

PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST

Happy Anniversary!

Thanks to your ongoing commitment and support, we have much to celebrate as we mark POST's 25th year. Together, we have changed the course of land use on the Peninsula and built a remarkable legacy of open space for future generations to enjoy.

It all began in 1977, when a small group of local citizens founded POST to support the land conservation efforts of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD).

Since then, we have raised millions of dollars and saved nearly 50,000 acres of open space and have worked well beyond projects undertaken with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. These achievements are a testament to the vision and wisdom of our founders and the generous support of our donors, friends and volunteers.

"An Amazing Story"

Initially, POST's charge was to work with private landowners who might be reluctant to deal with government agencies and to raise money to supplement public funds available for land acquisition.

Ward Paine, an early venture capitalist, was recruited by then MROSD general manager Herb Grench to "get things started." Paine in turn recruited POST's first board of trustees—former Stanford University vice-president Bob Augsburger, who would become the organization's executive director, Sheldon Breiner, Tom Ford, Mel Lane, Rosemary Young, Charles Anderson, Phyllis Draper, Clarence Ferrari, Jr., and Gene Brown. At an early meeting, the new board proposed an ambitious goal: to someday be able to raise one million dollars for open space.

"Originally, POST was viewed as a support arm for the open space district," recalls Augsburger, who served as executive director from 1977 to 1986. "The idea was, we would work as a private nonprofit alongside the public entity to raise money and do some land transactions.

"Ward and I had a somewhat different view, a more expansive view. We didn't see ourselves limited by the district's jurisdictional boundaries. Early on, we started working to develop landowner contacts on the San Mateo Coast. We developed relationships with potential donors, so we'd be able to reach out to them eventually. We recognized the time would come when public agencies would not have adequate funds to do what was needed, and we could step in."

Paine believes that one of the keys to POST's success over the years has been its ability to work quickly and effectively with private landowners.

"We found that many landowners were motivated to have open space, but they didn't think that 'the government' could pull it off," he says.



From Windy Hill to the Coast: CELEBRATING POST'S FIRST 25 YEARS

Windy Hill \infty 1981





"I've supported POST because it's been a very effective organization in saving much of the land around here. That's really important to me."

GORDON MOORE, INTEL FOUNDER, WOODSIDE

"They didn't want to deal with the government agencies directly. We were the party in between, we could get it done. We also found that we could raise money in this community—a lot of it—to support open space.

"Today, POST still is dedicated to protecting open space, and the organization has grown far beyond what the open space district and the initial board of directors thought it could be. We've prospered greatly because of our excellent president and a very active, involved board of directors. I never could have imagined that we'd have a \$200 million campaign. Not in my wildest dreams. And not in my wildest dreams did I imagine we'd have such an impact on the San Mateo Coast. It's really an amazing story."

Audrey Rust, POST's president who succeeded Augsburger in 1986, cites three main reasons for the organization's success.

"I think POST has been so successful, first, because it's so targeted," she says. "For the entire 25 years, the mission has been about giving permanent protection to the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula landscape for people here now and for future generations. POST is completely focused, and I think that has had a lot to do with our success.

"Another reason is that our board of directors really gives to the organization. They give time and money, they give concerted thought, and they give of their reputations and connections. The board has been committed to excellence throughout the organization—finding excellent staff and finding the means to allow the organization to do its work in an effective and businesslike fashion. I thank Tom Ford for a lot of that. We benefited greatly from his support and wisdom.

"Finally, we've had a wonderful set of supporters," Rust concludes. "We have so many people who started off with us in the early years and continued to support us as we built our reputation and broadened the projects we've worked on. New friends have come aboard to play a key role in our more recent successes. We now have some 9,000 donors who give to the organization at every level, which is really remarkable."

25 Highlights from POST's First **25** Years



Conceived as a private, nonprofit organization to work in partnership with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Peninsula Open Space Trust is founded.

1978: Priorities Established

POST establishes its first land acquisition priority list, targeting 10 important properties on the Peninsula for permanent protection. To date, 187 properties have been protected as open space, including nine of those original 10 properties.

1981: Windy Hill

POST obtains this signature property-the scenic backdrop to Portola Valley, visible from throughout the Peninsula and from the East Bay-in a donation from Ryland Kelley and Corte Madera Associates. POST then sells it for half of the fair market value to the Midpeninsula Open Space District, thereby creating the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve and using the \$1.5 million purchase price to create POST's land acquisition fund.



