

LANDSCAPES

PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST 🐾 SUMMER 2009



Our Valley Just Got Greener...

POST Protects Rancho San Vicente in South San Jose

Unique, precious, worth protecting—Rancho San Vicente is stunning just as it is. And now it will stay that way, thanks to POST's purchase of this extraordinary expanse of rugged hillsides and rolling grasslands in the South Bay. Take a look inside and see for yourself the bounty of nature that awaits at Rancho San Vicente.

Rancho San Vicente

Historic Property to Link
Recreation and Wildlife



More Than 31,000 Acres for Habitat



When Rancho San Vicente

in south San Jose became available for protection, POST acted quickly to save it. This historic 966-acre ranch overlooking the Santa Cruz Mountain range just minutes from suburban Almaden Valley was slated for extensive development. Now its blankets of wildflowers, sprawling oak trees and panoramic valley views—along with its rare and fragile wildlife habitat, valuable watershed and rich potential for world-class outdoor recreation—will be preserved for everyone to enjoy, forever.

Thanks to steadfast support from donors, POST was able to purchase Rancho San Vicente in June from private developers for \$16 million. The ranch was once part of a far larger land grant of the same name dating back to 1842. At that time, the Mexican governor of the region granted the land to José Reyes Berryessa, a retired sergeant of the San Francisco Presidio and early settler of the Santa Clara Valley. In 1868, a patent confirming Berryessa's ownership of Rancho San Vicente was granted to him for 4,438 acres. Since then, boundaries have shrunk and owners have changed, but the land is still as pristine as it was 150 years ago, with cattle grazing on the property since at least the 1950s.

county land. Previous owners envisioned up to 900 residential units and an 18-hole golf course on the land. Rancho San Vicente Associates—a subsidiary of New Cities Development Group, based in Monterey—purchased the property in 1998 for \$16 million; they scaled back those plans, proposing up to 300 densely packed housing units on the flat, unincorporated county land and, more recently, up to 16 large residences on individual 40-acre lots on the hillier portion within San Jose. When those plans failed to come to fruition, the developers approached POST. Knowing that Santa Clara County Parks had for years listed the property as a priority, POST hopes to transfer the land to the county or to another public parks agency for permanent protection and public enjoyment.

Linking Protected Lands

Rancho San Vicente expands the web of lands within the Santa Cruz Mountains preserved by POST and its public agency partners, including Santa Clara County Parks, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and California State Parks. The property is a key link for recreation trails and wildlife corridors, with the potential to connect 31,867 surrounding acres of already protected parkland. That total includes nearly 7,500 acres to the east within Calero County Park and Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, and nearly 24,000 acres to the west, including Almaden Quicksilver County Park, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve and Bear



Bay checkerspot butterfly. California poppy. A wildflower-covered hillside with snow-capped Mount Hamilton in the distance.



Calero Reservoir spreads out at the foot of Rancho San Vicente's 1,058-foot-high summit. The white line of Highway 101 snakes along the base of the eastern hills on its way to Gilroy.

"It's amazing we can even consider protecting this place, and that a property of this size is still green and open within a major metropolitan area like the Bay Area," says POST President Audrey Rust. "Rancho San Vicente offers a wonderful opportunity to establish key links between miles of trails and to open up previously closed-off vistas for the public. With its prime location and excellent access, it will be easier than ever to enjoy nature close to home, especially for residents of San Jose and the South Bay."

The World at Your Feet

Rancho San Vicente sits between Almaden Quicksilver and Calero county parks and is bounded on one side by more than a mile of McKean Road, an officially designated County Scenic Road. Prominent at the southern tip of Almaden Valley, the property's 1,058-ft. summit rises above quiet neighborhoods with a breathtaking 360-degree view of Calero Reservoir, Mt. Umunhum, Mt. Hamilton, downtown San Jose and, on a clear day,

San Francisco. "If you have any question why this land needs to be protected, just walk up to the top," says Rust. "The view from the knoll shows the breadth of the lands that will be connected, right there in front of you."

