



PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST
LANDSCAPES  SPRING 2002

DRISCOLL RANCH

A Major Campaign Acquisition





Driscoll Ranch, rising up dramatically behind the community of La Honda, is one of the most visible and beautiful pieces of land along Skyline Ridge.



For the past 25 years, the Skyline corridor has been a major focus of POST's conservation efforts on the Peninsula because of its scenic beauty, important wildlife habitat, and enormous recreation potential. Windy Hill, the Phleger Estate, and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program are among our many successful projects in this area.

Driscoll Ranch, rising up dramatically behind the community of La Honda, is one of the most visible and beautiful pieces of land along Skyline Ridge. This 3,681-acre property is the sixth and latest acquisition in POST's "Saving the Endangered Coast" campaign.

Standing on one of Driscoll Ranch's grassy ridges, taking in glorious views of rolling hills, redwood forests, oak woodlands, and winding creeks, inspires not only a feeling of freedom and exhilaration, but also an appreciation of the property's sheer size and significance.

By preserving this massive piece of land, POST will protect vital natural resources—including abundant wildlife habitat, diverse vegetation and valuable watershed — maintain historic uses of the property, and eliminate any potential threat of development. We'll also increase recreational opportunities through trail connections with other existing open lands. Together with the adjacent La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and Djerassi property, Driscoll Ranch will create almost ten square miles of permanently protected open space.



A Shared Vision

One of the most appealing features of Driscoll Ranch is the excellent condition of the property. The current owner, Rudy Driscoll, Jr., and his father, the late Rudy Driscoll, Sr., have had a long-term interest in maintaining the health of the land. Despite its obvious development potential (an analysis prepared by POST staff revealed that there are up to 93 density units on the ranch), the property has been beautifully cared for and left undeveloped due to the Driscoll family's commitment to being good stewards of the land (see story page 10).

The Driscoll property was primarily used for logging until the early 1900s, when wheat farming and cattle grazing began. During the 1950s and '60s, the southwestern area of the property was used for oil drilling and exploration, and limited quarrying also was conducted. Since 1980, the main activity on the ranch has been cattle grazing.

Rudy Driscoll, Sr., purchased the original 1,638-acre ranch in 1968. The Driscolls acquired the adjacent 1,293-acre property to the north, formerly known as Wool Ranch, in 1994, and added the adjacent 1,050-acre parcel to the south, formerly known as Folger Ranch, the following year.

Last April, POST reached an agreement with the Driscolls to purchase the property for \$21 million over the next three years. Under terms of the agreement, Rudy Driscoll, Jr. will hold a lifetime right for grazing, pedestrian and equestrian activities on the land subject to a Resource Management Plan. He will also retain 300 acres consisting of an apple orchard, residence, ranch office, and an event center used for equestrian performance events.

The Driscoll family's interest in preserving the natural character of the land made it possible for us to purchase the property and protect something very precious for future generations. Hopefully, the purchase of this large and visible property will also set the tone for future acquisitions of nearby lands.



