



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

May 22, 2025 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM OR IN PERSON

The May 22, 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, May 21, 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.

4. Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2025

Attachment A

ACTION ITEM

5. General Manager's Report

Misti Arias, General Manager

**6. Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Presentation
INFORMATIONAL**

Attachment B

Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Manager
Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner

7. 2026 Work Plan Development

Attachment C

WORKSHOP

Misti Arias, General Manager
Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

8. Projects in Negotiations Attachment D

9. Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

10. Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2025



SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

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

March 27, 2025 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Hodges, Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Wendy Eliot, John Shribbs, Alex Decarli

1. Call to Order

Chair Ladi Asgill called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

2. Public Comment

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

No Public comment.

3. Correspondence/Communications

No correspondence.

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

Committee Action:

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

Member Martin motioned to approve minutes. Member Borrás seconded.

Aye: Richard Hodges, Paul Martin, Ladi Asgill, Steve Rabinowitsh, Thembi Borrás, Wendy Eliot, John Shribbs, Alex Decarli,

Nay: None.

Abstain: None

Public comment: No Public comment.

5. General Manager's Report

Misti Arias, General Manager

Public Comment:

No public comment.

6. Community Spaces Matching Grant Program Assessment Attachment B

Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

PROPOSED Minutes



Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator

Public Comment:

- No Public comment.

7. Acquisition Update and Advisory Committee Input Attachment c WORKSHOP ITEM

Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager

Public Comment:

- No Public comment.

8. Projects in Negotiations

Note these maps are updated quarterly.

Public comment:

No Public comment.

9. Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

Member comment:

- Member Borrás

10. Adjournment

Chair Asgill adjourned the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting: May 22, 2025.



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: May 16, 2025

To: Ag + Open Space Advisory Committee

From: Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Manager, and Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner

Subject: **County of Sonoma Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026 Update and Request for Advisory Committee Input on Ag + Open Space Mitigation Actions**

REQUESTED ACTION

Receive a report on the 2026 Update of the County of Sonoma's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan) process and provide input on proposed mitigation actions that will be included in the Ag + Open Space Annex to the Plan.

Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Process Update and Input, May 2025

At the Advisory Committee meeting on May 22, 2025, Stewardship Manager, Sheri Emerson, and Senior Conservation Planner, Allison Schichtel, will provide a presentation on the 2026 Update to the County of Sonoma's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan). Staff will share general information about the Plan and its benefits, describe Ag + Open Space's role, and share examples of how land conservation actions mitigate the impacts of natural hazards. Staff will solicit input from the Advisory Committee on the proposed mitigation actions included within the Ag + Open Space Annex to the Plan (a worksheet of the status of mitigation actions from the 2021 Annex is attached).

Background

A Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies potential hazards that a planning area is most vulnerable to; assesses risk to populations, property, and critical facilities; and includes a mitigation strategy to reduce risks. A mitigation strategy is a group of projects or actions intended to reduce the impacts of the hazards of concern. These projects or actions may include plans and regulations, structure and infrastructure studies and projects, natural systems protection studies and projects, and education and awareness programs. Projects or actions included in the Plan are eligible for certain types of funding.

The Hazard Mitigation Plan must be updated every five years. In 2016, the Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan was prepared for the County of Sonoma agencies only. In 2021, the County leveraged a regional approach to prepare a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan that comprises the hazard profiles, risk assessments, and mitigation strategies for multiple jurisdictions, including cities, towns, fire

agencies and other special districts, including Ag + Open Space. Each participating jurisdiction provided a mitigation strategy held within a jurisdiction-specific Annex to the Plan. The 2026 Update process also uses a regional approach, working with multiple jurisdictions.

Ag + Open Space is participating in the 2026 Update process as both a Planning Partner and Working Group member. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the California Office of Emergency Services must approve the Plan, and each participating jurisdiction must adopt the Plan, for the Plan to take effect. The 2026 Update process is anticipated to be completed by early 2026.

Ag + Open Space is not proposing any new actions in the 2026 Update (pending input from the Advisory Committee). Rather, Ag + Open Space will recommit to and report on progress made towards achieving the mitigation actions listed in the 2021 Plan.

Links to Additional Background Information

2026 Plan Update webpage: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/emergency-management/sonoma-county-multi-jurisdictional-hazard-mitigation-plan-2026-update>

2021 Plan Update: <https://permitsonoma.org/hazard-mitigation>

Link to Ag + Open Space Annex to 2021 Plan Update:

<https://permitsonoma.org/Microsites/Permit%20Sonoma/Documents/Long%20Range%20Plans/Hazard%20Mitigation%20Plan/Sonoma-County-2021-MJHMP-Volume-2-Sonoma-County-Agricultural-Preservation-and-Open-Space-District-Annex.pdf>

Attachment

Worksheet to evaluate status of Ag + Open Space Mitigation Actions from the 2021 Annex

Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026 Update for Sonoma County, California

Worksheet: Previous Mitigation Actions

Project # Project		Responsible Party	What is the status?	If you did not complete the action, should the action be included in the 2025 HMP?		
			<i>Provide details including the funding source, cost, phases completed, obstacles to progress, etc.</i>	Yes/ No	<i>If Yes, please describe the original problem, any updates to the action needed.</i>	<i>Hazard(s) of Concern addressed</i>
SAO-1	Participate in and support the County's Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) efforts, Watershed Task Force, and other emergency response/recover efforts.	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	Ongoing/in progress.	Yes	Ongoing support to County's emergency response and recovery efforts	All listed
SAO-2	Actively participate in the plan maintenance protocols outlined in Volume 1 of this hazard mitigation plan.	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	Ongoing/in progress.	Yes	Ongoing engagement with MJHMP maintenance and update process.	All listed
SAO-3	Coordinate vegetation management grant awards using funds from PG&E settlement	Ag + Open Space	Ongoing/in progress. Established in 2021, 74 projects have been awarded grants as of June 2024, total of \$11.4 million awarded. \$1.5 million to distributed to new high priority vegetation management projects in 2025.	Yes	CAO / Ag + Open Space engaged in process to determine the future of this grant program and wildfire resilience efforts.	Wildfire

SAO-4	Partner with County departments and other organizations to acquire countywide LiDAR and update land use/land cover, hydrology, topography, and vegetation structure (including fuel load) datasets	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidar acquisition complete: Partnered with the North Coast Resource Partnership and other entities to procure a \$3.5 million grant from the United States Geological Survey for the acquisition of a lidar point cloud and digital elevation model for Sonoma County and other northern California counties. The lidar data were collected in Fall 2022 and released for agency use in Spring 2024; public release is pending. • Updated datasets in progress: Established contract to develop an updated fine-scale vegetation map for Sonoma County. Expected completion in March 2026. • Pursuing funding for an updated hydrography layer in partnership with Sonoma Water, Permit Sonoma, and the San Francisco Estuary Institute. 	Yes	Additional funding needed to update the countywide fuel model and wildfire hazard index datasets. Future updates to reflect post-hazard conditions may be needed for affected areas.	All listed
SAO-5	Develop and implement a public outreach and education campaign about the role of land conservation and stewardship in mitigating flood, drought, and wildfire risks and impacts from climate change	Ag + Open Space	Completed/ongoing/in progress. Land for campaign launched, see website page https://www.sonomaopenspace.org/land-for-climate-resilience/ in 2023, launched Resilient Forests & Watersheds workshop series to outreach to forest landowners, community organizations, resource managers about watershed protection, forest mgt, and fuels treatments. Using Rx fire, rx grazing, shaded fuel breaks, and defensible space to improve wildfire resilience.	Yes	Ongoing need, additional campaigns to be developed to demonstrate benefit of land conservation and stewardship actions in mitigating listed hazards. Improving Resil. Forests & Watersheds website to serve as a holistic search tool for landowners.	Drought, Extreme Cold, Extreme Heat, Extreme Wind, Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Sea Level Rise, Wildfire
SAO-6	Map potential riparian (and shoreline) buffers of adequate width, length, hydrology, soils, and vegetation to provide effective fuel breaks, flood conveyance, and groundwater recharge.	Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to include riparian buffers in conservation easements based on unique property conditions and conservation values. • Pursuing funding for an updated hydrography layer based on Fall 2022 lidar in partnership with Sonoma Water, Permit Sonoma, and the San Francisco Estuary Institute. 		Additional funding needed to update data layers used for riparian mapping based on Fall 2022 lidar	

SAO-7	Identify priority areas and acquire conservation easements over multi-benefit natural and working lands in hazard-prone areas to ensure fewer people and structures are at risk and to allow first responders to stage suppression and response operations	Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped priority areas for protection of multi-benefit natural and working lands in high fire risk areas. Partnered with the Greenbelt Alliance to map property-specific conservation and land management strategies for wildfire risk reduction in the Sonoma Springs area. Mapped priority properties for conservation in flood-prone areas and conducted outreach to landowners. • Completed 16 conservation easement acquisition projects, including 6 in high wildfire risk areas within the wildland urban interface, 3 with significant floodplain protections, and 3 community open space projects • 56 conservation easement acquisition projects are in progress, including 29 community open space projects. • Stewardship of acquired conservation easements over multi-benefit natural and working lands in hazard-prone areas in accordance with hazard mitigation goals 	Yes	Ongoing need.	All listed.
SAO-8	Partner with public agencies, non-profit organizations, and private landowners to establish strategically placed fuel buffer zones between wildlands and at-risk communities	Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 6 conservation easement acquisition projects in high wildfire risk areas in the wildland urban interface. 10 projects with similar characteristics and conservation benefits are in progress. • Partnering with Calfire and others to establish a portion of a regional shaded fuel break at Ag + Open Space-owned Saddle Mountain Preserve – this fuel break is critical for protecting northeastern Santa Rosa from wildfires • Implemented 95 miles of shaded fuel breaks and roadside treatments to improve evacuation and ingress routes for public and fire professionals. Collaborated with Res. Conservation Districts, CALFIRE, Permit Sonoma to design and ensure env. Compliance and fund fuels treatments. 	Yes	Ongoing need. CALFIRE wildfire prevention grant to help install 13 mile shaded fuel break along Russian River. Measure H funding to be applied on project designed by partners in high risk areas.	Wildfire, Landslide/Mass Movement

SAO-9	Identify priority areas and acquire conservation easements over natural and working lands which provide drought, flood, and climate change resiliency benefits, including lands with high recharge potential; wetlands, floodplains, and headwater streams; and coastal areas (including coastal wetlands)	Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed 11 conservation easement acquisition projects that provide climate change resiliency benefits, including 4 projects with significant floodplain protections, 3 with wetland protections, 6 in headwater areas, 5 with high groundwater recharge potential. 16 projects with similar characteristics and conservation benefits are in progress. Stewardship of acquired conservation easements over natural and working lands in accordance with hazard mitigation goals 	Yes	Ongoing need.	Drought, Extreme Cold, Extreme Heat, Extreme Wind, Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Sea Level Rise
SAO-10	Partner with public agencies and non-profit organizations to expand, create, or connect new parks and open space preserves and trails and to implement open space projects in or near incorporated cities and other communities in Sonoma County, including acquisition projects and improvement projects (restoration, public access, agriculture, recreation development)	Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed 3 urban open space projects as part of our Community Spaces Matching Grant Program, as well as 5 projects to create new parks and open space preserves and 3 projects to expand existing parks. 29 Community Spaces Matching Grant Program projects and 4 other projects to create new and expand existing parks and recreational opportunities are in progress. Stewardship of acquired conservation easements in or near incorporated cities and other communities in Sonoma County, in accordance with hazard mitigation goals 	Yes	Ongoing need.	All listed.
SAO-11	Conduct and encourage forest and grassland management activities, including ecologically appropriate thinning, prescribed burning, and livestock grazing, to improve forest health and resiliency to wildfire, disease, and drought; to reduce wildfire hazards; enhance wildlife habitat; and increase carbon sequestration.	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing/ In Progress. Annual management of forest and grassland habitats at all Ag + Open Space-owned properties through thinning, prescribed burning, grazing, and mowing. Veg Mgt program has promoted Workforce Development and env compliance for wildfire resilience on private and public lands. Healthy forests can start with shaded fuel breaks followed by Rx burning under treated areas. 	Yes	Ongoing land management needs on AOS-owned properties and AOS-held CE properties	Drought, Wildfire, Extreme Wind, Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Wildfire

SAO-12	Stabilize burned slopes and remove hazard trees to reduce risk of debris flows and other damage to structures, roads, and waterways following a fire	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	Completed/ongoing/in progress. Hazard trees removed, burned slopes stabilized at Saddle Mountain (property was affected by 2020 Glass Fire). Ongoing monitoring and maintenance.	Yes	Anticipate impacts to AOS-owned properties from future wildfires	Extreme wind, Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Wildfire
SAO-13	Monitor and assess vegetation response, carbon loss, erosion and sedimentation risks, stream channel response, and invasive/noxious species establishment on burned lands to prioritize and implement remedial efforts as needed to minimize hazards.	County of Sonoma, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed/ongoing/in progress. Ag + Open Space-owned properties and Ag + Open Space-held CE properties have been assessed through both field monitoring and remote monitoring via the use of post-fire aerial imagery in the years since impacts from fires in 2017, 2019, and 2020. When released, the updated fine-scale vegetation map and 2022 lidar will support additional remote monitoring and assessment of vegetation response, carbon loss, and other fire impacts. 	Yes	Anticipate impacts of AOS-owned properties and AOS-held CE properties from future wildfires.	Wildfire.