Part of the property lies within the city limits of San Jose, while another portion lies on unincorporated

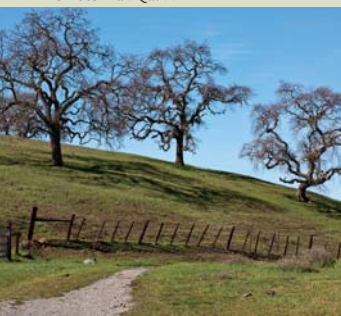


Rancho San Vicente creates a magnificent connection between two of south Santa Clara County's existing parks. The pale line across the property is the canal carrying storm water from Almaden Reservoir to Calero Reservoir.

Why Save Rancho San Vicente?



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1. Preserve Quality of Life

Protecting Rancho San Vicente helps maintain a balance between development and nature and ensures a greener, more livable future in south Santa Clara County. It also safeguards local watershed land for clean drinking water.

2. Protect Nature's Beauty

From silhouettes of ancient oaks in winter, to blankets of native wildflowers in spring-time and golden grasses in summer, Rancho San Vicente is a sight to behold. Let's keep this classic California landscape beautiful forever.

3. Save Land for Parks Close to Home

Rancho San Vicente provides a critical link to more than 31,000 acres of already protected lands. Once open to the public, it will connect miles of hiking trails and open up previously closed-off terrain for you to explore.

4. Keep Wildlife Habitat Healthy

From deer and bobcats to rabbits and butterflies, local wildlife calls this land home. Save their habitat and protect fragile ecosystems on the land.

5. Leave Your Legacy

Preserving special places like Rancho San Vicente means they will remain special, now and for the future, creating a lasting heritage of local land protection for generations to come.



Serpentine rock.

Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. A proposed trail route through the property has long been part of the Santa Clara County Parks Trails Master Plan.

The property contains 506 acres of rare serpentine soils, which are critical habitat for the Bay checkerspot butterfly, a federally threatened species. Among the hundreds of species of plants found, the endangered Metcalf canyon jewel flower and Santa Clara Valley dudleya also grow on the land. Ponds and streams provide habitat for endangered California red-legged frogs and tiger salamanders. Deer, coyotes, San Joaquin kit fox, bobcats and mountain lions roam the hillsides, and eagles nesting at Calero soar overhead. A canal owned by Santa Clara Valley Water District and carrying storm water from Almaden Reservoir crosses the property. The canal flows into neighboring Calero Reservoir, a vital source of local drinking water for Santa Clara County's 1.7 million residents.

Says Rust, "The variety of natural lands we have in Santa Clara County is rarely found anywhere else, and the network of open space and parkland being created here now will serve as our legacy for generations to come." ■



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Serpentine Soils— Abundant Beauty in a Natural Laboratory

If you were lucky enough to observe the ridges of Rancho San Vicente this spring, you would have seen waves of low-growing blue, pink, white and yellow flowers spreading among ancient rocks. These native flowers and grasses are evidence of underlying serpentine soils, a rare geologic formation found where the earth's giant tectonic plates collide. Beauty and scarcity make serpentine outcrops worthy of protection, and their abundance on 506 of the 966 acres of Rancho San Vicente is one of the reasons this land is worth saving.

"There are those in the scientific community who argue that serpentine grasslands are similar to native California grasslands before the arrival of Europeans," says Philippe Cohen, administrative director of Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve at Stanford University. "Just how similar is a matter of debate, but at least serpentine grasslands are composed of native plants. They're much closer to native grasslands than anything else we have left out there."

Earthquake Connection

Serpentine soils result from the presence of peridotite on the earth's surface. The slippery, green rock with a snake-like, mottled appearance gets forced up by underground slippages when oceanic plates subduct under a continental plate. Serpentine can be seen in road cuts along Highway 280, at Edgewood County Park, at Stanford's Jasper Ridge and at Coyote Ridge, east of Highway 101 in San Jose.

Serpentine soils differ from ordinary dirt in that they are often high in metals such as nickel, chrome and magnesium—toxic to most plants—and low in soluble calcium and nitrogen—minerals needed for healthy growth. In addition, serpentine soils are poor at holding water. Native plants are better adapted to these conditions than exotic annual grasses. Plants that adapt to serpentine conditions are generally small in stature compared with their relatives in other habitats.

