

SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL
PRESERVATION & OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

WORK PLAN

JULY 2012–JUNE 2015

Balancing Multiple Objectives



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
WORK PLAN PURPOSE	3
BACKGROUND — SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION & OPEN SPACE DISTRICT	4
Accomplishments: 1990–2011.....	4
Enabling Legislation.....	4
Bonding History	4
Governance	5
Guiding Documents	5
District Mission & Goals	5
Guiding Principles	5
PROGRAM AREAS	6
Planning.....	6
Acquisition	6
Stewardship.....	7
Operations.....	7
DISTRICT THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN	8
Work Plan Process.....	8
2012–2015 Strategies	8
Work Plan Budget.....	10
Work Plan Actions	11
Performance Measures	17
CONCLUSION	18
APPENDICES	19
Appendix A: District Accomplishments: 1990–2011.....	19
Appendix B: District Expenditure Plan and Enabling Legislation	25
Appendix C: Summary of Public Input	35

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District acknowledges and thanks the following entities and groups for their contributions to the development of this three-year Work Plan:

- Board of Directors, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- Citizen's Advisory Committee, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- Fiscal Oversight Commission, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- Numerous stakeholder groups, agencies and individuals who provided input in the areas of agricultural conservation, natural resource protection, recreation and public access, public health, economic vitality, scenic and open space protection, and land stewardship
- Staff, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District) was created in 1990 by the voters of Sonoma County to permanently protect the diverse agricultural, natural resource, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. Since 1990, the District has protected over 85,000 acres of open space and working landscapes via the purchase of conservation easements and fee title. The District developed this Work Plan, as directed by its Board of Directors, to guide the District's priorities, staffing and funding allocation for fiscal years 2012–2015. Despite the economic downturn, reduced funding revenues, and annual bond repayments, the District continues to have a stable long term source of funding through 2031. The Work Plan is grounded in the mission of the District as defined in its enabling legislation (Measure F) and the California Public Resources Code, as well as plans and directives adopted by the District's Board of Directors.

The purpose of the Work Plan is to:

- Identify priorities in the context of existing approved plans and commitments
- Achieve a balanced, multi-objective program, protecting lands in all categories
- Anticipate and dedicate resources needed to meet District objectives
- Commit to a spending plan for fiscal years 2012–15
- Provide measurements/benchmarks of success
- Communicate priorities to the public

The Work Plan was developed by staff via analysis of District enabling legislation, previous Board direction, historic data and trends, fiscal history and projections, and tracking of regional and national trends. The draft Work Plan was reviewed by the public, the District Advisory Committee and the District Fiscal Oversight Commission, and revised in response to this input.

Program areas included in this Work Plan include planning, acquisition, stewardship and administration. The proposed Work Plan budget includes expenditures of \$71,279,600 over the three year period, with approximately \$22 million each to Acquisition and Debt Service, \$9.4 million to Stewardship, \$1.2 million for planning — including funding development, \$3.2 million for operations, \$9.7 million for salaries and benefits, and \$2.1 million towards two Board authorized reserve funds for long term stewardship and operations & maintenance. District revenues during the three year Work Plan period are projected to be \$71,279,600, with \$48.7 million derived from the quarter cent sales tax, \$1.9 million from interest earnings, \$495,000 from rental and lease income, and approximately \$20 million derived from fund balance. This Work Plan proposes to retain a fund balance of slightly over \$40 million after the Work Plan period.

Work plan actions include a balanced program of acquisition and stewardship activities that implement the District's diverse mission, implement the District's enabling legislation and Board directives, and provide multiple benefits to the taxpayers and residents of Sonoma County. These actions are supported by planning, administrative and public outreach

activities and programs, and all are subject to Board approval. Many of the actions listed in the Work Plan represent multi-year projects and initiatives — such as long term acquisition processes, capital improvements, and multi-year planning efforts. The Work Plan includes ten identified acquisition projects currently in the planning stage, totaling 6800 acres at an estimated cost of roughly \$13.3 million. These projects represent a mix of Acquisition Plan categories, including agriculture, natural resources, greenbelts, recreation and education, and urban open space lands. There is also a placeholder for future acquisition projects that are identified during the three year Work Plan period, with over \$6 million set aside for these purchases. The Work Plan identifies eight properties for transfer to parks or other conservation entities, totaling 3400 acres. There are four urban open space projects proposed during the Work Plan period at a cost of \$1.25 million, with a future round of urban open space projects planned for the second year of the Work Plan period with a funding allocation of \$2 million. The Stewardship program proposes to develop key policies and programs — including a mitigation policy, fee lands strategy and volunteer/education/outings programs for a total of \$1,287,900. Additionally, the Stewardship program proposes to continue and enhance easement monitoring and protection of the District’s investment in its 77,500 acres of conservation easements for a cost of \$202,400. During the three year Work Plan period, the District proposes to manage over 7,500 acres of fee lands, perform resource assessments and enhancements, provide interim public access, including permit programs and volunteer patrol, engage in recreation planning and capital improvements and provide operations and maintenance payments associated with recreational land transfers for a total of \$7,928,300.

Measures to evaluate performance will focus on the number of items identified in the Work Plan that are completed during the three year Work Plan period, as well as the degree to which Board-directed plans are implemented. Future performance measurements — including cost/benefit analyses and community benefit analyses — are included in the planning program for the Work Plan and performance objectives, measures, indicators and metrics will be developed via meetings and workshops with Board members, the two advisory bodies and the public.



WORK PLAN PURPOSE

At the April 25, 2011 meeting of the District's Board of Directors, staff was directed to develop a three-year Work Plan to guide the District's priorities, staffing and funding allocation for fiscal years 2012–13 through 2014–15. The Board, staff, and community recognize the current challenges facing the District in light of the economic downturn and associated reductions in sales tax revenues, including reduction in outside funding from state bonds, foundations and federal sources, and a \$7.5 million annual bond debt repayment from 2011 through 2031. Despite these challenges, the District continues to have a stable funding source, allowing it to continue land conservation actions into the future. Given the economic constraints facing the District and the high expectations for the District to achieve a balanced and diverse set of goals, it is critical that the District prioritize its actions in order to be responsive to the vision of the community and effective with limited funds. Additionally, the District needs to consider actions included in the three-year Work Plan in the context of the twenty-year life of Measure F, ensuring that the diverse mission of the District is achieved during the life of the measure and that the three-year Work Plan actions are aligned with long term financial projections.

The Work Plan is grounded in the mission of the District as defined in its enabling legislation, as well as the goals in the Board-adopted Acquisition Plan and Strategic Plan. The purpose of the Work Plan is to:

- Identify priorities in the context of existing approved plans and commitments
- Achieve a balanced, multi-objective program that protects land in all Acquisition Plan categories

- Anticipate and dedicate resources needed to meet District objectives
- Commit to a spending plan for fiscal years 2012–15
- Identify measurements/benchmarks of success
- Communicate priorities to the public

Despite the current economic downturn and the annual bond debt repayment, the District retains not only a steady source of revenue through the quarter-cent sales tax, but also its culture of creativity, strong public support, and a network of partner agencies, community organizations, and funders. These resources and capacity will support the successful implementation of the Work Plan, helping the District to achieve protection of Sonoma County's agricultural, natural resource, and open space heritage.



BACKGROUND — SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION & OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 1990–2011

The voters of Sonoma County created the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District) to permanently protect the greenbelts, scenic viewsheds, farms and ranches and natural areas of Sonoma County. Situated on the northern edge of the rapidly urbanizing Bay Area, and facing the loss of natural and agricultural landscapes that define the county's rural character, the visionary voters of Sonoma County recognized the need for proactive local funding for agricultural and open space protection. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District was one of the first districts in the country established to protect both agricultural and open space lands, and to date has protected over 85,000 acres via the purchase of conservation easements and fee title. The District has received recognition from the National Association of Counties and the Trust for Public Land, ranking it as one of the top open space and farm land conservation programs in the nation. A summary of District Accomplishments over the last twenty years is included as Appendix A.

ENABLING LEGISLATION

In 1990 Sonoma County voters approved Measures A and C to create the District and enable the levying of a quarter cent sales tax to fund District operations until 2011. In 2006 with 76% of the vote, Sonoma County residents approved Measure F, which extended the quarter-cent sales tax through 2031. Measure F took effect in April 2011 and requires

that the sales tax be levied by the County rather than the Sonoma County Open Space Authority.

The District's actions are directed by Measure F, as well as the Public Resources Code. Measure F includes a detailed Expenditure Plan that specifies and limits the actions the District may take in protecting and stewarding land. Measure F, as well as the original Measures A and C that created and funded the District, are included as Appendix B. The open space designations eligible for protection under the Expenditure Plan include community separators, greenbelts, scenic landscape units, scenic corridors, agriculturally-productive lands, biotic habitat areas, riparian corridors and other areas of biotic significance, and other open space projects. Protection is accomplished primarily through the purchase of development rights from willing sellers in areas designated in the County and Cities' General Plan open space elements. Protection may include the purchase of fee interests for outdoor public recreation where the public use is consistent with the Expenditure Plan open space designations. Up to ten percent of total revenues generated over the life of the measure are available for operation and maintenance purposes on these fee lands. Operation and maintenance of land includes limited funding for initial public access.

BONDING HISTORY

In 2007, the District sold revenue bonds to take advantage of key conservation opportunities in the county. Sale of these bonds allowed for the purchase of 25 properties, including Saddle Mountain, Taylor

Mountain, multiple properties on Sonoma Mountain and several key acquisitions on the Sonoma Coast. In 2011, the District began repayment of the debt service associated with the sale of these bonds (totaling approximately \$7.5 million annually through 2031).

GOVERNANCE

The District is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the five members of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. Under Measures A and C, an independent Open Space Authority monitored all sales tax expenditures. As required by Measure F, the Open Space Authority has been reorganized as the five-member Sonoma County Open Space Fiscal Oversight Commission to provide independent fiscal oversight of the District's operations. A 17-member District Advisory Committee advises the Board and staff on policy matters and proposed land protection and stewardship efforts. The District is ultimately responsible to the taxpayers of Sonoma County, under the governance of the Board of Directors and with advice and guidance from the Fiscal Oversight Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

The District's work is guided by two Board approved planning documents — the Acquisition Plan entitled *Connecting Communities and the Land* and the District Strategic Plan: 2009–2013. Additionally, the District is guided by its annual Board-approved budget and miscellaneous policies and procedures adopted by the Board, including the Sonoma County Strategic Plan.

DISTRICT MISSION & GOALS

The Mission of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District is to:

Permanently protect the diverse agricultural, natural resource, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations.

The goals from the District's Acquisition Plan *Connecting Communities and the Land* continue to guide the actions proposed in this Work Plan. They are:

1. Maintain the county's rich rural character and the unique qualities of each city

and areas throughout the county that help provide our sense of community.

2. Support the economic vitality of working farms to preserve the agricultural heritage and diversity of the county.
3. Protect the ridgetops, coastal bluffs, hillsides, and waterways that create the county's striking natural beauty.
4. Provide connections between urban areas, parks and natural areas throughout the county for both people and wildlife.
5. Preserve diverse natural areas that provide habitat for wildlife.
6. Protect the waterways and associated natural lands that maintain water quality and supply.
7. Partner with local agencies and organizations to leverage funding for land protection, foster stewardship, and provide opportunities for recreational and educational experiences.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles inform the actions and decisions of the District, both during the Work Plan period as well as throughout the life of the District. These principles are not listed in order of priority.

1. Protect the highest priority lands in all acquisition plan categories (Agriculture, Natural Resources, Greenbelts, Recreation and Education, Urban Open Space).
2. Use taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.
3. Ensure long-term fiscal sustainability and institutional capacity.
4. Generate innovative solutions to accomplish the District's vision for healthy ecosystems, working landscapes and communities.
5. Operate transparently, share information, and be responsive to requests and ideas from the community
6. Engage in high-quality planning using the best available data.
7. Partner and collaborate to accomplish District mission.