WINDY HILL

National Group Started 1982:

POST executive director Bob Augsburger is one of a handful of conservation leaders instrumental in the formation of the Land Trust Exchange, the national organization of private land trusts. Today the group, now known as the Land Trust Alliance, provides information, resources and training to more than 1,200 nonprofit land trusts nationwide.

Cowell Ranch 1987:

In a high-speed, six-month campaign, POST, under the leadership of its second executive director, Audrey Rust, raises \$2 million to save the 1,270-acre Cowell Ranch, preserving beach access, productive farmland and the scenic corridor along the San Mateo Coast. This represents the biggest and most complex project POST has ever attempted and the organization's first major fund-raising effort. This project also marks POST's first success in obtaining state bond and government funds, allowing POST to "recycle" donor funds for other land saving projects.



THE PHLEGER ESTATE



COWELL RANCH AND THE SAN MATEO COAST

1990: Volunteer Monitoring Program Formed

POST creates a volunteer program to monitor open lands that have been given permanent protection through conservation easements or acquisition. Today, a cadre of 80 POST volunteers assists the organization in monitoring compliance with conservation easements and the condition of lands POST owns.

1990: Phleger Estate

POST mounts one of the largest fund raising campaigns ever undertaken by a land conservation organization to purchase and protect this beautiful redwood forest with essential help from Senators Alan Cranston and Dianne Feinstein, and Representatives Tom Lantos, Anna Eshoo, and Tom Campbell. The project marks two important "firsts" for POST: 1) successfully working through the federal legislative process to expand the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and 2) building a private-public partnership involving 3,500 individual donations, grants from Save-The-Redwoods League and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, and a \$10.5 million appropriation from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.



Wallace Stegner Lecture Series Created

POST works with noted author, environmentalist and POST Advisory Council member Wallace Stegner to develop a premier lecture series on the themes of land, preserving our environment, and the values that have molded the American character. Tragically, Stegner dies in April of 1993 from injuries suffered in a car crash, months before the lecture series was to begin. His widow, Mary Stegner, graciously agrees to our naming the lecture series in his honor and Ambassador Bill and Mrs. Jean Lane begin nine years of generous series sponsorship. The Wallace Stegner Lecture Series has continued to celebrate his memory and the many aspects of conservation.

1995: Madonna Creek Ranch

POST receives a gift of 564 acres of coastal land near Half Moon Bay from Mrs. Mimi Levitt of New York City. The Madonna Creek donation inspires our efforts to acquire three other properties—Mills Creek Canyon (1999), Miramontes Ridge (1999), and Johnston Ranch (1998 and 2001)—to restore the Pilarcitos watershed, protect critical riparian corridor and provide linkage to Burleigh-Murray State Park.



WALLACE STEGNER background photo: The Phleger Estate, 1990, Dewitt Jones

1995: POST Wins National Award

POST receives the Chevron-Times Mirror Magazines "Conservation Organization of the Year" Award in Washington D.C. The award honors POST for "conservation achievements that have helped perpetuate and inspire the ideal that individuals do make a difference."

1996: **Cloverdale Coastal Ranch**

With the purchase of the 8.8 square mile Cloverdale Coastal Ranch (5,638 acres) POST protects many of the features that make northern California unique-coastal bluffs, grasslands, farm land, creeks, riparian habitat, and redwoods. The project marks the advent of POST's stewardship program to develop conservation management plans to protect natural habitat, preserve coastline and agricultural land, and provide recreational opportunities.



In the most important environmental project to have been completed on the Peninsula, POST saves the final 1,600 acres of this restorable wetland "island" in San Francisco Bay from landfill and development. The purchase culminates a 20-year effort by many regional groups to protect Bair Island's tidal marshes and sloughs, which provide critical habitat for more than 200 species of birds, fishes, and mammals. POST later transfers the property to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California State Fish and Game Department.



JOHNSTON RANCH



AN EVENING IN THE MEADOW (from left) Ward Paine, Bruce Babbitt, Mel Lane and Tom Ford.

1998: "An Evening in the Meadow"

POST honors founders Tom Ford, Mel Lane and Ward Paine for their outstanding leadership, vision, hard work and generosity. More than 450 friends and supporters, including U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, attend the reception and dinner, held at the home of Gordon and Betty Moore.

1998 (and 2001): Johnston Ranch

In two separate transactions, aided by a \$1 million challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation, POST protects the historic Johnston Ranch at the southern city limits of Half Moon Bay creating a boundary against further development. This scenic property sets the tone for the rural San Mateo Coast with its lush green farmland, grass-covered hills, and important wildlife habitat.

