

20 YEAR IN 19 REVIEW



*Leaving a Legacy for
Future Generations*

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ANDREA MACKENZIE



“In our every deliberation we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.”

- The Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy

2019 was a landmark year for the Open Space Authority and the residents we serve with the long-sought preservation of the North Coyote Valley, one of the most important conservation achievements in a generation. On November 6, a historic 11-0 vote of the San Jose City Council gave the green light to a significant land conservation deal and partnership that protected almost 1,000 acres in the North Coyote Valley, one of the Bay Area’s most significant natural landscapes.

For close to 40 years, this “last chance landscape” at the southern extent of San Jose City limits had been slated for tech campuses, business parks, warehouses, and distribution centers. Development had not yet come to pass due to a combination of significant remaining infrastructure costs, a recession, the growing desire of employers and employees to locate within the urban area, and a growing commitment by San Jose leaders to embrace a more climate-smart future. But Coyote Valley’s future remained unresolved, until now.

The novel funding partnership that enabled this transaction directly protects parcels that are cornerstones for conservation of North Coyote Valley, which includes an essential wildlife linkage, some of the area’s last remaining natural floodplains, and underground aquifers with drinking water.

Few conservation deals have been done at this scale within cities, and San Jose is one of the first in the nation to significantly invest infrastructure funding in nature-based solutions to pro-actively address flood risk reduction, water supply, and water quality benefits to its human and natural communities. Coyote Valley can be a model for others looking to use nature-based solutions to build resilience to a changing climate.

By preserving and restoring this significant natural and working landscape, we can also realize a new and unparalleled public nature preserve in the coming years, just minutes from downtown San Jose. This historic conservation effort will benefit not only current human and wildlife residents of the valley, but generations to come.

So what’s next? The Authority and its partners will seek to acquire additional properties to fulfill the vision of the Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage. And acquisition of property is just one of many steps in an ongoing process of stewardship – the act of caring for the land and restoring its health to benefit nature and people. With the purchase of these significant properties, we can now begin re-imagining a greener future for Coyote Valley.

Coyote Valley was the biggest story of 2019, but we also celebrate and highlight other successes this year in conservation, stewardship, public access, connecting people to nature, leveraging our local funding, and working on public policy and legislative initiatives.

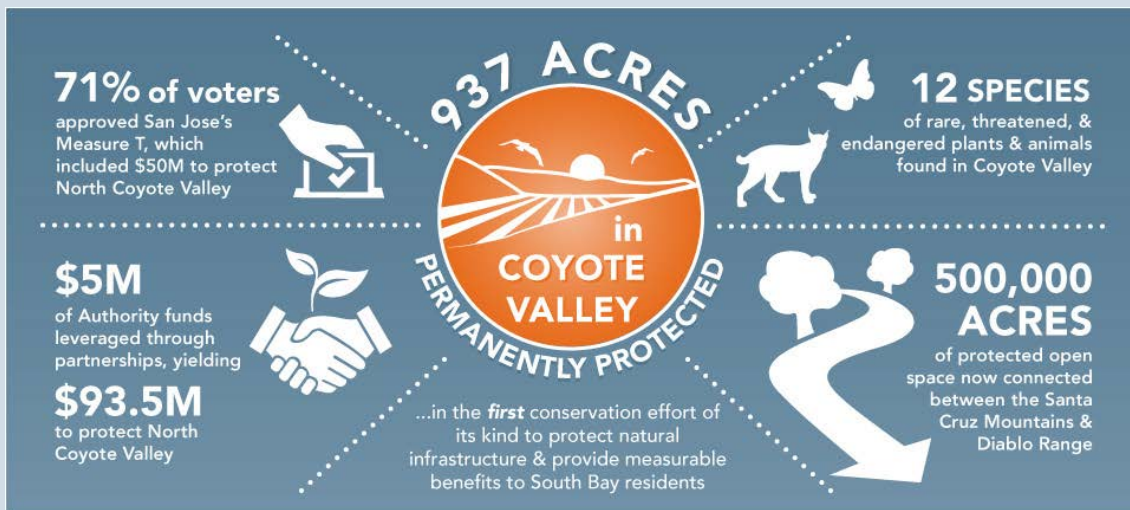
The Authority continues to make strategic investments in conservation consistent with its mission, the Santa Clara Valley Greenprint, and Measure Q. We are effectively leveraging our public funding to preserve, manage, and care for land and natural resources by tapping into grants and partnerships. And we are connecting more and more people to the health benefits of nature through educational programs and urban open space grants that now total 57 projects and \$11.5 million of investment in communities and neighborhoods across Santa Clara County.

