



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

March 27, 2025 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM OR IN PERSON

The March 27, 2025 Sonoma County Ag + Open Space Advisory Committee meeting will be held in person at Ag + Open Space's office located at 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA. The public may also participate virtually through Zoom.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting using one of the two following methods:

1. **Zoom:** Join the Zoom meeting on your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking:
<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/95865054803?pwd=6kK8lsDW02YfOtu6YOzFMFSwfDH2kQ.jyJdob-eS3CqTy4C>

If you have the Zoom app or web client, join the meeting using the Password: 628163

Call-in and listen to the meeting: Dial +1 669 900 9128 | Enter Webinar ID: 958 6505 4803

2. **In Person:** Members of the public may attend in person at Ag + Open Space's office at 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA in the large conference room.

PUBLIC COMMENT DURING THE MEETING: You may email public comment to Michelle.Nozzari@sonoma-county.org. All emailed public comments will be forwarded to all Committee Members and read aloud for the benefit of the public. Please include your name and the relevant agenda item number to which your comment refers. In addition, if you have joined as a member of the public through the Zoom link or by calling in, there will be specific points throughout the meeting during which live public comment may be made via Zoom and phone.

DISABLED ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability which requires an accommodation or an alternative format to assist you in observing and commenting on this meeting, please contact Michelle Nozzari by email to Michelle.Nozzari@sonoma-county.org by 12pm Wednesday, March 26, 2025 to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment

Comments on items not listed on the agenda.

3. Correspondence / Communications

Correspondence can be emailed to aos-adminaide@sonoma-county.org by 12pm
Wednesday, March 26, 2025.

4. Approval of Minutes from February 27, 2025 Attachment A ACTION ITEM

5. General Manager's Report

Misti Arias, General Manager

**6. Community Spaces Matching Grant Program Assessment Attachment B
WORKSHOP ITEM**

Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager
Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator

**7. Acquisition Update and Advisory Committee Input Attachment C
WORKSHOP ITEM**

Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager

8. Projects in Negotiations Attachment D

9. Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

10. Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2025.

**FUTURE MEETING TOPICS
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

4/24/25
CANCELED

5/22/25
TBD

5/26/25
TBD



SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

747 Mendocino Avenue – Suite 100, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

February 27, 2025 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Paolo Tantarelli, Wendy Eliot, Michelle Whitman, John Shribbs, Alex DeCarli, Don McEnhill, Emily Albert

1. Call to Order

Chair Thembi Borrás called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Public Comment

Chair Borrás opened comments on items not listed on the agenda.

Public comment:

- Duane Dewitt
- Susan Kirks

3. Approval of December 12, 2024 Minutes Attachment A ACTION ITEM

Committee Action:

Chair Borrás called for a vote to approve the advisory minutes.

Member Eliot motioned to approve minutes. Members Shribbs and Asgill seconded.

Aye: Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Paolo Tantarelli, Wendy Eliot, Michelle Whitman, John Shribbs, Alex DeCarli, Don McEnhill, Emily Albert

Nay: None.

Abstain: None

Public comment:

- Duane Dewitt
- Susan Kirks

4. General Manager's Report

Misti Arias, General Manager

PROPOSED Minutes



Public Comment:

- Duane Dewitt
- Susan Kirks

5. Member Engagement Survey Results & Recommendations

Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

Public Comment:

- Duane Dewitt

6. Advisory Committee Administration Attachment B ACTION ITEM

Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

- a) Advisory Committee Rules of Procedures & Brown Act
- b) Hybrid Meeting AB 2449 Review
- c) Ad Hoc Subcommittee Assignments

Committee Action:

Members Hodges, DeCarli, and Shribbs were appointed to the Agricultural Ad Hoc Subcommittee. Appointments were approved unanimously by the Advisory Committee.

Aye: Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Paolo Tantarelli, Wendy Eliot, Michelle Whitman, John Shribbs, Alex DeCarli, Don McEnhill, Emily Albert

Nay: None.

Abstain: None

Public comment: None

- d) Committee Calendar & Roster
- e) Election of Committee Officers

Committee Action:

Chair Borrás called for a vote to appoint new executive officers: Ladi Asgill as Chair, John Shribbs as Vice Chair, and Wendy Eliot as Chair Pro Tem.