1999: Rancho Cañada Del Oro

POST's acquisition of this richly beautiful 2,428-acre property, located within the city limits of San Jose, saves classic California meadows, rolling foothills, canyons surrounded by oak covered ridges, and sweeping views of the Diablo Range and Mount Umunhum. Rancho Cañada del Oro will be added to Calero County Park.

background photo: Bair Island, 1997, Robert Buelteman



1999: Robert

Robert Redford Lectures for POST

Academy award winning actor/director Robert Redford adds celebrity to POST's Wallace Stegner Lecture Series. Redford's conversation with broadcaster Michael Krasny plays to a full house at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts.



Rancho Cañada del Oro

1999: Campaign Exceeds Goal

Thanks to 7,886 donors, POST completes the *"Campaign to Save Essential Open Space"* six months ahead of schedule and nearly \$5 million over goal. The final numbers: in less than three years, POST raises \$33.3 million to protect 12,569 acres of prime open space on the Peninsula.



POST acquires Bear Creek Redwoods, long a high priority for open space advocates. This extraordinary property, visible to thousands of motorists as they travel Highway 17 through the Lexington Basin, includes hundreds of acres of majestic redwood and fir forests, together with more than 14 miles of hiking trails, providing the opportunity to create a redwood park for the people of Silicon Valley.



Robert Redford and Mary Stegner

2000: POST Hikes Announced

The Djerassi Resident Artists Program (DRAP), a wellknown artist-in-residence program located on 580 acres near Woodside, announces its free, docent-led annual POST hikes of the grounds and sculpture collection. The hikes are part of the conservation easement purchased by POST and provide an opportunity for the public to view this marvelous property.

2000: Garden Club Honors Rust

POST president Audrey Rust receives a prestigious national conservation award—the Garden Club of America's Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal—for her "outstanding achievement in environmental protection and maintenance of the quality of life." Previous winners include David Packard, ecologist Eugene P. Odum and Patrick Noonan, former President of the Nature Conservancy and founder of the Conservation Fund.



BEAR CREEK REDWOODS

2000: Whaler's Cove at Pigeon Point

POST purchases three of the most highly visible, scenic and symbolic acres of land on the San Mateo Coast. Acquisition of this oceanfront property next to Pigeon Point Lighthouse halts construction of a 9-unit motel that would have destroyed the scenic values of the property, closed public access to Whaler's Cove Beach, and potentially harmed coastal waters due to a water treatment facility intended to serve the motel.

2001: "Saving the Endangered Coast" Campaign Launched

POST announces an unprecedented \$200 million campaign to save more than 20,000 acres of open space on the San Mateo Coast. The campaign begins with lead gifts of \$50 million each from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the largest gifts ever made to a local land trust.



WHALER'S COVE AT PIGEON POINT (after removal of nine motel units)



RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

2001: Stewardship Committee Established

POST creates a stewardship committee comprised of of staff, board members, and volunteers to help define the organization's expanding role in stewardship of open lands. Going forward, POST will increase its focus on taking care of the land, healing the earth, and restoring natural biodiversity (see story page 11).

2001: Rancho Corral de Tierra

POST announces the acquisition of the spectacular 4,262-acre Montara Mountain property, which features panoramic views of the entire Bay Area, rich agricultural land, important water resources, several miles of trails, and an incredible array of wildlife and vegetation. The transaction marks the beginning of a threeyear process to permanently protect the property as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

2002: Driscoll Ranch

POST acquires Driscoll Ranch in La Honda, one of the largest (3,681 acres) and most visible pieces of land on the west side of Skyline Ridge. The resource management plan for the ranch will advance the concept of conservation grazing, continuing a grazing operation on the property that is compatible with protecting vital wildlife habitat and providing public recreation opportunities.

Looking Ahead: The Next **25** Years

What does the future hold for POST? Our expectation is that during the next 25 years, as the majority of strategic conservation lands are protected from further development, POST's focus will gradually shift from acquiring land for open space to a greater emphasis on stewardship—caring for and healing the land.

During our current "Saving the Endangered Coast" campaign, we are working to acquire most of the remaining major blocks of open space on the Peninsula. Although we will need to continue to protect significant properties as they become available, our agenda will move toward largely unknown and uncharted territory for POST: how to restore and take care of the open lands we have protected. We define this responsibility as encompassing not only the land in POST's ownership, but also the open lands we have passed on to public agencies. Clearly, part of our mission will be to help public agencies do the best possible job of taking care of land they hold in trust for each of us.

Our goal in all of this is to nurture and sustain habitat diversity in a "used" landscape—one where public recreation opportunities and historic uses of the land for farming, grazing and other activities will be maintained in a sustainable fashion. This is a formidable challenge, involving significant scientific, cultural, and financial issues. To be successful, we will need money, technical expertise, and new strategic partnerships.