As 2020 gets underway, we wish to acknowledge the public's continued support of and trust in the Authority: we couldn't do our important conservation and stewardship work without the support of residents in our communities of Campbell, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, San Jose, and Santa Clara. And no one agency or organization works alone – it takes a community of public agencies, nonprofit partners, and funders to deliver huge conservation successes like Coyote Valley. Together, we are protecting the natural legacy of the Santa Clara Valley for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Andrea Mackenzie

YEAR AT A GLANCE



INITIATIVES



Coyote Valley: A Legacy for Future Generations

At approximately 7,400 acres in size, Coyote Valley is one of the last great natural landscapes and last undeveloped valley floors remaining in the San Francisco Bay Area. This beautiful valley just south of San Jose has long been a conservation priority for the Authority.

After being threatened with development countless times, 937 acres in North Coyote Valley have been protected by a public-private partnership between the Open Space Authority, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), and the City of San Jose. This includes an essential wildlife linkage connecting over one million acres of habitat in the adjoining Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range, where \$3.5 billion has already been invested in conservation. North Coyote Valley also protects the quality of drinking water stored in underground aquifers and contains the last remaining natural floodplains that increase Silicon Valley's resilience to climate-related impacts.

A creative, collaborative approach to funding made possible the \$93.5 million acquisition of the Sobrato and Brandenburg properties, the cornerstones for conservation of the North Coyote Valley. The City of San Jose's contribution to the transaction came through Measure T, a \$650 million infrastructure measure placed on the November 2018 ballot by the City Council. The measure included up to \$50 million for land acquisition in Coyote Valley for natural flood control and water quality protection.

Coyote Valley is key to the region's climate resilience, with numerous opportunities to protect and restore existing natural infrastructure that can buffer the effects of environmental change. For example, Coyote Valley contains thousands of acres of floodplains that can recharge aquifers and absorb water, reducing the risk of flooding in downstream communities. Agricultural lands, such as those traditionally covering the valley floor, produce 70 times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than urbanized areas; protecting undeveloped and agricultural lands reduces sprawl and thus helps avoid emissions.

The purchase recognizes the value of Coyote Valley's natural infrastructure to benefit nature and people, and we now have an unparalleled opportunity to restore the South Bay's largest remaining freshwater wetland, Laguna Seca, and significant undeveloped natural floodplains upstream of San Jose.

Coyote Valley is now recognized statewide as a landscape of significant importance for its natural infrastructure benefits including flood risk reduction, wildlife protection, and climate resilience.

Thanks to a bill introduced by California Assemblymember Ash Kalra and signed by Governor Newsom in October 2019, the state has formally recognized the significance of Coyote Valley. The Coyote Valley Conservation Program establishes the 17,200-acre Coyote Valley Program Area as an important statewide resource.

The bill acknowledges the region's importance in curbing sprawl and in serving as a floodplain that will help buffer flooding and other effects of climate change. It authorizes the Authority to create a structure and expand partnerships for restoration and preservation projects that will reduce flood risk, protect natural open space, preserve wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for recreation.

It will take significant additional public and private funding to implement the vision for Coyote Valley to heal the land, restore healthy, functioning ecosystems, and open the lands for public use. This is not unlike other signature natural areas in the San Francisco Bay Area, such as Golden Gate National Park.

As the Authority is now responsible for stewarding, managing, and opening this land to the public, they will lead the development of a science-based planning process — in partnership with the City of San Jose and POST — to engage the community, key partners, and stakeholders in the designing and placemaking for a regional nature preserve, wildlife corridor, and greenway. The Authority encourages the public to engage in this process and you can sign up to receive updates and invitations to lend your voice to the planning process here.

