



# LANDSCAPES

## New Tools Help POST Expand Farmland Protection

Options address the multiple challenges local farmers face

FALL 2012





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## Saving the Lands That Sustain Us All

**T**he “Buy Local” food movement has been part of the Bay Area consciousness for years. Yet rapid development and rising real estate prices are equally prevalent. The conflict between the two poses a hurdle to farmers seeking to establish roots in local farmland. And with the average age of today’s farmers at 57, a generation’s retirement may mean we sacrifice not only our farming legacy, but our access to sustainable, locally grown food that has been so important to our quality of life.

That’s why POST is expanding our work to protect area farmland. We’ve examined models used in other parts of the country and are adapting them to address the challenges unique to our region to ensure that local farming can remain a viable way of life.

As POST leads the way on this effort, we are also moving forward with our Heart of the Redwoods Campaign.

It has always been part of our mission to protect the multiple types of landscapes at risk in our area. Now we are armed with new tools that you will read about in this issue, and new partnerships with local farmers and other conservation organizations. POST is at the vanguard of saving the local areas we love before they disappear for good, whether they are covered in row crops or towering redwoods.

With your continued support, we can save these irreplaceable lands not just for ourselves, but for generations to come.

Thank you,

Walter T. Moore  
POST President



Rancho Corral de Tierra ©2010 Robert John White

## POST Finds New Ways to Keep the Farmer in the Dilemma

The San Francisco Peninsula is lucky to have productive farmland to supply healthy food and support local economies. Coastal crops such as Brussels sprouts, artichokes and leeks also contribute to the national supply of specialty foods. POST has always recognized the need to preserve our local farmland from development—to date we have saved 15 percent of the row-crop land in San Mateo County. This farmland would have disappeared without the tenacity of an older generation of farmers and the conservation efforts of POST and our partner agencies.

**N**ow times are changing. Those steadfast farmers are approaching retirement. A growing population is increasing the pressure on rural areas with potential for development. Despite a struggling national economy, real estate prices in our area continue to rise. Although demand is high for locally grown produce, new farmers must face these and many other hurdles to establish themselves locally.

To address these challenges, POST is adopting a progressive approach. In the past POST preserved farmland by placing conservation easements on land or buying the land outright. But our 35 years of experience have shown us we need to be more assertive to ensure that protected farmland remains available for agriculture and that farmers are able to build equity in the lands on which they operate. Our expanded protection of farmland introduces new tools to help us whether we're selling farmland we already own, renewing leases we currently hold, or entering into new leases. In all cases POST will also encourage organic farming on these lands.





North Cowell Ranch © 2008 Neal Kramer

## New Tools of the Trade

POST is proactively addressing the challenges facing today's farmers with the following:

**1. Affirmative agricultural easements**—Traditional conservation easements focus on limiting development and protecting a property's natural features. Affirmative agricultural easements, however, *also require* that the protected land be kept in agriculture.



©2008 Neal Kramer



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**2. Options to purchase at agricultural value (OPAV)**—If the owner of a property covered by an affirmative agricultural easement can no longer farm or is unable to find an approved agricultural buyer, the OPAV gives POST the opportunity to buy the land back from the farmer at an agreed-upon price.

**3. Ground leases**—Unlike a traditional lease, a ground lease allows the tenant to own and build equity in improvements on the land (infrastructure, buildings, etc.) as an investment in his or her own future. When the lease ends, the tenant is able to sell the improvements to a new tenant, who leases the land from POST.



©2010 Steve Schecter

## Farmland is Essential Land by Larry Jacobs

We eat every day. Instead of foraging, hunting, planting, harvesting, preserving and preparing food, we shop. The neighborhood store—with a parking lot bigger than the nearest farm and shelves overflowing with fruits, vegetables, dairy, meats and endless aisles of eye-catching containers—leaves an impression of plenty, plenty of farms, plenty of good soil, plenty of water. That's no longer true.

Since 1984 we've lost more than 200,000 acres of farmland to urbanization in the nine-county Bay Area. The story in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties is dramatic. Between 1990 and 2008, cropland shrank by 40 percent in San Mateo County. In Santa Clara County it shrank by 39 percent, a genuine loss of more than 20,000 acres.