SAO-14	Partner with RCDs and other organizations on technical assistance and outreach efforts to landowners regarding best practices and mitigation measures for wildfire, flood, and drought hazards.	RCDs, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	<p>Completed/Ongoing/In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ag + Open Space contracted with Sonoma Resource Conservation District in 2019 to provide technical support to Sonoma County landowners affected by 2019 and 2020 wildfires. • Ag + Open Space participates in the Sonoma County-led Watershed Task Force, and the Marin Resource Conservation District-led Ag Lands Emergency Response Team (ALERT), part of the Sonoma-Marin Ag and County Climate Coalition. • Ag + Open Space continues to partner with Resource Conservation Districts and others on sharing best practices and mitigation measures for listed hazards. • The County has an MOU with Gold Ridge and Sonoma RCD to promote the Resilient Forests & Watersheds workshop initiative. This contract started in June 2023 and will go through June 2026. 	Yes	Ongoing need anticipated.	Drought, Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Wildfire
SAO-15	Partner with RCDs and other organizations to implement habitat restoration projects to reduce flood risk and/or risk of post-fire landslide or debris flows.	RCDs, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	Ongoing/In progress. Ag + Open Space continues to partner with Resource Conservation Districts and others on prioritization of projects to reduce flood risk and/or risk of post-fire landslide or debris flows.	Yes	Ongoing need anticipated.	Flooding, Landslide/Mass Movement, Wildfire
SAO-16	Partner with RCDs and other organizations to improve soil health, including organic matter content, aggregate stability, water holding capacity, and carbon sequestration	RCDs, Support Agency: Ag + Open Space	Ongoing/In progress. Ag + Open Space continues to partner with Resource Conservation Districts and others on outreach and other actions to improve soil health. Ag + Open Space received a training grant from American Farmland Trust to support capacity building and participation in the Soil Health Stewards Program https://farmland.org/soil-health-stewards-program/	Yes	Ongoing need anticipated.	Drought, Extreme Cold, Extreme Heat, Extreme Wind, Flooding



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: May 16, 2025

To: Ag + Open Space Advisory Committee

From: Misti Arias, General Manager
Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager

Subject: 2025 12-Month Work Plan in Preparation for 2026 Work Plan Discussion

REQUESTED ACTION

Receive a brief update on the status of the 2025 Work Plan and the process for developing the 2026 Work Plan; and provide input on the goals and performance measures for the 2026 Work Plan.

Staff have provided the following memo and 2025 Work Plan, which was sent to the Board of Directors in August 2024, to help committee members prepare for the discussion. NOTE: Only five goals are allowed per the Board's template.

Memo to the Board of Directors & 2025 12-Month Work Plan

INTRODUCTION

Ag + Open Space now has the organizational structure and staffing needed to implement the Vital Lands Initiative and deliver on our community's intentions outlined in Measure F. Our positive and supportive culture and compelling mission are motivating staff to work efficiently and effectively. We have raised our acquisition activities and are regularly closing at least 6 projects per year. Ag + Open Space closed 6 acquisition projects in 2023 and is on track to close 8 projects in 2024. This increase in acquisition activity has resulted in significant use of our Open Space Special Tax Account fund balance with an anticipated increase of use of these funds in FY 24/25. The FYE 23/24 balance is \$65,500,000 compared to the FYE 22/23 \$82,400,000 balance.

The funds are intended for open space conservation, so we are fulfilling the promise we made to the community by accelerating conservation efforts and expenditure of the fund balance. However, this increases our awareness of the finite nature of these funds and the need for us to make intentional, well-informed decisions when pursuing land conservation efforts. We have also made great progress in enhancing our support of conservation easement landowners and are poised to help increase enhanced land management and agricultural production. We continue to evaluate how best to support our recreational partners to help ensure that new parks and preserves are accessible to all members of our community. Staff continues to work with agricultural partners and local producers to increase our ability to use land conservation tools to preserve agricultural lands, increase equitable land access, and support local producers. These efforts are critical to the success of our future reauthorization effort. Ag + Open

Space has the staffing and financial resources to pursue ambitious goals in 2025 as outlined below, which includes use of tribal funds outlined in the mitigation agreements with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR).

Much of the work of Ag + Open Space is on-going and takes a number of years to complete. Therefore, many of our goals are the same as they were in our 2024 Work Plan, but the specific annual measures are different.

PERFORMANCE GOALS

Performance Goal 1: Conserve a diversity of lands that further the agricultural land, water, wildlife, community identity and healthy community goals outlined in the Vital Lands Initiative, with a focus on agricultural lands and climate resilience.

Measures:

- a. Complete at least 6 land or conservation easement acquisitions that further a diversity of the Vital Lands Initiative Goals to conserve agricultural lands, wildlands, water, community identity and healthy communities. Projects that have the potential to close in 2025 include Bianchi Ranches – Two Rock, Crawford Gulch, Deniz Family Farm, Laguna Edge, Peters Ranch, Rowland Mack, South Sonoma Mountain – Rodgers Creek North, South and Skyline, and Willow Ave.
- b. Negotiate a riparian easement on at least 1 property. This is a pilot program. We have a pilot project underway and will make adjustments based upon what we learn from the pilot before expanding the program.
- c. Board approval of at least 3 Community Spaces Matching Grant Projects that have been recommended for funding in a previous grant cycle. We have 24 active projects; of those projects, the Badger Park, Geyserville Community Park, Guerneville River Park, Healdsburg Montage Park, Maxwell Farms, Mark West Community Park, and Petaluma River Park have the potential to come before the Board in 2025.
- d. Conduct outreach to 2 areas of high priority agricultural and natural lands to increase and accelerate protection of these lands.
- e. Create proactive plan for future acquisitions for the fiscal and calendar year.
- f. Refine tools to help estimate acquisition project costs earlier in the process.

Background Information:

Ag + Open Space's primary purpose is to conserve open space; this goal is fundamental in meeting that purpose by setting aggressive targets that greatly increase the amount of conserved land and our ability to conserve land efficiently. There are direct benefits to landowners who choose to conserve their land but, more importantly, each of these projects results in broad public benefits for everyone in our community. These benefits include clean air and water, healthy local foods, carbon sequestration and climate adaptation, decreased risk from extreme events, scenic vistas, and vibrant natural lands for both wildlife and recreation. Ag + Open Space has accelerated our acquisition efforts over the last two years and have begun to expend the fund balance in the Open Space Special Tax Account (OSSTA). We have budgeted over \$58 million for acquisition and matching grant projects in fiscal year 24/25. Our projected sales tax revenue for the same fiscal year is \$32.3 million. We are striving to leverage our sales tax

dollars as much as possible and have estimated over \$10 million in outside funding this fiscal year. If we are successful in closing the projects anticipated in our budget, we will use approximately \$21.9 million of the \$67.9 million OSSTA fund balance. If we continue at this rate, we will expend the full OSSTA fund balance in three to four years. The primary purpose of these funds is open space conservation, so we are meeting the expectations of our community. However, we need to further refine our processes to plan for and select the highest priority acquisition and Community Spaces projects. Ag + Open Space is building our capacity to estimate the costs of potential acquisition projects so that we can consider the fiscal implications earlier in the process and strategize grant funding and timing of closing. The complexity of this work and the magnitude of the workload may warrant additional acquisition staff. We have currently been using consultants to help balance the workload but there is still additional need.

This goal furthers both the Vital Lands Initiative Goals and Objectives and the Sonoma County Strategic Plan Climate Action and Resiliency 5.2 and Organizational Excellence 1.4 and 4.1.

Performance Goal 2: Ensure responsible stewardship and management of conserved lands that meet industry standards.

Measures:

- a. Create Ag + Open Space Endowment to ensure that our agency can meet its perpetual obligation to steward lands and conservation easements.
- b. Transfer Stewardship Reserve Funds to the Ag + Open Space Endowment and begin annual funding of the reserve equal to previous annual debt service payment.
- c. Work with state representatives to pass legislation that would allow for more diverse investment options for the endowment fund.
- d. Develop an Ag + Open Space Endowment investment policy. Continue to increase the pace of ground and remote easement monitoring visits.
- e. Continue to improve responsiveness to confirmed easement violations, regularly report violations to the Board, and provide technical support to landowners to help bring them back into compliance with their easement.
- f. Complete the highest priority easement amendments and develop a strategy for further prioritization and completion of the remainder.
- g. Continue to support landowners through timely review and approval of use requests, amendments, and addressing outstanding violations.
- h. Work with partners to host at least two workshops (land-based training and education programs) for easement landowners.
- i. Provide at least 2 outings and/or trainings that showcase Saddle Mountain as a demonstration of methods to increase community resiliency to wildfire and extreme weather events.
- j. Work with Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to create a grant program to provide technical and financial support to increase land management practices on public and private lands that enhance the health and function of protected lands.
- k. Work with County partners through the Resilience Coordination Team (RCT) to present long-term vegetation management recommendations to the Board.
- l. Conduct 10 workshops for local communities in areas of high risk for wildfire through the Resilient Forests and Watersheds initiative.

- m. Complete the Northside Russian River Shaded Fuel Break project.
- n. Provide 10 additional vegetation management grants by be March 2025.

Background Information:

Conserving land is an on-going responsibility, Ag + Open Space has a perpetual obligation to ensure that conserved lands are managed in a way that furthers our goals. Conservation easements restrict uses and development that negatively impact conservation values. We have a responsibility to ensure landowners are honoring these restrictions. Ag + Open Space has sufficient sales tax funding for our current stewardship efforts and to fund the Board approved endowment. However, we will need to pursue legislation in 2025 to allow for more diverse investment options to ensure stewardship of our conservation easements in perpetuity. Protecting what is currently on the land is just the beginning. The survival of natural and human communities will rely heavily on how well land is managed over time, including adopting new practices that go beyond preservation to actively enhancing conservation values, increasing carbon sequestration, and improving resilience to climate change and extreme events. Ag + Open Space can build upon our existing landowner relationships and expand opportunities to restore and enhance the health of natural and agricultural lands. Fortunately, FIGR has agreed to provide up to \$2 million per year to Ag + Open Space. We have initiated the consultation process with FIGR and are requesting the creation of a land management/enhancement grant program to be made available to landowners with conservation easements. In addition, we are requesting funds to be made available to our recreational and agricultural partners for land management, agricultural infrastructure and enhancements. There are limits to how Ag + Open Space can use Measure F sales tax funding to enhance privately owned land so we will be applying for public agency and private foundation grants to assist with implementing this goal.

This goal furthers universal objectives and guiding principles of the Vital Lands Initiative and Sonoma County Strategic Plan Climate Action and Resiliency 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, and 5.2 and Organizational Excellence 1.5 and 4.1.

Performance Goal 3: Increase equitable agricultural and recreational access to conserved lands.

Measures:

- a. Work with partners to open at least 2 park and open space preserves to the public.
- b. Continue to pilot the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program rolling application process and present funding recommendations.
- c. Initiate assessment of 2-year Community Spaces Matching Grant Program to identify and recommend future program refinements to the Board.
- d. Continue to pilot the Buy-Protect-Sell program to increase protection of a diversity of agricultural lands and help facilitate equitable, affordable access to these lands for diverse farmers and rancher and assess program impact.
- e. Work with partners to develop the Somos Tierra (campesino land access project) and identify a property to acquire.
- f. Identify a partner qualified and willing to own land in Sonoma County to provide affordable, reliable leases to local farmers.