PROGRAM AREAS

The District accomplishes its mission through its core program areas of planning, acquisition, and stewardship, supported by financial planning and administrative services. Following are brief descriptions of each program area.

PLANNING

The planning staff collects and analyzes information to prioritize lands for acquisition in all acquisition plan categories and to effectively and efficiently steward and manage protected lands. The District has led or participated in various local and regional planning efforts in support of land conservation, including the recent Sonoma County Oak Woodland Management Plan, the Coastal Prairie Mapping Program, the Mayacamas Conservation Plan, the Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals project, and a detailed evaluation of habitat connectivity in the Mayacamas Range. The first steps in a county-wide vegetation mapping effort are currently underway.

The District was recently awarded a large private foundation grant to perform economic analyses of the value of conservation. Information from this analysis will be used to evaluate the impact of the District on the Sonoma County economy, to help guide conservation priorities and to attract outside funding for core District activities. The District is also partnering with The Nature Conservancy to determine the carbon sequestration potential of forest and rangelands in Sonoma County, and to develop tools to support conservation via climate mitigation and adaptation.

ACQUISITION

The District selects and designs projects that protect a balance of agricultural, scenic, natural and recreational lands using the latest planning information. Acquisition staff works with willing sellers to protect these lands in a number of ways, including two primary mechanisms: 1) conservation easements — which allow the land to stay in private ownership while protecting the conservation values; and 2) fee purchases — when the District purchases land with the intent to transfer it to a state, regional, or local public entity or non-profit organization subject to a conservation easement, or resell it to a private individual subject to a conservation easement. In addition, the District develops and implements a diverse range of tools for protecting different types of land, such as customized conservation easements and affirmative preservation agreements for agricultural or natural and resource protection, and partnerships for recreational lands.

With its sustainable revenue stream, the District has a unique ability to work with city, county, state, and federal partners to leverage funding to enhance land protection throughout the county. The District has leveraged significant funds for acquisition with numerous partners including the California Coastal Conservancy, City of Sonoma, City of Petaluma, Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Forest Legacy Fund, Sonoma County Water Agency, State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Wildlife Conservation Board. The District also provides funds and technical assistance to local cities, agencies, and non-profit organizations for recreation, public access, restora-

tion, and other open space projects in urban areas through the competitive Matching Grant Program.

STEWARDSHIP

The stewardship program ensures protection and, where appropriate, enhancement of conservation values for District-protected lands. Easement stewardship activities — including development of baselines, monitoring of easements, processing of permitted use requests, and rare enforcement actions — ensure permanent protection of conservation values and easement compliance, as well as fostering communication and cooperation with easement landowners.

Fee land stewardship activities — maintenance, land management, and capital improvements — protect and enhance the conservation values of properties the District holds in fee. Maintenance includes vegetation management, fire risk reduction, and infrastructure upkeep. For some properties, detailed management plans have been developed to assess existing resources, identify compatible uses of the land, and develop a set of recommended management actions. Nearly all fee properties are currently grazed or are in some other agricultural use.

The District has engaged in various habitat restoration projects — including the enhancement of riparian habitat to benefit Coho salmon and other aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, as well as to protect and enhance water quality. The District has also increased recreational opportunities through creation of multi-use trails and related amenities, and funding of non-profit partner-led outings and permit programs. The Agricultural and Environmental Education Program educates the public about the District, Sonoma County habitats and species, land conservation, stewardship, and agriculture.

OPERATIONS

Administrative services of the District include financial planning, legal analysis, and the day-to-day management of District personnel needs, contracts and budget. Although these services comprise only a small percentage of the overall budget, they are critical for sound and sustainable management of the public's tax dollars and for protection against incurring avoidable liability.



DISTRICT THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN

WORK PLAN PROCESS

The District three-year Work Plan was developed by staff using the following methods:

- Analysis of historic data and trends related to District land conservation actions
- Analysis of fiscal history and projections, including expenditures and revenues (sales tax and other income)
- Tracking of regional and national trends in conservation strategies and methods
- Assessment of local, regional and national trends in funding
- Evaluation of current and proposed Work Plan actions in the context of District enabling legislation, Measure F and Expenditure Plan
- Evaluation of current and proposed Work Plan actions in the context of Board resolutions and direction

The draft Work Plan was reviewed by the public, the District Advisory Committee and the Fiscal Oversight Commission, and updated based on the input of these groups. Appendix C summarizes this input. District staff will develop regular updates to the Work Plan, subject to Board approval, to reflect new fiscal data and information about time-sensitive opportunities and trends.

2012–2015 STRATEGIES

The guiding principles stated above inform the following strategies and detailed Work Plan actions for the three fiscal years between July 1, 2012 and June 30,

2015. The strategies focus and prioritize the District's efforts during the Work Plan period; the Work Plan actions identify specific tasks based on an analysis of enabling legislation, legal requirements, Board direction, opportunities, constraints, community objectives, and short and long-term revenue projections.

1. Enhance planning to effectively prioritize District actions.

The District will continue to invest in high-quality data gathering and analysis to support the effective prioritization of land acquisition and stewardship activities, enhance opportunities for outside funding, and document the impact of District actions. Access to high-quality data and planning information is a cost-effective method to ensure the appropriate prioritization of District actions, to ensure public credibility, to attract outside funding, and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of District activities. District investment in data development and planning is a relatively small allocation within the overall Work Plan, yet results in overall efficiency and a substantial return on investment.

2. Maintain focus on the acquisition and stewardship of conservation easements as primary protection mechanism.

The District's enabling legislation and Expenditure Plan direct the District to focus its actions on the protection of key agricultural, natural resource, green-belt, and scenic lands via conservation easements, with a limited amount of District funds allowed for the fee title purchase and interim operation of recreational lands. Since only a partial interest in a

property is acquired, easements are a tool for protecting more and higher quality land at a lower cost than outright fee purchases. As easements allow the land to remain in private hands, they do not require the management investments or incur the liabilities associated with fee title ownership.

3. Support urban open space conservation through a bi-ennial matching grant program.

Since its inception in 1990, the District has worked with the county's nine cities, county departments, local agencies and non-profit organizations in a unique partnership — a competitive Matching Grant Program. This program builds on local capacity to protect, preserve, and enhance urban open spaces, and to provide recreational opportunities to residents. In order to have a robust program that is conducted in an efficient manner, the District will conduct the program on a bi-ennial basis.

4. Enhance easement stewardship.

The District will enhance its protection of conservation and open space easement properties through more frequent easement monitoring, which will result in multiple benefits. Increased frequency of monitoring will ensure that the District has regular communication with landowners, which will contribute to positive relations with landowners and decrease the likelihood of easement violations. Any violations of easement terms will be identified sooner, which will help to prevent lingering and unresolved enforcement situations. Additionally, increased monitoring will bring the District's easement stewardship activities more in line with national easement stewardship standards as outlined by the Land Trust Alliance.

5. Identify priorities for fee lands management and transfers.

The intent of the voters, reflected in the enabling legislation and Expenditure Plan, is for the District to act as a land protection entity, transferring recreational lands to relevant parks management agencies immediately or shortly after purchase. Given the economic downturn and lack of funding for parks management agencies, the District has been unable to transfer previously-purchased properties that provide recreational opportunities. In addition to recreational properties held in fee, the District holds other fee properties that

require ongoing management, resulting in significant allocations of staff and other financial resources.

The District will prepare a Fee Lands Strategy to guide the stewardship and disposition of lands held in fee by the District. The development of this strategy includes an inventory of District fee lands, analysis of opportunities, and development of a workplan for each property that describes recommended maintenance activities, land management practices, and disposition options. Disposition may include transfer of fee title to a partnering entity or sale to a conservation buyer while holding back a conservation easement, or retaining fee title for revenue generation or other purposes. The Strategy will direct limited staff and funding resources towards priority actions intended to achieve specific conservation outcomes. In addition, the Strategy will identify areas where volunteers, partnering organizations, and outside funding could be utilized to further District resources.

6. Transfer identified fee lands.

Prioritized fee lands will be transferred to parks agencies and to other willing land management entities that have the capacity and mission to protect the conservation values purchased by the District. The District will retain conservation easements over all transferred properties.

7. Provide opportunities for public to engage in caring for District-protected lands.

The community that envisioned and created the District rightfully feels a sense of pride and ownership in this organization and its work. The interim access, outings, and education programs provide opportunities for the community to engage with the land it has protected. In addition, the District will expand its volunteer and intern program during the Work Plan period. Volunteers may participate in key District activities such as easement monitoring, land management activities including invasive species removal, restoration of habitat for fish and wildlife, volunteer patrol, community education and interpretation, and infrastructure maintenance — all essential to successful stewardship of protected lands.

8. Focus on current commitments for recreational capital improvement expenditures.

During recent years the District has devoted a large amount of staff time and funding to capital improvement projects for recreation, including trail and trailhead construction, and master planning. Projects have included public use planning for Taylor Mountain, trail planning and construction along the Laguna de Santa Rosa, along the North Slope of Sonoma Mountain, at Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve, and trail planning along the East Slope of Sonoma Mountain. These investments, although they yield a tremendous return in terms of public awareness of and connection to protected lands, represent a very substantial portion of the overall revenues of the District. Such an investment reduces the District's ability to protect other key properties, including agricultural, natural resource, scenic, and greenbelt lands.

The District will honor its current commitments for recreational capital improvements, including the completion of the North Slope Sonoma Mountain trail, the Taylor Mountain Master Plan, and recreational improvements at the Montini Open Space Preserve, Healdsburg Ridge and the Laguna Trails. In the interest of being more efficient with limited funding, the District will not invest in additional capital improvement projects for recreation during the 2012–2015 Work Plan period. The District will continue to collaborate with its recreation-focused partners to promote passive, low-impact recreational uses, focusing its limited resources on land conservation activities.

9. Expand focus on leveraging District revenues.

Given the economic downturn, reduction in sales tax revenues, bond debt repayment, and general reduction in available state and federal funding, it is imperative that the District be proactive in seeking and generating funding to leverage the investment of Sonoma County taxpayers. Using its sales tax revenue as a match to attract outside grant funding, the District will seek grant funding in collaboration with local and regional partners. The District will also participate in local and regional measures designed to enhance funding for District and partner conservation activities, and will continue to track relevant federal legislation and funding opportunities. The District will continue to support a State Legislative Program and investments in regional conservation organizations such as the Bay Area Open Space Council and California

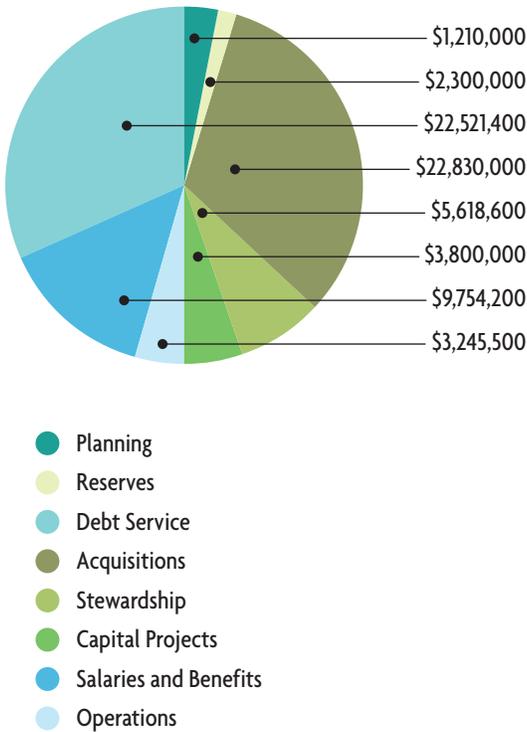
Council of Land Trusts to track funding opportunities of interest to the District and its partners.

