



**AG + OPEN SPACE**  
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**May 25, 2023 | 5:00 pm**

MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM OR IN PERSON**

The May 25, 2023 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/98316944769?pwd=MURud1o3TDVRRWStOSEF5Z25MdElzdz09>

If you have the Zoom app or web client, join the meeting using the Password: 778144

**Call-in and listen to the meeting:** Dial 1 669 900 9128 Enter meeting ID: 983 1694 4769

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 [Mariah.Robson@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Mariah.Robson@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 Mariah Robson by email to [Mariah.Robson@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Mariah.Robson@sonoma-county.org) by 12pm Wednesday, May 24, 2023 to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Comment**  
Comments on items not listed on the agenda. Time is limited to 2 minutes per person/item.
3. **Approval of Minutes from April 27, 2023 Attachment A** **ACTION**  
ITEM
4. **General Manager's Report**
5. **Subcommittee Report Outs**
6. **DOC Riparian & Ag Grant update** **INFORMATIONAL**  
Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner
7. **Proactive Conservation Outreach update** **INFORMATIONAL**  
Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Program Manager
8. **Projects in Negotiations Attachment B**
9. **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members**
10. **Adjournment**  
Next Scheduled Meeting: June 22, 2023

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FUTURE TOPICS  
Subject to Change

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**6/22/23**  
Possible Field Trip: Location TBD

**7/27/23**  
MGP Funding recommendations





**AG + OPEN SPACE**  
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**Virtual Meeting Due to Sonoma County's Shelter in Place Order**  
**April 27, 2023 | 5:00 pm**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Thembi Borrás	Paul Martin	Angel Lopez	Jan McFarland
Josh Proctor	Bill Smith	Mark Stapp	Jesús Guzmán
Steve Rabinowitsh*	Michelle Whitman	Wendy Eliot	

\* AB2449 Teleconferencing Participant

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Kristina Tierney	Cary Fargo	Don McEnhill	Curt Nichols
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**STAFF PRESENT:**

Misti Arias, General Manager; Amy Ricard, Community Resources Manager; Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager; Monica Delmartini, Stewardship Specialist; Sara Ortiz, Administrative Aide; Michelle Nozzari, Administrative Aide; Aldo Mercado, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

**Call to Order**

Chair Thembi Borrás called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Chair Borrás took roll call. Steve Rabinowitsh, in accordance with AB2449, notified the legislative body that he was participating remotely as he was traveling on official business.

**Public Comment**

Susan Kirks, representing Paula Lane Action Network and Madrone Audubon Society, commented on an Ag + Open Space DEI blog regarding the role of grazing in combatting climate change. Ms. Kirks also commented on the Paula Lane Open Space Preserve and her concern for the American badger habitat on the preserve.

**Approval of Minutes from March 23, 2023**

Chair Borrás asked for any comments or revisions to the March 23, 2023 minutes. There were none. A vote took place, and all were in favor and the minutes were approved. Jan McFarland, Jesús Guzmán, Mark Stapp, and Wendy Eliot abstained as they were not present at the March Meeting.

## General Manager's Report

- A Burn Boss is being contracted to assist with Saddle Mountain Vegetation Management projects.
- Outings and Education Contracts and Forever Forestville Conservation Easement Second Amendment go to the Board on May 16, 2023.
- Soda Springs Open Space Preserve will go to the Board on May 23, 2023
- Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve, the Ayers Addition, Chanslor Ranch, Regional Conservation Partnership Program Vital Streams and Forests, Denner Ranches Conservation Easement, Environmental Services Contract and the Lafranchi project will go to the Board on June 6, 2023.
- The recruitment for two Community Relations Assistants is ongoing and 148 applications were received.
- Sonoma Land Trust is hosting a sign unveiling ceremony at Sonoma Mountain Vernal Pools next Thursday, May 4, 2023.
- Ag + Open Space will be presenting at the Together Bay Area conference on Wednesday, May 10, 2023.
- We received 35 proposals requesting \$7.5 million in the latest grant cycle for the Vegetation Management program and we have \$3 million in funding this year. Recommendations will be presented to the Board on June 6, 2023.
- The 2023 Living with Fire – Sonoma County Forest Conservation Conference is taking place June 23 and 24, 2023 at Shone Farm. The aim of the conference is to support our community's wildfire resilience and forest health through collaboration and sharing best management practices to protect our communities, land, and natural resources.
- Ms. Arias discussed that Ag + Open Space work is not always shared with the Advisory Committee until projects are complete. Going forward, updates about projects in process will be presented to the Advisory Committee more regularly. Currently two projects have closed, four offers are in negotiation, nine appraisals are in process, and there are 36 active acquisitions. However, real estate projects are protected. Therefore, due to confidentiality laws, some transactional information related to projects cannot be shared without landowner consent. Ms. Arias also highlighted the Appraisal Model developed by Acquisition Specialist Pierre Ratte. This predictive model assists in estimating the cost of land.

