

PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST

Landscapes

FALL 2011



Connecting People to the Land



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We've all heard the dreaded refrain on family outings, "Are we there yet?" The dragging of feet and constant whining can make you question your sanity as you try to take in a nice view or enjoy some much-needed exercise. I'll admit feeling this way while hiking with our two young daughters, now 18 and 14, to places like the Candelabra Tree at Butano State Park. At first, I would try to extoll the beauty of our open space, how lucky we were to have it undeveloped, and so close to home. After some reluctance, my kids would fall into a comfortable pace, talking and laughing, and sometimes, for the first time in weeks, really connect, not just with nature but with each other.

After 16 years at POST, I've come to appreciate the power of connecting people to the land. I've seen it with our volunteers as they work together to eradicate invasive weeds, or learn something new during a volunteer training day (see p. 12). I've seen it in the eyes of our conservation partners when, after years of effort, we finally announce the opening of a new trail for everyone to enjoy (see p. 6). And I've seen it in the generous giving year in and year out by you, our donors. This act of connecting people to the benefits of healthy, open lands and inspiring them to action is at the heart of what we do here at POST, and it's something I'm proud to continue in my new role as president of POST.

While we build on our successful track record of preserving our most vulnerable undeveloped lands, we must address the challenges of the current economy. Among them are the diminishing resources of our public

agencies, felt most acutely in the impending closures of up to 70 state parks, and the need for a new era of collaboration with all our partners to achieve true landscape-level conservation. We've done a tremendous job so far protecting individual properties, but now we must knit these lands into a healthy, sustainable ecosystem that can withstand the vagaries of climate change and support the rich variety of life we've come to love about living here.

Working at such a regional scale requires teamwork and sustained collaboration. Just as our world is evolving, so must the way we accomplish our conservation goals. That's why, in the coming years, you'll be hearing more about our collaborations like the Living Landscape Initiative, which a group of five conservation organizations including POST launched this past spring to protect 80,000 acres in and around Silicon Valley over the next 20 years. And that's why POST will be looking for new ways to make sure our public agencies have a strong basis of support to weather tough economic times.

As we move forward with this work, I hold firm to what so many of you who support POST have shown me: success is not merely measured in the acres we've saved, but in the connections we've built with the land and with each other.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Walter". The script is fluid and cursive.

Walter T. Moore
POST President



These Lands are Your Lands

POST may be best known for acting quickly to protect land from inappropriate development, but it's also essential to get people out on the land to inspire them to care for and protect it. Three new exciting projects will entice you out on the trails, and move us a few steps closer to creating a mosaic of sustainable, connected lands.

- **Pillar Point Bluff**, which POST first protected in 2004, transferred to San Mateo County in August, adding another 140 acres to the county's world-class Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. (Full story on p. 4)
- In July, we partnered with the State Coastal Conservancy to open the **Cowell-Purisima Trail**, a 3.6-mile bluff-top path that runs from Cowell Ranch State Beach near Half Moon Bay to a scenic overlook further south. Now hikers, cyclists and bird enthusiasts alike can enjoy this stunning new section of the California Coastal Trail. (Full story on p. 6)
- Finally, we're unveiling plans for **Audrey's Way**, a lookout point and gathering area in honor of POST's former president Audrey C. Rust that will expedite access to POST-protected Mindego Hill and other open space lands along Russian Ridge. (Full story on p. 8)

A big "thank you" to our public agency partners on these projects: San Mateo County, the Coastal Conservancy and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. POST's ongoing collaborations with these agencies and other groups make public access to these lands possible. Enjoy!

POST Transfers Pillar Point Bluff

Habitat-rich Bluff-top Joins



top: *Dudleya farinosa* lights up the ground, along with Beach strawberry.
left: Elise and Antonio Baugh of Half Moon Bay hike along the bluff.
right: A cyclist enjoys an early morning ride on the bluff trail. below:
Spectators eye the surf at Mavericks from the safety of Pillar Point Bluff.



In August, POST achieved its vision for one of the most scenic spots along the San Mateo Coast when it transferred 140-acre Pillar Point Bluff near Moss Beach to San Mateo County. With a \$3 million grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board, the county purchased the land for inclusion in the James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

“Pillar Point Bluff illustrates what POST does best: negotiate purchases, hold land until a conservation partner is ready to acquire it and improve the land for habitat and public enjoyment while it’s in our care,” said POST President Walter T. Moore. “We’ve done a lot of work here, improving trails, adding a small parking lot to facilitate public use, restoring the native landscape and improving wildlife habitat. Our goal was to leave the land better than we found it. We’re glad Pillar Point Bluff will continue to be in good hands with the county.”