Brian O'Neill

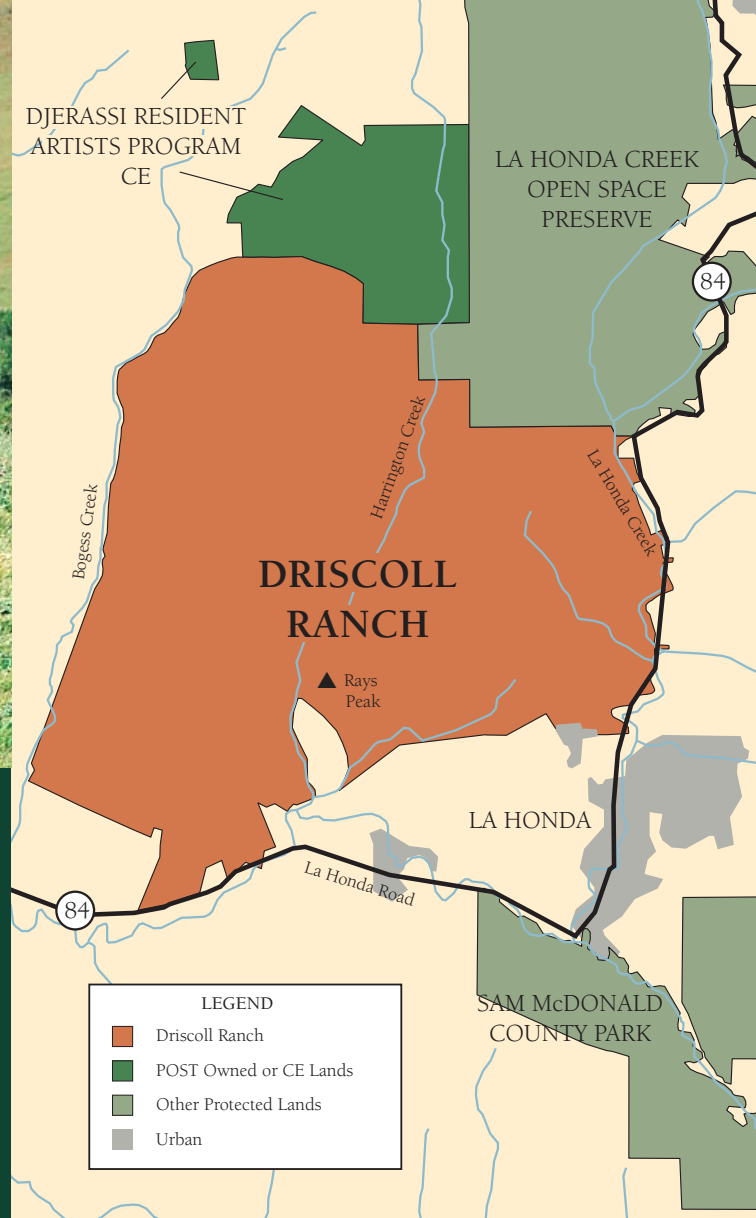


Robert Buelteman

What We'll Accomplish

By acquiring Driscoll Ranch we will accomplish a number of important goals:

- Permanently preserve nearly six square miles of scenic open space
- Protect an incredible wildlife habitat for mountain lions, golden eagles and several threatened and endangered species
- Preserve picturesque redwood and oak forests
- Protect three large creeks and a major portion of the entire watershed feeding into San Gregorio Creek
- Preserve spectacular, panoramic mountain and ocean views
- Maintain existing cattle grazing and equestrian operations
- Provide an opportunity to develop a long-term resource management program for conservation grazing on the property
- Eliminate any potential threat of development
- Create nearly 10 square miles of open space when combined with existing open lands
- Provide abundant opportunities for public recreation
- Provide impetus for future conservation easements or acquisitions of other critical properties in the area



Robert Buelteman



The three creeks support steelhead trout populations and serve as tributaries to San Gregorio Creek, a major steelhead-spawning stream.



Breathtaking Landscape

Driscoll Ranch's forests and rolling hills dominate the landscape in the La Honda area. Roughly two miles across from north to south and nearly three miles across from east to west, the land lies immediately northwest of the community of La Honda. La Honda Elementary School sits at the southeastern entrance to the property on Sears Ranch Road, a half a mile up from Highway 84.

While privately owned lands surround most of Driscoll Ranch, the property is bordered on the north by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and the Djerassi Resident Artists Program property. The ranch is highly visible from these two properties, as well as from the Sam McDonald County Park, located approximately one mile to the south. It can also be viewed from nearly two and a half miles along Highway 84. The length of Highway 84 that must be traveled in order to get around two sides of the property demonstrates its vast expanse.

The property is characterized by two broad, grassy ridges lying on both sides of Harrington Creek, which bisects the property in a steep-sided valley. The ridges drop down to two other creeks—Bogess Creek and La Honda Creek—and along the creeks are large stands of second-growth redwoods, oak and buckeye. Ray's Peak rises near the center of the ranch, affording scenic ocean views.

Driscoll Ranch has extraordinary habitat value for mountain lions, as well as the endangered tiger salamander and San Francisco garter snake. Deer, bobcat, American badger, fox and coyote all have been identified on Driscoll Ranch, and numerous raptors can be seen flying overhead, including the Cooper's hawk, golden eagle, osprey, ferruginous hawk, and black shouldered kite.

The property includes over 14 miles of riparian corridor. More than 35 springs and wells, eight ponds, and several small tributaries to the La Honda, Bogess and Harrington Creeks cross the land. The three creeks support steelhead trout populations and serve as tributaries to San Gregorio Creek, a major steelhead-spawning stream. Driscoll Ranch's ponds are home to the Southwestern pond turtle and the federally-threatened California red-legged frog.





Brian O'Neill

Future Plans

The Resource Management Plan for Driscoll Ranch is being prepared by Paul Kephart of Rana Creek, an organization which develops restoration and grazing management plans, in conjunction with POST, Rudy Driscoll, Jr. and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. The goal of the plan is to protect the biodiversity of the property, maintain cattle grazing on the land, and facilitate low-impact recreational activities such as hiking, biking, and equestrian use.