Member Martin motioned to approve the executive officers. Member Whitman seconded.

Aye: Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Paolo Tantarelli, Wendy Eliot, Michelle Whitman, John Shribbs, Alex DeCarli, Don McEnhill, Emily Albert

Nay: None.

Abstain: None

Public comment:

PROPOSED Minutes



- Duane Dewitt
- Susan Kirks

7. Projects in Negotiations

Note these maps are updated quarterly.

Public comment:

- None

8. Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

Member comment:

- John Shribbs

9. Adjournment

Chair Borrás adjourned the meeting at 6:54 pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting: March 27, 2025.





MEMORANDUM

Date: March 27, 2025
To: Advisory Committee
From: Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator
Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

Subject: 2025 Community Spaces Matching Grant Program Assessment & Recommendations

REQUESTED ACTION

Receive a report on the current status of the [Community Spaces Matching Grant Program](#) and a proposed revised approach based on an assessment of the pilot program and recent funding cycles and provide feedback.

SUMMARY

Since its inception, Ag + Open Space has continuously worked to increase the impact and efficiency of the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program. Over the last few cycles, we have learned much about the changing needs of the community, the interests of our Board, and the type of process that would best meet both.

The current competitive process is extensive, time-consuming, and results in several new projects being activated at one time. However, it is important to engage in this intensive process when it is being used to make challenging funding recommendations based on a limited budget amount. Yet, in the last three cycles, despite staff and advisory body recommendations to partially fund some projects, the Board has prioritized full funding for all grant requests, exceeding budget amounts they had previously authorized for each cycle. In 2024, the first year of a 2-year rolling application pilot program, the Board committed **\$6.8M – \$800,000 more than the \$6M authorized for both 2024 and 2025**, the entirety of the pilot program. Staff fully understands and supports the Board's interest in maximizing our ability to help realize these critical community projects; however, we no longer feel that a competitive process is the best way to do so.

Instead, staff proposes that we use the Board-approved guidelines, evaluation criteria, and selection matrix to evaluate individual projects on a true rolling basis, as we do with traditional conservation easement acquisition projects. Shifting from the competitive process would give staff more time to conduct outreach to priority communities, build awareness and relationships, and support partners and community organizations in developing Community Spaces projects that are ready to implement when they apply for funding. This process would still employ the same level of scrutiny when evaluating projects, but the process would be more streamlined and create a more even and steady cadence of new projects.

Staff further proposes that there would no longer be a specific budget amount for a given year or cycle. The Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission would review projects, and the Board would evaluate and accept them individually throughout each fiscal year in consideration of available revenue, other current acquisition commitments, unencumbered obligations, and organizational priorities.

This recommended approach maximizes the support and technical assistance staff can provide to community project proponents, honors our guidelines and transparent evaluation process, is financially prudent, and provides our advisory bodies and Board of Directors more time and flexibility in selecting and funding individual projects.

EVALUATION OF CURRENT COMMUNITY SPACES MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM PROCESS

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Priority Communities Supported

- Pre-Application, priority community outreach, and technical assistance enabled organizations to apply who otherwise lack awareness and capacity

Expanded Project Diversity

- 2024 projects included 70% in park gap areas, 70% in low-income communities, and 57% new to CSMGP

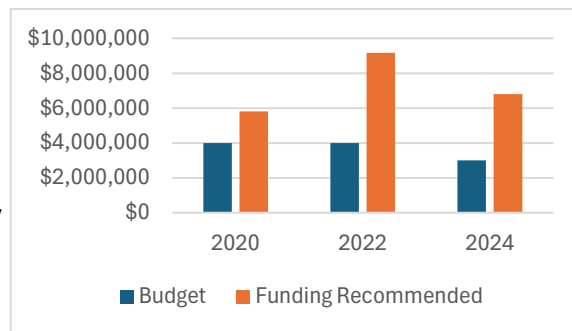
Robust Project Pipeline

- Currently discussing potential applications with 9 organizations; at least 5 applications likely in 2025

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Evaluation Process

- The competitive evaluation process is designed to objectively evaluate projects to make tough funding recommendations based on Board-approved guidelines and budget amounts
- It takes at least six months to launch, evaluate projects, and present funding recommendations to the Board
 - This comprehensive process involves staff, the Advisory Committee, Fiscal Oversight Commission, and several public meetings
- In the last three funding cycles, the Board has recommended full funding for all Community Spaces grant requests, exceeding their own pre-approved budget amounts
- A competitive evaluation process is unnecessary if we are not using that process to make tough financial decisions based upon a limited budget amount