“Pillar Point Bluff is a stunning addition to the County Park system,” said Assistant San Mateo County Manager David Holland. “This area provides great hiking and nature-watching opportunities for the public and completes the landside portion protecting the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. We are grateful to POST for their stewardship of this property until we could acquire it.”

POST purchased the bulk of Pillar Point Bluff in 2004 and additional parcels in 2007 and 2008. Since then, volunteers and vendors have carried out extensive stewardship projects on the land, including removing invasive Pampas grass, re-routing hiking paths away from eroding slopes and reseeding worn patches of bluff top with native plants. POST also removed the crumbling foundation of a former dairy barn and restored abandoned irrigation ponds used by seasonal birds and resident wildlife.

to San Mateo County

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

The land drains directly into Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, where seals and pelicans populate the shoreline, while farther out the Pacific churns over the outer reaches of the reef. To the east, wetlands and marsh areas provide habitat for at-risk species such as the California red-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake and several types of birds. Across Highway 1, the tilled farm fields and bulky shoulders of Montara Mountain on POST-protected Rancho Corral de Tierra create a panoramic backdrop to the whole scene.

“We are very grateful for POST’s ability to preserve open space land adjacent to the reserve,” says Sarah Lenz, a ranger with San Mateo County Division of Parks. “Trails like those at Pillar Point Bluff allow people to see the reef without putting too much pressure on its delicate inhabitants, and give visitors a way of observing seal colonies without disturbing them, especially during pupping season. Plus, the beautiful views remain open.”

Originally, Pillar Point Bluff was part of the

historic Rancho Corral de Tierra land grant. Remnants of a dairy that operated during the early 1900s can still be found in the tall grass on the flats near Airport Boulevard. By 1980, the land had attracted investors eager to build a bed-and-breakfast and a business park, but the projects failed to get the necessary approvals. At that point ownerships began to change, and POST was able to work out purchase agreements.

Generous donors have helped make each step from acquisition to stewardship to public enjoyment possible. A memorial fund established by Kathy and Al Lauer of Portola Valley was a major source of funding toward the purchase of the land and installation of the Jean Lauer Trail, an important link in the California Coastal Trail named for the Lauers’ daughter, Jean, a former POST land manager who passed away in 2005. POST also received major support for Pillar Point Bluff from public funding agencies, including \$1 million from the California Coastal Conservancy. ■

“Pillar Point Bluff illustrates what POST does best: negotiate purchases, hold land until a conservation partner is ready to acquire it and improve the land for habitat and public enjoyment while it’s in our care.” — POST President Walter T. Moore

If You Go...

What You’ll See:

- Soaring pelicans, cormorants, gulls and hawks
- Seasonal wetlands
- Coastal waters protected by the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

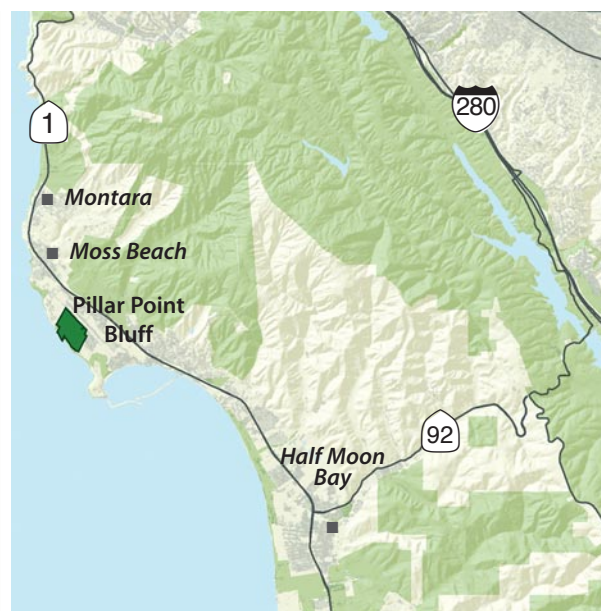
Driving Directions:

http://www.openspacetrust.org/activities/tour_pillar.html

Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Access: Cyclists, hikers, equestrians, dogs on leash

Services: Parking lot and staging area



Cowell-Purisima Trail Opens

In 1972, Californians passed Proposition 20 which declared “a hiking, bicycle and equestrian trails system shall be established along or near the coast.” Fast forward to 2011, when the California Coastal Trail, a 1,200-mile path from Oregon to Mexico, is half complete.