Chair Borrás opened the meeting for questions and comments from Advisory Committee members and members of the public.

Ms. Kirks, representing Paula Lane Action Network and Madrone Audubon Society, brought awareness to the Together Bay Area Conference happening on May 9-12 and that Ms. Arias will be a speaker.

## Update on Fuels Management at Saddle Mountain

Monica Delmartini, Stewardship Specialist, provided an update on fuels management and prescribed fire planning and implementation on Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve. Saddle Mountain OSP is a 960-acre property located in Rincon Valley, originally inhabited by the Mishewal – Wappo people who stewarded the land. Ag + Open Space finalized the Management Plan for the preserve in 2019; at the time, one of the main concerns on the Preserve was the potential for



encroaching Douglas-fir to out-compete diverse native hardwood species. The preserve burned in the 2020 Glass Fire, prompting a prioritization of removal of fire-killed Douglas-fir saplings in otherwise healthy oak woodlands and hardwood stands to reduce hazard fuel loads. The planning process for this work included extensive collaboration with consultants, a Wappo Tribal representative, and CAL FIRE, all of whom remain involved with project planning and implementation. A 120-acre understory thinning project and two shaded fuel breaks were planned, and funding secured via a Coastal Conservancy grant. To date, approximately three quarters of the project has been completed with the remainder expected to wrap up this summer. 20 timber and 7 grassland burn units have been delineated with burn plans currently in development, and broadcast burning with either CAL FIRE or Audubon Canyon Ranch's Fire Forward program may be possible as early as fall 2023. CAL FIRE has been burning piles associated with the thinning work at no cost to Ag + Open Space, and this work is nearly complete. These projects have provided rich opportunities for community engagement and collaboration, public outings, and information sharing with conservation partners, and serve as an example of multi-benefit vegetation management that balances ecological health with hazard reduction goals. Additionally, a strong partnership with Sonoma State University has created numerous opportunities for research on the preserve, focused mainly on forest stand structure mapping and analysis, tracking pre- and post-fire changes, and testing the effectiveness of thinning treatments via fire modeling. Publications associated with this research are available to the community and may help guide appropriate forest stewardship by private and public landowners.

Chair Borrás opened the meeting up to the members and the public.

Member Jesus Guzman asked if the Mishewal-Wappo Tribe had been engaged in the fuel management objectives of this project and if so were individuals being compensated. Ms. Delmartini explained that yes, the tribe had been engaged and were being compensated.

For more information, please feel free to contact Ms. Delmartini at Ag + Open Space. The PowerPoint presentation is available upon request.

#### **Recreational Fee Lands Transfers & Public Access**

Ms. Arias discussed recreational fee lands transfers and public access. This is the beginning of the conversation and a look at the role Ag + Open Space is playing in providing public access. Ms. Arias gave an overview of what we have done to this date: purchased 26 new parks and preserves (which do not include park additions or Matching Grant Projects), 17,000 acres of land that are open to public access, and \$140 million contributed. Some of the most popular properties include Sunset Beach, Mom's Beach, Taylor Mountain, North Sonoma Mountain, Laguna Trails, and Fitch Mountain. Twelve of the properties have not been opened yet to the public. They have been bought and held for various reasons. Ms. Arias outlined different projects, the issues involved, and several scenarios of transferring and public access in the future.

For more information, please feel free to contact Misti Arias at Ag & Open Space.