During the planning process, which is expected to take 3-5 years, the Authority will offer guided walks, stewardship and volunteer days, and educational programs to connect local communities to Coyote Valley.



Connecting People to Nature

Hikers, cyclists, and equestrians of all ages enjoyed special access to our preserves at this year's Open Access Days. These special events allow the public to explore properties that are on their way to becoming preserves, including Blair Ranch, Coyote Ridge, Diablo Foothills, Little Uvas, and Palassou Ridge. These properties include important wildlife habitat, lands under restoration, and historic sites.

The beautiful wildlife and lands at our open space preserves was in focus at our first-ever Photo Contest. Photographers sent in dozens of stunning images, showcasing the range of talent and natural beauty in our valley.

Outside of the contest, our field staff continue to take stunning landscape and wildlife photos, including photos of photos of snow at Sierra Vista, this year's most popular social media post.

Our popular public events highlighted outings to view birds and other wildlife, exploration of nature through art, and the ever-popular astronomy nights for full moons and the eclipse. In addition to our programs promoting physical health, this year we led events focusing on mental health through mindfulness and meditation.

In addition to bike trails at our open space preserves, the Authority funds urban bike trails through our Urban Grant Program. From the one-mile paved Penitencia Creek Trail in east San Jose to the family-friendly bike path in Campbell's Stojanovich Family Park, Authority-funded bike trails offer lots of ways to explore on two wheels.

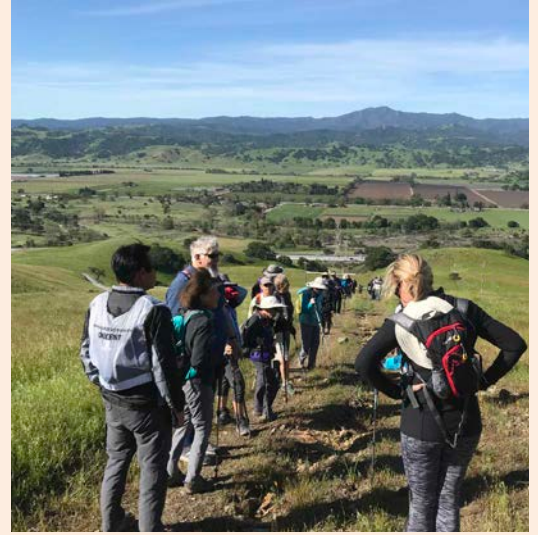
Investing in Nature

Past recipients of the Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program connected people of all ages with nature throughout the region. These investments, funded by Measure Q, are helping to open and maintain parks and trails, protect water resources, and connect generations to our local natural resources.

In downtown San Jose, the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy has led student field trips along the river and into the park's popular rose garden for years, introducing students to nature. With support from the Authority's grant, the Conservancy has developed a new student-led program where students explore nature hands-on, learning to ask and discover with the scientific method. Some 3,000 students, mostly from urban underserved districts, participated in this active model of learning, which improves science literacy and critical thinking skills.

Providing resources for growing vegetables at home is the key to success for the nonprofit Valley Verde – Home Garden Project, which helps low-income San Jose residents overcome food insecurity by learning to garden while building community. Support from the Authority's grant has helped Valley Verde provide participants with raised beds, soil, starter plants, and educational workshops to help them get started growing organic food in their own yards.

The Authority's 20% Funding Program funded one of our earliest grants, the Ulistac Natural Area Restoration and Education Project. Twenty years and the efforts of hundreds of volunteers later, the restored native habitat is thriving, and now hosts members of the public and educational tours along with native plants and wildlife.



Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

Protecting species and habitats requires regional planning, and in November, the Authority became the first agency in the state to have an approved Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Created by the passage of AB 2087 in 2016, the RCIS program is a voluntary, non-regulatory regional planning tool to incentivize and guide investments in natural resource conservation and climate resilience. It uses a science-based approach to identify the conservation and enhancement opportunities that can best help California's declining and vulnerable species by protecting, creating, restoring, and reconnecting habitat, and that can support species recovery and adaptation to climate change and resilience.