On July 21, POST and the California Coastal Conservancy celebrated the opening of the newest section of the path, the Cowell-Purisima Trail, which runs for 3.6 miles along coastal bluffs just south of Half Moon Bay. The trail offers spectacular views of the ocean and gently sloping foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Visible from the trail are offshore rocks, inaccessible pocket beaches and a seal haul-out area.

“This gorgeous stretch of the Coastal Trail is the result of a long and fruitful partnership between POST and the Coastal Conservancy as well as landowners, farmers and other groups,” said POST President Walter T. Moore. “With generous support from our donors and the conservancy, POST has played a key role in making the Cowell-Purisima Trail a reality, from saving land up front and holding back protective conservation easements, to preserving surrounding farmland and now opening up the trail to the public.”

The northern end of the trail begins above a small state-managed pocket beach at Cowell Ranch State Beach, originally protected by POST in 1987 through a partnership with the conservancy and California State Parks. The trail continues south across three bridges and past rich, productive farm fields to a bluff-top overlook. POST sold the farmland to the Giustis, a local farming family, at reduced cost while retaining easements that protect wildlife habitat and trail corridors.

Without the vision and persistence of POST and the conservancy, the whole panorama could have become just another set of subdivisions. Instead, in June 2008, with nearly \$3 million from the conservancy, POST built the parking lot and new trail. Now, instead of houses, the public can enjoy natural views from the trail and benefit from the continued production of high-quality local food.

POST will oversee the day-to-day management of the trail for the next three years until a public agency partner can be found to take permanent ownership.

“This beautiful piece of the coast deserved a great trail, and now it has it,” said Sam Schuchat, executive officer of the conservancy. “This was well worth waiting for.” ■

If You Go...

What You'll See:

- Spectacular views of the ocean and Santa Cruz Mountains
- Offshore rocks, inaccessible pocket beaches and harbor seals
- Artichokes and Brussels sprouts
- Grazing cattle

Driving Directions:

www.openspacetrust.org/cptrail

Hours: Northern portion of the trail closed to public weekdays June – September due to agricultural operations; southern end open year-round.

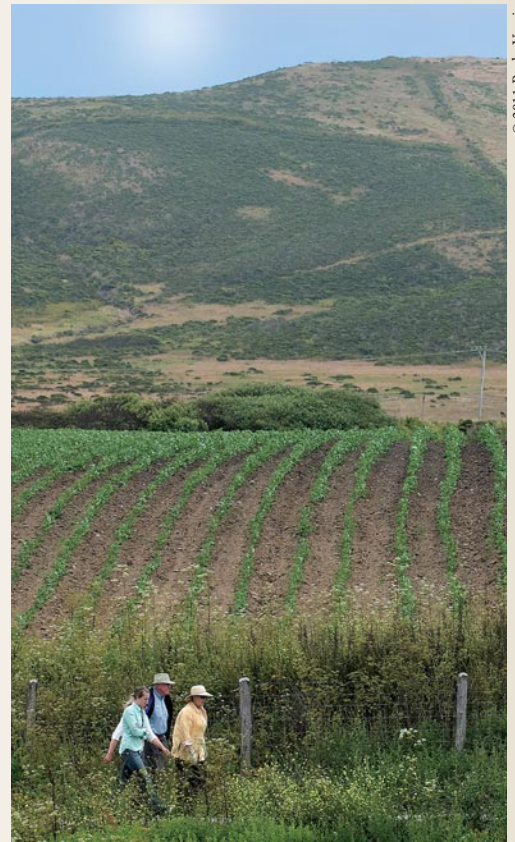
Access: Hikers, cyclists and wheelchairs (with the exception of middle part of trail crossing Purisima Creek). Sorry, no dogs or horses.

Services: Parking and restrooms at both ends of the trail, interpretive signs.





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top: Interpretive sign along the trail. above right: Walking south along the trail through row crops. above: Seals of many colors frequent a tiny beach visible from the new trail. right: California Coastal Conservancy Executive Officer Sam Schuchat and POST President Walter Moore prepare to cut the ribbon on the newly opened Cowell-Purissima Trail. below: A tractor chugs along a farm road in a field of Brussels sprouts.