Approximately 20 rare, threatened or endangered plants and arthropods are associated with the Bay Area's serpentine grasslands. The list of native plants found on serpentine grasslands at Rancho San Vicente includes purple needle grass, California brome, blue dicks, owl's clover, tidy tips, California poppy, the Metcalf Canyon jewel flower and dwarf plantain, the most important food of the endangered Bay checkerspot butterfly in its larval stage.

Serpentine Science

Scientists have used serpentine soils and their associated plants as a baseline for the study of how healthy systems respond to climate change. They have also tested plants for their response to high levels of toxic minerals. In addition, there have been studies on the interaction between native pollinators—bees, butterflies, beetles and certain flies—and the serpentine floral community.

Urban development has been the greatest threat to serpentine grasslands in California. POST is proud to have saved a significant remnant at Rancho San Vicente as well as at other properties in our region. ■



More South County Land Saved!

Two Purchases Link 8,000 Acres of Parkland

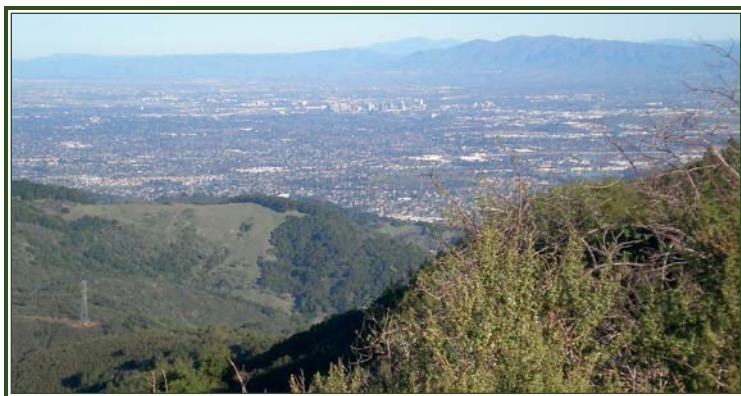
Early this year POST completed two more purchases of strategic open space in south Santa Clara County. The first is 74 acres of undeveloped land next to Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve. The second is 118 acres adjacent to the first purchase and next to Almaden Quicksilver County Park. POST acquired these lands in February and March for \$250,000 and \$400,000, respectively. Both are rugged, barely served by roads or trails, and heavily covered with brush and oak woodland. Together these two parcels link 8,000 acres of surrounding open space and parkland.



© 2009 POST

Mt. Umunhum as seen from the same ridge shown in the photo to the left.

© 2009 POST

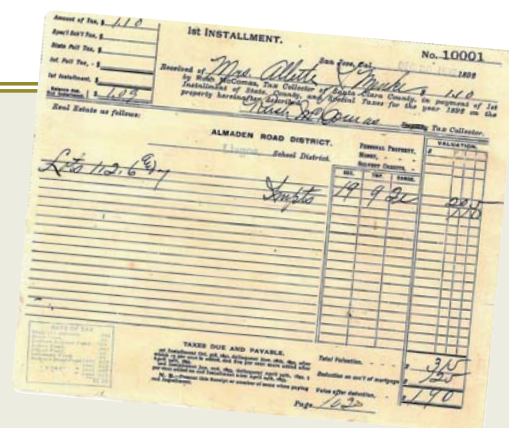


The ridge on the 74-acre parcel is the boundary between Alamitos Creek, which flows north through San Jose and into San Francisco Bay, and Llagas Creek running south to Monterey Bay.