WORK PLAN BUDGET

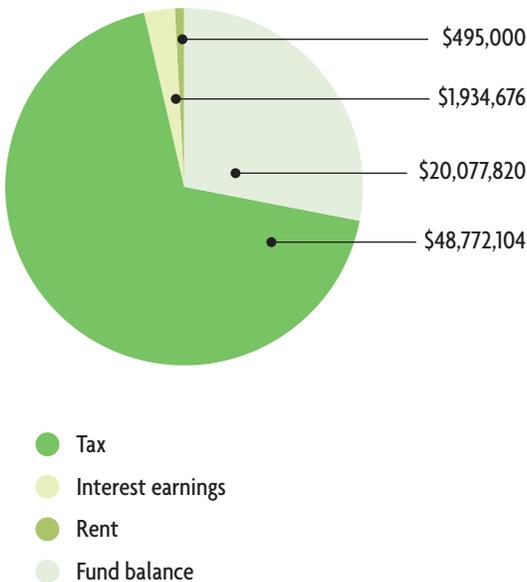
The District's budget for the Work Plan period includes program expenditures, operational costs, salaries and benefits, payment of the debt service, and payment into two reserve funds for responsibilities post 2031 — when Measure F sunsets. The table and graphs below show both expenditures and revenue, including the amount to be spent from the fund balance, to provide a complete picture of the District's budget in the Work Plan period.

WORK PLAN BUDGET			
	Year 1 (FY 12–13)	Years 2–3	3-Year Total
EXPENDITURE			
Planning	\$370,000	\$840,000	\$1,210,000
Acquisition	\$12,890,000	\$9,940,000	\$22,830,000
Stewardship	\$7,676,500	\$1,742,100	\$9,418,600
Operations	\$1,329,400	\$1,916,100	\$3,245,500
Salaries and Benefits	\$3,391,100	\$6,363,000	\$9,754,100
Debt Service	\$7,506,600	\$15,014,800	\$22,521,400
Stewardship Reserve	\$500,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,700,000
O&M Reserve	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$600,000
TOTAL	\$33,863,600	\$37,416,000	\$71,279,600
REVENUE			
Tax	\$16,128,000	\$32,644,104	\$48,772,104
Interest earnings	\$644,892	\$1,289,784	\$1,934,676
Rent	\$165,000	\$330,000	\$495,000
Fund Balance	\$16,925,708	\$3,152,112	\$20,077,820
TOTAL	\$33,863,600	\$37,416,000	\$71,279,600
Remaining Fund Balance			\$40,323,236

WORK PLAN EXPENDITURES



WORK PLAN REVENUES



WORK PLAN ACTIONS

The Work Plan actions include the tasks the District will undertake during the Work Plan period to meet its mission and address Board approved plans and directives. The following work and associated District funding and staff resources reflect the Work Plan strategies outlined above. All actions listed are subject to Board approval.

BENEFITS OF WORK PLAN ACTIONS

The suite of actions included in the Work Plan provides multiple benefits to the Sonoma County community and supports a balanced program that achieves the diverse mission of the District. Each program area's benefits are aligned with the categories outlined in the District's Board approved Acquisition Plan, Strategic Plan and the District's enabling legislation. These benefit categories are described below.

Agriculture (A): Protect the diverse agricultural character and heritage of Sonoma County. Support the continued viability of farms and ranches. Assist farmers and ranchers to keep vital agricultural lands in production primarily through the purchase of conservation easements and affirmative agricultural agreements. Protect some of the largest intact farms and ranches within important agricultural regions which contribute to the local agricultural economy, preserve the county's rural character, and provide access to fresh locally grown and produced goods.

Greenbelts (G): Protect greenbelts that separate cities and communities. Preserve key scenic lands that surround cities and communities, and preserve the gateways to Sonoma County. Protect lands within greenbelts that enhance residents' quality of life. Expand networks of protected lands on the urban edge that promote healthy, livable communities with opportunities for recreation, non-motorized transportation and locally grown agricultural products.

Natural Resources (NR): Maintain the natural diversity of the county with healthy connected habitats for plants and animals. Conserve a network of streams and watershed lands to preserve water quality for human communities, fish and other wildlife. Protect habitats unique to Sonoma County. Protect natural resources to benefit human communities and ecosystems. Conserve lands that provide viable habitat linkages for wildlife

and help human communities and ecosystems mitigate and adapt to climate change. Ensure that public recreational use of lands purchased in fee is compatible with the sensitive natural features of the land.

Recreation & Education (RE): Work with partners to create and expand parks and preserves and provide educational experiences that protect and increase awareness of Sonoma County's unique natural and agricultural areas. Work with partners to expand bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian trail linkages between communities that connect locally and regionally protected lands. Ensure District-protected lands are managed to protect conservation values while allowing compatible public recreational uses. Promote recreational and educational opportunities for residents to learn about, enjoy and experience the natural diversity of Sonoma County. Prioritize outdoor recreational opportunities close to urban areas and in proximity to underserved communities.

Urban Open Space (UOS): Work with public and non-profit partners through the District's Matching Grant Program to protect lands within or near urban communities. These projects will preserve and enhance natural areas; protect viable agricultural lands that provide locally grown and produced food; retain scenic resources that contribute to the unique character of these communities; and create public outdoor recreational opportunities including access to urban open space in underserved communities.

Most of the District's actions result in benefits in multiple categories. The following table provides detailed information about the actions proposed for each program area, and the benefits associated with each listed action.

PROGRAM AREA: PLANNING	COST — THREE YEARS: \$1,210,000
<p>Program Description: Enhance data and planning to identify, prioritize and inform the District's programs and projects, share information with the public and attract funding</p>	
<p>Community Benefits: High quality planning allows staff to provide the District's Board with robust analyses to support their decision making, prioritize actions based on the best available data, achieve long term cost savings by gathering and analyzing data that can be used in multiple applications, attract funding from agencies and foundations as well as support future legislation and other revenue measures with key statistics and information regarding the impact of the District. Additionally, high quality data and planning support the day to day operations associated with responsibly managing over 85,000 acres of land, and providing information to the public regarding the outcome of their investments.</p>	
ACTIONS	BENEFIT CATEGORIES
Develop analyses of threat to natural, scenic, and agricultural resources	A, G, NR
Conduct visibility analysis to identify highly scenic lands	G
Develop agriculture viability and land protection strategy	A, NR
Update greenbelt parcel analyses	G
Analyze economic value of conservation	A, G, NR, RE
Perform county wide carbon sequestration mapping	A, G, NR
Develop multi-scale wildlife corridor mapping	A, NR
Develop habitat restoration strategy for District lands	A, NR
Develop key datasets, including vegetation, updated aerials and maps	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Update and integrate Acquisition Plan and Strategic Plans	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Develop and deploy a GIS based Decision Support System	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Develop a riparian corridor protection and enhancement strategy	A, NR
Develop a source watershed protection strategy	A, NR
Develop District climate mitigation and adaptation strategies	A, NR
Evaluate Agricultural preservation tools (Williamson Act "replacement")	A
Strategy for District role in local food security/agricultural viability	A
Continue Agricultural Technical Advisory Group	A
Assess funding needs and strategies for partnering on revenue development	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Plan/implement key grant applications	A, G, NR, RE, UOS

PROGRAM AREA: ACQUISITION			
CORE ACQUISITION FUNCTIONS		COST — THREE YEARS: \$130,000	
Program Description: Further land protection efforts by continuing thorough analyses of potential projects, and development and implementation of innovative and appropriate acquisition tools and policies.			
Community Benefits: Landscapes that support agriculture, community separators, recreation, and wildlife habitat are as important to our communities as other infrastructure such as roads, sewers, and storm drains. Countywide open space networks can protect agricultural lands and link urban communities, open spaces, trails, and wildlife habitat — a strategic approach to conservation that protects Sonoma County’s critical “green infrastructure.” The District’s land conservation efforts help shape the quality of communities and ensure that Sonoma County’s natural beauty, farming traditions, and clean air and water are safeguarded for the future.			
ACTIVE ACQUISITION PROJECTS		COST — THREE YEARS: \$13,375,000	
Description: Continue to expand land protection efforts through the completion of acquisition projects currently under negotiation.			
ACTIONS	EASEMENT OR FEE PURCHASE	ACRES	BENEFIT CATEGORIES
Arrowhead Dairy	CE	910	A,G,NR
Bordessa Ranch	CE	500	A,G,NR,RE
Cresta II Ranch	Fee	20-70	NR, RE
Elliott Ranch	CE	1,110	A,G,NR
Fitch Mountain	Fee	250	G,NR,RE
Max	CE	2,300	NR
McClelland Dairy	CE	340	A,G
McCullough II	Fee	260	NR, RE
Stewarts Point Ranch	CE	870	A,G,NR,RE
Sullivan	CE	210	G,NR
FUTURE ACQUISITION PROJECTS		COST — THREE YEARS: \$6,075,000	
Description: Maintain an active and balanced acquisition program that uses the latest conservation planning strategies to identify the highest priority projects and recommend project structures that achieves multiple benefits.			
TRANSFER PROJECTS (ACQUISITION STAFF TIME ONLY — DISTRICT EXPENDITURES CONTAINED IN STEWARDSHIP)			
Description: Complete the transfer of District-owned lands that have identified partners, while retaining a conservation easement that seeks to permanently protect the Districts’ identified conservation values.			
ACTIVE MATCHING GRANT PROJECTS		COST — THREE YEARS: \$1,250,000	
Description: Continue the District’s efforts to expand urban open space opportunities through our competitive matching grant program.			
ACTIONS	BENEFIT CATEGORIES		
Colgan Creek	NR, RE, UOS		
Crane Creek Regional Trail	RE, UOS		
La Cresta Ridge and Ravine	G, NR, RE, UOS		
Riverfront Regional Park	RE		
FUTURE MATCHING GRANT PROJECTS		COST — THREE YEARS: \$2,000,000	
Description: Conduct the Matching Grant Program on a bi-ennial basis to ensure that the program is expanding urban open space efforts in the most efficient manner.			

