



S O N O M A C O U N T Y
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2009

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Acting General Manager of Open Space District Appointed

Board appoints acting District head and begins nationwide search

SANTA ROSA, Calif. – The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, serving as the District’s Board of Directors, late yesterday named Bill Keene as acting General Manager of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. Keene will manage the District’s overall operations including land acquisition and stewardship activities, until the Board selects a replacement for Andrea Mackenzie, who leaves the District on April 20, 2009 after nearly nine years of managing the District.

“The District remains in capable hands,” said Paul Kelley, Fourth District Supervisor, and chair of the Board. “The Board is confident that with Bill’s expertise, solid judgment, and long experience in serving the Sonoma County community, we will continue to make excellent progress in protecting our agriculture and open space. We are very fortunate to have him as our acting general manager.”

Keene has served as Assistant General Manager of the District since July 2008 and been integral in the development of the organization’s Strategic Plan which outlines specific initiatives and actions for the next five years. Prior to joining the District, Keene served as program manager for the Water Agency’s Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Program in Sonoma Valley. The program, the first of its kind in Sonoma County, was rated one of the top programs in the state for funding.

“I am honored to continue the good work of the District,” said Keene. “Despite this transition time, we are connecting communities to the land, building and strengthening partnerships, and implementing key initiatives in our Strategic Plan,” said Keene.

Additionally, Keene has extensive experience building partnerships throughout the region with water agencies, municipalities, business interests, agricultural groups, non-profits, and other organizations in the areas of water resources, natural resources management, land use planning, climate change, integrated regional water management planning and watershed management.

“The Board of Supervisors has made an excellent choice,” said Craig Anderson, Executive Director of LandPaths, a key non-profit organization that partners with the District. “Bill is a ‘can-do’ thinker and believes strongly in partnerships between public agencies and between agencies and nonprofits. His ‘whole community’ approach will ensure that the District will become even more relevant in our lives.”

Keene will be available immediately to begin the transition at the District, but his official start date is April 21, 2009. The Board will begin a search for a permanent replacement immediately.

About the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resource and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. Since 1990, the District has protected 163 properties totaling 75,364 acres. Agricultural and open space lands have been protected through a 1/4-cent sales tax approved by voters in 1990 and reauthorized in 2006. For more information, please visit www.sonomaopenspace.org