© 2011 Ann Duwe



AUDREY'S WAY

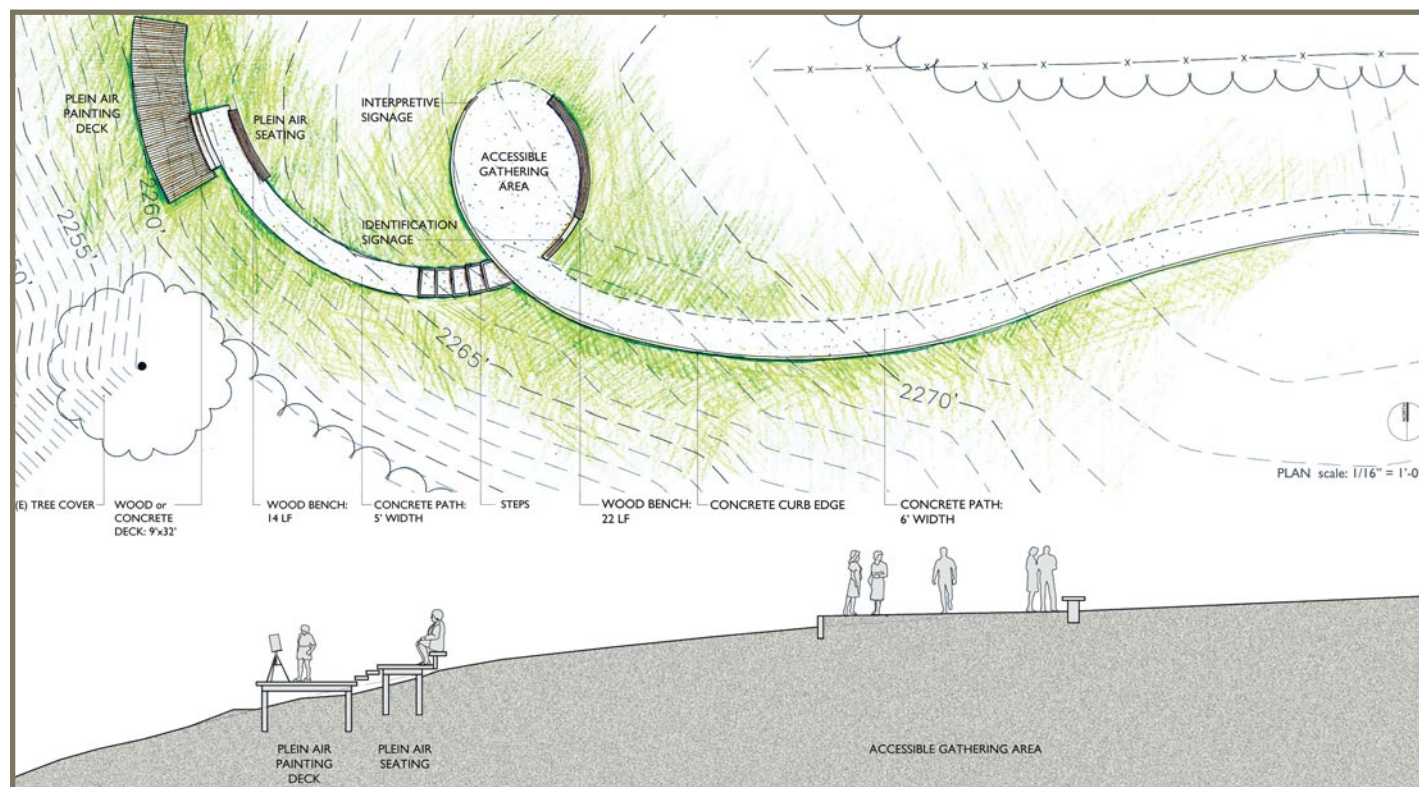
A Brushstroke on the Land

We're excited to share these new working plans-in-progress of Audrey's Way, the commemorative site along Skyline Ridge that will honor former POST president Audrey C. Rust and her many land-saving accomplishments. Earlier this year, POST transferred the land at the site to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) for inclusion in Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve. This stunning spot will serve as an easy public-access point to surrounding lands, including POST-protected Mindego Hill.