#### **Matching Grant Project Review Subcommittee**

Chair Borrás explained that currently there was only one active member on the subcommittee and asked for volunteers. Ms. Ricard explained the time commitment of this subcommittee and



reminded the Committee that members who may have a conflict of interest in a property should refrain from joining.

Member Jesús Guzmán volunteered to join. Chair Borrás took a roll call. A vote took place, and all were in favor.

#### **Projects in Negotiations**

Chair Borrás asked for any comments or questions on the Projects in Negotiations spreadsheet. There were none.

#### **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members**

Chair Borrás asked for any announcements from Advisory Committee members. There were none.

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Borrás adjourned the meeting at 6:22.

#### **Next Meeting: May 25, 2023**

This meeting will be in person with an option for members of the public to join via zoom. The meeting place is: 747 Mendocino Ave, Ste 100, Large Conference Room, Santa Rosa

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Nozzari  
*Advisory Committee Clerk in Training*



Conservation Easement Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District									Status	Comments
			Step 1	Step 2			Step 3		Step 4			
Abril Ranch	1,929	4									On-Hold	Stalled due to federal mineral rights ownership
Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve - Ayers Addition	320	5									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - appraisal first draft due 3/20
Baumert Springs	372	5									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - appraisal under review
Bavarian Lion Vineyards	1,858	4									Initiating Project	Project accepted 4/6/2023
Bianchi Family	633	5	+	+							Initiating Project	Initiating Project
Big Sulphur Creek (Krasilsa)	507	4									Initiating Project	Initiating Project
Blucher Creek Headwaters	212	5									Initiating Project	Project back to active - initiating project structure
Chanslor Ranch	378	5									Negotiating CE	Due Diligence
Crawford Gulch	92	5									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Deniz Ernest & Beverly Trust	217	2									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Deniz Family Farm	355	2									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Denner Ranches	489	5									Appraisal Process	Landowner considering offer
Diamond W Ranch	849	2									Negotiating CE	Project Structure - CE drafting
Gillis Ranch Preserve	139	2 & 5									Appraisal Process	Negotiating CE - internal review; formerly called Riebli Family
Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve - Salt Creek Addition	989	1									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - appraiser under contract
Lafranchi (Laguna)	127	5									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - appraiser under contract
Limping Turkey Ranch	158	2									Initiating Project	Initiating project
Lobban – Creekside Addition	3	1									Appraisal Process	Working on project structure
Lobban – Mark West Creek	266	1									Appraisal Process	Working on project structure
Mark West Wikiup Preserve	31	4									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase
McClelland Dairy	348	2									Negotiating CE	Project Structure - CE drafting
McCormick Ranch - Regional Parks	253	1									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase
Miguel-Tocci	489	5									Initiating Project	Initiating project
Peters Ranch	278	2									Initiating Project	Initiating Project Structure
Preston Farm	133	4									Negotiating CE	Project Structure - CE Drafting
Rincon Hills	218	1									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Rowland Mack	168	1									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
Russian River Habitat Restoration	63	4									Initiating Project	Initiating project
Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve	209	4									Approvals/Baseline	BOD Date: 5/23/2023
Spring Hill Ranch	579	2									Appraisal Process	Appraisal phase - ongoing
Starrett Hill	319	5									Initiating Project	Project Structure - development
South Sonoma Mountain - Grove	371	2	+	+							Initiating Project	Initiating project
South Sonoma Mountain - Skyline	490	2									Initiating Project	Formerly called Triangle G Ranches - AB50; initiating project
South Sonoma Mountain - Rodgers Creek	896	1 & 2									Initiating Project	Formerly called Triangle G Ranches - Legacy; initiating project
Witt Home Ranch	395	2									Initiating Project	Initiating project
Wolf Creek Ranch	1,195	5									Initiating Project	Initiating project
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>16,328</b>											