PROGRAM AREA: STEWARDSHIP	
Program Description: <i>The Stewardship program ensures protection and, where appropriate, enhancement of conservation values for District-protected lands.</i>	
Community Benefits: <i>Responsible stewardship of District-protected lands is essential to preserving the District' investment in perpetuity. Stewardship actions help support the long term viability of Sonoma County's agriculture operations while respecting the County's rich agricultural heritage, preserve the integrity of greenbelts and scenic corridors, protect and enhance natural resources, provide and support recreational opportunities and partnerships, and ensure the long-term protection of urban open spaces.</i>	
POLICIES AND PROGRAMS	COST — THREE YEARS: \$1,287,900
<i>Description: Develop and implement policies and programs to steward District-protected lands.</i>	
ACTIONS	BENEFIT CATEGORIES
Develop mitigation policy	A, G, NR
Develop sign standards	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Implement outings program on primarily fee properties	A, NR, RE
Implement agricultural and environmental education program on most fee and many easement properties	A, NR, RE
Develop volunteer program	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP	COST — THREE YEARS: \$202,400
Description: <i>Ensure easement compliance and permanent protection of conservation values for all lands protected by District easements, approximately 200 easements over 78,000 acres.</i>	
ACTIONS	BENEFIT CATEGORIES
Prepare baselines prior to project closing	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Increase frequency of easement monitoring to every 18 months	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Process permitted use and amendment requests	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
Follow up on violations and enforce easement terms	A, G, NR, RE, UOS
FEE LANDS STEWARDSHIP	COST — THREE YEARS: \$7,928,300
Description: <i>Protect and enhance conservation values of approximately 7,500 acres that the District holds in fee. Along with development of an overall strategy for the District's fee lands, routine natural resource management and infrastructure maintenance activities on all properties, and resource studies to support project structure of conservation easements as part of the land transfer process, this Work Plan includes tasks to be completed for the specific properties listed below.</i>	
Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanup and prevention of illicit activities Trails and Community Involvement Plan 	NR, RE
Carrington Ranch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grazing Management Plan 	A, NR, RE
East Slope Sonoma Mountain Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail and Community Involvement Plan 	NR, RE
Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail construction O&M funding 	G, NR, RE
Jenner Headlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Resource Management Plan 	A, NR, RE

Laguna Trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail construction O&M funding 	A, G, NR, RE
Lawson addition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> O&M funding 	NR, RE
Mark West properties (Cresta Ranch, McCullough) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource studies 	A, NR, RE
Montini Open Space Preserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail construction O&M funding 	A, G, NR, RE
North Slope Sonoma Mountain properties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource studies Trail construction O&M funding 	A, NR, RE
Poff Ranch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contamination remediation Management Plan 	A, NR, RE
Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan 	G, NR, RE
Sonoma Mountain Ranch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grazing Management Plan 	A, NR, RE
Taylor Mountain Open Space Preserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master Plan Interim access O&M funding 	A, G, NR, RE

PROGRAM AREA: OPERATIONS	COST — THREE YEARS: \$3,245,500
Program Description: <i>Provide efficient and effective District administrative services and support for functioning of District programs. Facilitate internal and external communication, including website maintenance and other outreach methods, District Advisory Committee, sponsorships.</i>	
Community Benefits: <i>ensure fiscal integrity, transparency, public responsiveness and sustainability of the District so that it is effective in implementing its mission and achieving the intent of the voters.</i>	
ACTIONS	BENEFIT CATEGORIES
Administration, Fiscal, HR, Overhead	A, NR, G, RE, UOS
Communications and Public Relations	A, NR, G, RE, UOS

The following table summarizes the annual staffing needed to accomplish the actions identified above, and the associated costs for the three-year period.

PROGRAM AREA	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)	PERCENT OF TOTAL STAFFING	THREE-YEAR STAFFING COST BY PROGRAM AREA
Planning	2.7 FTE	11%	\$1,613,934
Acquisition	5.8 FTE	24%	\$2,297,328
Stewardship	10.0 FTE	40%	\$3,143,442
Operations	6.25 FTE	25%	\$2,699,423
Total	24.75	100%	\$9,754,127

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The District will evaluate Work Plan performance based on the following:

- Number of Work Plan items completed
- Implementation of identified strategies
- Degree to which balance is achieved among Expenditure Plan and Acquisition Plan categories
- Progress towards achieving Acquisition Plan and Strategic Plan goals

Note: During the Work Plan period the District will work with the community, the Board of Directors, the District Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission to refine quantitative and qualitative metrics and indicators for performance evaluation.



CONCLUSION

The District has accomplished a great deal in its first twenty years — successfully carrying out the community’s vision for substantial and permanent agricultural and open space protection in Sonoma County, furthering the county’s goals for healthy communities, ecosystems and viable farms and ranches, and contributing to the economic vitality of the county and region. Although the District is faced with challenging economic times, there is an opportunity for the District — via careful and strategic planning, creative innovation, quality work, prioritization of actions and collaboration with community partners — to not only continue the legacy of conservation accomplishments over the last twenty years, but to expand upon the local vision that created this nationally-recognized unique land conservation organization. The District Work Plan 2012–2015 represents a substantial portfolio of actions designed to implement the District’s mission and Board directives, to efficiently and effectively achieve a balanced conservation program that benefits the diverse needs of the Sonoma County community.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 1990–2011

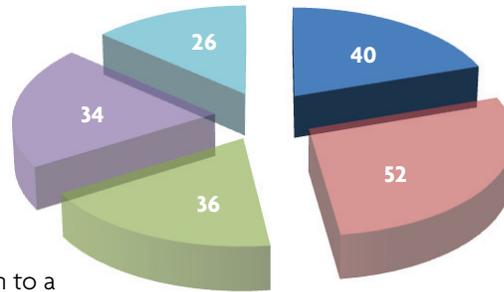
The following pages summarize District accomplishments from its formation until the present. Although accomplishments are listed by category — including Agriculture, Greenbelts, Natural Resources, Recreation/Education, and Urban Open Space — the majority of District projects accomplish multiple objectives in more than one category. For example, most of the District’s agricultural projects accomplish important natural resource protection goals, and many greenbelt and natural resource projects include agricultural operations. The following pages are intended to provide an overview of the District’s successes over the last twenty years and to demonstrate the multiple benefits associated with District actions.

FARMS AND RANCHES

District Accomplishments 1990–2011

FARMS AND RANCHES make up the majority of Sonoma County's visible and scenic open lands. Our farms and ranches support the local economy, feed our urban residents, and continue the county's agricultural heritage.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE The District has protected 40 farms and ranches totaling nearly 23,000 acres that range in size from a 17-acre vegetable farm to a 7,900-acre cattle ranch. Agriculture projects result in conservation easements that allow agricultural uses but also include some restrictions to maintain the ecological values of the property. The 40 farms and ranches completed to date include dairies, heifer replacement ranches, sheep ranches, vineyards, orchards, vegetable farms, and hay farms. However, a majority of the projects identified in the other land protection categories include agricultural use. As illustrated in the example below, many of these agricultural projects also include conservation values identified in the other land protection categories.



LAND PROTECTION CATEGORY

- **Agriculture (40 Projects)**
- **Greenbelts (52 Projects)**
- **Natural Resources (36 Projects)**
- **Recreation and Education (34 Projects)**
- **Urban Open Space (26 Projects)**

BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES: GILARDI RANCH



COHO HABITAT

Conservation easement contains protections for Salmon Creek, habitat for endangered coho salmon and freshwater shrimp

ADDING VALUE TO HABITAT RESTORATION

Easement protections add value to riparian restoration projects conducted on the property and elsewhere along Salmon Creek by Gold Ridge RCD

SCENIC BODEGA VALLEY

Easement limits building on the highly scenic hillside above the town of Bodega, visible from Bodega Hwy, a General Plan scenic corridor

ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL ACREAGE

Sale of easement enabled landowner to purchase 83 adjacent, graze-able acres (included in the easement)

AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY

Easement permanently merged the property's three parcels into one, keeping the ranch to an agriculturally viable size

REGIONAL RANGELAND CONSERVATION

The acquisition continues District focus on the highly productive grasslands in southwest county where the District has protected 20 other dairies and ranches

Gilardi Ranch. Mr. Gilardi's 400-acre heifer replacement ranch is one of the many scenic working ranches visible as one drives west on Bodega Highway from Freestone. Seeing an opportunity to expand his ranching operation, Mr. Gilardi used the proceeds of a conservation easement sale to purchase and protect 83 adjacent acres, a reversal of the trend toward subdivision in the county. The District's conservation easement contains specific protections for Salmon Creek, important habitat for Coho salmon, steelhead trout, and California freshwater shrimp, and is the focus of ongoing restoration efforts by Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District.

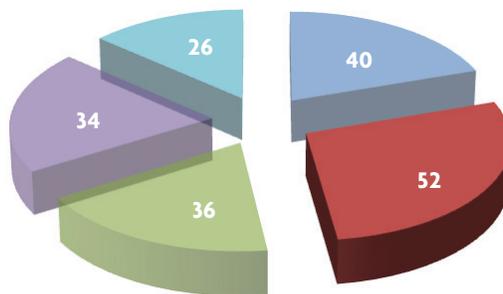
GREENBELTS AND SCENIC HILLSIDES

District Accomplishments 1990–2011

GREENBELTS AND SCENIC HILLSIDES are the scenic open lands that buffer our cities, where food is grown and raised, and where people go to experience nature, walk, and commute on bike.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

The District has protected 52 properties between and around cities totaling over 10,000 acres that range in size from a 12-acre vernal pool to a 1,900-acre block of properties that prevents sprawl between Santa Rosa and Sebastopol, provides habitat, and features public trails. The District focuses its efforts on areas at risk from urbanization. Protection of greenbelt properties achieves other objectives listed in the District's Acquisition Plan – including the protection of agricultural and scenic areas, sensitive natural communities and in some cases recreational lands.



LAND PROTECTION CATEGORY

- **Agriculture (40 Projects)**
- **Greenbelts (52 Projects)**
- **Natural Resources (36 Projects)**
- **Recreation and Education (34 Projects)**
- **Urban Open Space (26 Projects)**

BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES: TAYLOR MOUNTAIN OPEN SPACE PRESERVE



INTACT COASTAL

Oak Woodlands supports rich wildlife diversity

LEASED GRAZING

Supports ag producers and benefits grasslands

URBAN-EDGE PRESERVE

Protects voter-approved Urban Growth Boundary

PUBLIC ACCESS PERMIT PROGRAM

Allows responsible public access during master planning

GRADE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The preserve hosts nearby schools participating in a District-sponsored, nature-based program

COUNTY CHARACTER

Land purchase prevented development on Santa Rosa's scenic backdrop

SEASONAL WETLANDS

Habitat for endangered red-legged frog

ADJACENT PRIVATELY-HELD CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Provides a buffer for users and wildlife

MULTI-USE TRAIL

A moderately-strenuous trail leads to stunning vista

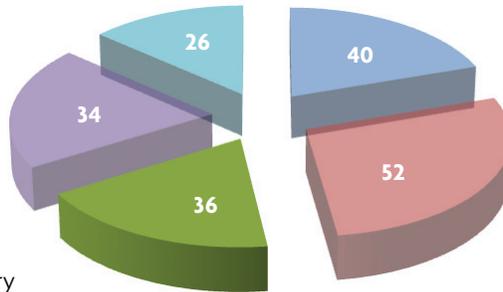
Taylor Mountain Open Space Preserve. A product of five conservation land deals spanning a decade, this highly visible 1,100-acre hillside preserve on the edge of Santa Rosa's urban growth boundary is one of the District's greatest examples of exhibiting patience and vision to achieve bold open space protection. The central piece, acquired in 2006, brought with it a condition that the preserve be available for public access within a year. Public tours began almost immediately, followed by an innovative permit use program. A public master planning process is currently underway in preparation for the preserve to become a regional park and open space preserve.

WATER, WILDLIFE, & NATURAL AREAS

District Accomplishments 1990–2011

NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS are the undeveloped areas of the county where creeks and rivers carry the water we drink, forests and woodlands filter the air we breathe, and the wildlife we enjoy viewing move unimpeded through valleys and over ridges.

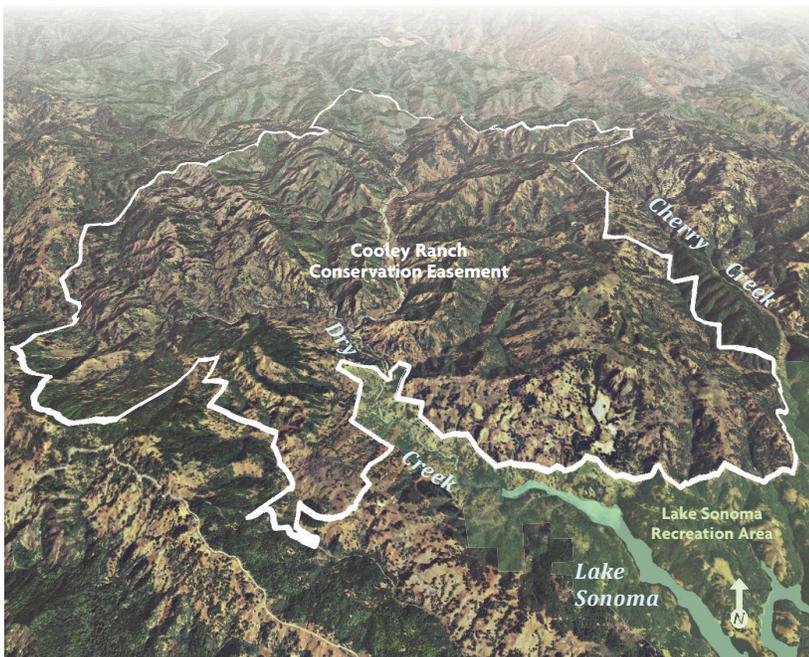
SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE The District has protected 36 properties in which the primary purpose was Natural Resource conservation, including the 19,000-acre Cooley Ranch and 5,400-acre Jenner Headlands, conserved in partnership with Sonoma Land Trust. The 36 properties cover a range of habitat types, including intact oak woodlands, redwood forests, vernal pools, coastal prairie, and riparian zones along creeks and rivers. To date, the District has protected nearly 40,000 acres of natural resource lands. However, as illustrated in the example below, many of these project also include conservation values identified in the other land protection categories.