"The fact that this property is in such excellent shape is a real credit to the owners," said Audrey Rust, POST President. "We're really pleased we have the opportunity to work with Rudy to

advance the concept of conservation grazing, which will maintain a grazing operation on the property that is compatible with our resource preservation goals. It's an important undertaking, and there are not that many opportunities to do it in this area.

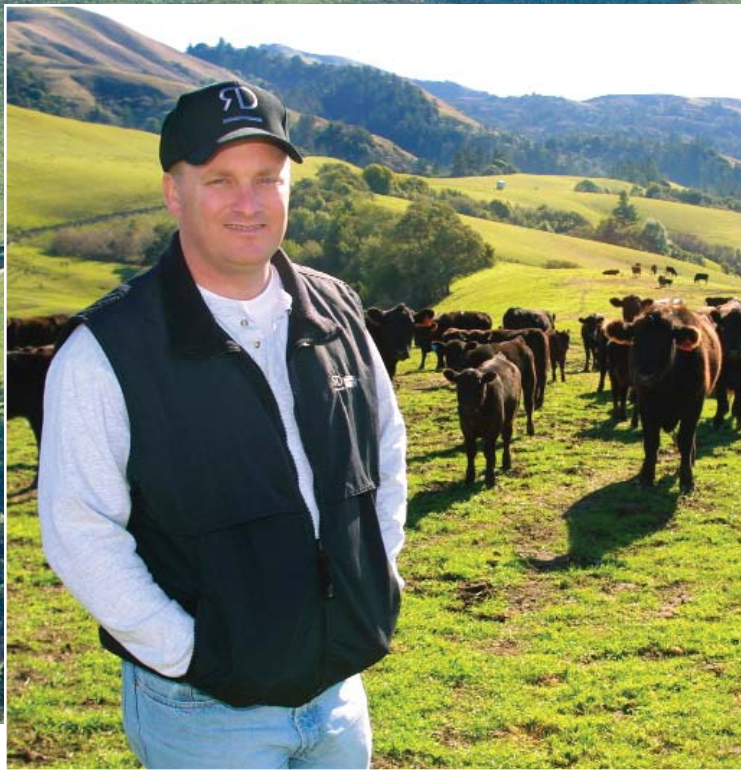
"Driscoll Ranch is really a linchpin for our land stewardship program. The long-term plan for the property also includes public recreational use. It's tricky to put all these things together, but we believe it can be done."

Rudy Driscoll, Jr. will handle interim management of the land, subject to the terms of the plan. Eventually POST hopes to transfer the property to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District or another public agency. POST is working with the District to seek state funding to cover up to half of the cost of the land.

"This project is an important piece of our fund-raising campaign," Rust said. "We're going to have to pay for Driscoll Ranch with private donations before any public funding takes place. If we succeed at a later date in obtaining public grants to cover some of the cost, our donor gifts will be available once again for other important land acquisition projects." ■



Brian O'Neill



William Matthias

A Legacy of

More than anything else, Rudy Driscoll, Jr., wanted to carry out his father's wishes.

"It was very important to my dad that our ranch remain open space, regardless of whether we held it in our possession or it went to an outside source," Driscoll says. "Dad was very adamant that if we made a deal to sell the property, it would be fair to both sides. He would take less money for the land if he knew that it would be well cared for. For him, that was added value."

Last April, the Driscolls agreed to sell the property to POST. Five months later, Rudy Driscoll, Sr. died. Since then, it has been left to his son to finalize the deal and provide input on the management plan for the property.

"POST was the first group to approach us that I felt had the resources to buy the property and a compatible vision of how the land should be used," Driscoll says. "For me, it's very important that the land remain in grazing and recreational use. I want to make sure that if it eventually gets turned over to the District (Midpeninsula Regional Open Space

District) or another public agency, there are very specific guidelines involved.

"So I've put a lot of time in with POST to develop the management plan for the property. (POST Vice President) Walter Moore has been my primary contact. The whole staff has been very professional. They've all been great to work with."

Driscoll, a former Menlo Park policeman, currently grazes Aberdeen Black Angus cattle on the land. He hopes the conservation grazing plan that is being developed for the property will help prove the value of cattle as a vegetation management tool.

"I was a biology major in college, and my family background has always been in land stewardship," he says. "One of my goals is to work with POST to help bridge relations between horse and cattle people with conservationists. I want to dispel some of the myths about the damage caused by cattle and help promote their use as a service provider. We want to change the image of cattle from being a lease operation to a service operation."