- g. Work with Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to provide funding to agricultural and recreational partners to increase and enhance equitable park and farmland access and land management.
- h. Manage partner Outings and Education contracts to provide funding for at least 6 outings that expand opportunities for all members of the community to connect with protected lands.
- i. Provide funding to complete at least 2 Matching Grant Projects that increase access to communities identified in need of parks in the Park Gap Analysis.
- j. Present recommendations to the Board (developed in collaboration with recreational partners) that identify how we can support efforts to open parks and preserves acquired with Ag + Open Space funds and provided with Initial Public Access and Operations and Maintenance (IPAOM) funds.

Background Information:

Agricultural production is stressed not only by climate change and market demand, but also because of the high cost of land and advanced average age of farmers and ranchers. Ag + Open Space can help address one of the most critical components to ensure the continued success of our agricultural community: affordable land access. We can reduce the cost of agricultural land and competition for land by non-agricultural buyers. In addition, Ag + Open Space has requested consultation with FIGR to discuss a portion of the open space funds identified in the amended compact being used to support equitable land access. Our proposal is that these funds could be used for startup costs (access, water, soil amendments, farm plans etc.), land-based learning programs, modifying agricultural practices to enhance food production and climate resilience, and indigenous and/or culturally relevant farming practices and products. We also intend to support local partners in creating land-based training programs that increase the number and diversity of farmers and ranchers that are prepared to own and operate their own farm. These types of programs can be very effective in supporting the transition of farmworkers to owner/operators.

In addition, scientific studies show that human health is greatly improved with regular access to the outdoors. This is one of the many additional benefits of our land conservation efforts. One of the best ways to build support for Sonoma County land conservation is to provide people with opportunities to experience these extraordinary open spaces. Ag + Open Space has worked with numerous recreational partners to acquire land for additions to existing or to create new parks and open space preserves. Many of these properties are not yet open to the public. We need to strategize with our recreational partners to ensure that these properties are open to the public as soon as possible and look for opportunities to create recreational access in communities where it doesn't currently exist. Ag + Open Space updated our Community Spaces Matching Grant Program to make grant funds more accessible to a broader array of community groups and organizations. We are currently piloting the new guidelines and application process and will evaluate how well we are meeting the needs of our community to recommend further refinements to the Board as needed. Ag + Open Space will need to leverage Measure F sales tax revenue with public agency and private foundation grants to further this goal.

This goal furthers the Vital Lands Initiative and goals in the Sonoma County Strategic Plan in Climate Action and Resiliency 5.2, Organization Excellence 4.1, and Racial Equity and Social Justice 4.3.

Performance Goal 4: Engage the community and build awareness of how Ag + Open Space's land conservation work is critical to ensuring healthy communities that are resilient to climate change.

Measures:

- a. Complete website redesign with a priority on showcasing acquisition, stewardship, and community engagement efforts.
- b. Update and share interactive active projects map for Board of Directors, Fiscal Oversight Commission and Advisory Committee members.
- c. Create public dashboards to share initiatives and report progress.
- d. Launch "Land for All" outreach campaign and additional campaigns as needed and in alignment with agency goals and priorities. Previous campaigns focus on climate, agriculture, biodiversity, and scenic beauty.
- e. Create and release a FY 24/25 annual report (print and video) to share project and program highlights, as well as financial information.
- f. Continue to enhance Public Outings and Youth Education program to include at least 4 outings hosted by Ag + Open Space.
- g. Continue to build relationships with local tribes to encourage cultural resource protection, integrate traditional ecological knowledge into land management, and help facilitate land back or cultural access agreements.
- h. Develop communication strategy for grant funders that aligns with contract agreements.

Background Information:

Ag + Open Space plays a foundational role in providing and maintaining our community's quality of life. The community has conserved nearly 125,000 acres of land through their own generosity. All community members deserve to have a better understanding of how local sales tax dollars have honored their intention in creating the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District and associated time limited funding sources. We have a responsibility to demonstrate the enormous public benefits being achieved through our work on behalf of the community. Our work to increase engagement with and better inform the community will also be done collaboratively with our partners such as Regional Parks, the County's Climate Action and Resilience Department, UC Cooperative Extension, Resource Conservation Districts, Sonoma Land Trust, The Wildlands Conservancy, and local cities. Ag + Open Space has sufficient staff and financial resources to implement this goal.

This goal furthers the guiding principles of the Vital Lands Initiative and the Sonoma County Strategic Plan Organizational Excellence 2.2 and 2.4.

Performance Goal 5: Evaluate and refine administrative function and land conservation processes to enhance Ag + Open Space's efficiency and effectiveness and diversity, equity and inclusion.

Measures:

- a. Begin implementation of reauthorization strategy including additional polling, and identifying external campaign leads and partners.
- b. Provide staff training on the dos and don'ts related to a reauthorization campaign.
- c. Finalize and begin implementation of Ag + Open Space DEI Roadmap.

- d. Develop legislative strategy to secure funding for priority projects and programs.
- e. Assess staffing and organizational structure to ensure adequate resources to achieve priority goals.
- f. Develop funding strategy to leverage local sales tax dollars.
- g. Evaluate organizational processes and practices to identify ways to simplify and streamline our work.

Background Information:

We are short on time in terms of climate change and the Ag + Open Space sales tax measure. Leadership at the national, state, and regional levels are setting land conservation goals to ensure that we can be resilient to climate change. One of the best ways we can ensure that natural and agricultural systems can adapt to climate change is to protect a large percentage of land with a diversity of physical characteristics. Measures C and F have helped us make great strides toward conserving the amount of land needed to ensure resilience to climate change and our quality of life in Sonoma County. However, there is still significant work to do, which necessitates an extension of our quarter-cent sales tax. There are limitations as to how public agency funding can be used for reauthorization campaigns so Ag + Open Space will look to our partners and outside funding sources as needed to implement this goal.

There is more land conservation work to be done than time and resources available. We need to set ambitious, measurable goals and then implement in the most efficient, effective, and equitable ways to meet them. We need to increase our capacity to complete this work by refining our organizational structure and processes, employing creative approaches and tools, and being intentional and strategic. Ag + Open Space needs to focus all efforts on actions that will result in protecting as much high priority land as possible and ensuring that our efforts provide equitable benefit to all members of our community.

This goal furthers all the goals identified in the Vital Lands Initiative and the Sonoma County Strategic Plan Climate Action and Resilience 5.1 and 5.2 and Organizational Excellence 1.1.



Acquisition Project Status Chart | Conservation Easements

Attachment D

										Agricultural Lands										Community Identity										Healthy Communities										Water										Wildlands										Project Evaluation										Initiating Project										Due Dilligence										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	Initiaiting Project																																																																																																																																									
2	Berry Forest Preserve	133	5								+	+									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development																																																																																																																																									
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	Gill Creek Confluence	51	4						+		+	+									Initiating Project	Initiating Project																																																																																																																																									
11	Hendren Ranch	347	5						+		+										Initiating Project	Initiating Project																																																																																																																																									
12	Ielmorini Ranch - Sonoma Mountain	417	2																		Initiating Project	Initiating project																																																																																																																																									
13	Limping Turkey Ranch	158	2																		Initiating Project	Initiating project																																																																																																																																									
14	Little Rancheria Creek	276	5									+									Initiating Project	Work scheduled to begin next year																																																																																																																																									
15	Lobban – Mark West Creek	266	1																		Negotiating CE	Initiating Project																																																																																																																																									
16	McClelland Dairy	348	2																		Appraisal Process	Responding to funder appraisal comments																																																																																																																																									
17	Monte Rio Redwoods Expansion	1,517	5														+				Approvals/Baseline	BOD scheduled for 6/3/25																																																																																																																																									
18	Peters Ranch	278	2																		Initiating Project	Draft CE in Internal Review																																																																																																																																									
19	Rincon Hills	218	1																		Initiating Project	Updating project structure/transaction																																																																																																																																									
20	Rowland Mack	168	1																		Appraisal Process	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE																																																																																																																																									
21	South Fork Gualala River	299	5								+	+									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development																																																																																																																																									
22	South Sonoma Mountain - Grove	366	1 & 2																		Negotiating CE	Project Structure - development																																																																																																																																									
23	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek North	393	1 & 2																		Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE																																																																																																																																									
24	South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek South	421	2																		Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE																																																																																																																																									
25	South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline	480	1 & 2																		Negotiating CE	Appraisal work underway + internal review of CE																																																																																																																																									
26	Starrett Hill	319	5																		Initiating Project	Project Structure - development																																																																																																																																									
27	Willow Avenue Farm	8	2																		Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE																																																																																																																																									
28	Witt Home Ranch	395	2																		Initiating Project	Initiating project																																																																																																																																									
Total Acres		11,673																																																																																																																																																													

Acquisition Project Status Chart | Matching Grant Projects

Matching Grant Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Vital Lands Initiative Goals				Step 2				Step 3			Step 4	Step 5	Status	Comments
			Agricultural Lands	Community Identity	Healthy Community	Water	Initiating Project	Due Diligence	Project Structure	CE Negotiations	Appraisal Process	FOC	BOD	Escrow/Closing	Implementation +		
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 following trail construction
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 submitted for Regional Parks Review.
Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG	4	3														Initiating Project	Matching Grant Agreement and CE RC in Co Co review. Next steps sharing legal docs with City. 100% construction plans
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 Matching Grant Agreement.
Denman Reach	2	2														Negotiating CE	MGA CE getting through internal review, Liz Co Co final review. MGA need documentation from City purchase price, closing statement and funding source.
Geyserville Community Plaza	1	4							+							Initiating Project	Grantee reviewing Letter of Intent approved. MGA CE RC drafting. Working on project structure.
Graton Town Square	0.6	5						+	+	+						Negotiating CE	Grantee approved Letter of Intent and is advancing permitting and CE considerations. MGA in development.
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 Phase 2	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' Demonstration	4.5	1														Initiating Project	Pending direction from Public Infrastructure
Mark West Area Community Park	1	4														Completed Project	Closed 4/5.
Mark West Area Community Park Ph 2	1	4														Initiating Project	Drafting MGA.
Maxwell Farms	79	1														Negotiating CE	Negotiating 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 signed. Legal agreements in development.
River Lane***	1	5													+	Escrow/Closing	Closed pending grant match and reporting due diligence.
Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1c	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	Letter of Intent under Regional Parks review. MGA drafting.
Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway***	49	1														Escrow/Closing	Closed pending due diligence including match
Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula)	27**	2							+							Initiating Project	CE amendment and Recreation Covenant needs dev that will cover McNear as well as Steamer Landing w/Catherine in development. RC req of Steamer and McNear Amendment.

Tierra de Rosas Plaza	1	3															Initiating Project	LOI executed. MGP drafted
Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2	21	4															Initiating Project	Drafting MGA and RC.
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				Healthy Comm unities											Out of Program (other)	Funding request withdrwan by SMART 7/10/2023
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Acquisition Project Status Chart | Transfers

[illegible]



Ag + Open Space Active Acquisition Projects (January 2025)

Active Projects

Supervisory District 1

Crane Creek Ranch
This 290-acre ranch is located just east of Petaluma Hill Road to the east of the City of Rohnert Park. Crane Creek, a tributary of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, flows into the property from Crane Creek Regional Park to the southeast, and is home to California Central Coast steelhead along its entire reach through the property. Crane Ranch forms a connection between the Crane CE property to the north and Ho fee property to the south. Current land use includes sheep and cattle grazing, cultivated hay, and a 2-acre plot for hops. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands and Community Identity, Water

Crane Creek Trail MG
The City of Rohnert Park will transfer 75 acres to Regional Parks to expand Crane Creek Regional Park. This project will also extend Copeland Creek trail and will provide access across Petaluma Hill Road to the park by constructing a new 1-mile trail. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Lobban Mark West Creek
The property consists of 266 acres off St. Helena Road, adjacent to Rancho Mark West and Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve. The current owner is working with LandPaths as a project partner. The property burned in the Glass Fire, and the forest is currently being salvage-logged. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Los Guillos Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden MG
The Los Guillos Demonstration Garden, a project of the University of California Master Gardeners of Sonoma County, will transform a once-devastated parcel on the Los Guillos campus—burned in the 2020 Glass Fire—into a thriving, educational space. With support from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program, the Master Gardeners will create a fully accessible demonstration garden, showcasing sustainable practices that support native habitats, promote wildlife-friendly landscapes, address food insecurity, and enhance climate resilience. Visitors will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning through themed garden and a state-of-the-art greenhouse classroom. Planned features include an oak arbor picnic area, a children's garden expansion, a native plants garden, an outdoor classroom, a fire-resilient garden, a greenhouse and shade house, an expanded orchard, and an outdoor nature classroom—offering a welcoming space for education, inspiration, and community connection.