Project Readiness

- Funding cycle deadlines incentivize application submittal prior to project readiness, tying up staff and financial resources prematurely and delaying project completion
- Average project tenure (from acceptance into the program to completion of the project) is **6.5 years**, which exceeds initial grant terms and requires extensions, impacting staff capacity and delaying project delivery

28 current active projects represent 40% of the 71 projects accepted since 1994

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED NEW APPROACH

Increases impact and efficiency of the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program by:

- Incentivizing applicants to apply when projects are ready, not rushing to meet unnecessary deadlines
 - Truly ready projects deliver open space to community faster
 - Funding and implementing ready projects help scale project management and planning
 - Applicants will still be able to apply *anytime* this year and in the future when their project is ready
- Following a process that reflects our shared commitment to fiscal prudence and accountability by taking into consideration existing program funding commitments and projected revenues
- Freeing up more time for staff to focus on active and emerging projects
- Eliminates conflicts among projects when several new projects are activated at the same time

Why Now?

- Community-based organizations, non-profits, and public agencies are making us aware of future projects – we want to communicate changes to potential applicants as soon as possible
- Removing the pressure of deadlines allows organizations to focus on getting projects truly ready before applying for funding
- We want to dedicate staff time that would have been used launching the cycle and conducting the evaluation process this year to providing technical assistance to support development of new projects
- A break in “funding cycles” would allow staff to make greater progress in addressing the backlog of current active projects (**see Exhibit 1**)
- Fiscal Oversight Commission and Advisory Committee members are questioning the need for the in-depth, time-consuming evaluation process if funding recommendations are set aside
- We are actively spending down the fund balance, so it is critical that all funding decisions are informed by available revenue and obligations (**see table below**) and other priority projects (**see Exhibit 2**)

As of December 31, 2024

Cash by Fund	
OSSTA – Measure F	\$60,836,919
Ag + Open Space	1,951,776
AOS Reserve	7,500,000
Cooley Reserve	166,606
IPAOM Available	13,550,417
Total Cash	\$86,814,491
Unencumbered Obligations	
Community Spaces Matching Grant Program Active Projects	\$25,046,855

With 26 active CE projects and 28 active CSMGP projects, we will spend this down very quickly.

We have pledged over \$25M in CSMGP funds, with more projects on the way.

Next Steps

As the Board of Directors makes the final decision of which projects are accepted into the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program with associated funding amounts, and the process to determine a project’s acceptance into the program, staff will consider the feedback from the Advisory Committee when it brings a revised approach to our Board of Directors at a future board meeting.

EXHIBIT 1
ACTIVE COMMUNITY SPACES MATCHING GRANT PROJECTS

	CSMGP Project Name	Applicant	Acceptance Date	Remaining Obligated Funds
1	A Place to Play	City of Santa Rosa	3/3/2021	\$1,000,000
2	AmeriCorps Trail	City of Sebastopol	11/13/2018	\$126,943
3	Badger Park	City of Healdsburg	11/13/2018	\$1,000,000
4	Bayer Farm Development	LandPaths	9/9/2008	\$37,986
5	Bodega Bay Trail	Regional Parks	3/3/2021	\$795,000
6	Colgan Creek Phase 4	City of Santa Rosa	12/13/2022	\$1,500,000
7	Colgan Creek Phase 5	City of Santa Rosa	12/10/2024	\$1,555,000
8	Crane Creek Regional Trail	City of Rohnert Park	3/3/2021	\$1,360,000
9	Denman Reach	City of Petaluma	10/14/2014	\$50,000
10	Geyserville Community Plaza	SoCo PI	8/22/2023	\$1,000,000
11	Graton Town Square	Graton Community Services District	12/10/2024	\$750,000
12	Guerneville River Park Phase 2	Regional Parks	9/18/2012	\$368,000
13	Healdsburg Montage Park	City of Healdsburg	3/3/2021	\$1,000,000
14	Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	Earth Island Institute	11/13/2018	\$1,000,000
15	Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension Phase 2	Earth Island Institute	12/13/2022	\$450,000
16	Los Guilicos Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden	UC Regents	12/10/2024	\$1,046,084
17	Mark West Community Park	Sonoma Land Trust	8/22/2023	\$1,169,500
18	Mark West Community Park Phase 2	Sonoma Land Trust	12/10/2024	\$300,000
19	Maxwell Farms	Regional Parks	10/25/2016	\$250,000
20	Occidental Community Plaza	SoCo PI	12/10/2024	\$700,000
21	Petaluma Bounty Farm	Petaluma People's Services	8/22/2023	\$2,040,000
22	Petaluma River Park	Petaluma River Park Foundation	3/3/2021	\$1,000,000
23	Roseland Creek Community Park Phase 1c	City of Santa Rosa	10/25/2016	\$920,000
24	Russian River Community Park	SoCo PI	12/10/2024	\$1,500,000
25	Sonoma Schellville Trail	Regional Parks	8/22/2023	\$1,000,000
26	Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula)	City of Petaluma/FOPR	10/25/2016	\$100,000
27	Tierra de Rosas	Sonoma County CDC	8/22/2023	\$2,000,000
28	Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2	Atletico Santa Rosa	12/10/2024	\$993,342
				\$25,046,855