LAND PROTECTION CATEGORY

- **Agriculture**
(40 Projects)
- **Greenbelts**
(52 Projects)
- **Natural Resources**
(36 Projects)
- **Recreation and Education**
(34 Projects)
- **Urban Open Space**
(26 Projects)

BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES: COOLEY RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT



WATER SUPPLY

Easement protects one-quarter of the Lake Sonoma watershed, integral to the county's water supply

WATER QUALITY

Over 40 miles of sensitive riparian areas are protected from human and cattle impacts

WILDLIFE MIGRATION

Property provides unobstructed movement for wide-ranging game and carnivore species

WORKING RANCH

Cattle graze nearly 17,000 contiguous acres while 1,000 acres of vineyard are allowed within a specified area

OAK WOODLANDS

Intact, high quality oak woodlands and grasslands

REGULAR PUBLIC OUTINGS

Six guided public outings per year, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and overnight trips

Cooley Ranch Conservation Easement. At the time of purchase, in 2002, Cooley Ranch was one of the largest conservation easements over private land in California. It remains the District's largest easement. Roughly the size of Santa Rosa, the ranch's 19,000 acres sprawl out over pristine oak woodlands and grasslands that typify interior Sonoma and Mendocino counties. The property covers a quarter of the land that drains to Lake Sonoma, a key water supply facility for a half-million people. Deer, mountain lion, bobcat, bald and golden eagle, and many other wildlife species thrive in the ranch's intact habitat. Half of the easement (the portion in Mendocino Co.) was generously donated by Mr. Cooley and his family.

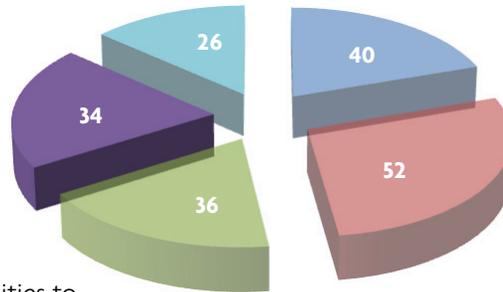
RECREATION & EDUCATION

District Accomplishments 1990–2011

RECREATION AND EDUCATION

Whether it's a short hike in an oak woodland, a long bicycle commute on a regional trail, or a classroom visit to a nearby wetland, getting "out there" is important to understanding and appreciating the natural and scenic gifts of Sonoma County.

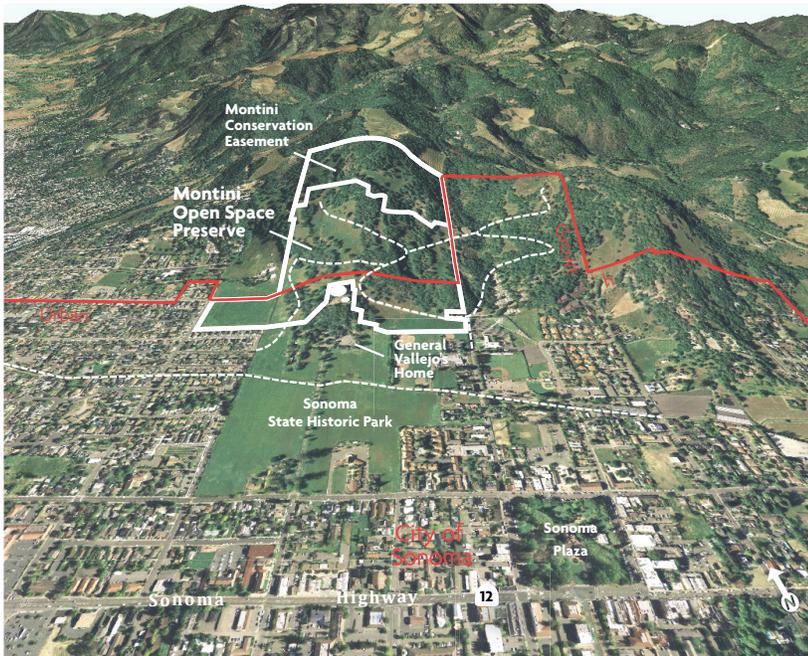
SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE The District has protected 34 properties that offer opportunities to experience the county's open space. These projects total 13,600 acres and constitute a near doubling of the publicly-accessible land open by County Regional Parks, and a one-third increase of the county's State Park land. District trail purchases have resulted in 15 miles of open access trail. District-sponsored annual outdoor education programs get 450 children out to District-protected open spaces, where they learn about agricultural production and the natural world. District-sponsored public outings to open space lands continue to reach out to underserved communities. As outlined in the District's expenditure plan, every recreational project must be compatible with other open space values. Therefore, these projects always include conservation values identified in the other land protection categories as illustrated in the example below.



LAND PROTECTION CATEGORY

- **Agriculture (40 Projects)**
- **Greenbelts (52 Projects)**
- **Natural Resources (36 Projects)**
- **Recreation and Education (34 Projects)**
- **Urban Open Space (26 Projects)**

BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES: MONTINI OPEN SPACE PRESERVE & CONSERVATION EASEMENT



BACKDROP TO SONOMA

Protects the scenic oak woodlands visible from all areas of the city

ADDS TO EXISTING URBAN GREENSPACE

Creates a 200-acre swath of accessible greenspace

IN-TOWN RECREATION

Within walking or biking distance to every neighborhood in Sonoma

OAK WOODLAND AND SAVANNAH HABITAT

Preserves over 150 acres of oak woodlands and oak savannah that support multiple wildlife species and rare plants

TRAILS TIE INTO EXISTING NETWORK

The preserve's trails link up with an existing network of hiking trails and bike paths

CATTLE GRAZING AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Using a system of self-closing gates, or stiles, human visitors will share the preserve with grazing cattle, providing access while maintaining agricultural values

UGB REINFORCEMENT

The preserve and easement reinforce the City's voter-approved urban growth boundary

Montini Open Space Preserve and Conservation Easement. In 2004, the owners of the scenic backdrop of the historic home of General Vallejo and of the City of Sonoma expressed a desire to protect their land for the enjoyment of future generations. Recognizing an extraordinary opportunity, the District negotiated the purchase of 98 acres of the Montini Ranch adjacent to Sonoma State Historic Park and a conservation easement on 54 acres, which is still part of the Montini family's working ranch. The District is working with the City of Sonoma for the eventual transfer of ownership and operation as an urban-edge park with trails and vistas of Sonoma Valley.

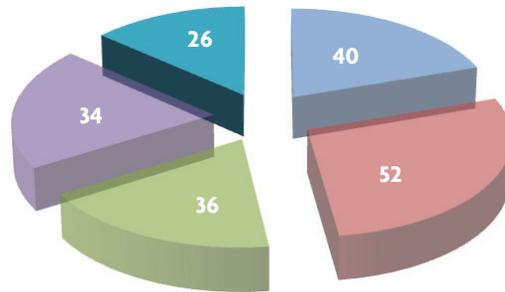
URBAN OPEN SPACE

District Accomplishments 1990–2011

URBAN OPEN SPACE is the land in and on the edge of the county's built environment where natural habitats and scenic open spaces are preserved and restored and where the community's recreation needs are fulfilled in concert with these efforts.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Through its Matching Grant Program, the District has awarded grants to eight of the nine incorporated cities and several Sonoma County non-profit organizations for projects that meet the recreation and habitat enhancement needs of urban communities. The grants, which range from \$18,500 to \$4 million, fund acquisition and/or enhancement of land. Funded projects include land for Windsor's Town Green, a Russian River access near Monte Rio, and the Prince Memorial Greenway in Santa Rosa. To date, 26 grants have been awarded to fulfill the needs of twelve communities.



LAND PROTECTION CATEGORY

- **Agriculture (40 Projects)**
- **Greenbelts (52 Projects)**
- **Natural Resources (36 Projects)**
- **Recreation and Education (34 Projects)**
- **Urban Open Space (26 Projects)**

BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES: PETALUMA MARSH ENHANCEMENT PROJECT



TIDAL MARSH HABITAT PROTECTION

Part of the historic extent of San Pablo Bay

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Wildlife-friendly wastewater "polishing" ponds responsibly recycle used water while providing bird habitat

URBAN OPEN SPACE

Trails connect the project area with the Petaluma Sheraton and Marina and the offices and manufacturing plants of southeast Petaluma

EXTENSION OF EXISTING SHORELINE TRAIL NETWORK

Shollenberger and Alman Marsh trails connect the project area with the Petaluma Sheraton and Marina

CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO MEET REGIONAL NEEDS

Need for a City wastewater recycling facility and tidal marsh restoration and protection brought together a consortium of partners to fulfill multiple goals

Petaluma Marsh Enhancement Project is a successful partnership between the City of Petaluma, State Coastal Conservancy, Save the Bay, and the District. The project epitomizes the goal of the District's Matching Grant Program to fund multi-objective projects that have regional significance. The project added a mile of walking trails to a west coast birding hotspot, Shollenberger Park; permanently protected enhanced marshland within the historic extent of San Pablo Bay; and facilitated the construction of innovative, wildlife-friendly wastewater treatment ponds needed by the City of Petaluma.

APPENDIX B: DISTRICT EXPENDITURE PLAN AND ENABLING LEGISLATION

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
OPEN SPACE DISTRICT FORMATION
MEASURE A**

**Shall the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation
and Open Space District be created and established?**

FULL TEXT OF MEASURE A

RESOLUTION NO. 90-1532

Dated: August 14, 1990

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, CONCLUDING THE PUBLIC HEARING, CALLING A SPECIAL ELECTION ON THE FORMATION OF THE SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS LIMIT, ORDERING NOTICE OF ELECTION, ORDERING CONSOLIDATION OF THE SPECIAL ELECTION WITH THE GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 6, 1990, REFERRING THE MATTER TO THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION EXECUTIVE OFFICER PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 5517.1, AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO 90-1419, DATED JULY 24, 1990.