The Authority worked closely with The Nature Conservancy, Valley Transportation Authority, Valley Habitat Agency, State Coastal Conservancy, Conservation Strategy Group, and others to develop the Santa Clara County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (SCCRCIS).

Approved in November 2019, the SCCRCIS complements and is consistent with the Santa Clara Valley HCP/NCCP (Habitat Plan), building on the Habitat Plan's conservation goals, objectives, and reserve design to "fill in the gaps" that are not addressed by the Habitat Plan in Santa Clara County, both in geography and in resources.

Using Mitigation Credit Agreements, the SCCRCIS supports voluntary conservation and enhancement actions that fulfill mitigation requirements of state and federal environmental laws. This will help infrastructure agencies consider how strategic conservation investments and can fulfill mitigation requirements, expedite project timelines, and generate effective conservation outcomes at a regional scale.



PROJECTS



LAND ACQUISITIONS

Land Acquisitions

Conserving, connecting, and restoring open space is core to the Authority's mission, which has conserved more than 26,000 acres of open space. This year we completed major acquisitions in North Coyote Valley, and purchased two properties totaling nearly 570 acres that expanded connections between the Authority's Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (Midpen) 18,000-acre Sierra Azul Preserve.

NORTH COYOTE VALLEY

In a landmark conservation transaction, the City of San Jose, POST, and Open Space Authority purchased 937 acres of undeveloped lands in North Coyote Valley from willing sellers in November 2019. The acquisition will permanently protect wildlife habitat, natural floodplains, and water quality and build resilience to climate change for residents in the nation's tenth largest city and surrounding communities. The Authority will manage these lands and lead the master planning process to open them to the public.

Located at the southern extent of San Jose city limits, North Coyote Valley is the critical landscape linkage between the Santa Cruz and Diablo Mountain ranges, allowing wildlife to migrate and adapt to a changing climate. Conservation of these lands will also protect groundwater, support local agriculture, and provide significant new opportunities for outdoor recreation.

This is an important step in the protection of Coyote Valley, and one that will provide our human and natural communities multiple benefits. The landmark transaction leveraged funding from the Authority's Measure Q, San Jose's Measure T, and POST.

- Preserved: 937 acres
- Partners: Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), City of San Jose
- Cost: \$93.5M



CONNECTING RANCHO CAÑADA DEL ORO AND SIERRA AZUL

In the Santa Cruz Mountains, the Authority connected key pieces of open space with the purchase of the Martinez properties in June 2019, linking more than 31,000 acres of protected open space. Filling in these missing pieces creates a contiguous greenbelt of open space, protecting wildlife corridors as well as the headwaters of Barrett Creek and portions of the Llagas Creek headwaters watersheds. It includes an unpaved firebreak that was critical in limiting the spread of the 2016 Loma Fire.



This purchase increases opportunities for larger regional trail connections across preserves, eventually extending from Rancho Cañada del Oro to Lexington Reservoir.

- Preserved: 242 acres
- Partner: POST
- Cost: \$500,000, split evenly by the Authority and POST

Just south of Almaden Reservoir, another Authority-POST project links protected lands in the heart of the southern Santa Cruz Mountains. Together with POST, the Authority purchased the Barrett Canyon property in February 2018. In late 2018, POST completed cleanup work on the property, and transferred it to the Authority in January 2019. The property contains much of the Barrett Creek watershed, including a mile of unmodified stream and 60 acres of beautiful coast live oak forest, and protects the quality of drinking water for San Jose.

This property, together with Midpen's concurrent purchase of the Twin Creeks Property, an adjoining 154-acre parcel, connects Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve and protects an important wildlife corridor between these open space lands.

- Preserved: 326 acres
- Partners: POST, Midpen, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
- Cost: \$2.02M total: \$1.57M for acquisition and \$450,000 for cleanup and restoration, paid for by a \$900,000 grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, with the remaining amount shared between POST and the Authority



HEALING THE LAND

Healing the land

Restoring and stewarding open space is an ongoing responsibility. Undoing damage done by development, neglect, and even natural processes such as flooding can restore beauty, habitat values, and ecological function to our protected lands.