EXHIBIT 2
ACTIVE CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROJECTS

	CE Project Name	Acreage	Sup. District	Vital Lands Goals				
				Agricultural Lands	Community Identity	Healthy Communities	Water	Wildlife
1	Bavarian Lion Vineyards	1,858	4	x		x	x	x
2	Berry Forest Preserve	133	5		x			x
3	Bianchi Ranches - Two Rock	633	2	x	x		x	
4	Bucher-Russell Ranch	562	4	x	x		x	x
5	Crane Creek Ranch	290	1	x	x	x	x	x
6	Crawford Gulch	92	5			x	x	x
7	Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust	217	2	x	x		x	
8	Deniz Family Farm	315	2	x	x		x	
9	Diamond W Ranch	849	2	x	x		x	
10	Ielmorini Ranch - Sonoma Mountain	417	2	x	x		x	
11	Laguna Edge	29	5	x	x		x	
12	Limping Turkey Ranch	158	2	x	x		x	
13	Little Rancheria Creek	276	5				x	x
14	Lobban - Mark West Creek	266	1			x	x	x
15	McClelland Dairy	348	2	x	x		x	
16	Monte Rio Redwoods Expansion	1,517	5			x	x	x
17	Peters Ranch	278	2	x	x		x	
18	Rincon Hills	218	1		x	x	x	x
19	Rowland Mack	168	1		x		x	x
20	South Sonoma Mountain - Grove	366	1 & 2	x	x		x	x
21	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek North	393	1 & 2	x	x		x	x
22	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek South	421	2	x	x		x	x
23	South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline	480	1 & 2	x	x		x	x
24	Starrett Hill	319	5		x	x	x	x
25	Willow Avenue Farm	8	2	x	x			
26	Witt Home Ranch	395	2		x		x	
On Hold - may/may not go to active at some point								
27	Lafranconi	211	5	x	x		x	x
28	Nolan Creek 1	317	5		x	x	x	x
29	Nolan Creek 2	171	5				x	x
30	Nolan Creek 3	49	5					
31	Oak Ridge Angus (LaFranchi)	1,189	4	x	x		x	x
32	Preston Farm	120	4		x		x	x
33	Reynoso Vineyard	395	1			x	x	x
34	Russian River Habitat Restoration	63	4		x		x	
35	Spring Hill Ranch	642	2	x	x		x	



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 20, 2025

To: Ag + Open Space Advisory Committee

From: Jen Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager

Subject: Acquisition Update and Advisory Committee Input

Acquisition Update and Input, March 2025

At the Advisory Committee meeting on March 27, 2025, Acquisition Manager, Jen Kuszmar, will provide a presentation on the Acquisition Program and will solicit input from the Advisory Committee on recently activated projects.