WHEREAS, this Board did on July 10, 1990 adopt resolution no. 90-1286 noticing a public hearing on the question of the formation of the proposed Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District; and

WHEREAS, that public hearing has been correctly noticed and all persons present were allowed to hear and be heard; and

WHEREAS, following the conclusion of the public hearing this Board did adopt resolution no. 90-1419, dated July 24, 1990 which resolution incorrectly set forth the language of the ballot measure in a manner that does not meet the requirements of Public Resources Code section 5518;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Board of Supervisors hereby finds, declares, determines and orders as follows:

1. That the foregoing recitations are true and correct.
2. That the public hearing is concluded.

3. The name of the district shall be the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.
4. The reason for forming the district is to further the state policy on the preservation of open space expressed in Government Code section 65562 and to implement the Agricultural and Open Space Elements of the 1989 Sonoma County General Plan.
5. That the District shall only purchase interests in real property from willing sellers.
6. That all lands within the boundaries of the district will be benefitted by being included within the district.
7. It is proposed that the district will be financed by gifts, grants, special taxes, general obligation bonds and other sources of revenue authorized by law or any combination thereof.
8. The boundaries of the district be coterminous with the boundaries of the County of Sonoma.
9. The annual appropriations limit of the district shall be \$20 million.
10. A special election on the following question is hereby called to be held on November 6, 1990:
 - » Shall the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District be created and established? YES NO
11. The special election is hereby ordered consolidated with the November 6, 1990 general election and the County Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to do all things required by law to conduct the election.
12. In accordance with Public Resources Code section 5517, the Clerk shall cause a certified copy of this resolution to be published once a week for three successive weeks prior to the date of the election in the Press Democrat.
13. In accordance with Public Resources Code section 5517.1, the Clerk shall deliver a copy of this resolution, within five days of its adoption, by registered mail to the Executive Officer of the Sonoma County Local Agency Formation

Commission for the preparation of an impartial analysis to be included with the sample ballot.

14. That the formation of the District is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act as a program or project which is submitted to a vote of the people [California Administrative Code 15378(b)(4)].
15. That resolution no. 90-1419, dated July 24, 1990, is hereby rescinded.

SUPERVISORS:

NICHOLAS absent
HARBERSON aye
SMITH absent
CARPENTER aye
ESPOSTI aye

AYES 3 NOES 0
ABSTAIN 0 ABSENT 2

SO ORDERED.

**IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS BY EXECUTIVE OFFICER
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
FORMATION
MEASURE A**

This proposition is to form the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District would be a governmental entity, with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors serving as the governing body of the district. The boundaries of the district would be the same as the boundaries of Sonoma County.

The primary purpose for forming the district is to implement state policy (as expressed in Government Code Section 65562) to recognize that open space is “a limited resource which must be conserved whenever possible.” This public entity would have the authority to accept donations of real property and purchase real property from willing sellers for the purpose of open space and agricultural preservation. The district would be prohibited from exercising the power of eminent domain to acquire property.

If formed, the district would be financed by gifts, grants, special taxes, general obligation bonds, and

other revenue sources permitted by law. However, the measure in and of itself would not authorize the levy of any taxes. If formed, it is proposed that the district be financed through a contract with the Sonoma County Open Space Authority. The Open Space Authority has placed a quarter-cent sales tax measure on the November ballot for the purpose of financing open space acquisition.

A favorable vote on this issue would result in the formation of the district and set an annual appropriations limit. The vote required to confirm the formation of the district is a majority favorable vote on the question.

s/ Vivian Look
Assistant Executive Officer
Sonoma County Local Agency Formation
Commission (LAFCO)

**ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A
SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE
DISTRICT FORMATION**

The Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District has broad-based nonpartisan support. Businesspeople, farmers, environmentalists and elected officials all worked together to put this measure on the ballot. Now it's your turn to take action. We urge you to vote YES.

We believe that a majority of Sonoma County residents want a stable agricultural economy, protection of natural habitat, greenbelts separating our cities and soothing scenic vistas.

The District would have NO REGULATORY AUTHORITY. It would work with WILLING SELLERS to VOLUNTARILY implement the Agricultural, Open Space and Resource Conservation Elements of the Sonoma County General Plan.

We think it important to know that the District can ACCEPT GIFTS of land, development rights and specific easements. It can also PURCHASE these real estate interests AT FAIR MARKET VALUE from WILLING SELLERS. Landowners who donate or sell conservation easements (also known as agricultural, scenic and open space easements) voluntarily give up development rights, not ownership. They still own the land and can keep it, sell it or pass it to heirs.

It is also important to know that AGRICULTURAL LAND can continue to be used for agricultural purposes.

The formation of the District will not cost the taxpayers any money.

TO PRESERVE OUR AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE, OUR SCENIC BEAUTY AND OPENNESS, OUR AIR AND WATER QUALITY AND TO PREVENT URBAN SPRAWL, WE ASK EVERYONE TO VOTE YES ON THIS MEASURE.

s/ Mitchell Mulas, Dairy Farmer

s/ Bill Carle, Attorney

s/ W.C. "Bob" Trowbridge, Recreational Businessman

s/ Dee Swanhuysen, Board of Directors

s/ Clint Wilson, Greenbelt Alliance Businessman

NO ARGUMENT AGAINST THIS MEASURE WAS SUBMITTED

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
AGRICULTURE AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION
MEASURE C**

Shall the people of Sonoma County approve an ordinance for agricultural land preservation and open space acquisition, imposing a 0.25 percent sales tax for a period not to exceed 20 years, with an annual appropriations limit of \$40 million?

FULL TEXT OF MEASURE C

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION AND
OPEN SPACE EXPENDITURE PLAN

EXHIBIT A

The purpose of this expenditure plan is to implement the 1989 Sonoma County General Plan by preserving agricultural land use and open space. This purpose will be accomplished primarily through the purchase of development rights from willing sellers in areas of the County which are designated in the General Plan Open Space Element but may include the purchase of fee interests for public recreation where the public use would not be inconsistent with the Open Space designation provided below.

Designated open space areas include community separators, scenic landscape units, scenic corridors, critical habitat areas and riparian corridors.

Community separators are generally located between cities, providing visual relief from continuous urbanization. These lands are frequently subject to development pressures, and therefore, have been identified as priority sites for acquisition to prevent urban sprawl, to retain the rural and open character of the County and to preserve agricultural uses.

Scenic landscape units and scenic corridors are areas of high visual quality.

Critical habitat areas and riparian corridors, such as wetlands, rare and endangered species locations, fresh and salt water marshes, oak savannahs, streams and watercourses, are environmentally sensitive areas requiring protection and careful management.

Other areas of biotic significance which may be adversely impacted by development and incompatible land use are the Petaluma River, Laguna de Santa Rosa, and San Pablo Bay margin.

Other open space projects including, but not limited to, urban open space projects within incorporated areas of Sonoma County. Funds for these projects will be available on a competitive matching grant basis, with preference given to acquisition and development projects which affect both incorporated and unincorporated lands and watercourses. Examples of such projects include restoration of the Petaluma River and Santa Rosa Creek.

This expenditure plan shall be administered by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and the Authority shall enter into a contract with the District for that purpose.

FULL TEXT OF MEASURE F

ORDINANCE NO. 5677R OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA EXTENDING THE IMPOSITION OF A TRANSACTIONS AND USE TAX TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

Section 1. TITLE. This Ordinance shall be known as the Sonoma County Open Space, Clean Water and Farmland Protection Measure. The County of Sonoma, hereinafter shall be called "County." This Ordinance shall be applicable in the incorporated and unincorporated territory of the County.

Section 2. EFFECTIVE DATE; OPERATIONAL DATES; ADMINISTRATION.

A. This Ordinance shall become effective upon its approval by a two-thirds majority of the electors voting on the measure.

B. This Ordinance shall become operative on April 1, 2011; provided, however, that the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space 2006 Expenditure Plan ("the 2006 Expenditure Plan"), attached hereto as Exhibit "A," shall become operative on the effective date of this Ordinance.

C. The existing contract between the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District and the Sonoma County Open Space Authority shall remain in effect, subject to amendments, through March 31, 2011.

D. Prior to April 1, 2011, the District and the County shall enter into a contract for the administration of the 2006 Expenditure Plan. That contract shall

become operative on the expiration of the current contract between the Authority and the District and shall provide for the administration of the 2006 Expenditure Plan by the District and the funding of the District's annual budgets by the County from funds available in the Open Space Special Tax Account.

Section 3. PURPOSE. This Ordinance is adopted to achieve the following, among other purposes, and directs that the provisions hereof be interpreted in order to accomplish those purposes:

A. To extend the imposition of a retail transactions and use tax in accordance with the provisions of Part 1.6 (commencing with Section 7251) of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code and Section 7285.5 of Part 1.7 of Division 2 which authorizes the County to adopt this tax Ordinance which shall be operative if 2/3 of the electors voting on the measure vote to approve the imposition of the tax at an election called for that purpose.

B. To adopt the extension of a retail transactions and use tax Ordinance that incorporates provisions identical to those of the Sales and Use Tax Law of the State of California insofar as those provisions are not inconsistent with the requirements and limitations contained in Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code and to authorize the issuance of limited tax bonds to finance the purchases of open space lands that are consistent with this Ordinance.

C. To adopt the extension of a retail transactions and use tax Ordinance that imposes a tax and provides a measure therefor that can be administered and collected by the State Board of Equalization in a manner that adapts itself as fully as practicable to, and requires the least possible deviation from, the existing statutory and administrative procedures followed by the State Board of Equalization in administering and collecting the California State Sales and Use Taxes.

D. To adopt the extension of a retail transactions and use tax Ordinance that can be administered in a manner that will be, to the greatest degree possible, consistent with the provisions of Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, minimize the cost of collecting the transactions and use taxes, and at the same time, minimize the burden of record keeping upon persons subject to taxation under the provisions of this Ordinance.

E. To authorize the issuance of bonds and the undertaking of lease-purchase financing obligations to finance the acquisitions specified in Exhibit "A."

Section 4. EXPENDITURE PLAN; LIMITATION OF EXPENDITURES; FISCAL OVERSIGHT. Pursuant to the requirements of Government Code §50075.1, (1) the 2006 Expenditure Plan constitutes the statement of the specific purposes for which the revenue generated by this Ordinance may be expended, (2) the expenditure of the revenue generated by this Ordinance shall be restricted to the purposes stated in Exhibit "A," (3) the revenue generated by this Ordinance shall be deposited into the "Open Space Special Tax Account," and (4) the County Auditor shall prepare and file with the Board of Supervisors reports meeting the requirements of Government Code §50075.3. The Sonoma County Open Space Authority shall provide specified fiscal oversight as provided in an agreement between the County and the District.

Section 5. CONTRACT WITH STATE. Prior to the Operative Date, the County shall contract with the State Board of Equalization to perform all functions incident to the administration and operation of this transactions and use tax Ordinance; provided, that if the County shall not have contracted with the State Board of Equalization prior to the Operative Date, it shall nevertheless so contract and in such a case the operative date shall be the first day of the first calendar quarter following the execution of such a contract.

Section 6. TRANSACTIONS TAX RATE. For the privilege of selling tangible personal property at retail, a tax is hereby imposed upon all retailers in the incorporated and unincorporated territory of the County at the rate of one quarter of one per cent (0.25%) of the gross receipts of any retailer from the sale of all tangible personal property sold at retail in said territory on and after the operative date of this Ordinance.

Section 7. PLACE OF SALE. For the purposes of this Ordinance, all retail sales are consummated at the place of business of the retailer unless the tangible personal property sold is delivered by the retailer or his agent to an out-of-state destination or to a common carrier for delivery to an out-of-state destination. The gross receipts from such sales shall include delivery charges, when such charges are subject to the state sales and use tax, regardless of the place to which

delivery is made. In the event a retailer has no permanent place of business in the State or has more than one place of business, the place or places at which the retail sales are consummated shall be determined under rules and regulations to be prescribed and adopted by the State Board of Equalization.

Section 8. USE TAX RATE. An excise tax is hereby imposed on the storage, use or other consumption in the County of tangible personal property purchased from any retailer on and after the operative date of this Ordinance for storage, use or other consumption in said territory at the rate of one quarter of one percent (0.25%) of the sales price of the property. The sales price shall include delivery charges when such charges are subject to state sales or use tax regardless of the place to which delivery is made.

Section 9. ADOPTION OF PROVISIONS OF STATE LAW. Except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance and except insofar as they are inconsistent with the provisions of Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, all of the provisions of Part 1 (commencing with Section 6001) of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code are hereby adopted and made a part of this Ordinance as though fully set forth herein.