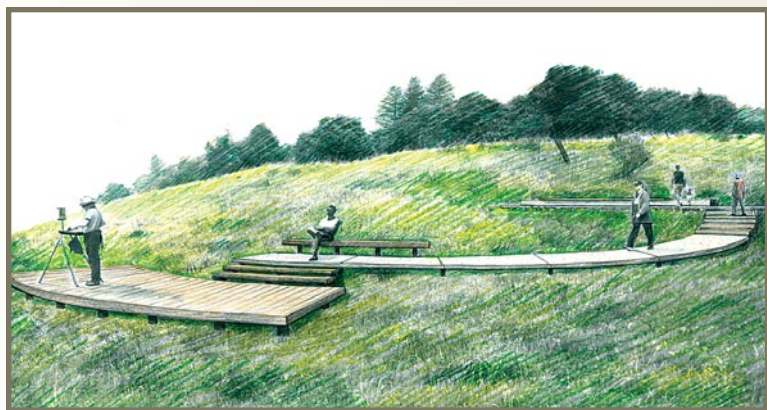
The grassy knoll along Alpine Road, just west of the intersection with Skyline Boulevard, will feature a low-profile lookout point and gathering spot in harmony with the natural setting. An adjacent staging area will accommodate visitors, and connecting pathways will lead to trails venturing farther into

Russian Ridge and other preserves.

POST, working in partnership with MROSD, has committed to covering all the costs associated with design, planning, permitting and construction of the Audrey's Way site and staging area. To assist our public agency partner, we're also raising money toward ongoing maintenance. We've established the Audrey's Way Fund to cover all these expenses, and we need your help! To date, we have raised nearly \$1 million toward our goal of \$1.5 million, the estimated cost of the entire project. If you'd like to take part in this lasting tribute to Audrey, create a beautiful new destination for outdoor recreation, and accelerate opening up Mindego Hill to public access, please contact Mark Dawson, Director, Capital Gifts, at (650) 854-7696 x342 or mdawson@openspacetrust.org ■



An overhead and side view of the proposed features of Audrey's Way near Mindego Hill.



Thank you!

This list of donors recognizes the individuals who have made gifts of \$500 or more as of August 15, 2011 in support of Audrey's Way.

Anonymous (2)
 Gibson and Mickie Anderson
 Kay Baum and David Stuhr
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View of Mindego from Audrey's Way site



Saving Land, One House at a Time

After 30 years of being a landlord, Carol Goodwin knew she was finished when her tenants moved out of her house in San Mateo last year. She and her first husband had bought the house in 1960 and raised their children there. When they moved to another house in San Mateo ten years later, Carol, who had earned her real estate license, convinced her husband to keep it as a rental. But after three decades of re-painting and patching walls, Carol was getting weary and turned to her tax accountant for advice. “I asked him what would happen in terms of capital gains if I sold it,” she says. “He was the one who told me about a charitable remainder annuity trust.” The life-income gift appealed to Carol with its guarantee of income, shelter from capital gains and charitable tax deduction. “With this type of trust, I receive the same amount as I would if I were renting my house but without all the hassle,” she says.

When it came time to pick the beneficiary of the trust, Carol didn’t hesitate in her choice of POST. “I’ve always been interested in saving land. There are bigger organizations that do it too, of course, but I wanted to give back to something more local.” A committed walker, Carol has met a friend at Sawyer Camp Trail near Crystal Springs Reservoir two mornings a week for the last 20 years. Her other passion is cats. She volunteers with the Homeless Cat Network every week and is keenly aware of the importance of preserving habitat for our region’s wildlife.

Carol’s gift was made in honor of her late husband, Russell Palin. While Carol will continue to receive payments from the trust for the rest of her life, the remainder will eventually support POST’s land-saving work.

“I live on a creek in San Mateo, and even though I’m in the city limits, deer come visit my backyard almost every day,” she says. “It’s beautiful here. I feel so fortunate.” ■



“I wanted to give back to something more local.” — CAROL GOODWIN

Real Estate Gifts to POST

Making a gift of real estate — such as a vacation home or investment property — can reduce your taxes, ease the demands of owning property and even provide you with lifetime income.

Here are three ways to make a real estate gift to POST, each with its own benefits to you:

1. Making an outright gift allows you to receive the maximum charitable income tax deduction and avoid capital gains taxes.

2. Gifting a remainder interest in your property allows you to receive a tax deduction at the time of the gift and continue enjoying the property during your lifetime.
3. Establishing a charitable remainder trust with real estate allows you to avoid capital gains taxes, obtain a tax deduction at the time of the gift and receive income for the rest of your life.