There are at least three important issues that must be addressed. The first is controlling soil erosion. If you drive along the San Mateo Coast on Highway 1, you can see large erosion gullies in the hillsides. Erosion destroys vegetation, farmland, trails, and scenery. In fact, San Mateo County has the dubious distinction of having more erosion of this type than anywhere else in California. Furthermore, sedimentation in streams and creeks resulting from soil erosion causes destruction of important fish habitat. POST's challenge will be to develop effective erosion management techniques to deal with this growing problem.

The second major issue involves "invasive exotics," the non-native plants and animals that invade an area, take it over, and force out the native vegetation and wildlife. Two prime examples of invasives are cape ivy and feral pigs.

Cape ivy, which can be seen throughout the San Mateo Coast in valleys and stream corridors, spreads rapidly and chokes out native plants, which provide habitat for indigenous flora and animal life. Our task is to create a landscape in which native plants and grasses can thrive, providing the needed habitat for native animal populations.



Conservation grazing on Driscoll Ranch



Delairea odorata



Feral Pigs Sus scrofa



Erosion Gullies

Feral pigs were originally the offspring of wild boars and domestic pigs. These animals, weighing up to 500 pounds, have a highly destructive impact on the landscape. They uproot soil and vegetation while hunting for the roots and grubs that make up their diet, creating severe erosion problems and destroying the plant cover. Because feral pigs reproduce prolifically, producing one to two litters of six to eight piglets each year, they are very difficult to control. In dealing with this problem, we must also resolve important questions of humane treatment.

The third major issue facing us is water use. Here the conflict is between human uses—farming or home development—and wildlife uses. Many streams throughout San Mateo County that flow out to the ocean support coho salmon and steelhead trout populations. These fish are anadramous—they are born in freshwater, travel out to saltwater, and then return to spawn in freshwater. Our challenge is to make water available to maintain coastal agriculture and, at the same time, protect the natural habitat of these two endangered species and other wildlife dependent on the riparian area associated with these creeks. To deal with these issues, POST must acquire more technical expertise. Over time some of this will come from the addition of staff members with scientific backgrounds in fields such as hydrology, geology, botany, and biology. We'll also forge partnerships with universities that offer restoration ecology curricula to gain their expertise. We'll continue to work closely with public agencies. And finally, we'll recruit more volunteers to help with monitoring and other activities related to our stewardship efforts.

Given the complexity of these issues, we need to keep local citizens informed and involved with what we are trying to accomplish. In this regard, as part of our new Conservation in Action Program, we are installing signage on or near POST projects to educate the public and highlight areas where POST is making a difference.

One thing that will not change in the next 25 years is our need for your support. As we move forward into this next stage of our organization's history, we are confident that our committed friends and donors will continue to share our vision of protecting land for open space and being good stewards of that land.

"POST is one of those rare organizations that combines a hopeful vision of the future of our Peninsula with practical and immediate action."

DIANNE MCKENNA, POST BOARD CHAIR, SUNNYVALE



POST ROAD TRIP

IN 25 YEARS POST has helped protect nearly 50,000 acres of open space, from as far north as Montara (Rancho Corral de Tierra) to as far south as San Jose (Rancho Cañada del Oro). Though we can't take you past every acre we've protected in this limited space, we've put together a short coastal driving tour of a few of the properties you have helped safeguard. Most of these properties do not yet have public access, so unless otherwise mentioned, please enjoy the views from the road.

Directions: Take Hwy 280 to Hwy 92 West.

(1) **Madonna Creek Ranch:** Going west on 92 towards Half Moon Bay, immediately beyond the colorful Pastorino's Farm Center on the left, you can see a portion of the 563acre Madonna Creek Ranch. Part of the valley is currently leased to the Cozzolino family where they have a cut flower operation. Just over the hill to the southeast is Miramontes Ridge, which joins with the ruggedly beautiful Mills Creek Canyon, both properties also acquired by POST.

Turn left on Route 1. Travel one mile south and make a left onto Higgins-Purisima Road.

(2) Johnston Ranch: Before you are open fields planted with brussels sprouts, farmed since Civil War times and by the Giusti family for the past 50 years. The historic Johnston House, owned by the City of Half Moon Bay, is on the hill to the right. POST's 862-acre ranch maintains a firm urban-rural boundary on the southward city limits of Half Moon Bay, and ensures that valuable farmland has a chance to continue.

Continuing along Higgins-Purisima Road on the left you will see the sign for the Burleigh-Murray State Park.