Conservation grazing plans typically rotate cattle through smaller pastures for shorter periods



Good Stewardship

of time. This short duration/high impact grazing is designed to help minimize damage, keep grass growth at the correct level, and rejuvenate native grasses while controlling invasives. It also can aid erosion control by compacting soils in erosion gullies.

“If you look at vegetation management, your options are fire, pesticides, bulldozing and cattle,” Driscoll says. “Cattle, if used correctly, have by far the least harmful impact and the most productive impact on the land. We bring in cattle to reduce residual dry matter and dead grass stands, which allows the native grasses to have less competition and grow early in the season. The cattle can go on side hills and help reclaim the grassland and help push the invasive or exotic grasses back.”

In addition to his cattle grazing activities, Driscoll is involved in several investment and business development projects. However, horses are his first love.

He hosts the Coastside Country Rodeo at the Driscoll Ranch event center, part of the 300 acres he will retain after completion of the sale to POST. The event center includes two round pens, a large arena,

bucking chutes, an announcer’s booth, cattle holding pens, and picnic and parking areas. In addition to the rodeo, the center will host other equestrian performance events such as barrel racing and team penning.

Driscoll will use the facility to break his horses, house borders, and conduct training classes and clinics. He currently owns 25 quarter-horses. Some are kept at a stable behind his home in Woodside; the others are housed on the ranch or in Oklahoma.

“I’ve always been into horses,” he says. “My dad’s mother lived in New Mexico, just outside of Santa Fe. Since I was a little boy, I used to go there in the summers and ride horses. As I grew up back here, I got more and more into horses. There are so many different types, and they’re so personal. Riding horses is so relaxing.

“When I’m working with my horses or my cattle at the center of the ranch, it’s two and a half miles to my nearest neighbor. As far as I’m concerned, I have the best office in the Bay Area.” ■



DJERASSI ART TOURS SCHEDULED

The Djerassi Resident Artist's Program, a well-known artist-in-residence program near Woodside, has announced its schedule of "POST Hikes." These free, docent-led public tours of the Program's grounds and sculpture collection are being conducted as part of the conservation easement purchased by POST. The conservation easement ensures the permanent protection of the Program's 580-acre property, which contains dense redwood forests, as well as spectacular views of rolling landscape from Skyline Ridge to the Pacific Ocean. POST Hikes will provide an opportunity for the public to view this marvelous property, along with installations by the many artists who have drawn inspiration from its natural energy and beauty. To make reservations contact the Djerassi Artist's Program at (650) 747-1250.

POST HIKES SCHEDULE

Wednesday, April 10
 Friday, May 3
 Saturday, May 18
 Wednesday, June 5
 Friday, June 14
 Sunday, June 23
 Wednesday, July 10
 Friday, July 26
 Wednesday, August 21
 Saturday, September 7
 Friday, September 27
 Saturday, October 12

“MEL’S LANE”

A Future Path to the Coastal Trail at Whaler’s Cove

On December 5th, POST founder, former Board member and current Advisory Council member Mel Lane was thanked by POST’s Board of Directors and friends for his decades of leadership in protecting open lands and the California Coast. POST President Audrey Rust presented Mel with a water-color depicting the future “Mel’s Lane” at Whaler’s Cove, adjacent to the Pigeon Point Lighthouse.

POST purchased the three acre Whaler’s Cove site in May 2000, halting the construction of nine motel units. Once all the site restoration is

complete, Mel’s Lane will be part of the Coastal Trail, a place for the public to stop and view the ocean and bluffs.

Whaler’s Cove will be transferred to California State Parks, and the public will have access to the beach, bluff and tide pools, as well as a beautiful spot to enjoy the sweeping view south along the coast to Año Nuevo. While taking in this never-to-be-forgotten view, visitors can be assured that the view is also never-to-be-spoiled because of the support of POST donors. ■



Artist: Marcus Lui

SAVING THE ENDANGERED COAST

Campaign Update

In April 2001 POST launched *Saving the Endangered Coast*, a \$200 million, three-year initiative to protect more than 20,000 acres of threatened open space on the San Mateo Coast. We are happy to report that less than one year later we are already half way to our land protection goal!