Until the 1960s, Silicon Valley was renowned for its orchards. With some of the deepest alluvial soils in the world, a year-round growing season, artesian spring water and dry weather for fruit-ripening, this was the place to find THE BEST apricots, cherries and pears in the world.

Good soil is a limited resource. It takes 300 years to make one inch of topsoil. We forget that we need good soil and clean water to produce healthy plants and good harvests. We need to cherish these fields as special places.

As the age of the average farmer exceeds 55, farmland prices surpass what farmers can afford and new farmers struggle to get started, we need new ways to help tomorrow's farmers succeed today. If we don't protect the resources needed to assure agriculture is sustainable and financially viable, we'll lose the capacity to grow food locally. That would be a big loss indeed.

POST's mission has always included protecting farmland. Now we have focused tools to promote local farm viability and techniques to help them produce the cornucopia we expect to find at our grocery store, favorite restaurant or farmer's market.

POST's new approach does more than protect land. It protects the farm, the farmer and our supply of local food.

*Larry Jacobs, a POST Board member since 2005, is president and founder of Jacobs Farm / Del Cabo, with farms in Pescadero, Baja California in Mexico and Peru. All are organic operations that practice as well as teach social responsibility and environmental stewardship.*



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**4. Land improvement loans**—Finding sufficient funding for necessary improvements is a challenge for farmers. POST will provide loans to help tenants or property owners with affirmative agricultural easements make these improvements run more efficiently.

These methods have been successfully tested by conservation organizations in other parts of the country, including Massachusetts, Vermont and New York, but are still relatively new to California. As we begin our work on our first projects using these tools, POST looks forward to championing them as a way to preserve our Coastside farming heritage and our access to local sources of fresh food.



©2012 Michelle Mellon

## POST Seeks Tenant for Dogwood Farm

Do you or someone you know dream of operating a small organic farm where you can raise flowers, strawberries and specialty vegetables? Here's your chance!

Dogwood Farm (previously called Blue House Farm) is up for lease from POST. The farm is part of POST's Cloverdale Coastal Ranches in Pescadero. The current tenants are relocating, and POST is seeking someone eager to carry on local coastal farming.

Sixty acres of productive bottom land are available along Butano Creek, complete with a small blue farmhouse, historic barn, outdoor kitchen and assorted outbuildings. The property will operate under a ground lease, allowing the farmer to own and build equity in the improvements on the land.

**For more information, contact POST Conservation Project Manager Jeff Powers at (650) 879-3284 or [jpowers@openspacetrust.org](mailto:jpowers@openspacetrust.org).**



## Pie Ranch: The Sweet Rewards of Saving Farmland Using



It's not unusual for a vision to shape a property's future. It's more unusual for a property's shape to define the vision for its future. But that was the case in 2002 when Jered Lawson, Nancy Vail and Karen Heisler partnered to purchase a 14-acre piece of land in Pescadero. They named it Pie Ranch, inspired by the parcel's triangular shape, and now grow all the ingredients it takes to make sweet, crumbly pies!

Nestled in an oasis that rolls gently from hills down to Highway 1, neat rows of crops share space with grazing areas for chickens and their cheery red mobile coops. An outdoor kitchen anchors the area where students, interns and apprentices are introduced to life on a farm. Then there are the goats and cows, and the old barn that serves as farm stand, wheat mill and dance hall.

It almost didn't happen. The vision grew, but so did the need for more space. When neighboring Green Oaks Ranch went on the market, the partners didn't have the resources to purchase it. POST stepped in and acquired the 13-acre former dairy ranch and flower farm with plans to transfer it to the young farmers.

## Eat Smart, Buy Local!

Explore these farm stands selling produce grown on land protected by POST.



### Pies, Produce and More

About six miles south of Pigeon Point lighthouse on the eastern side of Highway 1, a simple sign sits as its own small beacon, signaling your arrival at **Pie Ranch** in Pescadero. Step inside the big barn to find berries, lettuce, garlic and other seasonal fruits and vegetables, plus eggs, flour, wheat berries, t-shirts and, of course, pie for sale. Open Saturdays and Sundays 12 to 6 p.m., March through October (12 to 5 p.m. during daylight savings).