Maxwell Farms MG
Regional Parks will construct park improvements to create new recreational opportunities at this existing park. Park amenities such as restrooms and trails will be constructed. Regional Parks is also partnering with the Sonoma Ecology Center to implement restoration on a 0.25 mile stretch of Sonoma Creek. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water

Rincon Hills
Ag + Open Space would purchase a conservation easement on this 218-acre property within the Santa Rosa City Limits. The property is adjacent to Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve to the northeast, and City zoning could allow subdivision into more than 200 residential lots. The property is in the wildland-urban interface, and with appropriate vegetation management, could serve as a fire buffer for the City. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Roberts Oaks
Roberts Oaks is approximately 412 acres sited directly east of Rohnert Park across Petaluma Hill Road. The property has a 4.5-acre spring fed pond, undulating mature oak woodlands with spectacular views in multiple directions. With its spectacular scenery and proximity to local populations, Ag + Open Space will acquire the property in fee and transfer it to Regional Parks. The property's excellent access, unique topography, water and habitat features including numerous wooded and shady glades with bucolic views tee it up to be an outstanding park.

Rowland Mack
This project includes a conservation easement over a 168-acre property south of and adjacent to the El Recreo conservation easement and the Lawson Addition to Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve. This acquisition would expand protection along the southern Mayacamas Mountains and possibly facilitate expansion of the park. This property is in the Badger Creek watershed – a tributary to Santa Rosa Creek, a steelhead stream. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Sonoma Schellville Trail
In the mid-1980's, Sonoma County Regional Parks began their work to acquire a trail to fill a critical gap in the local and regional trail system. Regional Parks will be able to leverage Matching Grant funds to finally purchase the remaining land and build trail that will connect local and regional trail systems, including the San Francisco Bay Trail that connects 47 cities across 9 counties.

South Sonoma Mountain - Grove
This 369-acre property, near the summit of Sonoma Mountain, shares a boundary with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. The property is located at the terminus of Grove Street and is entirely within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing and limited residential development. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek (North)
This 813-acre property is comprised of three parcels. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit and the southeastern boundary is Stage Gulch Road. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing, some vineyard use, and limited residential development. The northern part of the property is contiguous with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. Ellis, Lafferty, and Rogers Creeks, two intermittent creeks, are located on the property. Rogers Creek hosts threatened steelhead. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline
This project will place a conservation easement on a 491-acre property so it remains as open space for wildlife habitat, grazing and limited residential use. The property is contiguous with George Ranch and is quite visible given its location near the summit of Sonoma Mountain. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Rogers and Lafferty Creeks, two intermittent creeks, are located on the property. Rogers Creek hosts threatened steelhead and is potential habitat for yellow-legged frog. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

Supervisory District 2

Blanchi Ranches - Two Rock
This 632-acre property seeks the protection of an agricultural based conservation easement over three contiguous ranches. Presently, Ag + Open Space is working with the owner on an NCRS application for grant monies

Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust
This project includes a conservation easement on a 217-acre property on the western slope of Sonoma Mountain within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Adobe Creek, a tributary to the Petaluma River, crosses the property, and the property is used to preserve the land for agricultural production. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

Deniz Family Farm
This project includes a conservation easement on a 315-acre property on the western slope of Sonoma Mountain within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Adobe Creek, a tributary to the Petaluma River, flows across the property. Based on existing legal lots and zoning, the property could be subdivided into nine separate ownerships. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

Denman Ranch MG
The City of Petaluma seeks to acquire a 2.1-acre parcel that is pivotal to the completion of a larger 23.5-acre riparian restoration, public trail, environmental education, and flood control project on the Petaluma River. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

Diamond W Ranch
This is certified organic 850-acre dairy near Valley Ford and Two Rock. It has a small stretch of Steeply Creek and is highly visible along Bodega Ave/Valley Ford Rd and Roblar Rd. The family would like to retire all but two of the nine development rights. A conservation

Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension

MGP Phases 1 & 2
The Kelly Creek Project of the Earth Island Institute will acquire 44 acres and transfer fee title to Regional Parks to expand Helen Putnam Regional Park and provide a new access point off of D Street. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Ielmorini Ranch - Sonoma Mountain
This 417-acre cattle ranch is located northeast of Petaluma on the lower slopes of Sonoma Mountain. There is a year-round stream, Washington Creek, on the property, and the landowner has expressed interest in riparian conservation as well as continued agricultural operations. A conservation easement would preserve the land for agricultural uses while also protecting natural areas, wildlife corridors, and scenic resources. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands and Water. The property also ranked highly in the Vital Lands Risk of Loss scoring category due to zoning and development of surrounding properties.

Limping Turkey Ranch
This 158-acre ranch is located between the Mattos and Camozzi conservation easements. The property's grasslands, terrain, abundant water, and adjacency to other agricultural lands make it a critical addition to a large block of agricultural conservation easements in the area. It is at high risk of conversion to rural residential homes because it has already been subdivided and prepared for development with wells, perc tests, and defined legal lots. A conservation easement on this property would likely consist of an amendment to the Camozzi easement to add this land with selection of its natural resource values. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

McClelland Dairy
This project includes a conservation easement on a 348-acre dairy in the Two Rock area. This well-known dairy hosts an annual pumpkin festival each fall and portions of the property are highly visible from Bodega Ave, a designated Scenic Corridor. There is strong interest from the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) program to fund an easement on this property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

Petaluma Bounty Community Farm MG
For over 15 years, Petaluma People's Services' Bounty Community Farm has grown and sold affordable, locally-grown fruits and vegetables in the center of Petaluma, while prioritizing the creation of opportunities for low-income and vulnerable community members to have fresh and healthy food. Matching Grant funds will help them purchase the land they've long farmed and continue their work of bringing fresh, healthy food and sustainable agricultural education to their community

Petaluma River Park MG
The Petaluma River Park Foundation will construct initial public recreational improvements on their recently acquired 10-acre parcel on McNear Peninsula, adjacent to Steamer Landing Park. These improvements will include trails, docks, plantings, and restrooms. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Peters Ranch
This project would include a conservation easement over a 277-acre dairy farm, located on Llano Road near the Laguna Treatment Plant. The property consists of rolling hills with mature oaks, woodlands, wetlands, and riparian habitats. Split by Laguna de Santa Rosa, it supports an active wildlife and recreation corridor. George McClelland, the owner and a respected Sonoma County dairy operator, intends to maintain and expand his operations whilst preserving the natural resources of a complex pasture, wetland, woodland, and riparian park. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agriculture Lands, Community Identity and Water.

South Sonoma Mountain - Grove
This 369-acre property, near the summit of Sonoma Mountain, shares a boundary with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. The property is located at the terminus of Grove Street and is entirely within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing and limited residential development. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek (North & South)
This 813-acre property is comprised of two parcels. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit and the southeastern boundary is Stage Gulch Road. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing, some vineyard use, and limited residential development. The northern part of the property is contiguous with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. Ellis, Lafferty, and Rogers Creeks, all intermittent, are located on the property. Rogers Creek hosts threatened steelhead. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline
This project will place a conservation easement on a 491-acre property so it remains as open space for wildlife habitat, grazing and limited residential use. The property is contiguous with George Ranch and is quite visible given its location near the summit of Sonoma Mountain. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Rogers and Lafferty Creeks, two intermittent creeks, are located on the property. Rogers Creek hosts threatened steelhead and is potential habitat for yellow-legged frog. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula)
The Petaluma River Park Foundation will construct initial public recreational improvements on their recently acquired 10-acre parcel on McNear Peninsula, adjacent to Steamer Landing Park. These improvements will include trails, docks, plantings, and restrooms. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Willow Avenue Farm
This project includes a conservation easement on a 7.5-acre diverse animal small agricultural farm. It is located within a priority greenbelt area and is highly visible from public roads and the SMART rail line. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands and Community Identity

Witt Home Ranch
This project includes a conservation easement on a 395-acre beef ranch just west of Petaluma on Bodega Ave. It is located between the McDowell open space easement and the Uncle Henry's Ranch conservation easement. A very prominent and scenic hilltop is the centerpiece of the property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

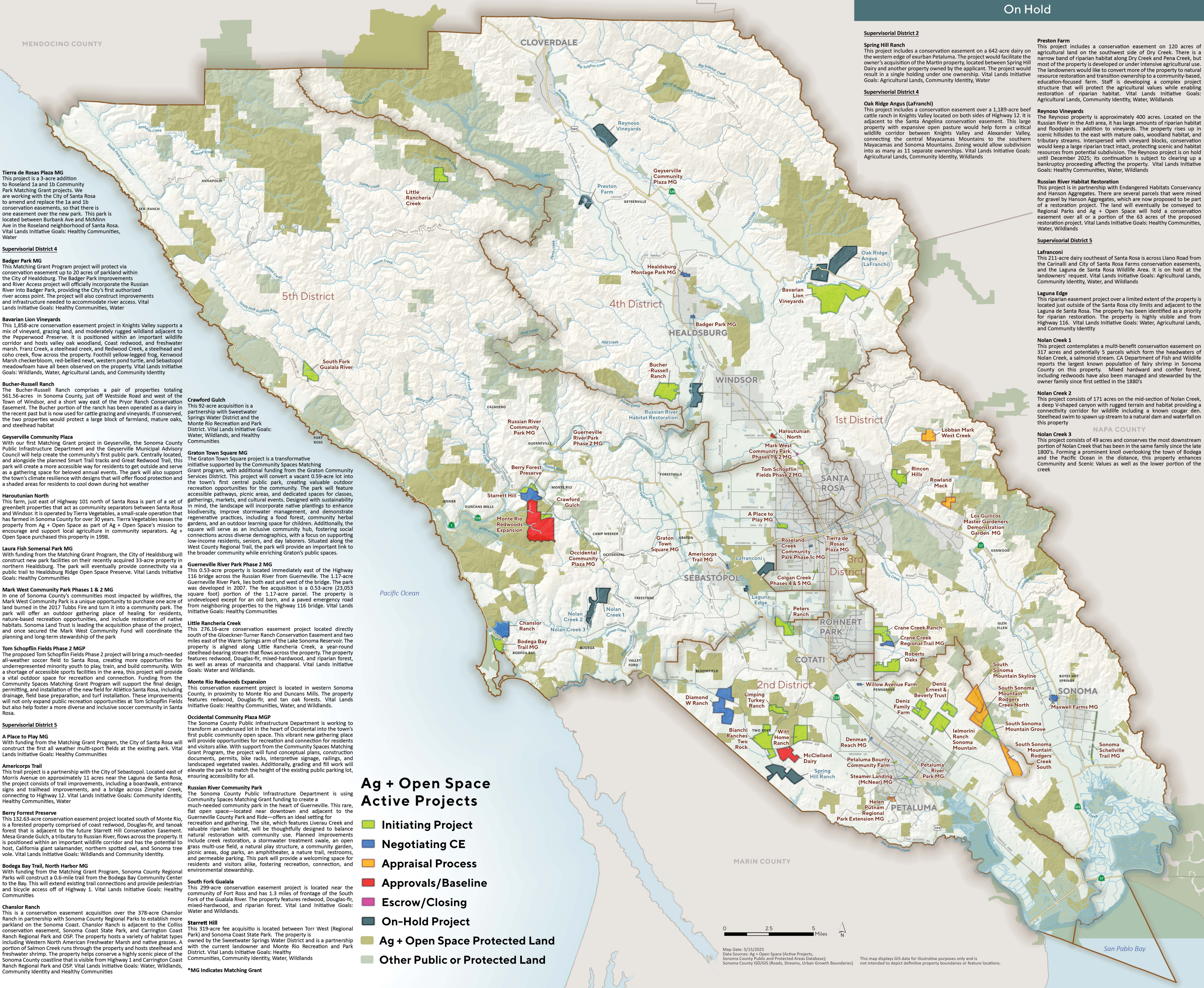
Supervisory District 3

Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG
This project is for the acquisition of a 4-acre parcel adjacent to the existing Colgan Creek restoration, park development and trail project. This additional parcel will allow increased creek meander in the ongoing creek restoration effort, and will provide additional land for additional recreational development, including a neighborhood park. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water

Colgan Creek Phase 5 MG
The Colgan Creek Neighborhood Park Phase 5 Improvement project, in partnership with the City of Santa Rosa, aims to bring a long-awaited 5.8-acre neighborhood park to the residents of southwest Santa Rosa. The location next to the final segment of a multi-phase creek restoration and shared-use path project, the park will serve as a vital green space for the growing community. With support from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program, this project will engage the community in updating the master plan and designing a park that reflects local needs. Planned improvements include enhanced public access, utility infrastructure, and a mix of active and passive recreation features. Potential amenities may include play and picnic areas, walking and biking paths, and spaces for various recreational activities—creating a welcoming and vibrant outdoor space for all to enjoy.

Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1c MG
This project is a 3-acre addition to Roseland 1a and 1b Community Park Matching Grant projects. We are working with the City of Santa Rosa to amend and replace the 1a and 1b conservation easements, so that there is one easement over the new park. This park is located between Burbank Ave and McMin Ave in the Roseland neighborhood

Starrett Hill
This 319-acre fee acquisition is located between Torr West (Regional Park) and Sonoma Coast State Park. The property is owned by the Sweetwater Springs Water District and is a partnership with the current landowner and Monte Rio Recreation and Park District. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands



Ag + Open Space Active Projects

- Initiating Project
- Negotiating CE
- Appraisal Process
- Approvals/Baseline
- Escrow/Closing
- On-Hold Project
- Ag + Open Space Protected Land
- Other Public or Protected Land

On Hold

Supervisory District 2

Spring Hill Ranch
This project includes a conservation easement on a 642-acre dairy on the western edge of suburban Petaluma. The project would facilitate the owner's acquisition of the Martin property, located between Spring Hill Dairy and another property owned by the applicant. The project would result in a single holding under one ownership. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

Supervisory District 4

Oak Ridge Angus (LaFranchi)
This project includes a conservation easement over a 1,189-acre beef cattle ranch in Knights Valley located on both sides of Highway 12. It is adjacent to the Santa Angelina conservation easement. This large property with expansive open pasture would help form a critical wildlife corridor between Knights Valley and Alexander Valley, connecting the central Mayacamas Mountains to the southern Mayacamas and Sonoma Mountains. Zoning would allow subdivision into as many as 11 separate ownerships. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Wildlands

Reynoso Vineyards
The Reynoso property is approximately 400 acres. Located on the Russian River in the Asti area, it has large amounts of riparian habitat and floodplain in addition to vineyards. The property rises up in scenic hillsides to the east with mature oaks, woodland habitat, and tributary streams. Interspersed with vineyard blocks, conservation would keep a large riparian tract intact, protecting scenic and habitat resources from potential subdivision. The Reynoso project is on hold until December 2025; its continuation is subject to clearing up a bankruptcy proceeding affecting the property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Russian River Habitat Restoration
This project is in partnership with Endangered Habitats Conservancy and Hanson Aggregates. There are several parcels that were mined for gravel by Hanson Aggregates, which are now proposed to be part of a restoration project. The land will eventually be conveyed to Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space will hold a conservation easement over all or a portion of the 63 acres of the proposed restoration project. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Supervisory District 5

Lafranchi
This 211-acre dairy southeast of Santa Rosa is across Llano Road from the Carnilli and City of Santa Rosa Farms conservation easements, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wildlife Area. It is on hold at the landowners' request. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

Laguna Edge
This riparian easement project over a limited extent of the property is located just outside of the Santa Rosa city limits and adjacent to the Laguna de Santa Rosa. The property has been identified as a priority for riparian restoration. The project is on hold until December 2025. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Agricultural Lands, and Community Identity

Nolan Creek 1
This project contemplates a multi-benefit conservation easement on 317 acres and potentially 5 parcels which form the headwaters of Nolan Creek, a salmonid stream. CA Department of Fish and Wildlife reports the largest known population of fairy shrimp in Sonoma County on this property. Mixed hardwood and conifer forest, including redwoods have also been managed and stewarded by the owner family since first settled in the 1880's

Nolan Creek 2
This project consists of 171 acres on the mid-section of Nolan Creek, a deep V-shaped canyon with rugged terrain and habitat providing a connectivity corridor for wildlife including a known cougar den. Steelhead swim to spawn up stream to a natural dam and waterfall on this property

Nolan Creek 3
This project consists of 49 acres and conserves the most downstream portion of Nolan Creek that has been in the same family since the late 1800's. Forming a prominent knoll overlooking the town of Bodega and the Pacific Ocean in the distance, this property enhances Community and Scenic Values as well as the lower portion of the creek

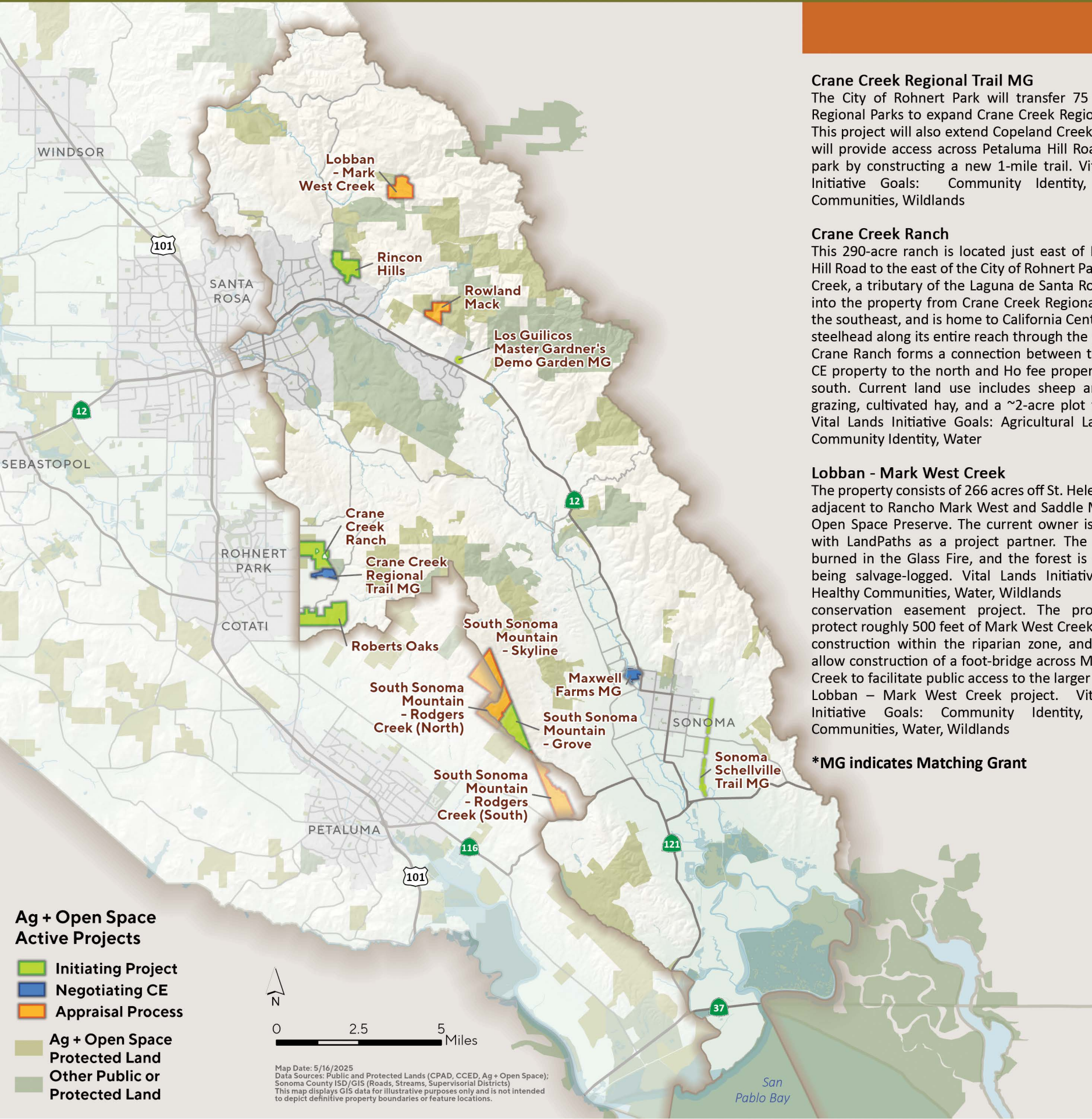
Map Date: 5/15/2025
Data Sources: Ag + Open Space (Active Projects, Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department, Sonoma County ISD/GIS (Roads, Streams, Urban Growth Boundaries))

This map displays GIS data for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to depict definitive property boundaries or feature locations.

San Pablo Bay

*MG Indicates Matching Grant

Active Projects



Crane Creek Regional Trail MG

The City of Rohnert Park will transfer 75 acres to Regional Parks to expand Crane Creek Regional Park. This project will also extend Copeland Creek trail and will provide access across Petaluma Hill Road to the park by constructing a new 1-mile trail. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Crane Creek Ranch

This 290-acre ranch is located just east of Petaluma Hill Road to the east of the City of Rohnert Park. Crane Creek, a tributary of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, flows into the property from Crane Creek Regional Park to the southeast, and is home to California Central Coast steelhead along its entire reach through the property. Crane Ranch forms a connection between the Crane CE property to the north and Ho fee property to the south. Current land use includes sheep and cattle grazing, cultivated hay, and a ~2-acre plot for hops. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands and Community Identity, Water

Lobban - Mark West Creek

The property consists of 266 acres off St. Helena Road, adjacent to Rancho Mark West and Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve. The current owner is working with LandPaths as a project partner. The property burned in the Glass Fire, and the forest is currently being salvage-logged. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands conservation easement project. The project will protect roughly 500 feet of Mark West Creek, prevent construction within the riparian zone, and it could allow construction of a foot-bridge across Mark West Creek to facilitate public access to the larger 266-acre Lobban – Mark West Creek project. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

*MG indicates Matching Grant

Los Guilicos Master Gardner’s Demonstration Garden MG

A project of the University of California Master Gardeners of Sonoma County, will transform a once-devastated parcel on the Los Guilicos campus—burned in the 2020 Glass Fire—into a thriving, educational space. With support from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program, the Master Gardeners will create a fully accessible demonstration garden, showcasing sustainable gardening practices that support native habitats, promote wildlife-friendly landscapes, address food insecurity, and enhance climate resilience. Visitors will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning through themed gardens and a state-of-the-art greenhouse classroom. Planned features include an oak arbor picnic area, a children’s garden expansion, a native plants garden, an outdoor classroom, a fire-resilient garden, a greenhouse and shade house, an expanded orchard, and an outdoor nature classroom—offering a welcoming space for education, inspiration, and community connection.

Maxwell Farms MG

Regional Parks will construct park improvements to create new recreational opportunities at this existing park. Park amenities such as restrooms and trails will be constructed. Regional Parks is also partnering with the Sonoma Ecology Center to implement restoration on a 0.25 mile stretch of Sonoma Creek. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water

Rincon Hills

Ag + Open Space would purchase a conservation easement on this 218-acre property within the Santa Rosa City Limits. The property is adjacent to Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve to the northeast, and City zoning could allow subdivision into more than 200 residential lots. The property is in the wildland-urban interface, and with appropriate vegetation management, could serve as a fire buffer for the City. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Roberts Oaks

Roberts Oaks is approximately 412 acres sited directly east of Rohnert Park across Petaluma Hill Road. The property has a 4.5-acre spring fed pond, undulating mature oak woodlands with spectacular views in multiple directions. With its spectacular scenery and proximity to urban populations, Ag + Open Space will acquire the property in fee and transfer it to Regional Parks. The property’s excellent access, unique topography, water and habitat features including numerous wooded and shady glades with bucolic views tee it up to be an outstanding park.