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

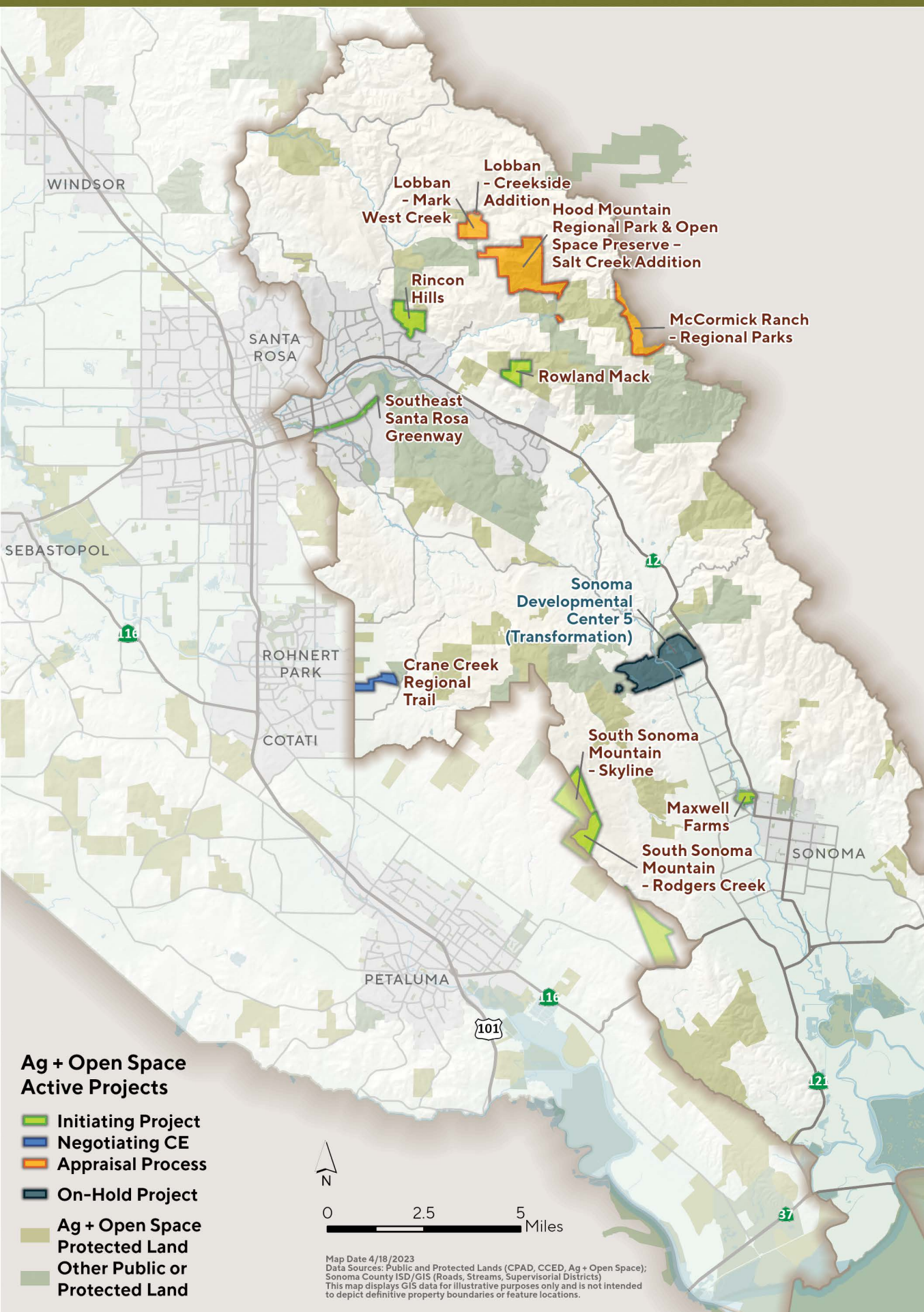
Matching Grant Project Name	Acreage (approx)	Sup. District	Project Evaluation										Status	Comments	
			Step 1	Step 2			Step 3			Step 4	Step 5				
A Place to Play	87	5												Initiating Project	Initiating project
AmeriCorps Trail	12	5												Other	Implementation - CE/RC will be recorded following trail construction.
Badger Park	20	4												Initiating Project	Site Assessment in process for project documentation
Bayer Farm Development ***	6**	3		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			Completed Project & Tracking Match	Reimbursement ongoing; Grant extended
Bodega Bay Trail	178	5												Initiating Project	Site Assessment in process for project documentation
Colgan Creek Phase 3 MG***	7**	3		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			Completed Project	Restoration work complete
Colgan Creek Phase 4 MG	4	3												Initiating Project	Accepted into program during 2022 MGP funding cycle
Crane Creek Regional Trail	75	1												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant
Denman Reach	2	2												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE
Falletti Ranch	4	2												Completed Project & Tracking Match	Tracking match
Forever Forestville***	4	5												Completed Project & Tracking Match	Tracking match
Graton Green	1	5												Completed Project	Completed
Healdsburg Montage Park	36	4												Initiating Project	Meeting w City of Healdsburg next week 4/17
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension	56	2												Negotiating CE	Initiating project
Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension Phase 2	47	2												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE w/ HPRP Extension Phase 2
Keiser Park Expansion 2	2	4												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE
Maxwell Farms	79	1												Initiating Project	Drafting Documents
Paula Lane Open Space Preserve	11	2												Completed Project & Tracking Match	Tracking match
Petaluma River Park	20	2												Initiating Project	Letter of intent in negotiation
River Lane***	1	5												Escrow/Closing	Litigation hold removed. Finalizing docs; Grant extended to 10/25/24
Roseland Creek Community Park - Phase 1c	3	3												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant
SMART Pathway - Payran to Southpoint	14	2												Negotiating CE	Negotiating CE, Rec Covenant
Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway***	61	1												Initiating Project	Created project tracking task force, starting site assess and docs
Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula)	27**	2												Initiating Project	Initiating project
Taylor Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve - Cooper Creek Addition	54	3												Completed Project & Tracking Match	Closed 4/1/20. Tracking match
Tierra de Rosas***	1	3												Initiating Project	Drafting documents
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>778</b>														