Dianne Johnson Schilling Remembers the Look of the Wild

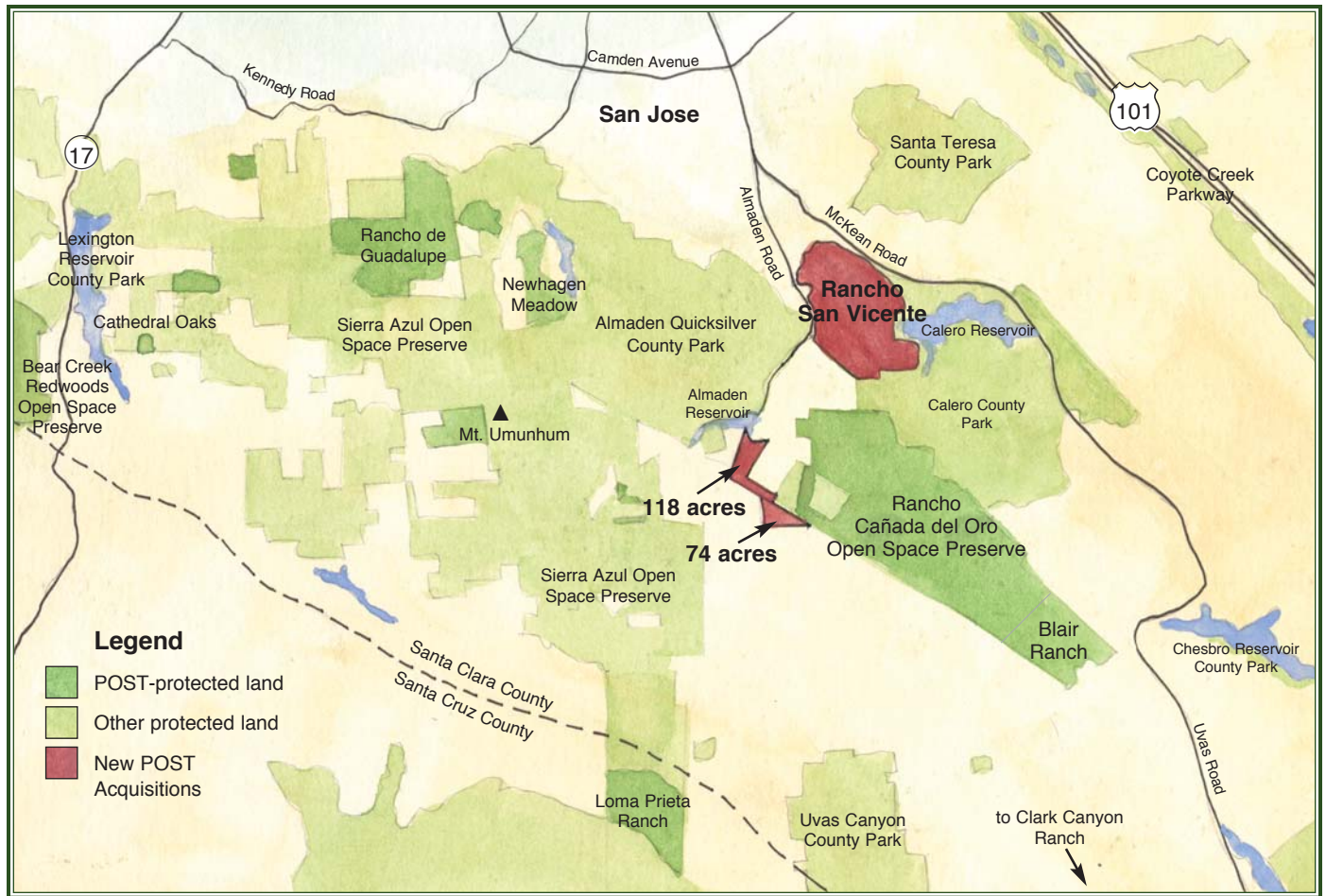
For Dianne Johnson Schilling of Portola Valley and her brother Richard Johnson of Reno, the decision to sell 74 acres in South County to POST came as a result of their desire to see its scenic beauty and natural resources preserved permanently. The land had been in their family for five generations, since their great-great-grandmother, Alleta Menke, purchased it in the late 1800s. Menke's two sons had a cabin there and worked for some years at the New Almaden Mine. Schilling and Johnson recall the rugged isolation of the land with great fondness.

"From my home in Portola Valley I can see Windy Hill. That's what first got me interested in POST," said Schilling, referring to the Skyline Ridge landmark POST



An 1892 tax bill for Alleta Menke's ranch.

protected in 1979 and later transferred to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD). "The view of the hills brings home to me every day the value of having open natural land nearby. In selling our family land to POST, we can help safeguard a backdrop of hills for others to enjoy." ■



POST's South County History

Rancho San Vicente is the most recent evidence of POST's ability to preserve the region's greenbelt. Our commitment to protecting at-risk landscapes in south Santa Clara County goes back to 1980, and POST is still the organization best prepared to save land there. Some of POST's major South County acquisitions include:

- **1980** – A gift of 142 acres on the shoulders of Mt. Umunhum. Later that year POST transferred the parcel to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) for addition to their Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve.
- **1986** – A gift of stock in the Guadalupe Land Company led to POST's purchasing 286 acres near Hicks Road. A generous gift from POST Board member Paul Newhagen and his wife, Antje, made possible this purchase, now named Newhagen Meadow in honor of Paul's mother Mimi.
- **1995** – Assisting MROSD with a \$1 million loan toward its purchase of 1,200-acre Rancho de Guadalupe, which was added to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve.
- **1999** – Purchase of 2,427-acre Rancho Cañada del Oro, most of which was used to create the open space preserve of the same name in 2003.
- **2008** – Assisting with the purchase of 865-acre Blair Ranch in Morgan Hill by the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority. The land became another addition to Rancho Cañada del Oro.
- **2008** – Purchase of 408-acre Clark Canyon Ranch in Gilroy in anticipation of transferring it to a public agency partner for permanent protection.
- **2009** – Purchase of 966-acre Rancho San Vicente.



© Robert Buellman

Rancho Corral de Tierra is designated to become part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Next Installment Approved for Rancho Corral de Tierra

In these lean financial times, POST was especially grateful when news arrived in April announcing an award of \$4 million from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund toward purchase of Rancho Corral de Tierra near Montara. The money is part of the Congressional appropriations bill for fiscal year 2009. POST thanks Senator Dianne Feinstein, who guided the request through Congress and supports our effort to transfer Rancho Corral to the National Park Service as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Last year POST was awarded \$1,960,000 from the same fund. Senator Feinstein was instrumental in that installment payment as well. ■

San Francisco Peninsula— Place of Contentment

California's 14th Congressional District, which stretches from Belmont almost to Santa Cruz, is the nation's most contented, according to a new Gallup Poll.

What accounts for this very positive finding? Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, the district's long-time representative, suggested, among other things:

"People value the land there, and they've worked hard for generations to protect it. The environment is not an issue here—it's valued, cherished... and sustained by each generation."

— From the *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 11, 2009

POST Receives Wavcrest Grants

Grants from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation will help POST complete the planning work begun at Wavcrest in Half Moon Bay. Thanks to the Packard Foundation grant of \$75,000, POST will begin identifying public partners according to the uses and activities for the 206-acre beachside property. The grant will also help POST prioritize work for natural resource protection as well as the best placement and mix of

community uses. Trails, including a segment of the California Coastal Trail, will be a major consideration.

The San Francisco Foundation awarded POST a \$50,000 grant to help with the cost of acquisition. The foundation is engaged in protecting habitat for endangered species, providing recreational opportunities and targeting properties that connect to other protected land. Last year the foundation awarded POST a \$50,000 grant toward the purchase of Mindego Hill. ■

Austin E. Stewart II and Steve Kikuchi Honored

POST enthusiastically honored attorney Austin Stewart of Palo Alto as Volunteer of the Year and gave a special award to landscape architect Steve Kikuchi of Half Moon Bay at an event in March celebrating the work of more than 100 volunteers.

Stewart is an associate attorney with DLA Piper in East Palo Alto. He was recognized for numerous pro bono hours given to POST since 2005. Stewart first assisted with the acquisition of Diamond H Ranch near San Gregorio. Since then he has assisted on eight transactions involving approximately 2,300 acres of open space land. In 2008 he helped POST protect Blair Ranch, 865 acres in Morgan Hill. This year he helped with acquisition of Rancho San Vicente.

POST's mission to preserve our natural environment, whether the organization is focused on the San Mateo County coast or on southern Santa Clara County. As an avid outdoorsman, I am amazed to have such beautiful, unspoiled hillsides and a coastline so close to our urban area. That proximity is also the threat and the reason we need to work hard to protect open land."



Steve Kikuchi

© 2007 Paolo Vecchia



Austin E. Stewart II

"Stewart applies his extensive real estate background to helping conserve land," says Walter T. Moore, POST executive vice president. "His volunteer work is particularly appreciated in these tough financial times."