Ranch lands and stock ponds are some of the last remaining habitat for native frogs and salamanders. At Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve, the Authority has partnered with the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency to restore two former stock ponds to serve as habitat for these amphibians and other wildlife. Repair of a broken dam now allows these ponds to hold water again, so that they may provide breeding habitat for the threatened California tiger salamander and California red-legged frog. The Habitat Agency will maintain and monitor the ponds (and the amphibians), allowing the Authority to focus staff and resources on restoring additional ponds.



- Partner: Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
- Cost: \$600,000 paid by the Habitat Agency

In south Santa Clara County, the Authority's 284-acre Pajaro River Agricultural Preserve is part of a large network of protected, productive farmlands that provide fresh food and flood prevention to the local community. Together with property manager Luís Urias and UC Farms, Authority staff, and volunteers removed trash, invasive vegetation, and graffiti from the northern part of the property, which is now back in agricultural production – primarily bush beans.



Partnering with Point Blue Conservation Science and the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency, the Authority also worked to achieve funding to enhance and restore critical riparian habitat on the property. Restoring the area will connect two million acres of important habitat for wildlife such as mountain lions, bobcats, and badgers, provide rich habitat for rare species, such as the Least Bell's Vireo (an endangered songbird) and the Western monarch butterfly, and improve water quality in the Pajaro watershed.

- Partners: UC Farms, Open Space Authority volunteers, Point Blue Conservation Science, Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency
- Cost: \$379,394 grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and \$210,412 grant from California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Restoration at Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, the Authority's largest property, is an ongoing process, and teams of students from San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School completed a number of projects in a week-long service campout. This training program for disadvantaged teens and young adults helps them explore careers in natural resource management – and learn technical skills – while they complete their high school degrees. On the chilly winter trip, the enthusiastic students learned from Authority field staff and removed invasive shrubs around an old house, the orchard area, and along the access route. The partnership not only improved habitat at Rancho, it also helped create connections with nature and career opportunities for the next generation.



Also at Rancho, more than 200 freshman from San Jose's Harker School spent a day removing debris and helping widen a 1.25 mile-long section of the Mayfair Ranch Trail, making it safer for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders. As part of the day of service learning, the students learned about the history of local Native Americans, plants, and wildlife in activities led by their teachers, Open Space Authority staff, and volunteer docents.

The partnership not only benefited the preserve – it helped connect the students to local open space and empowered them to take an active role in protecting our environment.

This year the Authority launched the Trail Masters Program, a comprehensive hands-on training for volunteers interested in trail work and preserve maintenance.

The year-long course includes six classroom sessions on the technical aspects of trail creation, maintenance, and repair, as well as other topics like trail structures and water management. Participants also complete more than a dozen hands-on workdays in the field with our Open Space Technicians.

Graduates of the program can complete trail maintenance and fieldwork alongside Authority staff; those who continue to serve in this role will eventually be able to lead volunteer trail maintenance projects and events on their own.

"Flagging and building a trail isn't just a physical exercise; it's imagination at work, and an opportunity for exploration."
–Silvia Maione, Volunteer Trail Master



The Authority will offer the program each winter/spring, and community members looking for a deeper knowledge of parks and natural resource management are invited to participate in this program.

"In this digital age, it's rare to have such a physical sign of your own accomplishment to point out as you can to a well-made/groomed trail."
–Denise Acomb, Volunteer Trail Master

PUBLIC ACCESS PLANNING

Public Access Planning

Increasing access to nature is the focus of the Authority's public access planning, which will expand existing open space preserves, and create new opportunities to visit lands on properties not yet open to the public.

This year the Authority launched an effort to plan for public use and access to the stunning views and unbeatable wildflower displays of Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve, just 10 miles from downtown San Jose. A new trail network will complete a nearly three-mile segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail. The plan will add a parking area, restrooms, and interpretive features and signage. These improvements will provide for increased public access opportunities through our docent-led programs in partnership with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council while protecting rare habitat and sensitive species at Coyote Ridge.



At Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, planning is underway to connect the Llagas Creek Loop Trail to the former Blair Ranch via a new bridge over Llagas Creek. This will allow visitors seasonal access to more than five miles of existing ranch roads through rolling grasslands, blue oak woodlands, and mixed oak savannah. Hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders will be able to explore the preserve's backcountry.

The planning, design, and implementation of access to Blair Ranch is funded by Measure Q; the preserve backcountry is scheduled to open in 2022.





GOOD GOVERNANCE

Good Governance

As part of our commitment to being open, transparent, and accountable, the Authority encourages public participation, proactively communicates with the public, and readily provides access to information.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) plays a key role in this commitment by making connections to the Authority's diverse communities and sharing community feedback with the Board and staff. The thirteen members are appointed by the Board to serve two-year terms. This year we honored two retiring members, both of whom have made significant contributions to furthering the Authority's mission during their respective tenures. Eric Carruthers, one of the citizens who helped found the Authority, retired after more than 25 years of service. A former Santa Clara County planner, Eric helped preserve Coyote Valley and has been an excellent consensus-builder, thought leader, and mentor to generations of CAC members. Another longtime champion of Coyote Valley, Gloria Chun Hoo served on the CAC for more than 9 years. As chair of the CAC, Gloria led the alignment of the CAC with the Authority's annual objectives, and improved the agency's visibility, accountability, and openness.

New to the CAC this year are avid hiker and longtime community volunteer Vicki Alexander, transportation engineer, trekker, and camper Sal Akhter, and outdoorsman Steve Mink – who also serves on Trail Patrol, Land Stewards, and Trail Masters. We thank all retiring and new CAC members for their dedication to our open space lands.

2019 also saw the launch of the Authority's work plan tracker, a tool for providing regular updates on the status of our work plan. This will be an important tool for increasing transparency about the agency's progress toward our goals for updating staff, the Board, and the public.

With the retirement of District 5 Board Member Virginia Holtz in 2018, the Authority welcomed new Board Member Shay Franco-Clausen. A long-time resident of San Jose, Shay is the first Afro-Latina to serve on the Authority's Board.



WILDLIFE RESEARCH

Wildlife Research

Our open space lands are home to a diverse animal community, some members of which find their last remaining habitat in our region. Toward the Authority's goal of protecting biodiversity, we are working to better understand our local wildlife and restore their habitat. In partnership with POST, the Authority received a grant to study habitat use by three threatened amphibian and reptile species in and around Coyote Valley. By better understanding where these species live, we can work to link their habitat from the foothills to the valley floor.

- Partner: POST
- Cost: \$78,948 grant from California Department of Fish and Wildlife

When habitat is bisected by roads and freeways, movement among habitat patches can be fatal. Monterey Road, one of the most dangerous crossings for wildlife, was the focus of a report this year from the Santa Clara County Wildlife Corridor Technical Working Group's Coyote Valley subcommittee. The report outlined a number of recommendations for reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions, one of which – new signage – the City of San Jose has already implemented. The Working Group team includes members from the Authority, POST, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Valley Water, Pathways for Wildlife, Santa Clara County Parks, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other state and local organizations.

- Partner: Santa Clara County Wildlife Corridor Technical Working Group's Coyote Valley subcommittee
- Cost: \$10,000 split evenly by the Authority and POST

Understanding how bobcats move across protected and developed lands is the focus of the Coyote Valley Bobcat Habitat Preference and Connectivity Report, released in October 2019. The science-based study helps us understand how this highly-mobile mammal moves through the valley to find prey and mate. Because bobcats tend to roam across large areas, they are particularly vulnerable to habitat fragmentation. Understanding their movement patterns helps inform land management, habitat restoration, and safe passages across roadways.

- Partners: POST, UC Santa Cruz
- Cost: \$256,400, which includes a \$75,130 grant from California Department of Fish and Wildlife; the rest was split by POST and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation



CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Climate Resilience

As climate change brings more frequent, severe, and costly disruptions, the Authority is working to improve our region's climate resilience. This is the ability of our natural and human communities to respond and adapt to extremes in temperature, flooding, drought, and wildfire.