\* 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 (March 2023)









### Active Projects

**Crane Creek Regional Park Expansion and Copeland Creek Trail Extension MGP**  
 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

**Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve - Salt Creek Addition**  
 This is a public recreation project to acquire the Weeks Ranch North property, over which we acquired a conservation easement in 2019, and an adjacent 101-acre property that is not currently protected. Together, the two properties form a connection between Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve and our Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve.

**Lobban - Creekside Addition**  
 This 2.6-acre parcel, now owned by LandPaths, will be an addition to the Lobban - Mark West Creek 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

**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

**Maxwell Farms**  
 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

**McCormick Ranch - Regional Parks**  
 This 253-acre property straddles Sonoma and Napa Counties and is located between Hood Mountain Regional Park & Open Space Preserve and Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Ag + Open Space would purchase a new conservation easement over the property, which burned in the Glass Fire. Project partners include Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Land Trust of Napa County, and the Napa County Open Space District. The project offers wildlife corridor protection and a potential Bay Area Ridge Trail connection. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

**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

**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

**South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek**  
 This 897-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.

**Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway MGP**  
 In 2016, the City of Santa Rosa and Sonoma Land Trust were accepted into the Matching Grant Program for a project to establish an urban greenway park in the heart of Santa Rosa. The project is located on what was originally intended to be the Caltrans Highway 12 expansion project, which Caltrans has since abandoned. The project would connect downtown Santa Rosa to Howarth Park, Spring Lake Regional Park, and Trione-Annadel State Park via a 2-mile multi-use trail corridor. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

### On Hold

**Sonoma Developmental Center 5 (Transformation)**  
 This project seeks to acquire a conservation easement over a 946-acre portion of the Sonoma Developmental Center. Preservation of the property would help protect a critical habitat corridor between Sonoma Mountain and the Mayacamas. It could expand and connect public parks and facilitate development of a Bay Area Ridge Trail connection. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

Map Date 4/18/2023  
 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

**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 355-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 MGP**  
 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.