No matter what method you choose, your gift helps permanently protect our region’s extraordinary open space lands.

For more information about POST’s real estate gifts program, please contact Adelaide Roberts, Director of Planned Giving, at (650) 854-7696, ext. 312 or aroberts@openspacetrust.org

POST Welcomes Two New Board Members

Venture Veteran: Matt Miller



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A resident of Woodside, venture capitalist and technology veteran Matt Miller joined POST's Board of Directors in June. Matt is managing director of Walden Venture Capital, a San Francisco firm investing in early-stage digital media and cloud-computing businesses.

"Matt has direct, personal experience with land protection tools such as conservation easements, and he has demonstrated leadership in working with nonprofits," says POST Board Chair Mark Wan.

"I came to Silicon Valley for the technology but stayed for the open space," says Matt. "During my first trip here for a job interview, I drove over Highway 92 to Half Moon Bay. I knew what I saw was unique and that I wanted to live here. You just don't find the same kind of dramatic open landscapes this close to most cities."

Matt's first technology job in California was with Oracle Corporation's newly created Desktop division

in 1989. Since then he has been involved in a wide range of early-state technology companies, first as an operating executive and then as a venture investor.

"There's a certain irony in being part of the engine that created Silicon Valley, which displaced the farms and orchards of earlier times and spurred expansion into the hills," says Matt. "I think each of us who has built a career in Silicon Valley should consider giving back to an organization that works to compensate for the environmental impact we have made, directly or indirectly, on the region."

Marketing Guru: Andy Cunningham

In July, POST welcomed high-tech marketing executive Andrea (Andy) Cunningham to its board. Cunningham is a branding pioneer who has helped launch legendary products including Apple's original Macintosh personal computer. She is currently chief marketing officer of Rearden Commerce, a next-generation e-commerce platform company in Foster City.

"Andy's extensive marketing and public relations experience will be a huge asset to POST as we reach out to individuals and companies in Silicon Valley," said POST President Walter T. Moore. "Andy is well-known and respected in the Valley and has worked with some of the most prominent leaders in the high-tech industry. We're thrilled to welcome her to POST's Board."

Before joining Rearden, Andy was founder, president and CEO of CXO Communication, a privately held brand strategy and communications firm in Palo Alto, where she continues to serve as an advisor to the executive team.

Andy's other nonprofit work includes service on the boards of the Computer History Museum in Mountain View and ZERO1: the Art and Technology Network, the San Jose-based contemporary arts organization she founded in 2000 to encourage creativity at the intersection of art and technology.

A resident of Palo Alto, Andy has long been familiar with POST. "It's incredible we have such vast amounts of open space and that it's so easy to commune with nature so close to an urban area," she says. "I'm grateful for all POST has done and am especially excited about its new partnerships such as the Living Landscape Initiative launched earlier this year. To me, POST is one of the best causes out there right now, and I'm excited to be part of its mission." ■



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Volunteer Training Day at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

A June training session at the James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve gave a group of volunteers, donors and POST staff a close look at the connections between land and the health of the tidal zone. The training session concluded with a POST-led hike along the ridge near Pillar Point Bluff, which transferred to the reserve in August (see pp. 4-5). ■

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- 1 Seen from the bluff, a spit of land gives way to fingers of reef at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.
- 2 A Bat star is lifted momentarily from its watery lodgings.
- 3 POST staff and volunteers peer intently into the crannies.

- 4 Clear water and bright sun help reveal a garden of purple sea urchins and green anemones.
- 5 Volunteer John Thomas jumps to stay dry.
- 6 Local creeks like this one drain into the reefs below.

When One Door Closes:

The Future of State Parks

It's no secret that California's state budget woes have extended to the state parks system, which faces a \$22 million shortfall over the next fiscal year and the closure of up to 70 of its 278 state beaches, parks and historic sites.

As a *New York Times* article recently pointed out, California isn't the only state in the nation whose state parks are at risk. Many state governments are leaving no stone unturned in their quest for interim and long-range solutions to keeping parks open. According to the *Times*, Washington and Georgia state parks are considering new fee structures. Arizona and Florida are looking into privatization of their parks, and Ohio has even floated the idea of allowing drilling for oil and gas beneath some state parks. In one of the more drastic moves, Idaho's governor suggested getting rid of its state parks altogether (thankfully, that proposal never made it past the legislature), while Colorado merged its parks department with its Division of Wildlife.