Section 10. LIMITATIONS ON ADOPTION OF STATE LAW AND COLLECTION OF USE TAXES. In adopting the provisions of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code:

A. Wherever the State of California is named or referred to as the taxing agency, the name of this County shall be substituted therefor. However, the substitution shall not be made when:

1. The word "State" is used as a part of the title of the State Controller, State Treasurer, State Board of Control, State Board of Equalization, State Treasury, or the Constitution of the State of California;
2. The result of that substitution would require action to be taken by or against this County or any agency, officer, or employee thereof rather than by or against the State Board of Equalization, in performing the functions incident to the administration or operation of this Ordinance.
3. In those sections, including, but not necessarily limited to sections referring to the exterior

boundaries of the State of California, where the result of the substitution would be to:

a. Provide an exemption from this tax with respect to certain sales, storage, use or other consumption of tangible personal property which would not otherwise be exempt from this tax while such sales, storage, use or other consumption remain subject to tax by the State under the provisions of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, or;

b. Impose this tax with respect to certain sales, storage, use or other consumption of tangible personal property which would not be subject to tax by the state under the said provision of that code.

4. In Sections 6701, 6702 (except in the last sentence thereof), 6711, 6715, 6737, 6797 or 6828 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

B. The word "County" shall be substituted for the word "State" in the phrase "retailer engaged in business in this State" in Section 6203 and in the definition of that phrase in Section 6203.

Section 11. PERMIT NOT REQUIRED. If a seller's permit has been issued to a retailer under Section 6067 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, an additional transaction's permit shall not be required by this Ordinance.

Section 12. EXEMPTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS.

A. There shall be excluded from the measure of the transactions tax and the use tax the amount of any sales tax or use tax imposed by the State of California or by any city, city and county, or county pursuant to the Bradley-Burns Uniform Local Sales and Use Tax Law or the amount of any state-administered transactions or use tax.

B. There are exempted from the computation of the amount of transactions tax the gross receipts from:

1. Sales of tangible personal property, other than fuel or petroleum products, to operators of aircraft to be used or consumed principally outside the County in which the sale is made and directly and exclusively in the use of such aircraft as common carriers of persons or property under the authority of the laws of this State, the United States, or any foreign government.
2. Sales of property to be used outside the County which is shipped to a point outside the County,

pursuant to the contract of sale, by delivery to such point by the retailer or his agent, or by delivery by the retailer to a carrier for shipment to a consignee at such point. For the purposes of this paragraph, delivery to a point outside the County shall be satisfied:

- a. With respect to vehicles (other than commercial vehicles) subject to registration pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 4000) of Division 3 of the Vehicle Code, aircraft licensed in compliance with Section 21411 of the Public Utilities Code, and undocumented vessels registered under Division 3.5 (commencing with Section 9840) of the Vehicle Code by registration to an out-of-County address and by a declaration under penalty of perjury, signed by the buyer, stating that such address is, in fact, his or her principal place of residence; and
- b. With respect to commercial vehicles, by registration to a place of business out-of-County and declaration under penalty of perjury, signed by the buyer, that the vehicle will be operated from that address.

3. The sale of tangible personal property if the seller is obligated to furnish the property for a fixed price pursuant to a contract entered into prior to the operative date of this Ordinance.

4. A lease of tangible personal property which is a continuing sale of such property, for any period of time for which the lessor is obligated to lease the property for an amount fixed by the lease prior to the operative date of this Ordinance.

5. For the purposes of subparagraphs (3) and (4) of this section, the sale or lease of tangible personal property shall be deemed not to be obligated pursuant to a contract or lease for any period of time for which any party to the contract or lease has the unconditional right to terminate the contract or lease upon notice, whether or not such right is exercised.

C. There are exempted from the use tax imposed by this Ordinance, the storage, use or other consumption in this County of tangible personal property:

1. The gross receipts from the sale of which have been subject to a transactions tax under any state-administered transactions and use tax Ordinance.
2. Other than fuel or petroleum products purchased by operators of aircraft and used or consumed by such

operators directly and exclusively in the use of such aircraft as common carriers of persons or property for hire or compensation under a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued pursuant to the laws of this State, the United States, or any foreign government. This exemption is in addition to the exemptions provided in Sections 6366 and 6366.1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code of the State of California.

3. If the purchaser is obligated to purchase the property for a fixed price pursuant to a contract entered into prior to the operative date of this Ordinance.

4. If the possession of, or the exercise of any right or power over, the tangible personal property arises under a lease which is a continuing purchase of such property for any period of time for which the lessee is obligated to lease the property for an amount fixed by a lease prior to the operative date of this Ordinance.

5. For the purposes of subparagraphs (3) and (4) of this section, storage, use, or other consumption, or possession of, or exercise of any right or power over, tangible personal property shall be deemed not to be obligated pursuant to a contract or lease for any period of time for which any party to the contract or lease has the unconditional right to terminate the contract or lease upon notice, whether or not such right is exercised.

6. Except as provided in subparagraph (7), a retailer engaged in business in the County shall not be required to collect use tax from the purchaser of tangible personal property, unless the retailer ships or delivers the property into the County or participates within the County in making the sale of the property, including, but not limited to, soliciting or receiving the order, either directly or indirectly, at a place of business of the retailer in the County or through any representative, agent, canvasser, solicitor, subsidiary, or person in the County under the authority of the retailer.

7. "A retailer engaged in business in the County" shall also include any retailer of any of the following: vehicles subject to registration pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 4000) of Division 3 of the Vehicle Code, aircraft licensed in compliance with Section 21411 of the Public Utilities Code, or undocumented vessels registered under Division 3.5 (commencing with Section 9840) of the Vehicle Code. That retailer shall be required to collect use

tax from any purchaser who registers or licenses the vehicle, vessel, or aircraft at an address in the County.

D. Any person subject to use tax under this Ordinance may credit against that tax any transactions tax or reimbursement for transactions tax paid to a County imposing, or retailer liable for a transactions tax pursuant to Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code with respect to the sale to the person of the property the storage, use or other consumption of which is subject to the use tax.

Section 13. AMENDMENTS. All amendments subsequent to the effective date of this Ordinance to Part 1 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code relating to sales and use taxes and which are not inconsistent with Part 1.6 and Part 1.7 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and all amendments to Part 1.6 and Part 1.7 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, shall automatically become a part of this Ordinance, provided however, that no such amendment shall operate so as to affect the rate of tax imposed by this Ordinance.

Section 14. ENJOINING COLLECTION FORBIDDEN. No injunction or writ of mandate or other legal or equitable process shall issue in any suit, action or proceeding in any court against the State or the County, or against any officer of the State or the County, to prevent or enjoin the collection under this Ordinance, or Part 1.6 of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, of any tax or any amount of tax required to be collected.

Section 15. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE LIMITED TAX BONDS AND LEASE-PURCHASE FINANCING AUTHORITY. Pursuant to Government Code §§55800 et seq. the County is authorized to issue limited tax bonds payable from the tax imposed by this Ordinance. The County may, from time to time, enter into lease-purchase agreements with the County's Treasurer and the District for the purpose of assisting in the purchase of properties anticipated by Exhibit "A."

Section 16. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the Ordinance and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby. Section

17. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance relates to the levying and collecting of a County transactions and use tax and shall take effect immediately upon approval of the electorate. Section 18. TERMINATION DATE. The authority to levy the tax imposed by this Ordinance shall expire on March 31, 2031. PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, State of California, on July 18, 2006, by the following vote:

SUPERVISORS:

Brown: ___ Kerns: ___ Smith: ___
Reilly: ___ Kelley: ___

Ayes: 5 Noes: ___ Abstain: ___ Absent: ___

SO ORDERED.

By: s/ Paul L. Kelley

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

County of Sonoma, State of California

ATTEST:

By: s/ Eeve T. Lewis

County Clerk and Ex-officio Clerk of the
Board of Supervisors of said County

EXHIBIT A

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN
SPACE 2006 EXPENDITURE PLAN

The purpose of this expenditure plan is to implement the Sonoma County General Plan and the general plans of the County's incorporated cities by preserving agricultural land use and open space. This purpose will be accomplished primarily through the purchase of development rights from willing sellers in areas of the County which are designated in the County and cities' General Plan open space elements and may include the purchase of fee interests for outdoor public recreation where the public use would not be inconsistent with the open space designations listed below.

The open space designations eligible for protection under this expenditure plan include community separators, greenbelts, scenic landscape units, scenic corridors, agriculturally productive lands, biotic habitat areas, riparian corridors and other areas of biotic significance, and other open space projects.

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1. Community separators and greenbelts are lands that function as open space to separate cities and other communities and protect city and community identity by providing visual relief from continuous urbanization. These lands are frequently subject to development pressures, and therefore, have been identified as priority sites for acquisition to prevent urban sprawl, to retain the rural and open character of the county and to preserve agricultural uses.
 2. Scenic landscape units and scenic corridors are areas of high scenic quality including natural landscapes and backdrops that provide visual relief from urban densities and maintain the open nature of the County.
 3. Agriculturally productive lands include working farms and ranches and other lands used for the production of food, fiber, and plant materials and the raising and maintaining of livestock and farm animals.
 4. Biotic habitat areas, riparian corridors, and other areas of biotic significance include freshwater and tidal marshes, wetlands, special status species locations, woodlands and forests, wildlife habitat corridors and lands along creeks and streams critical to protecting fisheries and water quality. These sensitive natural areas require protection, restoration, and resource management, and include the Petaluma River, Laguna de Santa Rosa, Russian River, Sonoma Creek and San Pablo Baylands.
 5. Other open space projects include, but are not limited to, urban open space and recreation projects within and near incorporated areas and other urbanized areas of Sonoma County. Funds for these projects shall be available to cities, the County and other entities through a matching grant program, with preference given to acquisition and development projects that link communities. Examples of these projects include creek restoration and enhancement, such as along the Petaluma River, Santa Rosa Creek, and Laguna de Santa Rosa, trails, athletic fields, and urban greenspace.
 6. Operation and maintenance of land includes limited funding for initial public access, operation and maintenance of recreational lands purchased in accordance with this Plan. No more than 10 percent of total revenues generated over the life of the Measure shall be made available for operation and maintenance purposes.

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT

DISTRICT WORK PLAN 2012-2015 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT

The following is a summary of written comments sent directly to District staff as well as public input from five workshops held between January 30 and February 7, 2012 regarding the District Work Plan. The purpose of the workshops was to present the draft District Work Plan and to solicit feedback and suggestions from stakeholders. Additionally, the draft District Work Plan was available for public review on the District website and the public was invited to a joint meeting of the District Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission focused on the Work Plan on February 9, 2012.

COMMENTS ON GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- In addition to protecting land, maintaining and managing it is also an important theme.
- Clarify that the principles are not listed by priority, but are all equal.
- The District should be a leader in collaboration.
- Move “operate with transparency” higher on the list. Even though the list is not in order of priority, the public needs to know that transparency is very important.
- Add a principle that reflects the goal of a healthy Sonoma County population.

COMMENTS ON STRATEGIES:

Strategy 1. Enhance planning to effectively prioritize District actions.

Strategy 2. Maintain focus on the acquisition and stewardship of conservation easements as primary protection measures.

- Conservation easements are the best bargain, much better deal than fee purchases.
- Easements on working landscapes are a great value. Agricultural operators can be encouraged to enhance resources on properties protected with conservation easements and it keeps land in private hands and on the tax rolls.

Strategy 3. Support urban open space conservation through a bi-ennial matching grant program.

- Change the Matching Grant Program strategy to reflect that the bi-ennial program is the minimum. If more funding becomes available, the grant cycle could occur more frequently.

Strategy 4. Enhance easement stewardship.

- Consider collaboration with other entities and volunteers to help with stewardship as per the Sonoma Land Trust model.
- Emphasize importance of education aspect of stewardship.