**Gillis Ranch Preserve**  
 This 138-acre dairy is currently operating at marginal capacity for meat goat and dairy cow grazing as it undergoes intergenerational transition. It is one of the largest land ownerships in the area. The conservation easement will seek to protect and enhance Blucher Creek, Volkerts Creek, and Cunningham Marsh, with associated beneficial grazing of livestock. Cunningham Marsh is a biologically important site, with rare and disjunct plant populations and the extent immediately upstream is already protected with conservation easements. Staff is working with Sonoma Land Trust to secure state funding for a conservation easement and potential habitat restoration. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Wildlands, Agricultural Lands

**Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension MGP**  
 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

**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

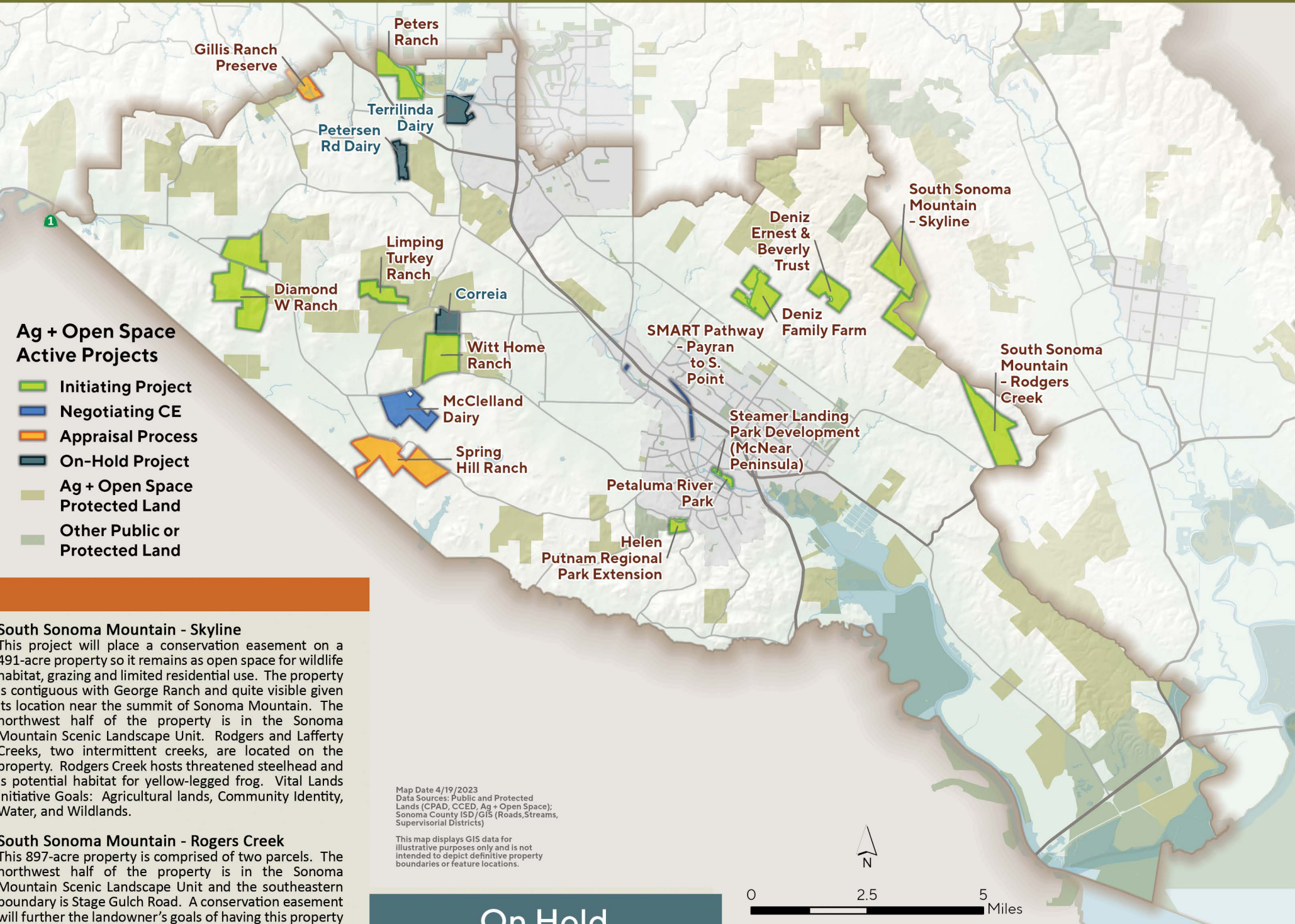
**Petaluma River Park MGP**  
 The Petaluma River Park Foundation will construct initial public recreational improvements on their recently acquired 10-acre parcel on McNear Peninsula, adjacent to Steamer Landing Park. These improvements will include trails, docks, plantings, and restrooms. Vital Lands 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.