"I feel privileged to be part of the effort," says Stewart. "I support

The special award to Kikuchi recognized his pro bono work in developing an environmentally sensitive landscape plan for POST's offices at 222 High Street. The new plan will extend the green practices in the renovated building's interior to the exterior. Specifics include a rainwater cistern, more bike parking, an enclosed outdoor patio as well as drought-tolerant native plants. Due to budget constraints, installation is on hold. The plan has been approved by the City of Palo Alto and is ready to go as soon as we are. ■

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POST Pays Respects to Brian O'Neill

The POST staff was deeply saddened to learn of the passing May 13 of Brian O'Neill, longtime superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). He was invaluable in advising POST on the process for adding the Phleger Estate in Woodside and Rancho Corral de Tierra in Montara to GGNRA. His visionary passion for land preservation ignited everyone who worked with him. He will be greatly missed.



Reserve Your Spot at Little Basin this Year

Camping at Little Basin may be just the thing to give you an experience of the natural world without having to travel far. The property is open weekends only through October. Reservations are essential.

Facilities include:

- Tent sites
- Rustic cabins that sleep up to 8
- Grills and picnic tables
- Baseball diamond
- Playground equipment
- Hiking trails
- Small pond for catch-and-release fishing



Detailed information about facilities and what to bring is available along with reservation forms at www.littlebasin.org, or you may call (650) 322-9256. Be sure to identify yourself as a POST donor. ■

Donor Profile: Life Changes Bring Mary Bromage to POST

She began her professional career as a software engineer and moved on to become a full-time mom when the second of her three sons was on the way. Last year, when her youngest left for college, Mary Bromage became a POST volunteer. Bromage is quietly proud of all these life-stages.

Mary and her husband, Bruce, formerly with Hewlett Packard, moved to Saratoga in 1993 when he joined the company. He is now an executive vice president at Symmetricom. Though the family hiked and camped at scores of national parks here and abroad, they never made it to Little Basin, the redwood retreat Hewlett Packard built for employees near Boulder Creek.

"That's what brought me to POST," explains Mary. "When I read that POST and Sempervirens had purchased Little Basin, that it would continue to be parkland, I knew we still had a chance. I had to be part of the effort to preserve beautiful places."

Bromage joined POST as an office volunteer, organizing photographs. In the next nine months she scanned and catalogued more than 1,000 images, a major contribution to the electronic archive of POST's



work. That assignment led to her joining the Skyline Society Committee, a group of volunteers who help interest other donors in supporting POST.

"It was time for me to come back out into the world," says Bromage. "People at POST are wonderful. They are doing good work for society, and that's what I'm drawn to." Whenever time allows, the Bromages still hike in local parks. At last they made it to Little Basin. ■

Getting to Know You: Market Research at POST

Last fall, POST conducted in-depth market research to gauge your opinions of our work and to identify new donors. The study was funded by a generous organizational effectiveness grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

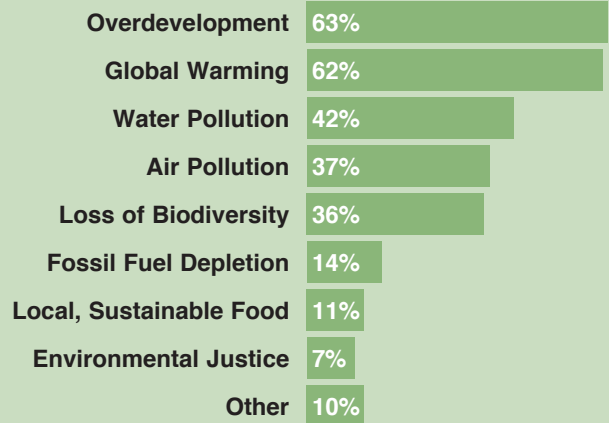
The study—the first of its kind for POST—included a mail and online survey of 600 current donors, a phone survey of 600 potential donors in south Santa Clara County, and three focus groups.

Here's a sampling of what we learned:

- **98 percent** of donors say POST is doing a great job protecting local open space, including 85 percent rating us "excellent."
- Current and potential donors place the highest priority on preserving coastal areas—the San Mateo Coast for current donors and the Santa Cruz Coast for potential donors.
- **80 percent** of donors support POST's increasing work in Santa Cruz and south Santa Clara counties.

