland and chaparral. It also includes nearly one mile of sensitive riparian woodland along Alamitos and Barrett Creeks, which converge on the property before draining into Almaden Reservoir. To improve drinking water quality and wildlife habitat, Midpen will complete the process of removing a complex of vacant creekside cabins deemed uninhabitable by Santa Clara County.

“Preserving the health of our watersheds that provide clean drinking water to San Jose and creating effective linkages across the land for wildlife are two of the most important factors in creating a landscape that will provide environmental benefits to all of us in the face of a changing climate,” said **Walter T. Moore**, president of POST. “The opportunity to link these remarkable preserves for human recreation was another key motivator. Our 326-acre purchase provides tremendous benefits to the residents of San Jose and surrounding communities.”

“I am thrilled with the prospect of connecting the preserves,” stated **Andrea Mackenzie**, general manager of the Authority. “This strategic acquisition will enable us to continue to implement the goals set forth in our *Santa Clara Valley Greenprint*. We will be able to protect and manage interconnected networks of open space lands for outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of our residents, as well as protect critical wildlife corridors and natural resources. This is an excellent example of public and private partners collaborating on a greater goal to protect the Valley’s beautiful open spaces. We look forward to managing this property and opening a connection between Sierra Azul and Rancho Cañada del Oro preserves.”

“Preserving this property aligns with Midpen’s mission and the community’s vision of restoring our watersheds, protecting wildlife corridors and extending trails that allow people to explore their local natural lands,” said Midpen’s Acting General Manager **Ana Ruiz**. “This property lies at the convergence of two major year-round creeks, surrounded by protected open space, providing an incredible opportunity to improve threatened drinking water quality and eventually connect trail systems for public enjoyment.”

The budget for the POST-Authority project is \$2.02 million; \$1.57 million for the purchase and \$450,000 for the clean-up operation. POST and the Authority will each contribute \$560,000, with the remaining \$900,000 coming in a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

Midpen purchased its property for \$2.8 million using Measure AA funds, offset by a \$750,000 grant, also from the Moore Foundation.

About the Peninsula Open Space Trust

POST protects open space, farms and parkland for communities in and around Silicon Valley. As a private nonprofit land trust, POST has been responsible for saving more than 75,700 acres over the last 40 years. POST works with private landowners and public agencies to connect people and nature for the benefit of all. Visit openspacetrust.org for more information.

About the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Created by voter initiative in 1972, Midpen has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of open space. Midpen is a California special district governed by a publicly elected board of directors. Its mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land and agricultural land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. Visit openspace.org for more information.

About the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority conserves the natural environment, supports agriculture, and connects people to nature, by protecting open spaces, natural areas, and working farms and ranches for future generations. Since 1993, the Authority has protected over 22,000 acres of open space, preserving the region's scenic beauty, protecting water resources and other natural capital, and providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Santa Clara County residents. Visit openspaceauthority.org for more information.

About the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Gordon and Betty Moore established the foundation to create positive outcomes for future generations. In pursuit of that vision, they foster path-breaking scientific discovery, environmental conservation, patient care improvements and preservation of the special character of the San Francisco Bay Area. Visit moore.org for more information.

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