**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

**SMART Pathway - Payran to Southpoint MGP**  
 The Matching Grant Program helped to fund a multi-use paved pathway, approximately 1.2 miles long and 12 feet wide, parallel to the SMART tracks between Payran Ave and Southpoint Boulevard in Petaluma. This project also includes an existing 200-foot long bridge across the Petaluma River. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

**Steamer Landing Park Development (McNear Peninsula) MGP**  
 With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the Friends of Petaluma River, in partnership with the City of Petaluma, will construct new accessible docks at Steamer Landing Park. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities



**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.

**South Sonoma Mountain - Rogers Creek**  
 This 897-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

**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

**Correia**  
 This is a 146-acre dairy located east of Two Rock. It is adjacent to the Mazzetta conservation easement and across Pepper Road from the Mickelsen conservation easement. A tributary to Stemple Creek runs through the property. A conservation easement will add to a large block of protected agricultural land in this area. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Water, Wildlands

**Petersen Rd Dairy**  
 This project includes a conservation easement over a 96-acre former dairy currently used for cattle pasture in support of other dairy operations. The landowner also owns Spring Hill Dairy and Petaluma Creamery. The property is located along Petersen Rd and adjacent to the Knudtsen and Stony Point Ranch conservation easements. A portion of the old Petaluma and Santa Rosa Railway right of way runs along the western edge of the property, which has been identified as a future trail in the Sonoma County General Plan. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

**Terrilinda Dairy**  
 This project includes a conservation easement on a 175-acre dairy on the western edge of Cotati and Rohnert Park. It is located within a priority greenbelt area and is highly visible from Stony Point Road. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water