(3) **Burleigh-Murray State Park:** If you're in need of stretching your legs, pull off for a short mile hike up to the historic dairy barn. With Miramontes Ridge located to the north and Johnston Ranch just behind you, it's easy to visualize the possible completion of a trail corridor that could extend from Skyline Ridge to Half Moon Bay.

Driving further southeast on Higgins-Purisima, you leave the Pilarcitos Creek watershed and loop back southwest toward the ocean.

4 Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve: A public preserve owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, this 2,500-acre canyon is wooded with redwood and Douglas fir. There is a small parking lot for your convenience.

Johnston Ranch

(5) **Purisima Farms:** Purisima Farms begins two miles beyond the Purisma Creek Preserve at the open fields on your left, usually planted with pumpkins and peas. This 534-acre property is an important part of the Highway 1 scenic corridor, providing a nearly one mile long, 360-degree view of coast, ocean, and hills. Combined with POST's conservation easements on the Cowell Ranches to the north and south, Purisima Farms creates more than 4 miles of permanently protected coastal bluffs and beaches.

When you return to Highway 1, turn right if you would like to stop at Cowell Beach (6), or turn left and continue south.

(6) **Cowell State Beach:** Cowell State Beach offers a half-mile trail from the parking lot to the edge of the bluffs with interpretive signs guiding you along the way. If you'd like to experience the beach first-hand, 90 steps lead down the bluff to beaches below.

Continue south on Highway 1.

(7) San Gregorio Ranch Conservation Easement: On the north and west of Route 84 is a 195-acre conservation easement purchased by POST in 1996. The easement on this private property protects scenic and natural resources.

(8) San Gregorio Farms: As you turn onto Route 84 you will see San Gregorio Farms on the hillside to your right. This 267-acre property contains grassy meadows and agricultural fields that provide views of the coast and neighboring hillsides. The property is bordered to the north by San Gregorio Ranch, to the west by San Gregorio State Beach, and to the south by Pomponio State Beach.

Continue east on Route 84.

(9) Driscoll Ranch: After going five miles along 84 towards La Honda, you will reach the Driscoll Event Center on your right. The bullpen is across from the southwestern portion of our most recent purchase, Driscoll Ranch. At 3,681 acres, the ranch creates nearly 10 square miles of open space when combined with the Djerassi Resident Artists Program (a POST conservation easement) and the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. Driscoll Ranch can be seen at various points for nearly two and a half miles along Highway 84.

At Skyline Blvd., turn right if you would like to visit Windy Hill, or continue on Highway 84 to return to Highway 280.

(10) Windy Hill: In 1981, POST obtained this gift of land which includes the open grassy hills distinctively silhouetted on the skyline behind the town of Portola Valley. On the 537 acres you'll find an eight mile loop trail and short view of the trail at the top of the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

WHEN YOU ENJOY FIRSTHAND the rich farmland, witness breaking waves and sandy beaches, and behold tree-lined ridges stretching to the north and south, you will know why we are looking forward to your involvement and support for the next 25 years of POST's land-saving work.



San bregorio Farma



Purisima Farms



Driscoll Ranch

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 agriculture, low intensity public recreation, wildlife habitat and other natural resource protection.

"Saving the Endangered Coast"

POST was founded 25 years ago by a small group of visionary men and women who realized the urgency and need for action to protect the magnificent lands on the Peninsula. They accepted the challenge to create a legacy of natural landscapes for future generations.

It is in this same spirit that POST has undertaken the campaign, "Saving the Endangered Coast," to protect 20,000 acres of threatened open lands along the San Mateo Coast. Since the announcement of the campaign in April 2001, POST has purchased or optioned six properties totaling 10,148 acres of coastal terrace, beaches, meadows and forests. We have raised a total of \$134,738,347 toward the goal of \$200,000,000 to assure the permanent protection of these and future campaign properties.

During the next few months every POST supporter will be asked to contribute to the campaign. We ask you to give generously to help protect the rural coastal lands so in future years we will look back and know that we responded with vision and determination to protect this extraordinary place.

Find out how you can be a part of this historic endeavor by calling Kathryn Morelli, Vice President of POST, at (650) 854-7696.



Landscapes

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When you get involved in an organization like POST, you do it because you believe in something and believe that individuals, working together, can accomplish great things.

KARIE THOMSON, POST BOARD MEMBER AND "SAVING THE ENDANGERED COAST" CAMPAIGN CHAIR, WOODSIDE

Cover photo: Brian O'Neill



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A land conservancy for the San Francisco Peninsula

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