### Simply Irresistible

The name says it all. **FARMSTAND** opened this spring on Pescadero Road, just two miles east of Highway 1. Owned and operated by certified organic herb and specialty produce grower Jacobs Farm/Del Cabo, FARMSTAND features products from Jacobs and surrounding farms. There are weekly specials plus a variety of fruits and vegetables, herbs, flowers, eggs, honey and organic strawberries grown in the fields surrounding the barn. Open Friday through Sunday and Monday holidays 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., summer through fall.

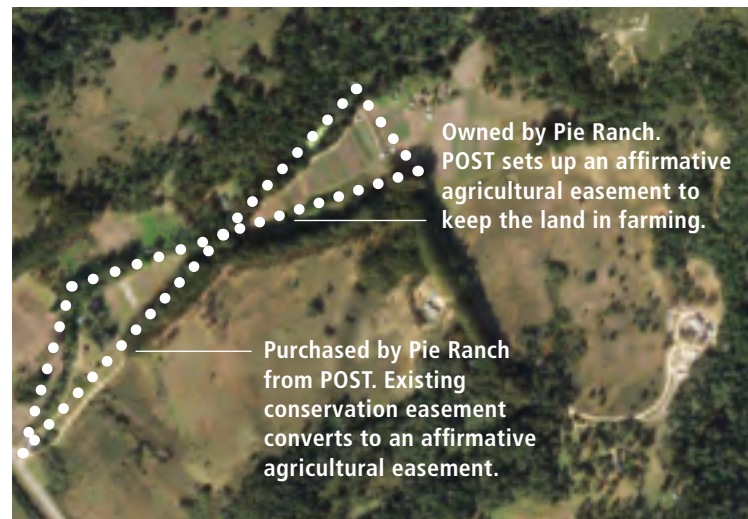
# POST's New Tools

Pie Ranch agreed to manage the new property (the "lower slice") with an option to buy, which it did thanks to a POST loan back in 2010. The land is subject to a POST conservation easement to protect both its historical value (some of the buildings onsite make it a nationally registered landmark) and its value as a creek corridor to the Pacific Ocean.

POST is now in discussions with Pie Ranch about new conservation options for both parcels.

"Our current conservation easements do a great job protecting the natural features of these lands," said Paul Ringgold, POST's vice president of stewardship. "But placing an affirmative agricultural easement here helps keep farming as a permanent part of our local landscape." Another new tool, the Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value (OPAV), would give POST the option to buy the protected parcels if they were put up for sale and a suitable buyer could not be found. POST wants to ensure that these parcels and other local farmland remains in agriculture so those inspired students, interns and apprentices have the

opportunity to one day make their own contribution to the longstanding legacy of farming on the coast.



Get farm-fresh recipes and find out which farmers markets carry produce grown on POST lands at [www.openspacetrust.org/farmstands](http://www.openspacetrust.org/farmstands)

## Pumpkins, Peas and Beets, Oh My!

That buzz isn't coming from the planes across the road, it's coming from **The Farmer's Daughter** farm stand on Highway 1. From potatoes to pumpkins, beets to peas, and honey to Brussels sprouts, there's a little something for everyone to enjoy. Open Saturdays and Sundays from May through October, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and daily in September for pumpkin season. Located between El Granada and Moss Beach, across from Half Moon Bay Airport.

## Happy Trails to You

Looking for a few more things to love about the San Mateo Coast? Visit **Bob's Farm Fresh Vegetables**, a few miles south of Half Moon Bay on Highway 1, across from the southern entrance to the Cowell-Purisima Trail (just south of Purisima Road). Here you'll find the type of row crops that thrive in this unique climate, including Brussels sprouts, leeks, chard and pumpkins. Open daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. from April through October.