Most eyes, however, are on California and, in particular, the Bay Area, since 18 of the region's 33 state parks are scheduled to close within the next calendar year. In June, *The Wall Street Journal* brought national attention to how some Bay Area parks are turning to nonprofit groups for help. Among the numerous

examples of parks partnering with nonprofits, it's been suggested that public-private partnerships are forging a new model for how state parks are run in the future. These partnerships may soon face less red tape if Assembly Bill AB42 passes, which would allow non-profits to take over operations at some state parks.



© 2007 Dan Quinn

Clio Quinn Ayres swings to the treetops at Little Basin.

While it's crucial that we find a more stable, long-term funding solution for state parks, POST and fellow land trusts have played their own role in bolstering the ailing state park system. In January, POST and Sempervirens Fund transferred 535-acre Little Basin to California State Parks for inclusion into Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Called a "first-of-its-kind deal" by the *San Jose Mercury News*, POST and Sempervirens Fund sold Little Basin to State Parks with a built-in \$1.3 million budget for staff and maintenance. Facing a \$1.2 billion maintenance backlog on current parks, the ability of the state to purchase new parkland has been severely hampered in recent years, but with some advance planning, the two land trusts were able to fund the park's maintenance with the proceeds of a bargain sale from original owner, Hewlett-Packard. It's just one example of how POST is working at the forefront to keep parkland land safe, open and permanently protected for future generations to enjoy. ■

Want to share your thoughts?

Email us at post@openspacetrust.org and be sure to put "In Context" as the subject line.

POST's 2011 *Get Out On the Land* Photo Contest Winners!

Congratulations to Kyrod Myatt of Morgan Hill for his dramatic photo of POST-protected Rancho Cañada del Oro Preserve south of San Jose.

Little did we know when we chose a beautiful close up of a variable checkerspot butterfly as runner-up that it was taken by Kyrod's wife, Jynelle La Pointe. Like Kyrod, Jynelle took her photo at Rancho Cañada de Oro. Congrats to the winning couple!

right: *Landscape*

Location: Mayfair Ranch Trail, Rancho Cañada del Oro.

Camera: Pentax K2000

Lens: 18-55mm lens

Setting: Aperture priority



© 2011 Kyrod Myatt

Left: *Butterfly*

Location: Catamount to Bald Peaks Trail, Rancho Cañada del Oro.

Camera: Pentax KX

Lens: Tamron 28-300mm lens

Setting: Aperture priority



© 2011 Kyrod Myatt

Contest winners Kyrod Myatt and Jynelle La Pointe.

© 2011 Jynelle La Pointe



Tributes

MARCH 16 – AUGUST 15, 2011

*POST is grateful to receive gifts in honor or in memory of friends and family members.
These gifts are a wonderful way to pay tribute to a person's love of outdoor places.*

Gifts in Honor of: Anne and David Bernstein • Nancy and Penn Butler
Trish Caldwell • John R. Carlson • Ann Colla • Earth Day • Steve Blank and Alison Elliott
Steve, Katie, Sarah Blank, Allison Elliott, John Wade • Dave Forter • Ted and Sissy Geballe
The Group Walking Windy Hill Since 1996 • John Hagedorn • Wait Harris and Leslie
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Gifts in Memory of: Jean Anderberg • Eugene Bianchi • Bea Brownson • Ida Buck
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Woolsey

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, public recreation and agriculture for people here now and for future generations.



Landscapes

Landscapes is published by
Peninsula Open Space Trust
222 High Street, Palo Alto, CA 94301

Telephone: (650) 854-7696

Fax: (650) 854-7703

Web site: www.openspacetrust.org

POST is a public benefit California corporation and is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to POST are tax-deductible.

Editor: Kate Cheney Davidson

Contributing Writer: Ann Duwe

Designed by DiVittorio & Associates

Printed by TradeMark Graphics, Inc.

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LANDSCAPES

FALL 2011

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Join us for a 3-mile hike on this beautiful coastal property as we learn how POST preserves its native landscape and wildlife.

Pescadero

Sunday, October 9 10 a.m. to noon

Moderately strenuous, occasional inclines.

RSVP for confirmation and directions to:
walks@openspacetrust.org
or call (650) 854-7696 x310

Hikes fill up quickly and space is limited.



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