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Midpen Open Space receives award for innovative climate action plan

Los Altos, CA [July 9, 2019] — The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District’s groundbreaking new climate action plan received an award for innovation in green community planning from the American Planning Association in June. Midpen is among the few, if not the first, regional open space agencies in the country to adopt a climate action plan and set formal goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Adopted in October 2018, Midpen’s climate action plan provides the organization with a roadmap to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 20% by 2022, 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050. These goals are in accordance with those of the state of California and the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement.

“Midpen is committed to doing its part to help California reach its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Although the public open space lands we manage are a far larger component of this contribution, we are also helping by reducing our operation’s carbon footprint,” Midpen Natural Resource Manager Kirk Lenington said.

Midpen is ahead of schedule on reaching its first goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 20% by 2022. A biennial inventory found that Midpen has already reduced its greenhouse gas emissions 14% from 2016 to 2018.

The reduction is partially driven by purchasing carbon offsets for business flights, and more employees working compressed or telework schedules and choosing cleaner ways to commute to work. Midpen also reduced emissions by purchasing renewable electricity from Silicon Valley Clean Energy and Peninsula Clean Energy, and switching to renewable diesel made from agricultural byproducts in its vehicles.

By protecting and caring for public open space, Midpen is helping the Bay Area become more resilient to the effects of climate change. Open space forests and grasslands capture and store carbon from the atmosphere. Undeveloped watersheds absorb, filter and release rainwater. And open space lands provide a variety of habitats that the Bay Area’s diverse community of plants and animals need to survive and adapt to changing conditions. For more information visit: www.openspace.org/our-work/projects/climate-change

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The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a public agency created by voters in 1972. Its mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land of regional significance in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. Midpen has successfully protected more than 63,000 acres of open space throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. www.openspace.org