# Heart of the Redwoods Campaign



## Gifts Help POST Gain Ground in Protecting Local Redwoods

**P**OST's Heart of the Redwoods Campaign is off to a strong start with \$11 million secured so far toward our \$50 million goal. The initial \$9 million came from four generous organizations—the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Resources Legacy Fund and The San Francisco Foundation. POST also received a leadership gift of \$1 million from donors Mark and Debra Leslie of Portola Valley. This funding was used toward the purchase of CEMEX Redwoods, our first campaign property. Subsequently we received foundation grants from the Melvin and Geraldine Hoven Foundation and the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation of San Francisco.

POST is also deeply grateful for major gifts from POST donors Mary and Clinton Gilliland and Charlene and Derry Kabcenell.

### Management and Maintenance

Past campaigns have emphasized the need to purchase land or secure its future through conservation easements. For the redwood campaign, POST is also setting aside money for the long-term management of the properties we acquire—a necessity in this era of diminished public agency resources. Funds will also go towards restoration efforts such as creek projects to bring back our native salmon, steelhead and trout, and the development of trail systems to link newly acquired redwood forests with existing public trails.

### Sources and Uses of Funding

It takes a community of like-minded citizens as well as partner organizations to succeed in a campaign of this magnitude. Fortunately, POST has 35 years of experience



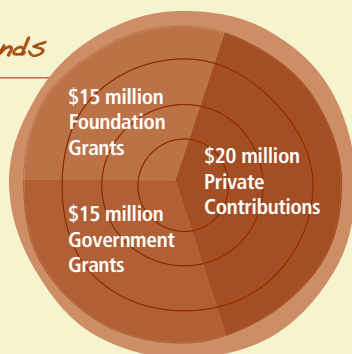
Bear Creek Redwoods  
All photos  
©2012 Paolo Vescia



to draw upon—in finding sources of funding as well as in negotiating for, purchasing and managing redwood forest land. Here is a summary of sources and uses of the money POST will invest in protecting 20,000 acres of redwood forest in our nearby Santa Cruz Mountains:

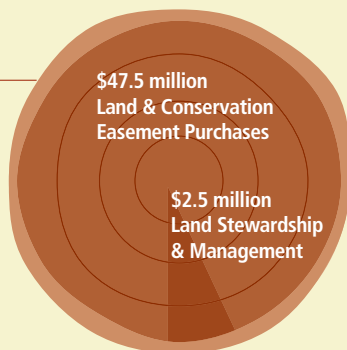
### *Sources of Funds*

\$50 million



### *Uses of Funds*

\$50 million



## Our Remarkable Redwoods

POST will use funds raised through the campaign to purchase properties and support stewardship and restoration projects as needed. We want to preserve not only the redwood forests on these lands but the benefits they provide to surrounding communities. By cleaning greenhouse gases from the air, improving the quality of drinking water and habitat for threatened fish species and wildlife, and offering us places of reflection and recreation, our local redwood forests help make our region a healthy and magical place to live.

**If you wish to learn more about POST's campaign to save our local redwood forests, contact Development Officer Linda Chin at (650) 854-7696 x338 or [Ichin@openspacetrust.org](mailto:Ichin@openspacetrust.org).**



A

Sunlight bursts through an opening in the trees at POST-protected Bear Creek Redwoods near Los Gatos.

POST Conservation Project Manager Abigail Adams displays a redwood tree core at a volunteer training.



B

## Talking with the Community about CEMEX Redwoods

In May, POST and its Living Landscape Initiative partners organized an informational meeting with Davenport residents about the future of the CEMEX Redwoods property. Approximately 140 people attended, a significant turn-out in a town of just over 400 people. Local residents emphasized recreational uses—hiking, biking, camping and horseback riding with minimum impact on the forest—as high priorities and also cited fire safety and land management as important concerns.

"People came with an open mind, so we were able to have a meaningful discussion about the possibilities for this property," said Paul Ringgold, POST's vice president for stewardship. "People left the meeting feeling that their ideas and concerns had truly been heard. It is heartening to know that residents place a high value on conservation of the forest with its creeks and wildlife and potential for recreation."

POST's Heart of the Redwoods Campaign continues to gather momentum. We hope you will recall your own special connections to our local redwood lands and will consider gifts to POST so these forests remain preserved for the future.