The data gleaned from the study will help POST set strategic marketing goals and reach out to new audiences in the future, so we can continue to attract support and meet the growing conservation needs of our region. If you have questions about the research, please contact POST Director of Communications Nina Nowak at nnowak@openspacetrust.org or (650) 854-7696, x. 306. ■

Top Donor Concerns



Ambassador Bill and Mrs. Jean Lane have sponsored POST's Wallace Stegner Lecture Series for 16 years. Here they meet Jim and Jamie Dutcher, whose presentation "Living With Wolves" drew an enthusiastic crowd on May 1.

Audrey Rust Receives Award

POST President Audrey Rust was one of six environmental leaders to receive the new Annual Environmental Leadership Award presented by Sen. Barbara Boxer and the California Democratic Party. She was honored in May for successfully guiding POST in the preservation of more than 63,000 acres of open space. Other honorees included actor, director and longtime environmentalist Robert Redford, a POST lecture series speaker. ■

Take a Summer Break Close to Home

It's summer! How about a cool walk among redwoods or a stroll on the beach? If the sound of waves sliding shoreward or the challenge of climbing a mountain spell summer for you, POST invites you to take a walk on properties we've helped protect. Much of the land has been transferred to

public agencies, and the names reflect ownership or management responsibilities. For details about trails, parking and other amenities, check our Web site www.openspacetrust.org or visit the sites of the agencies listed below. Properties are listed roughly north to south within their regions.



Bear Creek Redwoods © Brian O'Neill



Bear Creek Redwoods © 2009 POST



Pillar Point Bluff © 2009 Neal Kramer



Bear Creek Redwoods © 1999 Brian O'Neill



Coastal Outings

Rancho Corral de Tierra (POST by permit)
Pillar Point Bluff (POST)
Johnston House (POST & Johnston House Foundation)
Wavecrest (POST)
Cowell Ranch Beach (CA State Parks)*
Mel's Lane and Whaler's Cove at Pigeon Point Lighthouse State Historic Park (CA State Parks)*
Wilbur's Watch (POST)
Cloverdale Coastal Ranches (POST by permit)
Little Basin (POST and Sempervirens Fund, weekends only, reservations needed for camping)



Baylands

New Chicago Marsh (Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge)
Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area (MROSD)



South Santa Clara County

Bear Creek Redwoods (MROSD by permit)
Sierra Azul (MROSD)
Almaden Quicksilver (Santa Clara County Parks)
Rancho Cañada del Oro (Santa Clara County Open Space Authority)



Skyline Area

Phleger Estate (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)
Purisima Creek Redwoods (MROSD)
Windy Hill (MROSD)
Skyline Ridge (MROSD)
Sam McDonald (San Mateo County Parks)

*May close due to California's budget crisis.

POSTing your favorites

We want to hear from you about your favorite POST places. What draws you to them? Please send your thoughts to:

post@openspacetrust.org

Be sure to put "POST places" in the subject line of your email message.



Landscapes

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TRIBUTES

January 1, 2009 – March 30, 2009

Your honorary and memorial gifts to POST create a lasting tribute to friends and loved ones by helping to protect the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountain range. If you would like to make a tribute gift, please call Jennifer Tucker, Annual Giving Manager, at (650) 854-7696.

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Anne and David Bernstein
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Zsuzsi Conforti
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The mission of Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) is to give permanent protection to the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountain range. POST encourages the use of these lands for natural resource protection, wildlife habitat, low-intensity public recreation and agriculture for people here now and for future generations.



LANDSCAPES SUMMER 2009

Peninsula Open Space Trust

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Toto Ranch © 2009 Dan Quinn



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If you have a Facebook account, you can become a fan of POST. Get the latest updates on news and events, upload photos of POST properties, and interact with other supporters on our discussion "wall."

Here's how: Login at Facebook.com and type "Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)" in the search box at top right. Then click on our link and become a fan.

Share Your Photos on Flickr®

Browse POST's official photostream to see some of our dramatic landscape shots. If you have a Yahoo account, use Flickr to share even more of your POST photos.

Here's how: Go to Flickr.com and tag your images with the phrase "Peninsula Open Space Trust." To view POST's photostream, search for "Peninsula Open Space Trust," click on the "People" tab and select our link.