Overview of Conservation Easement Acquisition Processes

The acquisition process includes four primary phases:

1. Property Evaluation: This phase entails reviewing property attributes, the Vital Lands Initiative, and how conservation of a property will further Ag + Open Space priorities.
2. Project Structure: During this phase, staff engage more with the landowner to outline our mutual goals related to the current and future uses of the property. The Conservation Values of the project as well as the specific permitted and prohibited uses on the property are outlined. This phase may take several months and includes the drafting and negotiating of the conservation easement and any other applicable real property tools (e.g. recreation conservation covenant, agricultural covenant).
3. Appraisal and Approvals: Once a landowner and Ag + Open Space reach agreement to the terms of the conservation easement, a project enters the appraisal and approval phase. Ag + Open Space contracts with a professional appraiser to determine the value of the conservation easement*. This phase also includes approvals from the Fiscal Oversight Commission and the Ag + Open Space Board of Directors. Ag + Open Space is granted a conservation easement on all properties where we contribute funding. Board approval is required prior to any distribution of funds for conservation projects.
4. Escrow and Closing: Following Board approval, staff work to complete the conservation easement transaction. This phase includes executing all documents, preparing escrow instructions, CEQA postings and other steps. At the end of this phase Ag + Open Space has secured its perpetual protection of a property through a recorded conservation easement and other applicable real property tools.

**Community Spaces Matching Grant Program Projects and projects where Ag + Open Space may contribute to the fee acquisition may have only the fee title appraised or may not require an appraisal.*

Overview of Active Projects in “Initiating Project” or “Project Structure Phase”

Staff will provide an overview of three projects that are in the initial phases of our process to provide information to the Advisory Committee on some of our current work and to receive input these on the conservation projects.

Berry Forest Preserve

The Berry Forest Preserve property comprises a single parcel of 132.63 acres and is located near Monte Rio. The property is nearby several other active conservation properties including Starrett Hill, Crawford Gulch, Monte Rio Redwoods Regional Park and Open Space Preserve, and Monte Rio Redwoods Expansion. The property is zoned TP (Timber Production). It has been managed for timber production; however, there has not been any recent harvest, and most trees appear to be mid-late aged second growth. The property is densely covered by native trees – largely redwoods and Douglas Fir. The property also has suitable habitats - and observations on or nearby - for Northern Spotted Owl, osprey, and giant salamander. This Berry Forest Preserve ranks highly for the Vital Lands Community Identity and Wildlands categories as it is in a greenbelt and has high priority species and habitats on the property.

Bianchi Ranches – Two Rock

The Bianchi Ranches – Two Rock property is in the unincorporated town of Two Rock within the coastal agricultural belt west of Petaluma. The property is 632.7-acres and consists of 10 parcels. The ranch is contiguous with two Ag + Open Space Conservation Easements - Hansen Ranch and Arrowhead Ranch. There is a high density of protected (or active conservation project) lands within a 2-mile radius of the property, including McClelland Dairy (active), Spring Hills Ranch (on hold), Azevedo Ranch, DeMartin, Diamond W Ranch (active), Matin Ranch, Roblar Ranch, Mattos Dairy, Mickelsen, Mazzetta Dairy, Uncle Henry’s Ranch. The property ranks highly in Vital Lands categories of Agricultural Lands and Community Identity as it is in active agricultural use and surrounded and nearby other active, and permanently conserved, ag properties. Additionally, the property is highly visible from a number of public roads, adding to the scenic character of the area.

Gill Creek

Gill Creek Confluence is a 51.45-acre property north of Geyserville. It is bounded to the southeast by Golden Gate Land Conservancy’s Geyserville Vineyard conservation easement, to the northeast by River Road, and to the southwest by the Russian River. The property is primarily planted in vineyards with no structures. There are no residences currently on the property, and zoning would permit potential for two new primary residences/lots. Gill Creek itself runs along the length of the property

until it meets the Russian River. The property has recently been acquired by the conservation group, River Partners, who is interested in granting a conservation easement over the property and conducting environmental restoration activities along the Gill Creek and adjoining Russian River floodplain. The property ranked highly for Vital Lands categories of Water and Wildlands due to the proximity to the Russian River and the presence of habitat for steelhead. Ultimately, River Partners would like to transfer fee title to another organization in the future following restoration.

Overview of Recent and Anticipated Acquisitions

Staff will provide an overview of three recent conservation easement acquisitions and highlight some projects we anticipate completing soon.

Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway

In February 2024, Ag + Open Space contributed \$1 million, over half of the purchase price, in Matching Grant funds to support the acquisition of the 49-acre Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway. Decades of work has already gone into creating a “Central Park” for Sonoma County’s largest city, in no small part led by the community-member driven Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Campaign, and through the collaboration of several agencies, including: the City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Water, Sonoma County Regional Parks and LandPaths. The project was originally selected as a Matching Grant project in 2016, and the acquisition included a conservation easement and recreation covenant granted to Ag + Open Space over most of the property to ensure this land is forever conserved for public recreation and urban open space protection.

In the 1950’s and 60’s, this nearly 2-mile strip of open space that runs from Farmer’s Lane to Spring Lake Regional Park was purchased by CalTrans to extend Highway 12 eastward. By the 1990s, the City of Santa Rosa removed the freeway extension from their General Plan, and in 2014 the State adopted a resolution rescinding the freeway adoption due to lack of operational need, local support and funding. The property continues to sit vacant today. Over several decades, a community-led vision of a community park arose, and in 2009 neighbors officially formed the Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway Campaign to make that vision come alive.

While the Greenway planning process is still in motion, this park is set to connect visitors with Spring Lake Regional Park, Howarth City Park, and Trione-Annadel State Park. The Greenway will also provide pedestrian pathways and bike route options connecting the western section at Farmers Lane to the Prince Memorial Greenway, which ultimately connects to the Joe Rodota Trail and western Sonoma County. This is a huge leap in connectivity for all of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. In addition to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and possibilities, this land is crossed by three creeks – Matanzas, Sierra Park and Spring. Conservation of this land creates new opportunities for creek and wildlife habitat restoration, while also helping to clean our air, offer a cool place amidst urban heat islands, and hold space for people to explore with joy and wonder of the natural world.

Sonoma Land Trust and the Greenway Campaign provided \$827,000 in matching funds to complete the purchase. These funds were raised from foundations and private individuals including the Community

Foundation of Sonoma County, the Saba Foundation, the Mead Foundation and hundreds of individual gifts, both large and small.

The Greenway is essential for offering residents and visitors of Sonoma County additional opportunities to connect with nature in publicly accessible parks and open spaces. Conserving this Property meets multiple objectives described in the Ag + Open Space Vital Lands Initiative:

- Protect open lands that surround and differentiate the County's urban areas and contribute to the unique scenic character of the County.
- Protect natural lands and aquatic habitats that support sustainable aquatic ecosystems and water resources.
- Protect scenic resources visible from public places and thoroughfares to provide visual relief from urbanization.
- Provide open space and publicly accessible lands in and near cities and connect people with protected lands.

Camp Meeker Forest Open Space Preserve

In August 2024 Ag + Open Space provided \$2,225,000 for the purchase and conservation of Camp Meeker Forest Open Space Preserve. Located in and around Camp Meeker, this a 384-acre property was sold by the Episcopal Bishop of California and the Saint Dorothy's Rest Association to the Camp Meeker Recreation & Park District. Nestled within the Dutch Bill Creek watershed, the property is dominated by coast redwood and Douglas-fir forest habitat and 1.8 miles of Dutch Bill Creek runs along the edge of the preserve. Dutch Bill Creek is a steelhead and coho salmon stream recognized as critical to the coho salmon recovery effort. Home to second- and third-growth redwoods, the preserve has Douglas fir and other conifers, bay trees, and ferns. Conservation of this land creates new opportunities for enhanced forest and fuel management, increasing the resiliency of Camp Meeker residents. The conservation easement granted to Ag + Open Space will permanently protect these important natural resources.

Around 356 acres of the property will be publicly accessible in perpetuity through the provisions outlined in the Ag + Open Space recreation covenant. The acquisition did not include any of the St. Dorothy's Rest campus or camp facilities. The preserve is operated and maintained by the Camp Meeker Recreation & Parks District and is open to the public for passive recreation..

Camp Meeker Forest Open Space Preserve is essential for offering residents and visitors of Camp Meeker and Sonoma County additional opportunities to connect with nature in public open spaces. Conserving this Property meets multiple objectives described in the following Vital Lands Initiative Goals including:

- Community Identity – Protect open lands that surround and differentiate the County's urban areas and contribute to the unique scenic character of the County.
- Healthy Communities – Protect open space and publicly accessible lands in and near cities and communities and connect people with protected lands.
- Water – Protect natural lands and aquatic habitats that support sustainable aquatic ecosystems and water resources.