# Out and About with POST



## Training Keeps Volunteers on Their Toes

**E**ach year POST trains its intrepid band of land volunteers to help with monitoring easements, checking property conditions and managing invasive species. This year's training took place in May on Pesky Ranch in Pescadero, where POST holds a conservation easement. Volunteers explored the ins and outs of monitoring on working properties like farms and ranches.

## Service with a Smile

**I**n May POST coordinated a volunteer workday on Dogwood Farm for local Stanford and Yale alumni in support of their annual Day of Service campaigns. After a brief orientation from farmer Ned Conwell, the enthusiastic crew went to work weeding and mulching hedgerows of native plants and sampling strawberries straight from the field!



## Hard Work Yields Tasty Treats

**P**OST staff members were in for a treat at a workday on Pie Ranch in June. Farmers Jered Lawson and Nancy Vail gave a tour, then organized groups for trimming, weeding and planting. In addition to the satisfaction of a good day's work, there was delicious pie to share.





## POST Sponsors Sequoia Century Ride

For the second year in a row, POST sponsored the Sequoia Century, a regional cycling tour put on in June by the Western Wheelers Bicycle Club. POST staff members Paul Ringgold and Abigail Adams completed the 50-mile loop, while Gordon Clark rode the 62-mile circuit. The routes pass POST-protected lands along the most scenic roads in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.



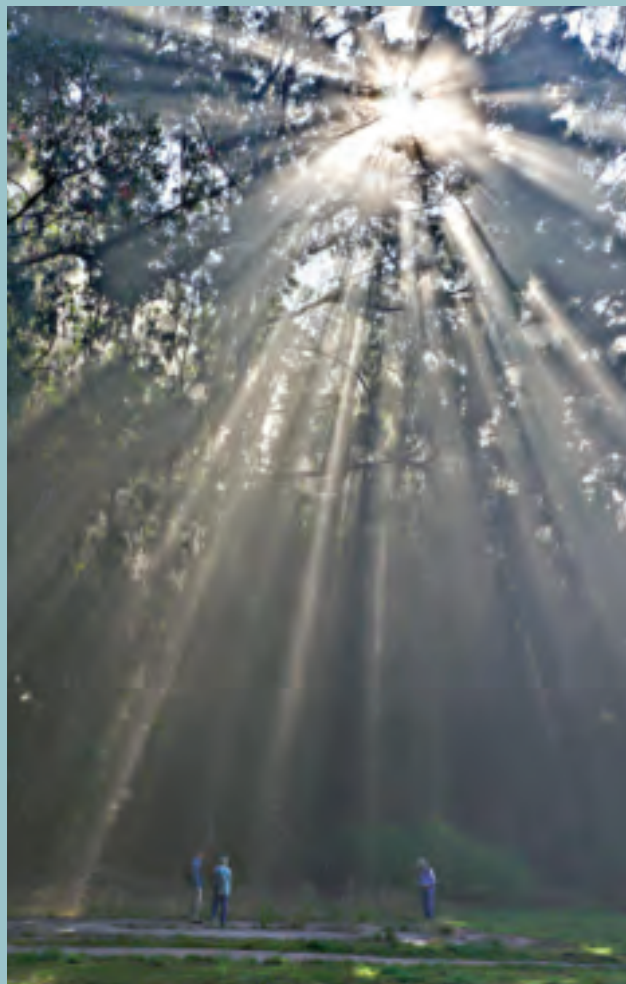
Photos ©2012 PhotoCrazy.com



A: Vice President of Stewardship  
Paul Ringgold

B: Conservation Project Manager  
Abigail Adams

C: Conservation Project Manager and Development Officer  
Gordon Clark



## Take a Hike with POST!

One of the many benefits of being a POST donor is seeing the lands we protect up close. Our Walks & Talks Series consists of exclusive hikes and tours of these properties in appreciation of donors who give \$500 or more annually to POST.

Past events have taken donors from skyline to shoreline with walks through redwoods, wildflower meadows, grasslands, ranches and farms.