Rowland Mack

This project includes a conservation easement over a 168-acre property south of and adjacent to the El Recreo conservation easement and the Lawson Addition to Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve. This acquisition would expand protection along the southern Mayacamas Mountains and possibly facilitate expansion of the park. This property is in the Badger Creek watershed – a tributary to Santa Rosa Creek, a steelhead stream. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Sonoma Schellville Trail MG

In the mid-1980’s, Sonoma County Regional Parks began their work to buy a railroad right of way in Schellville to fill a critical gap in the local and regional trail system. Regional Parks will be able to leverage Matching Grant funds to finally purchase the remaining land and build a trail that will connect local and regional trail systems, including the San Francisco Bay Trail that connects 47 cities across 9 counties.

South Sonoma Mountain - Grove

This 369-acre property, near the summit of Sonoma Mountain, shares a boundary with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. The property is located at the terminus of Grove Street and is entirely within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. A conservation easement will further the landowner’s goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing and limited residential development. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek (North & South)

This 813-acre property is comprised of two parcels. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit and the southeastern boundary is Stage Gulch Road. A conservation easement will further the landowner’s goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing, some vineyard use, and limited residential development. The northern part of the property is contiguous with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. Ellis, Lafferty, and Rodgers Creek, all intermittent, are located on the property. Rodgers Creek hosts threatened steelhead. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline

This project will place a conservation easement on a 491-acre property so it remains as open space for wildlife habitat, grazing and limited residential use. The property is contiguous with George Ranch and quite visible given its location near the summit of Sonoma Mountain. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Rodgers and Lafferty Creeks, two intermittent creeks, are located on the property. Rodgers Creek hosts threatened steelhead and is potential habitat for yellow-legged frog. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

Ag + Open Space Active Projects

- Initiating Project
- Negotiating CE
- Appraisal Process
- Ag + Open Space Protected Land
- Other Public or Protected Land



Map Date: 5/16/2025
Data Sources: Public and Protected Lands (CPAD, CCED, Ag + Open Space); Sonoma County ISD/GIS (Roads, Streams, Supervisorial Districts)
This map displays GIS data for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to depict definitive property boundaries or feature locations.

Active Projects

Bianchi Ranches - Two Rock

Bianchi Ranches - Two Rock is a 632 acre property which seeks the protection of an agricultural based conservation easement over three contiguous ranches. Presently, Ag + Open Space is working with the owner on an NCRS application for grant monies.

Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust

This project includes a conservation easement on a 217-acre property on the western slope of Sonoma Mountain within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Adobe Creek, a tributary to the Petaluma River, crosses the property. A conservation easement would preserve the land for agricultural production. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

Deniz Family Farm

This project includes a conservation easement on a 315-acre property on the western slope of Sonoma Mountain within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. A mile of Lynch Creek, a tributary to the Petaluma River, flows across the property. Based on existing legal lots and zoning, the property could be subdivided into nine separate ownerships.Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

Denman Reach MG

The City of Petaluma seeks to acquire a 2.1-acre parcel that is pivotal to the completion of a larger 23.5-acre riparian restoration, public trail, environmental education, and flood control project on the Petaluma River. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

Diamond W Ranch

This is certified organic 850-acre dairy near Valley Ford and Two Rock. It has a small stretch of Stemple Creek and is highly visible along Bodega Ave/Valley Ford Rd and Roblar Rd. The family would like to retire all but two of the nine development rights. A conservation easement would protect a large and highly productive agricultural property from parcelization and potential conversion out of agricultural use. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Water, Wildlands.

Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension MGP Phase 2

The Kelly Creek Project of the Earth Island Institute will acquire 44 acres and transfer fee title to Regional Parks to expand Helen Putnam Regional Park and provide a new access point off of D Street. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Ielmorini Ranch - Sonoma Mountain

This 417-acre cattle ranch is located northeast of Petaluma on the lower slopes of Sonoma Mountain. There is a year-round stream, Washington Creek, on the property, and the landowner has expressed interest in riparian conservation as well as continued

Limping Turkey Ranch

This 158-acre ranch is located between the Mattos and Camozzi conservation easements. The property's grasslands, terrain, abundant water, and adjacency to other agricultural lands make it a critical addition to a large block of agricultural conservation easements in the area. It is at high risk of conversion to rural residential homes because it has already been subdivided and prepared for development with wells, perc tests, and defined legal lots. A conservation easement on this property would likely consist of an amendment to the Camozzi easement to add this land with protection of its natural resource values. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

McClelland Dairy

This project includes a conservation easement on a 348-acre dairy in the Two Rock area. This well-known dairy hosts an annual pumpkin festival each fall and portions of the property are highly visible from Bodega Ave, a designated Scenic Corridor. There is strong interest from the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) program to fund an easement on this property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

Petaluma Bounty Community Farm MG

For over 15 years, Petaluma People's Services' Bounty Community Farm has grown and sold affordable, locally-grown fruits and vegetables in the center of Petaluma, while prioritizing the creation of opportunities for low-income and vulnerable community members to have fresh and healthy food. Matching Grant funds will help them purchase the land they've long farmed and continue their work of bringing fresh, healthy food and sustainable agricultural education to their community

Petaluma River Park MG

The Petaluma River Park Foundation will construct initial public recreational improvements on their recently acquired 10-acre parcel on McNear Peninsula, adjacent to Steamer Landing Park.These improvements will include trails, docks, plantings, and restrooms. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Peters Ranch

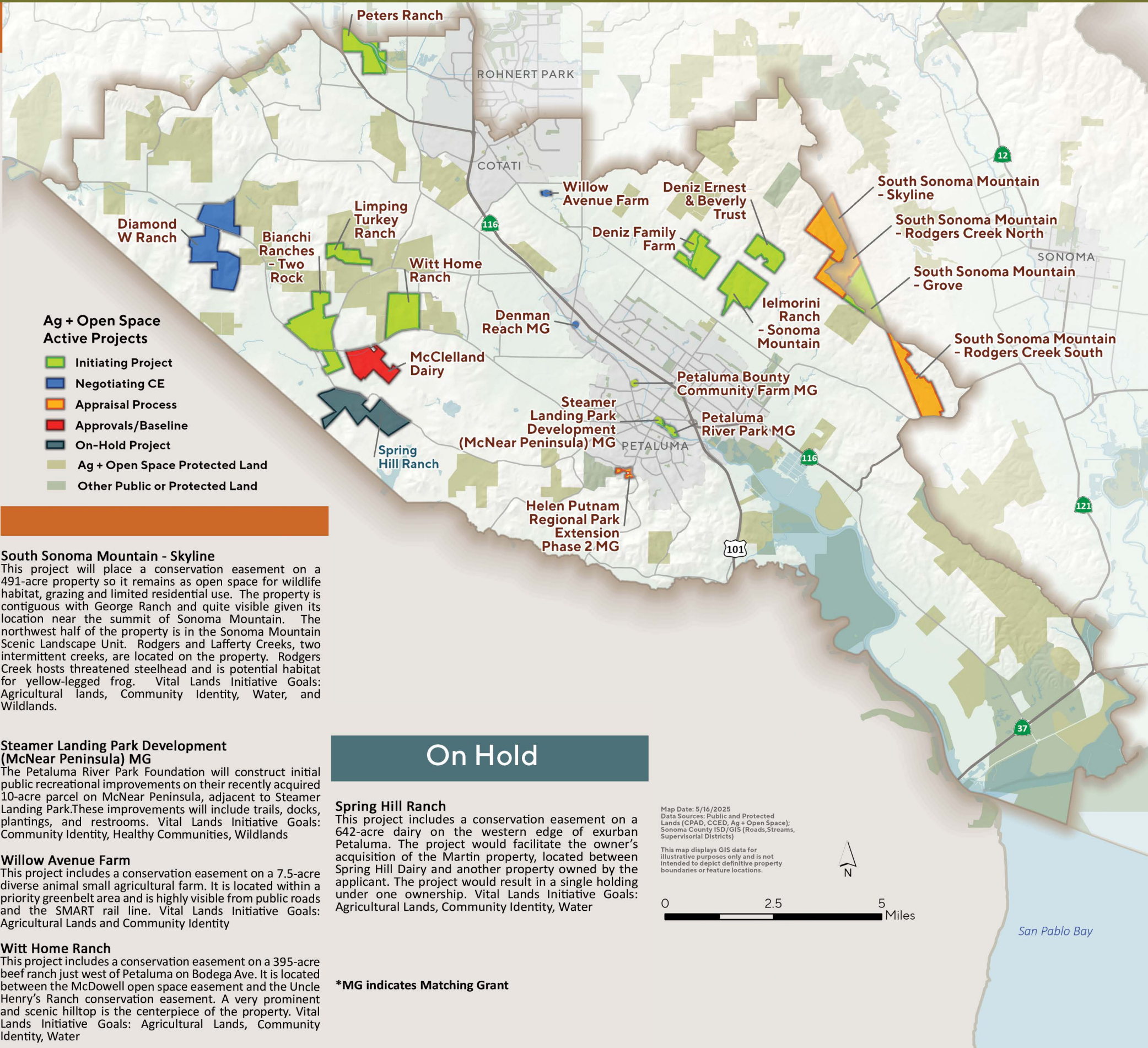
This project would include a conservation easement over a 277-acre dairy farm, located on Llano Road near the Laguna Treatment Plant. The property consists of rolling hills with mature oaks, woodlands, wetlands, and riparian habitats. Split by Laguna de Santa Rosa, it supports an active wildlife and recreation corridor. George McClelland, the owner and a respected Sonoma County dairy operator, intends to maintain and expand dairy operations whilst preserving the natural resources of a complex pasture, wetland, woodland, and riparian parcel. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agriculture Lands, Community Identity and Water.

South Sonoma Mountain - Grove

This 369-acre property, near the summit of Sonoma Mountain, shares a boundary with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. The property is located at the terminus of Grove Street and is entirely within the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing and limited residential development. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek (North & South)

This 813-acre property is comprised of two parcels. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit and the southeastern boundary is Stage Gulch Road. A conservation easement will further the landowner's goals of having this property remain as open space for grazing, some vineyard use, and limited residential development. The northern part of the property is contiguous with Moon Ranch and George Ranch. Ellis, Lafferty, and Rodgers Creek, all intermittent, are located on the property. Rodgers Creek hosts threatened steelhead. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands



South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline
This project will place a conservation easement on a 491-acre property so it remains as open space for wildlife habitat, grazing and limited residential use. The property is contiguous with George Ranch and quite visible given its location near the summit of Sonoma Mountain. The northwest half of the property is in the Sonoma Mountain Scenic Landscape Unit. Rodgers and Lafferty Creeks, two intermittent creeks, are located on the property. Rodgers Creek hosts threatened steelhead and is potential habitat for yellow-legged frog. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands.

Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula) MG
The Petaluma River Park Foundation will construct initial public recreational improvements on their recently acquired 10-acre parcel on McNear Peninsula, adjacent to Steamer Landing Park.These improvements will include trails, docks, plantings, and restrooms. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Wildlands

Willow Avenue Farm
This project includes a conservation easement on a 7.5-acre diverse animal small agricultural farm. It is located within a priority greenbelt area and is highly visible from public roads and the SMART rail line. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands and Community Identity

Witt Home Ranch
This project includes a conservation easement on a 395-acre beef ranch just west of Petaluma on Bodega Ave. It is located between the McDowell open space easement and the Uncle Henry's Ranch conservation easement. A very prominent and scenic hilltop is the centerpiece of the property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

On Hold

Spring Hill Ranch
This project includes a conservation easement on a 642-acre dairy on the western edge of exurban Petaluma. The project would facilitate the owner's acquisition of the Martin property, located between Spring Hill Dairy and another property owned by the applicant. The project would result in a single holding under one ownership. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

*MG indicates Matching Grant

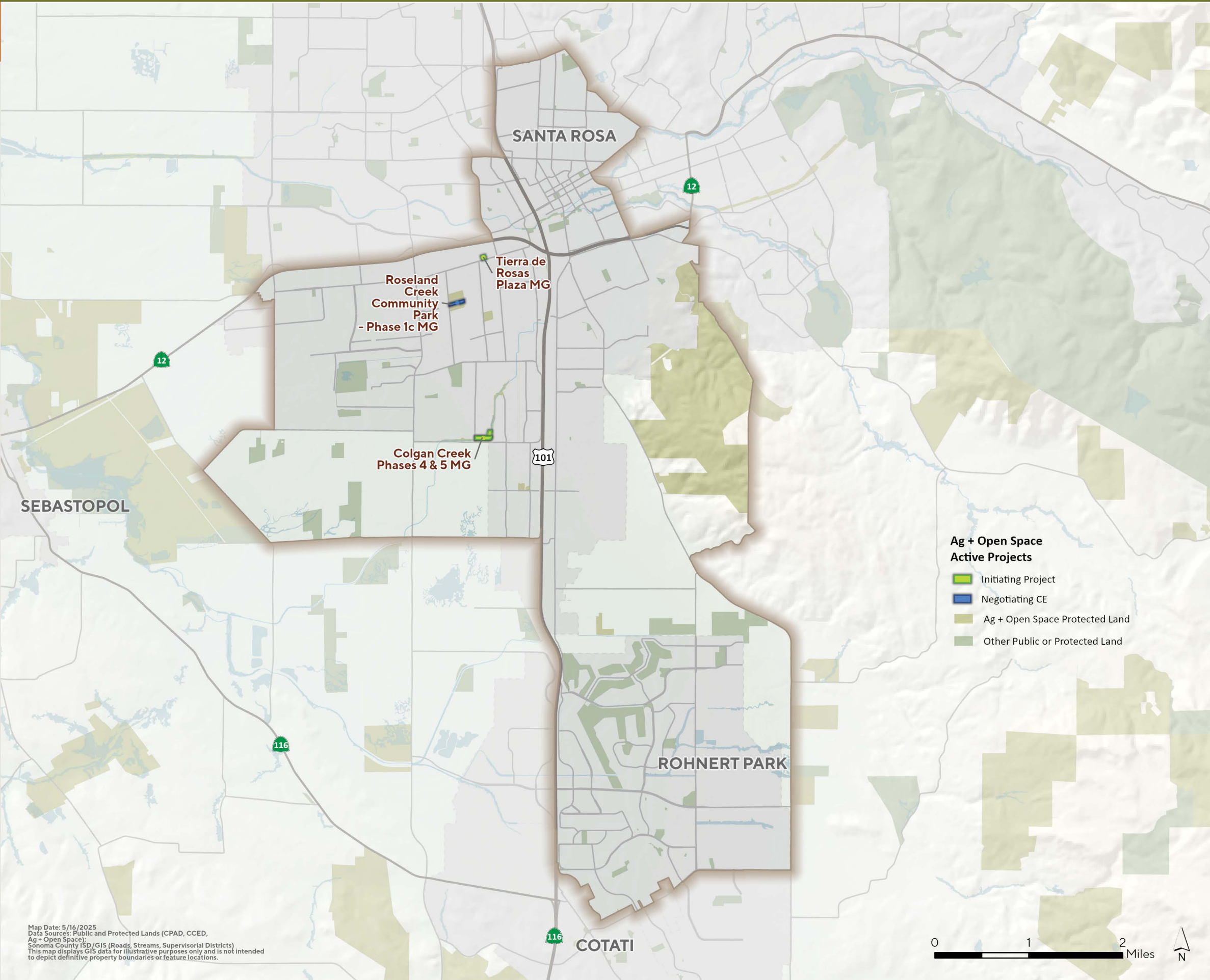
Active Projects

Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG
This project is for the acquisition of a 4-acre parcel adjacent to the existing Colgan Creek restoration, park development and trail project. This additional parcel will allow increased creek meander in the ongoing creek restoration effort, and will provide additional land for additional recreational development, including a neighborhood park. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water

Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1c MG
This project is a 3-acre addition to Roseland 1a and 1b Community Park Matching Grant projects. We are working with the City of Santa Rosa to amend and replace the 1a and 1b conservation easements, so that there is one easement over the new park. This park is located between Burbank Ave and McMinn Ave in the Roseland neighborhood of Santa Rosa. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water

Tierra de Rosas Plaza MG
As part of long-term dream of the Roseland community, the Sonoma County Community Development Commission's Tierra de Rosas project will create an open green space in the heart of a major mixed-use development. In addition to the beloved Mitote Food Park, this park will be a core element of the plan to convert what is mostly parking lots and empty storefronts into a vibrant gathering, celebration, and recreation hub for Roseland residents

*MG indicates Matching Grant



Active Projects

Badger Park MG
This Matching Grant Program project will protect via conservation easement up to 20 acres of parkland within the City of Healdsburg. The Badger Park Improvements and River Access project will officially incorporate the Russian River into Badger Park, providing the City’s first authorized river access point. The project will also construct improvements and infrastructure needed to accommodate river access. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Bavarian Lion Vineyards
This 1,858-acre conservation easement project in Knights Valley supports a mix of vineyard, grazing land, and moderately rugged wildland adjacent to the Pepperwood Preserve. It is positioned within an important wildlife corridor and hosts valley oak woodland, Coast redwood, and freshwater marsh. Franz Creek, a steelhead creek, and Redwood Creek, a steelhead and coho creek, flow across the property. Foothill yellow-legged frog, Kenwood Marsh checkerbloom, red-bellied newt, western pond turtle, and Sebastopol meadowfoam have all been observed on the property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Wildlands, Water, Agricultural Lands, and Community Identity

Bucher-Russell Ranch
The Bucher-Russell Ranch comprises a pair of properties totaling 561.56-acres in Sonoma County, just off Westside Road and west of the Town of Windsor, and a short way east of the Pryor Ranch Conservation Easement. The Bucher portion of the ranch has been operated as a dairy in the recent past but is now used for cattle grazing and vineyards. If conserved, the two properties would protect a large block of farmland, mature oaks, and steelhead habitat
Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Wildlands, Water, Agricultural Lands, and Community Identity

Geyserville Community Plaza MG
With our first Matching Grant project in Geyserville, the Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department and the Geyserville Municipal Advisory Council will help create the community’s first public park. Centrally located, and alongside the planned Smart Trail tracks and Great Redwood Trail, this park will create a more accessible way for residents to get outside and serve as a gathering space for beloved annual events. The park will also support the town’s climate resilience with designs that will offer flood protection and a shaded areas for residents to cool down during hot weather. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Haroutunian North
This farm, just east of Highway 101 north of Santa Rosa is part of a set of greenbelt properties that act as community separators between Santa Rosa and Windsor. It is operated by Tierra Vegetables, a small-scale operation that has farmed in Sonoma County for over 30 years. Tierra Vegetables leases the property from Ag + Open Space as part of Ag + Open Space’s mission to encourage and support local agriculture in community separators. Ag + Open Space purchased this property in 1998.

Laura Fish Somersal Park MG
With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the City of Healdsburg will construct new park facilities on their recently acquired 33-acre property in northern Healdsburg. The park will eventually provide connectivity via a public trail to Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

*MG indicates Matching Grant

Mark West Community Park Phases 1&2 MG
An important step in creating the area’s first central public park—a much-needed space for community gathering and healing in a neighborhood still recovering from the 2017 Tubbs Fire. This project builds on the recent acquisition of the parkland, made possible by support from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program and the Mark West Area Community Foundation. Phase 2 will focus on essential planning, design, and infrastructure improvements to make the park safe, accessible, and welcoming for all. Planned upgrades include an ADA pathway and parking enhancements, safety features like swing-arm gates and low fencing, water and power hookups, tree and vegetation plantings, a lawn, benches, picnic tables, an irrigation system, and interpretive signage. These improvements will help transform the space into a vibrant community resource for recreation, connection, and reflection.

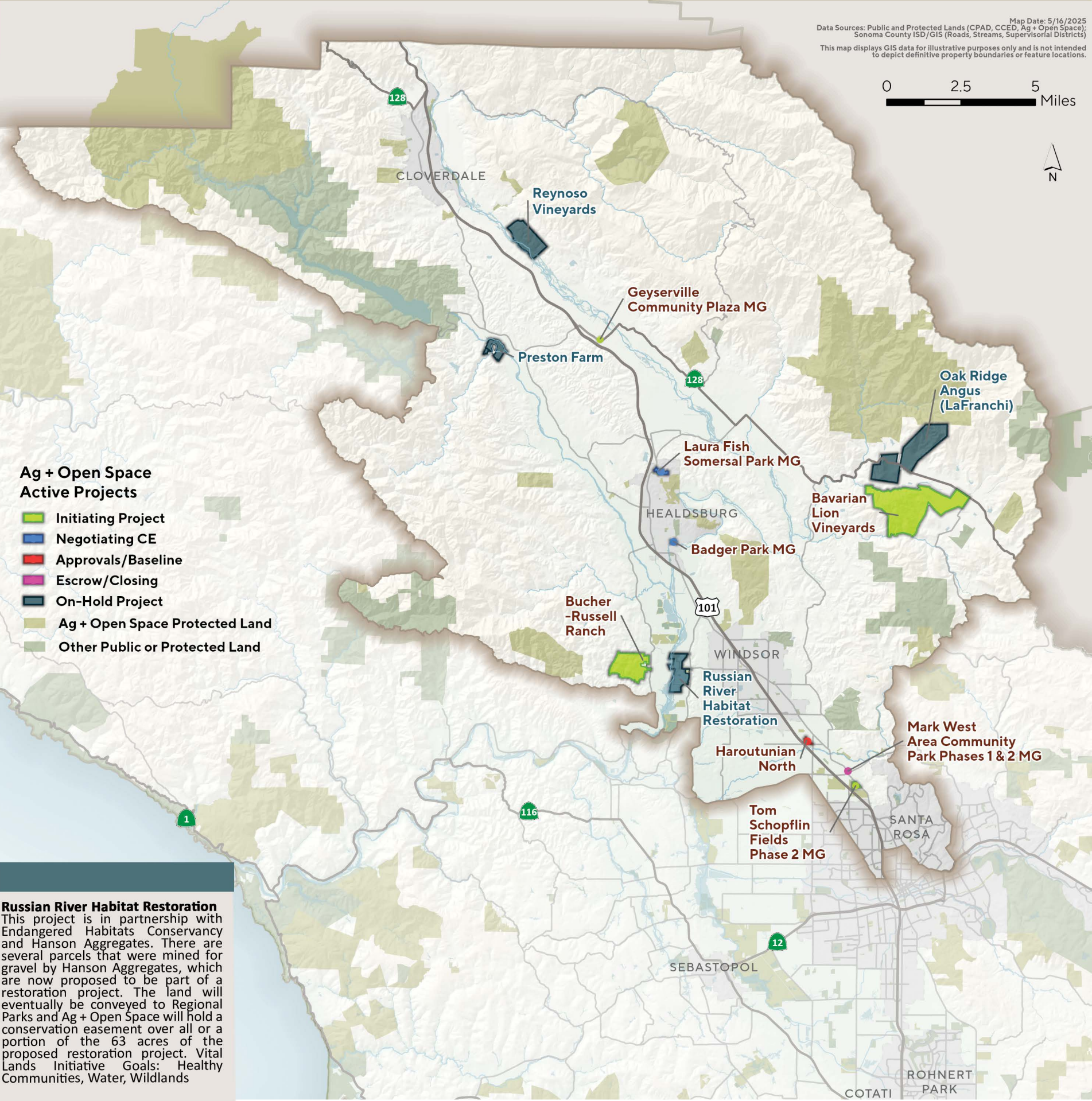
Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 MG
The proposed project will bring a much-needed all-weather soccer field to Santa Rosa, creating more opportunities for underrepresented minority youth to play, train, and build community. With a shortage of accessible sports facilities in the area, this project will provide a vital outdoor space for recreation and connection. Funding from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program will support the final design, permitting, and installation of the new field for Atlético Santa Rosa, including drainage, field base preparation, and turf installation. These improvements will not only expand public recreation opportunities at Tom Schopflin Fields but also help foster a more diverse and inclusive soccer community in Santa Rosa.