- Wildlands – Protect natural lands and terrestrial habitats that support plants, wildlife, and biodiversity.

Russian River Redwoods

In September 2024, Ag + Open Space provided \$6,180,000 in funding to purchase and transfer ownership of the 394-acre Russian River Redwoods property from Save the Redwoods League to the Russian River County Sanitation District, which is managed by Sonoma Water. The property, located south of Guerneville on the southeast side of the Russian River between Neeley Road and Mays Canyon Road, has historically been used for timber harvest but was long eyed for conservation given its scenic river frontage and stand of redwood trees, including the ancient and beloved Clar Tree.

Conserving this property has been a truly collaborative effort, with Save the Redwoods League first acquiring the property from RMB Revocable Family Trust in September 2023. The Russian River County Sanitation District will continue to utilize the property for sanitation purposes and will preserve and protect the conservation values of the property, including the natural resources such as redwood and Douglas fir forest, riparian habitats along the Russian River and Mays Canyon Creek. The conservation easement and recreation covenant ensure the property's natural resources are conserved forever, while also creating an opportunity for future public access.

Russian River Redwoods is essential for the Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, and Wildlands categories of Ag + Open Space's Vital Lands Initiative. Conserving this Property meets multiple objectives described in the Vital Lands Initiative as follows:

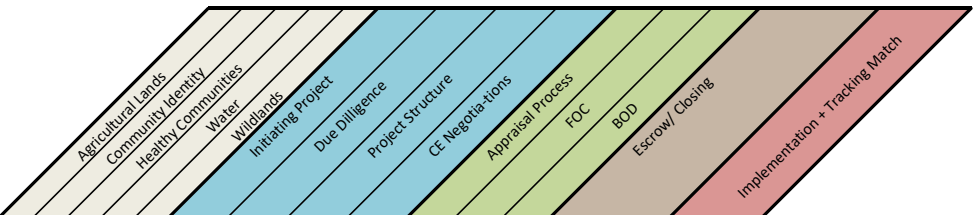
- Protect rare, unique, or particularly diverse vegetation communities.
- Protect the highest priority habitats for rare, unique, or special-status terrestrial plants and animals.
- Protect the highest priority riparian corridors and headwater streams.
- Protect the highest priority aquatic habitats and the lands that support rare, unique, or special-status aquatic plants and animals.
- Pursue partnerships for future acquisitions that expand, create, or connect new parks and open space preserves and trails.

Acquisition Project Status Chart | Conservation Easements

Attachment D

										Agricultural Lands Community Identity Healthy Communities Water Wildlands Project Evaluation Initiating Project Due Diligence Project Structure CE Negotiations Appraisal Process FOC BOD Escrow/Closing Purchase Price (BOD Approved)									
	Conservation Easement Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Vital Lands Initiative Goals					Step 1	Step 2			Step 3		Step 4		Status	Comments	
1	Bavarian Lion Vineyards	1,858	4														Initiating Project	Initiating Project	
2	Berry Forest Preserve	133	5							+							Initiating Project	Initiating Project	
3	Bianchi Ranches - Two Rock	633	2														Initiating Project	Draft CE in Internal Review	
4	Bucher-Russell Ranch	562	4														Initiating Project	Initiating project	
5	Crane Creek Ranch	290	1														Initiating Project	Initiating project	
6	Crawford Gulch	92	5														Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
7	Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust	217	2														Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
8	Deniz Family Farm	315	2								+						Negotiating CE	Project Structure - development	
9	Diamond W Ranch	849	2														Negotiating CE	Internal review of CE	
10	Ielmorini Ranch - Sonoma Mountain	417	2														Initiating Project	Initiating project	
11	Limping Turkey Ranch	158	2														Initiating Project	Initiating project	
12	Little Rancheria Creek	276	5														Initiating Project	Work scheduled to begin next year	
13	Lobban – Mark West Creek	266	1														Negotiating CE	Draft CE under review by LandPaths	
14	McClelland Dairy	348	2														Appraisal Process	Responding to funder appraisal comments	
15	Monte Rio Redwoods Expansion	1,517	5											+			Approvals/Baseline	FOC scheduled for 4/3/25	
16	Peters Ranch	278	2														Initiating Project	Draft CE in Internal Review	
17	Rincon Hills	218	1														Initiating Project	Updating project structure/transaction	
18	Rowland Mack	168	1										+				Appraisal Process	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE	
19	South Fork Gualala River																Initiating Project	Initiating Project	
20	South Sonoma Mountain - Grove	366	1 & 2														Negotiating CE	Project Structure - development	
21	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek North	393	1 & 2														Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE	
22	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek South	421	2														Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE	
23	South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline	480	1 & 2														Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE	
24	Starrett Hill	319	5														Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
25	Willow Avenue Farm	8	2														Initiating Project	Project Structure - development	
26	Witt Home Ranch	395	2														Initiating Project	Initiating project	
Total Acres		10,976																	