**For more information on the POST Walks & Talks series, contact Hillary Nicholson at [walks@openspacetrust.org](mailto:walks@openspacetrust.org) or (650) 854-7696 X310.**

# Announcing the Winners of POST's Heart of the Redwoods Photo Contest

**T**his summer we held a photo contest in support of our Heart of the Redwoods Campaign. The response was incredible and underscores just how much we all value our local redwood forests. We hope you are as inspired by these pictures as we are!

## Our Grand Prize Winner



Looking up through the heart of a redwood tree at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve in Woodside.  
Photo was taken July 26 using a Nikon Coolpix AW100. ©2012 David Henry



## Our Runners-up



A



B



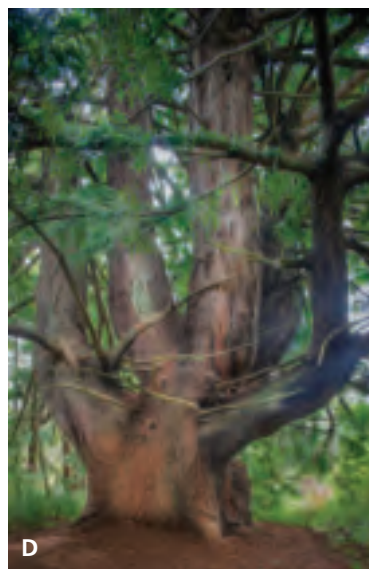
C

A: 2ND PLACE View of the redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains. ©2012 Kyrod Myatt

B: 3RD PLACE Colorful redwood scene in Butano State Park in Pescadero. ©2012 Steve Henry

C: 4TH PLACE Wildlife gets up-close and personal in Pescadero. ©2012 Bert Feuss

D: HONORABLE MENTION Candelabra tree in Butano State Park in Pescadero. ©2012 Steve Henry



D



SEBASTIAN KENNERKNECHT  
NATURE AND CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHY



Our special thanks to prize sponsors Sebastian Kennerknecht, Keeble & Shuchat Photography, University Art in Palo Alto and San Jose Camera & Video.



Allan and Marilyn Brown

## Create Your Legacy of Open Space

"Thanks to POST, the redwood forests, oak woodlands and pristine coastal lands of my childhood are still here now. With POST in our estate plans we'll help ensure these beautiful lands will be protected far into the future."

*-Allan Brown*

POST donor and former Board member

Your bequest to POST—through your will or living trust—could be a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate or a particular asset. You also may make POST a beneficiary of your IRA or other retirement account. By including POST in your estate plans, you enhance our long-term ability to save the beautiful landscapes that contribute to our quality of life.

**For more information about legacy giving at POST, please contact Adelaide Roberts at [aroberts@openspacetrust.org](mailto:aroberts@openspacetrust.org) or (650) 854-7696 X312.**



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# Tributes

April 1, 2012 – July 31, 2012

**POST is grateful to receive gifts in honor or in memory of friends and family members.**

**These gifts are a wonderful way to pay tribute to a person's love of outdoor places.**

## Gifts in Honor of:

Anne and David Bernstein • Steve Blank • David Brennan • John R. Carlson • Ruth Coale •  
Alison Elliott • Davis Horeff • Mike and Martha Kahn's 50th Wedding Anniversary • Robert L. Katz •  
Jon and Valerie Kirbienere • Max Listgarten • Lori McBride • Cindy S. Miller • Corrina Petriceks •  
Audrey C. Rust • Asan Saadat • Neal Sharma • Michelle Valdez • George Varian and Libby McMillian •  
Ben Verghese • Marilyn Walter • Diane Shrock and Peter Wang

## Gifts in Memory of:

Christopher Loren Albers • Carol Berkowitz • Lowell Burklund • Robert Caravalho •  
Jeanne Carevic • Chad • John & Lillian/Robert & Ferne Cohen/Swartley • David Daniels •  
Virginia Daugherty • Edward Davis • Jacobus J. Derksen • Helaine Dunmire •  
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LANDSCAPES

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**The mission of Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)**  
is to protect and care for open space, farms and  
parkland in and around Silicon Valley.

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FALL 2012

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