On Hold

Oak Ridge Angus (LaFranchi)
This project includes a conservation easement over a 1,189-acre beef cattle ranch in Knights Valley located on both sides of Highway 12. It is adjacent to the Santa Angelina conservation easement. This large property with expansive open pasture would help form a critical wildlife corridor between Knights Valley and Alexander Valley, connecting the central Mayacamas Mountains to the southern Mayacamas and Sonoma Mountains. Zoning would allow subdivision into as many as 11 separate ownerships. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Wildlands

Preston Farm
This project includes a conservation easement on 120 acres of agricultural land on the southwest side of Dry Creek. There is a narrow band of riparian habitat along Dry Creek and Pena Creek, but most of the property is developed or under intensive agricultural use. The landowners would like to convert more of the property to natural resource restoration and transition ownership to a community-based, education-focused farm. Staff is developing a complex project structure that will protect the agricultural values while enabling restoration of riparian habitat. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

Reynoso Vineyards
The Reynoso property is approximately 400 acres. Located on the Russian River in the Asti area, it has large amounts of riparian habitat and floodplain in addition to vineyards. The property rises up in scenic hillsides to the east with mature oaks, woodland habitat, and tributary streams. Interspersed with vineyard blocks, conservation would keep a large riparian tract intact, protecting scenic and habitat resources from potential subdivision. The Reynoso project is on hold until December 2025; its continuation is subject to clearing up a bankruptcy proceeding affecting the property. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands



Russian River Habitat Restoration

This project is in partnership with Endangered Habitats Conservancy and Hanson Aggregates. There are several parcels that were mined for gravel by Hanson Aggregates, which are now proposed to be part of a restoration project. The land will eventually be conveyed to Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space will hold a conservation easement over all or a portion of the 63 acres of the proposed restoration project. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Active Projects

A Place to Play MG
With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the City of Santa Rosa will construct the first all weather multi-sport fields at the existing park. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Americorps Trail MG
This trail project is a partnership with the City of Sebastopol. Located east of Morris Avenue on approximately 11 acres near the Laguna de Santa Rosa, the project consists of trail improvements, including a boardwalk, entrance signs and trailhead improvements, and a bridge across Zimpher Creek, connecting to Highway 12. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water

Berry Forest Preserve
This 132.63-acre conservation easement project located south of Monte Rio, is a forested property comprised of coast redwood, Douglas-fir, and tanoak forest that is adjacent to the future Starrett Hill Conservation Easement. Mesa Grande Gulch, a tributary to Russian River, flows across the property. It is positioned within an important wildlife corridor and has the potential to host, California giant salamander, northern spotted owl, and Sonoma tree vole. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Wildlands and Community Identity.

Bodega Bay Trail, North Harbor MG
With funding from the Matching Grant Program, Sonoma County Regional Parks will construct a 0.6-mile trail from the Bodega Bay Community Center to the Bay. This will extend existing trail connections and provide pedestrian and bicycle access off of Highway 1. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Chanslor Ranch
This is a conservation easement acquisition over the 378-acre Chanslor Ranch in partnership with Sonoma County Regional Parks to establish more parkland on the Sonoma Coast. Chanslor Ranch is adjacent to the Colliss conservation easement, Sonoma Coast State Park, and Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and OSP. The property hosts a variety of habitat types including Western North American Freshwater Marsh and native grasses. A portion of Salmon Creek runs through the property and hosts steelhead and freshwater shrimp. The property helps conserve a highly scenic piece of the Sonoma County coastline that is visible from Highway 1 and Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and OSP. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Wildlands, Community Identity and Healthy Communities

Crawford Gulch
This 92-acre acquisition is a partnership with Sweetwater Springs Water District and the Monte Rio Recreation and Park District. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Wildlands, and Healthy Communities

Graton Town Square MG
The Graton Town Square project is a transformative initiative supported by the Community Spaces Matching Grant program, with additional funding from the Graton Community Services District. This project will convert a vacant 0.59-acre lot into the town's first central public park, creating valuable outdoor recreation opportunities for the community. The park will feature accessible pathways, picnic areas, and dedicated spaces for classes, gatherings, markets, and cultural events. Designed with sustainability in mind, the landscape will incorporate native plantings to enhance biodiversity, improve stormwater management, and demonstrate regenerative practices, including a food forest, community herbal gardens, and an outdoor learning space for children. Additionally, the square will serve as an inclusive community hub, fostering social connections across diverse demographics, with a focus on supporting low-income residents, seniors, and day laborers. Situated along the West County Regional Trail, the park will provide an important link to the broader community while enriching Graton's public spaces.

Guerneville River Park Phase 2 MG
This 0.53-acre property is located immediately east of the Highway 116 bridge across the Russian River from Guerneville. The 1.17-acre Guerneville River Park, lies both east and west of the bridge. The park was developed in 2007. The fee acquisition is a 0.53-acre (23,053 square foot) portion of the 1.17-acre parcel. The property is undeveloped except for an old barn, and a paved emergency road from neighboring properties to the Highway 116 bridge. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Little Rancheria Creek
This 276.16-acre conservation easement project located directly south of the Gloeckner-Turner Ranch Conservation Easement and two miles east of the Warm Springs arm of the Lake Sonoma Reservoir. The property is aligned along Little Rancheria Creek, a year-round steelhead-bearing stream that flows across the property. The property features redwood, Douglas-fir, mixed-hardwood, and riparian forest, as well as areas of manzanita and chaparral. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water and Wildlands.

Monte Rio Redwoods Expansion
This conservation easement project is located in western Sonoma County, in proximity to Monte Rio and Duncans Mills. The property features redwood, Douglas-fir, and tan oak forests. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, and Wildlands.

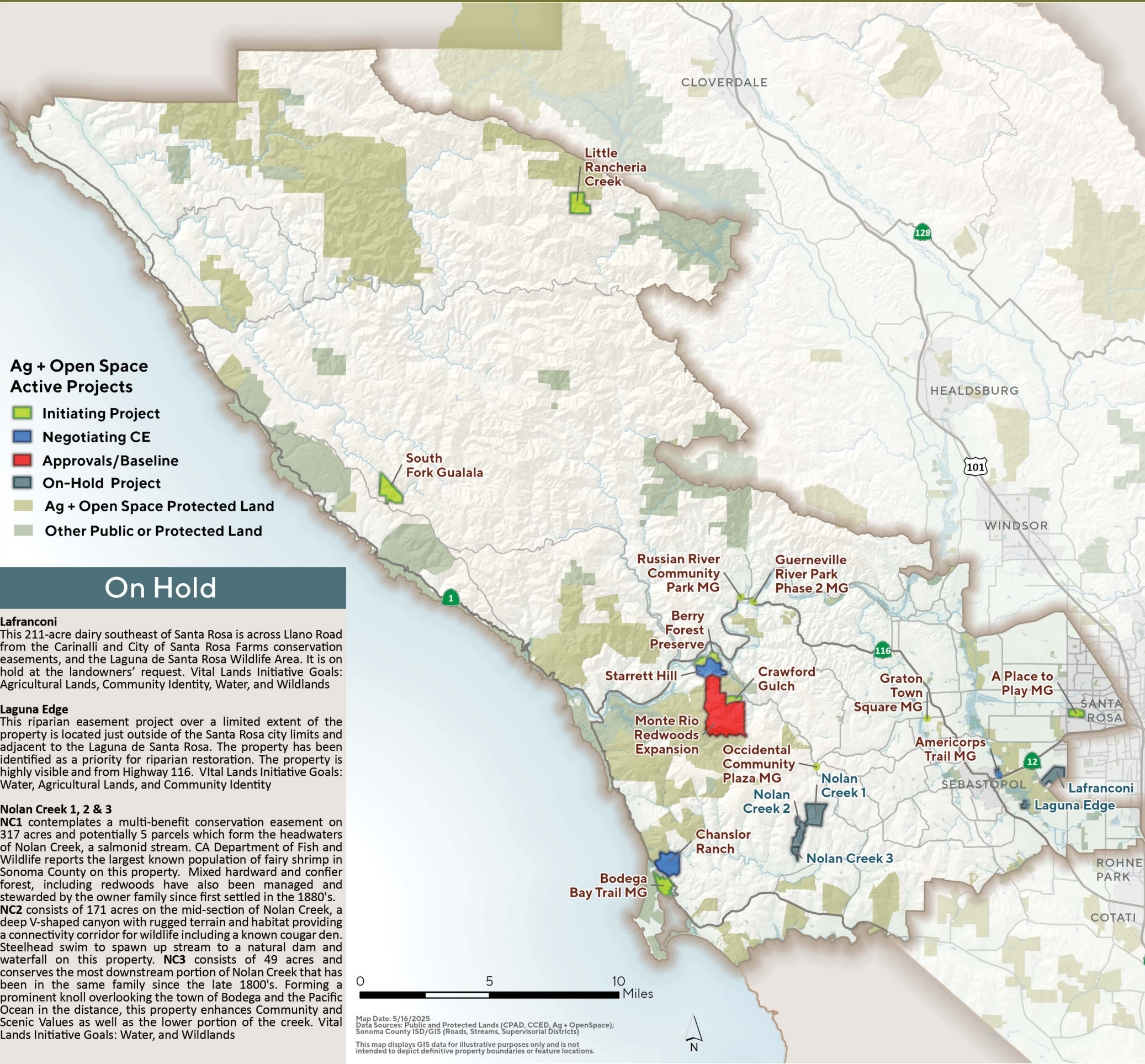
Occidental Community Plaza
The Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department is working to transform an underused lot in the heart of Occidental into the town's first public community open space. This vibrant new gathering place will provide opportunities for recreation and connection for residents and visitors alike. With support from the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program, the project will fund conceptual plans, construction documents, permits, bike racks, interpretive signage, railings, and landscaped vegetated swales. Additionally, grading and fill work will elevate the park to match the height of the existing public parking lot, ensuring accessibility for all.

River Lane MG
With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the Russian River Recreation and Parks District will acquire a 0.67-acre parcel along the Russian River for public access to the river. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

Russian River Community Park
The Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department is using Community Spaces Matching Grant funding to create a much-needed community park in the heart of Guerneville. This rare, flat open space—located near downtown and adjacent to the Guerneville County Park and Ride—offers an ideal setting for recreation and gathering. The site, which features Liverau Creek and valuable riparian habitat, will be thoughtfully designed to balance natural restoration with community use. Planned improvements include creek restoration, a stormwater treatment swale, an open grass multi-use field, a natural play structure, a community garden, picnic areas, dog parks, an amphitheater, a nature trail, restrooms, and permeable parking. This park will provide a welcoming space for residents and visitors alike, fostering recreation, connection, and environmental stewardship

South Fork Gualala
This 299-acre conservation easement project is located near the community of Fort Ross and has 1.3 miles of frontage of the South Fork of the Gualala River. The property features redwood, Douglas-fir, mixed-hardwood, and riparian forest. Vital Land Initiative Goals: Water and Wildlands.

Starrett Hill
This 319-acre fee acquisition is located between Torr West (Regional Park) and Sonoma Coast State Park. The property is owned by the Sweetwater Springs Water District and is a partnership with the current landowner and Monte Rio Recreation and Park District. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands



- Ag + Open Space Active Projects**
- Initiating Project
 - Negotiating CE
 - Approvals/Baseline
 - On-Hold Project
 - Ag + Open Space Protected Land
 - Other Public or Protected Land

On Hold

Lafranconi
This 211-acre dairy southeast of Santa Rosa is across Llano Road from the Carinalli and City of Santa Rosa Farms conservation easements, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wildlife Area. It is on hold at the landowners' request. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

Laguna Edge
This riparian easement project over a limited extent of the property is located just outside of the Santa Rosa city limits and adjacent to the Laguna de Santa Rosa. The property has been identified as a priority for riparian restoration. The property is highly visible and from Highway 116. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Agricultural Lands, and Community Identity

Nolan Creek 1, 2 & 3
NC1 contemplates a multi-benefit conservation easement on 317 acres and potentially 5 parcels which form the headwaters of Nolan Creek, a salmonid stream. CA Department of Fish and Wildlife reports the largest known population of fairy shrimp in Sonoma County on this property. Mixed hardwood and conifer forest, including redwoods have also been managed and stewarded by the owner family since first settled in the 1880's. **NC2** consists of 171 acres on the mid-section of Nolan Creek, a deep V-shaped canyon with rugged terrain and habitat providing a connectivity corridor for wildlife including a known cougar den. Steelhead swim to spawn up stream to a natural dam and waterfall on this property. **NC3** consists of 49 acres and conserves the most downstream portion of Nolan Creek that has been in the same family since the late 1800's. Forming a prominent knoll overlooking the town of Bodega and the Pacific Ocean in the distance, this property enhances Community and Scenic Values as well as the lower portion of the creek. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, and Wildlands