Strategy 5. Identify priorities for fee lands management and transfers.

- Emphasize protecting taxpayer’s investment

Strategy 6. Transfer identified fee lands.

Strategy 7. Provide opportunities for public to engage in caring for District-protected lands.

- Encourage public participation and keep people plugged in.

Strategy 8. Focus on current commitments for recreational capital improvement expenditures.

- There has been a long hold on many of the recreation projects. Disappointed that now they are more impacted by revenue reductions than other types of projects.
- What is happening with trails on Calabazas? The grants from SCC and Bay Area Ridge Trails for acquisition included funding for trail planning. Include that if additional money is available, more trail construction could occur during the Work Plan period.
- Surprise at complete shift away from spending on recreation. “Although it is true that significant amounts of money have been spent in this category, I would think it would be a very high priority of the district to analyze and begin to connect recreational holdings of the District, cities, state and county into a cohesive whole” to maximize the value of past purchases.

Strategy 9. Expand focus on leveraging District revenues.

- Look at other types of partners. Consider public/private partnerships.
- Be careful that income generation strategies do not negatively affect natural resources.
- Keep commitment to high standards when developing strategies to leverage funding, such as mitigation credits.

General comments on strategies:

- The strategies should include other means, such as education and support services, in addition to land protection to help preserve agricultural viability.
- What is the District doing, either directly or through partnerships, a) to help keep land in agriculture, or b) to help “get” land into the hands of farmers, either at a reduced price

through the imposition of affirmative easements, or through other mechanisms?

- Will the District’s partnerships with the County Lands Program and the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Program result in an increased access to affordable land for Sonoma County Farmers? Will lands be made available to existing farmers who wish to expand, or just to new farmers? “I’ve heard concerns expressed that perhaps land through County Lands will be restricted to new farmers, and that there may be more success/viability created if currently successful farmers who wish to expand were aided in this effort.”

COMMENTS ON BUDGET

- What happens to interest? Is it assigned by account balance? Explain in Work Plan.
- Request for breakdown of stewardship costs by property, including volunteer efforts and outings. More stewardship cost detail in general would be helpful.
- Add bar chart or state percentage of total for each element (e.g. planning, acquisition, stewardship, operations).
- The budget assumes slightly more than \$16 million per year in tax revenue for the next three years, including this year. What was the tax revenue for fiscal year 11-12 and is the \$16 million in line with revenue received?
- The district receives \$16 million in tax revenue and pays \$7.5 million in debt service leaving \$8.5 million. An annual expenditure of \$403,000 on top of the significant amount of monies already expended on mapping seems a bit out of balance. It is close to the annual budget for matching grants.
- Staffing of 24.75 persons with a shrinking budget and most of the fund balance depleted in fiscal year 12-13, seems excessive.
- What grants and other outside matching funds have been received in the last 5 years? Projected in the next 5? For what types of project?

COMMENTS ON WORK PLAN ACTIONS

Planning Actions:

- Include species corridor mapping in evaluation of new projects.
- Go team! (Support of the staff's list of planning actions.)
- Include analysis of how planning actions address all categories (ag, rec, scenic, greenbelts, etc.).
- Engage in planning partnership with other agencies, such as Regional Parks.
- Clarify the purpose of carbon mapping.
- Carbon mapping and conservation valuation work could help w/developing CEs that protect these values.
- Can key vegetation datasets be made available to partners?
- Share technical data to help other organizations.
- Glad to hear habitat connectivity is considered in evaluating projects.

Acquisition Actions:

Active projects

- Concerns expressed that trail access is not included in proposed Elliott Ranch acquisition. The area is identified for trails in Bay Area Ridge Trail Plan.
- The Work Plan needs a qualifier that states that not all of the projects listed have received action by the District Board of Directors. Otherwise the Plan has usurped the District Board of Directors authority to support or reject a particular project.

Future projects

- How are acquisitions prioritized?
- How are the acquisition criteria selected?
- Future acquisitions should be prioritized by the capacity to meet many goals. "We don't have the luxury of politics."
- What happens if critical properties come up for sale and there are not enough funds in annual projections? Are some funds reserved?

- Concern that the acquisition prioritization process may lead to too much filtering and lost opportunities.
- Agriculture faces risk from Williamson Act changes and trophy-home buyers. Can the District assess the risks to ag lands?
- Consider use of preservation agreements as another tool. Could be a "clincher" in ranking properties.
- Affirmative easements could help real agriculture stay viable.
 - » Do affirmative easements lower market value?
 - » Preservation or other affirmative agreements should be in addition to and separate from conservation easement.
 - » One participant expressed skepticism over affirmative easements.
- Natural resource management requirements on agricultural easements could be stronger.
- We're giving too much to the state. "We have a beautiful county. Why are we giving it away?"
- Concerned that, with the miniscule budget the OSD is forced to have over the next decade because of past acquisitions, public access projects (particularly implementation/construction) will, again, take a back seat to other types because they are seen as less important than others or because of lobbying efforts of agricultural and habitat/conservation interests. Combining these interests and public access on one property should be an imperative given the budget constraints. These types of "3 combo" projects should be placed well in front of all others. "This would be prudent and responsible to the citizens who voted to pay the increase in sales tax -- to buy the most important lands for the most citizens as possible. "

Transfer projects

- Will there be opportunities in future to engage in process of planning for disposition of fee lands?
- Can some of the coastal lands purchased for state parks be returned to agricultural use?

- Consider tackling the “paper part” --planning pieces—so even fee properties without takers can be ready for transfer quickly when takers become available.
- Add the planning tasks to time-line in fee land transfer strategy.
- Goals for fee transfer may be ambitious.

Matching Grant Program (MGP) projects

- Include a discussion of the fate of MGP funds that were awarded, but not spent.
- Could interest on funds approved but not spent immediately go back into MGP?
- MGP is very important. If extra funds are ever available from savings in other programs, even relatively small amounts could help the program.
- Environmental compliance work needed on some MGP-type projects, such as Southeast Greenway project. Is there an avenue to fund this?

STEWARDSHIP ACTIONS:

General comments on stewardship:

- Make sure to include forests in stewardship programs.
- Giving more funding to partner organizations may ultimately save District stewardship costs.
- To the extent District can stay a small, “lean and mean” group of managers, and farm out much of the reoccurring outreach and stewardship, the District will be less of a target in the event that political changes lead to major changes in direction.
 - » Outreach partners could be diversified with other groups such as Sonoma Ecology and Pepperwood doing outreach on District owned lands in their neighborhoods.
 - » Resource Conservation Districts can provide outreach, stewardship monitoring, and mitigation and enhancement projects on District owned lands.

Policies and programs

- Will CTS mitigation be in the mitigation policy? The City of Santa Rosa could use help with CTS mitigation as they develop recreation properties.
- District needs to be a “tool box for Santa Rosa Plain recovery planning”.
- Be cautious about entering carbon credit market. No “double-dipping” on conservation easements.
- Don’t get into carbon credits.
- Consider supporting adaptation to climate change effects (such as migratory corridors or thermal refuges) as well as mitigation measures.
- Outreach and public education efforts are key for the District.
- District has a role in encouraging good management of natural areas by private owners and public agencies.
- More public information is needed to generate more awareness and volunteer interest.
- Create a better interface with public on website so public can get and contribute information. Use social media.
- Promote public citizen monitoring/science.
- Try to represent/include people who are underserved.

Easement stewardship

- How are stewardship goals determined during the conservation easement process?
- PRMD-inherited easements:
 - » Who monitors if the intent of the mitigation been fulfilled?
 - » There is no public transparency with PRMD mitigation process; public can be stuck with sow’s ear. How can the District turn these easements into gold purse? Could volunteers, maybe neighbors, help with monitoring? Photo monitoring might be a simple way for volunteer to keep track.
 - » Mitigation must be set up to address District goals.

-
- » We need different funding stream to manage these easements. It should not be through ¼-cent sales tax.

Fee land stewardship

- Include more information on habitat restoration strategy.
- How will management activities be prioritized among all the fee lands?
- Include more specifics on what's happening on fee lands in 3-year plan period. How can people access this information as it is developed?
- Removal of grazing on coastal properties may not be in best interest of the resources the District paid to protect. Consider potential degradation of coastal grassland communities when giving land to State Parks which has not allowed grazing.
- Increase priority of distaff thistle control. It is a serious issue; the District needs a control plan.
- The District needs a weed management plan for all fee lands. This is important for conservation of resources not only on District's property, but also to prevent the spread of invasive weeds on neighboring properties and regionally.
- Define active recreation.
- District and partners need to engage public in discussions about values. Consider holding workshops for recreational users that promote understanding of natural resource values.
- Focus on regional stewardship of Mayacamas in partnership with Pepperwood Preserve.
 - » Consider adding Bradford Mountain, Grape Creek/Wine Creek.
 - » There is already a good data set including a big plant list.
 - » Look at opportunities to make acquisitions that improve access to existing District property in Mayacamas.
 - » Look at potential large-scale trail connectivity, such as Mark West area to Hood Mountain, Sugarloaf.

- » OK with community that Saddleback is a low priority for development.
- » Saddleback presents an opportunity demonstrating good forest management.

SUGGESTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Each piece of protected property should fulfill District's entire mission to the maximum.
- Value for money spent.
- Tie performance measures to public wishes as gathered during Measure F campaign.
- Ecological services and economic valuation initiative could develop useful performance measures.
- Include metrics to evaluate District's leadership role such as number of partners and effectiveness at achieving objectives that require collaboration.
- Measures should include both on-the-ground results (e.g. acres) vs. less "countable" accomplishments.
- Number of conservation easements negotiated in 3 months.
- Number of projects meeting multiple goals.
- How many citizens without a car have access to lands?
- Job creation.
- Every easement is monitored every year.
- Number of acres of ranching land that was removed from agricultural use returned to ag use.
- Performance measures listed in draft are weighted to acquisition. Beef up measures for planning and stewardship.

OVERALL COMMENTS

- Many participants expressed appreciation of the opportunity to engage with District staff in planning and encouraged the District to do it more often. Comments included:
 - » Have all interests represented at stakeholder meetings to facilitate dialogue.

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- » This process gives a view into District that public hasn't had before.
 - » The District could hold a once-a-year County wide open space conference. "Take over the Vet's Memorial for the day, invite every land conservation, environmental and ag group in the county to participate. Each could have a table for their organization. Have a morning session on protection issues and planning tools and the afternoon on stewardship. Get Mike Thompson or some such to keynote a lunch and give attendees lots of time to circulate and network. Give out a few annual awards recognizing the work of your outside partners. (Oh, and capture all the attendees names for your email list!)"
 - How does Work Plan dovetail with plans from other organizations, such as SLT?
 - Tie District activities into an increase in tourism.
 - Remind public of bond history in the Work Plan.
 - Need a different strategy for getting ag input. Suggestions include:
 - » Include more specific information in meeting titles
 - » Consider alternative venues such as Sebastopol to reach new people
 - How many acres of public access lands have been purchased over the life of the OSD and how many acres have been opened for public access so far/how many still in the wings? How many miles of public trails have been opened to date/miles being planned or in the wings and projected dates when they will be available.
 - » "District needs to prepare for the possibility that it is not reauthorized, meaning retiring all debt and farming out the responsibility for district owned properties and easements. On the other hand, it would be nice to build a more and more robust agency in anticipation of a second reauthorization. It may be possible to do both. Retiring current debt is a given. Farming out more complicated, but it should be possible, over the remaining term of authorization, to promote the development of the institutional capacities of your partner organizations to the point where they could securely take responsibility for properties and easements."
 - "Given the degree of fiscal uncertainty in today's world, an independently funded Parks and Open Space District, institutionalized in a way that insulates it from the tyranny of the "next three vote majority," would be a fantastic conservation legacy."
 - "You guys are doing great work!"



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