Acquisition Project Status Chart | Matching Grant Projects

Matching Grant Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District											Status	Comments
			Vital Lands Initiative Goals	Step 2				Step 3			Step 4	Step 5		
A Place to Play	87	5											Initiating Project	LOI in review, MGA drafting.
AmeriCorps Trail	12	5											Negotiating CE	Implementation - CE and Rec Covenant will be recorded
Badger Park	20	4											Initiating Project	Letter of Intent signed, MGA in negotiation. CE in
Bayer Farm Development ***	6**	3			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Other	Grant project closure due diligence.
Bodega Bay Trail	178	5											Initiating Project	Letter of Intent and Matching Grant Agreement drafting
Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG	4	3											Initiating Project	Matching Grant Agreement in development. Project
Colgan Creek Phase 5	4	3											Initiating Project	Pending closure of Colgan Creek Phase 4 MGA.
Crane Creek Regional Trail	75	1											Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE and Rec Covenant; meeting to align around
Denman Reach	2	2											Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE
Geyserville Community Plaza	1	4				+							Initiating Project	Grantee reviewing Letter of Intent and negotiating project
Graton Town Square	0.6	5											Initiating Project	Grantee reviewing Letter of Intent and advancing permitting
Guerneville River Park Phase 2	3	5			+								Initiating Project	Reviewing Park Improvements, due diligence/title review.
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	56	2											Negotiating CE	CE Negotiation underway
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	21.5	2						N/A					Negotiating CE	CE Negotiation underway
Laura Fish Somersal Park	36	4					+						Initiating Project	Letter of Intent signed. Internal review MGA and CE.
Los Guilicos Master Gardeners'	4.5	1											Initiating Project	Pending direction from Public Infrastructure
Mark West Area Community Park	1	4							+		+		Escrow/Closing	BOD approved 2/25. Scheduled 4/5 closing.
Mark West Area Community Park Ph 2	1	4											Initiating Project	Launching in March, with Ph1 closing pending.
Maxwell Farms	79	1											Negotiating CE	Drafting LOI, MGA, CE Documents.
Occidental Community Plaza	0.7	5											Initiating Project	Pending direction from Public Infrastructure
Petaluma Bounty Community Farm	3	2											Initiating Project	LOI in development.
Petaluma River Park	20	2											Initiating Project	Letter of Intent in development.
River Lane***	1	5										+	Escrow/Closing	Closed pending grant match and reporting due diligence.
Roseland Creek Community Park -	3	3					+						Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant.
Russian River Community Park	3.8	5											Initiating Project	Initiating project.
Sonoma Schellville Trail	21	1											Initiating Project	Drafting Letter of Intent and MGA
Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway***	49	1											Escrow/Closing	Closed pending due diligence including match
Steamer Landing Park Development	27**	2				+							Initiating Project	CE amendment and Recreation Covenant in development.
Tierra de Rosas Plaza	1	3											Initiating Project	LOI drafted, internal review; MGP drafted
Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2	21	4											Initiating Project	Orientation meeting held, established monthly project
Total Acres	709.1													

* District approved a 2-year extension

** Restoration/Development Project on previous acquisition.

*** District approved 5-year extension (MGP 2 year, fire 3 year)

+ indicates change in phase since last update (October 2023)

Out of Program (funding request withdrawn)

SMART Pathway - Payran to Southpoint	14	2														Out of Program (other)	Funding request withdrwan by SMART 7/10/2023
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Acquisition Project Status Chart | Transfers

[illegible]