Our Board and staff appreciate the critical importance of investing in the protection and restoration of natural and working lands for climate resilience, and we aim to serve as a model in the Bay Area in promoting climate resilience.

In 2019 we kicked off the Resilient Cities and Rural Areas project, a partnership between the Authority, SPUR, and the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI). The Resilient Cities Project aims to identify opportunities for urban as well as rural nature-based solutions and green infrastructure projects within San Jose's sphere of influence that will do the most good to address the impacts of climate change. This project can serve as a model for other cities in the Bay Area.

The Authority collaborated with SFEI to create the Urban Ecological Planning Guide for Santa Clara County, a guide for making cities more resilient by providing and augmenting urban green spaces. The toolkit will help public agencies, private citizens, and business owners improve biodiversity at even the smallest scale. It identifies areas where the integration of urban greening and ecological planning can help enhance our natural environment and make our region more resilient to the stresses of development and climate change, for example, by planting native plants that create wildlife habitat.

Our open space lands, particularly Coyote Valley, are a key part of climate resilience. This year's protection of 937 acres in Coyote Valley is a major climate victory. Coyote Valley contains thousands of acres of floodplains that can recharge aquifers and absorb water, reducing the risk of flooding in downstream communities. Agricultural lands produce 70 times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than urbanized areas, so protecting the undeveloped and agricultural lands of the valley will help avoid emissions by reducing sprawl. A statewide analysis of open space investment in California estimated that these efforts reduced carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated 4.27 million metric tons. Planned restoration offers great potential for carbon sequestration, and connecting wildlife habitat across the valley will allow species and habitats to respond to changing conditions.

Investing in nature as infrastructure will help our communities be more climate resilient while also helping to meet climate goals within local and regional plans such as Climate Smart San Jose, Plan Bay Area, and others. These efforts will also help us leverage local, regional, and state funding for open space.

Authority staff and board participated in the creation of the Conservation Lands Network 2.0, released in November. Based on science, this is a regional vision for a connected and climate-resilient landscape across the Bay Area. By supporting strategic investments in land acquisition and stewardship, the Conservation Lands Network focuses conservation in areas that represent the region's biodiversity and support ecological function across the ten Bay Area counties, equipping us to respond to climate change, connect landscapes, and connect upland and bayland conservation.



The Authority is working with the City of San Jose as it enters Phase Two of the Climate Smart San Jose initiative. Adopted in 2018, this is one of the first detailed city plans for reaching the targets of the international Paris Accord by reducing air pollution, saving water, and creating a stronger and healthier community. The Authority is helping the City further assess the carbon benefits of protecting and enhancing natural and working landscapes within the City's sphere of influence.

In August, the Authority and the County of Santa Clara were honored with the statewide 2019 Innovation in Green Community Planning Award of Excellence from the American Planning Association California Chapter. The award honors efforts to create more sustainable and green communities that reduce impacts on the natural environment and improves environmental quality.

The award went to the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan (Ag Plan), coauthored by the Authority and the County, which is a strategic plan for curbing urban sprawl into more than 28,000 acres of viable farmland and rangeland. The Ag Plan is not only a planning document, but also a roadmap for regional resilience in the face of climate change. The plan outlines strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions while also supporting the viability of our agricultural economy.

FINANCIALS & RECOGNITION

FINANCIALS

INVESTING IN NATURE

The Open Space Authority is primarily funded by a benefit assessment and an annual \$24 parcel tax, with additional funding from grants and gifts. Financial reports and audits are released after the close of each fiscal year, and are available on our website: www.openspaceauthority.org.

RECOGNITION

Our shared successes this year were thanks to the support of our many partners and donors. We'd like to thank these agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and individuals for their support this year. Collaborations, donations, and volunteer time all leverage public funds to help us protect and restore open space for the community to appreciate and enjoy.

To view our current partnerships, please visit our website: www.openspaceauthority.org.

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