With the purchase of Driscoll Ranch, POST has acquired or placed options to permanently protect 10,148 acres of coastal open lands. Driscoll Ranch's beauty epitomizes the sense of wide-open spaces of the Peninsula's rolling hills and provides views for miles around. Driscoll Ranch is the sixth property that has been optioned or purchased for protection through the Campaign. The others are Whaler's Cove and Bolsa Point Ranches, near the town of Pescadero; San Gregorio Farms; Rancho

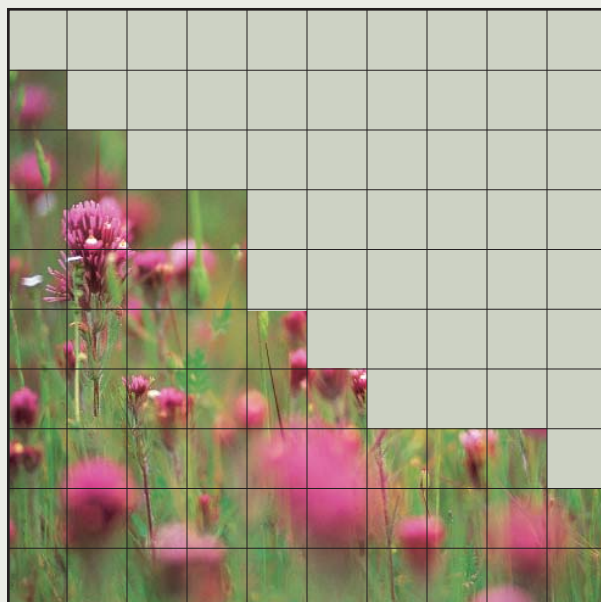
Corral de Tierra, which surrounds the towns of Montara and Moss Beach; and an addition to the previously protected Johnston Ranch property, located just south of Half Moon Bay.

To date, supporters, friends, and the Wildlife Conservation Board of the State of California have contributed \$134,211,697 toward *Saving the Endangered Coast*. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation contributed \$50 million each because they share our sense of urgency to protect these remarkable lands while we still can. They are challenging all of us to step up and commit the rest that is needed to achieve our goal of saving this extraordinary place.

We are far from the finish line and will need everyone's help if we are to succeed in protecting

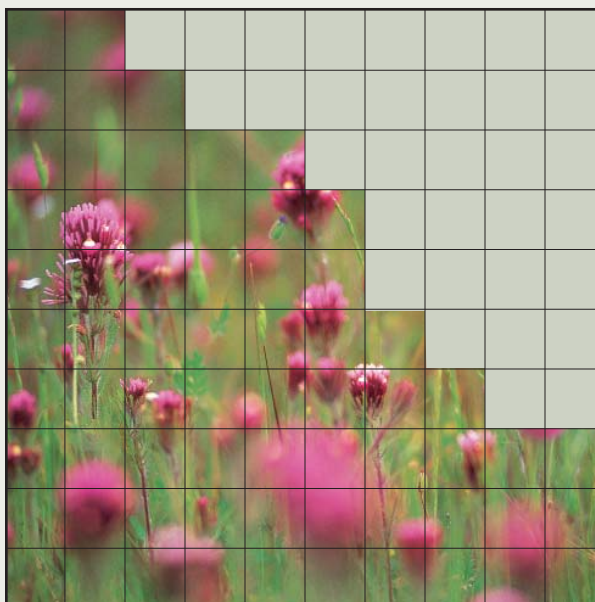
Completing the Picture (as of January 25, 2002)

ACRES SAVED: 10,148



GOAL: 20,000

MONEY RAISED: \$ 134,211,697



GOAL: \$ 200,000,000

POST'S MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) is to give permanent protection to the beauty, character, and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula landscape for people here now and for future generations. POST encourages the use of these lands for natural resource protection, wildlife habitat, low intensity public recreation and agriculture.

the San Mateo Coast, a worldwide natural resource because of its beauty, unique plant and wildlife habitat, and its proximity to one of the most heavily urbanized areas in the world. Find out how you can be part of this historic endeavor by calling Kathryn Morelli, Vice President of the Peninsula Open Space Trust, at (650)854-7696.

Stock Gifts to POST

A gift of stock can be an excellent way to support POST's land conservation work. You avoid the capital gains tax and receive a charitable deduction for the full value of the stock, regardless of appreciation. POST can then sell the stock tax-free and use 100% of the proceeds to protect our Peninsula open space.

It's easy to do — contact:

Banc of America Securities LLC
Montgomery Private Client Services
600 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 627-2191

Relevant information for a transfer of stock:

Account Name:
Peninsula Open Space Trust, #1 Land Purchases
Account #: 110-66982
DTC #: 773 Tax ID #: 94-2392007

It is important that you also notify POST directly of your gift to ensure that it is recorded accurately. Please call Daphne Muehle, POST's Director of Annual Giving, at (650) 854-7696.

However you choose to support POST's work, your contribution makes a difference and is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



Landscapes

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Cover photo: Brian O'Neill



LANDSCAPES SPRING 2002

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