### Active Projects

#### Crane Creek Regional Park Expansion and Copeland Creek Trail Extension MGP

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

#### Colgan Creek Phase 4 MGP

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 MGP

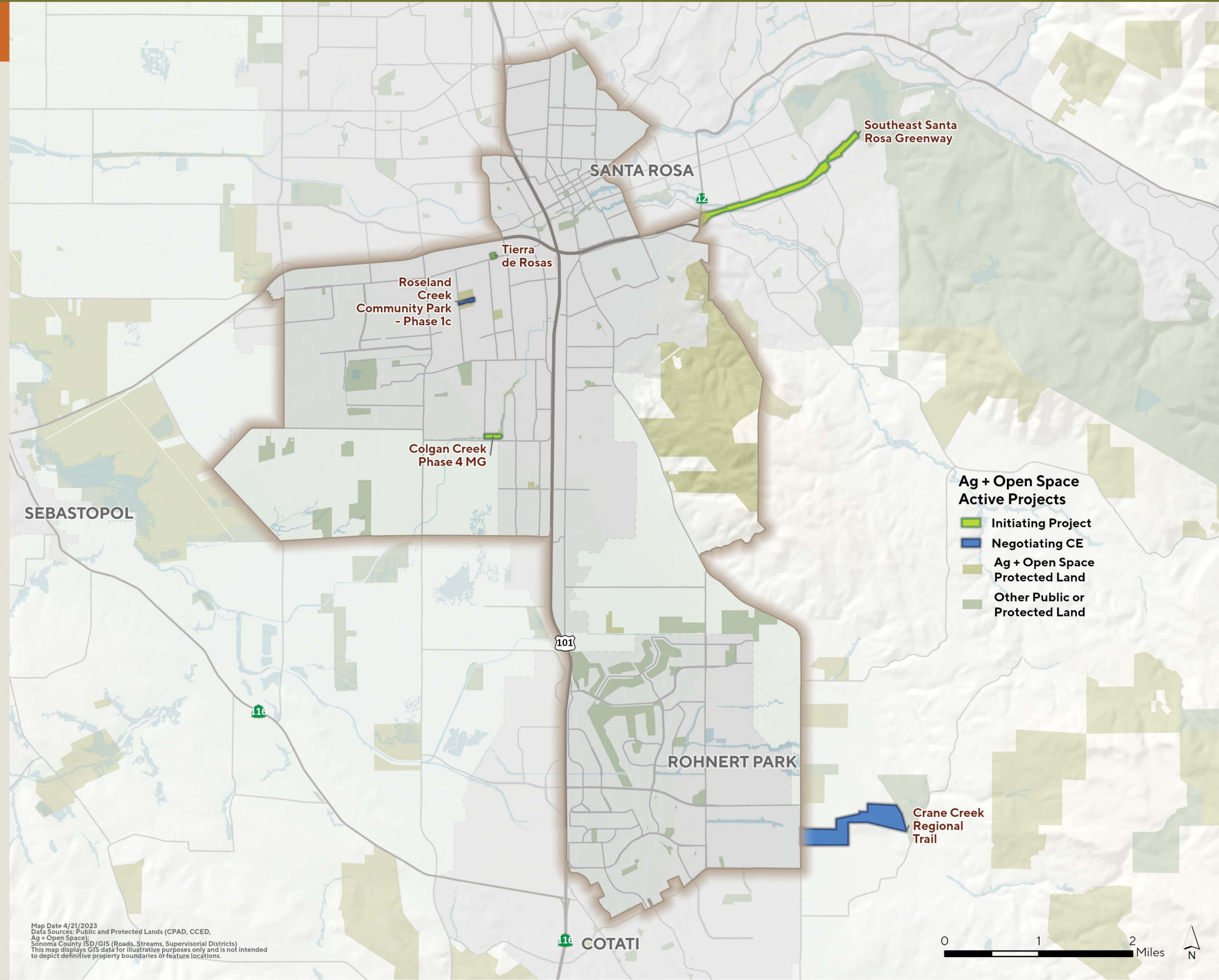
This project is a 3-acre addition to Roseland 1a and 1b Community Park Matching Grant projects. We are working with the City of Santa Rosa to amend and replace the 1a and 1b conservation easements, so that there is one easement over the new park. This park is located between Burbank Ave and McMinn Ave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

#### Southeast Santa Rosa Greenway MGP

In 2016, the City of Santa Rosa and Sonoma Land Trust were accepted into the Matching Grant Program for a project to establish an urban greenway park in the heart of Santa Rosa. The project is located on what was originally intended to be the Caltrans Highway 12 expansion project, which Caltrans has since abandoned. The project would connect downtown Santa Rosa to Howarth Park, Spring Lake Regional Park, and Trione-Annadel State Park via a 2-mile multi-use trail corridor. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

#### Tierra de Rosas MGP

With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the County's Community Development Commission, in partnership with the City of Santa Rosa, will construct a public park and plaza as a central hub and gathering place in the heart of Roseland. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities



**Ag + Open Space Active Projects**

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

Map Date 4/21/2023  
 Data Sources: Public and Protected Lands (CPAD, CCED, Ag + Open Space), Sonoma County ISD/GIS (Roads, Streams, Supervisorial Districts)  
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### Active Projects



**Abril Ranch**  
 This project includes a conservation easement on a 1,929-acre property east of Cloverdale and adjacent to the Klesko conservation easement. This is an opportunity to expand protection along the Big Sulphur Creek drainage in the heart of the Mayacamas Mountains—an area critical for biodiversity, climate resiliency, and wildlife movement. The property could be subdivided into as many as seven ownerships, and is located in a very remote and fire-prone part of the county. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, 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

**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

**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

**Big Sulphur Creek (Krasilsa)**  
 This project is in partnership with the Sonoma County District Attorney's office, who proposes that as part of a settlement of a criminal case related to a Water Board violation on this property, a portion of this 507-acre ranch, south of Big Sulphur Creek, be placed under conservation easement negotiated and held by Ag + Open Space. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

**Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve**  
 This project is a conservation easement over 209 acres, (three separate parcels owned by the same landowner, currently for sale), located west of downtown Cloverdale. The City of Cloverdale is interested in acquiring the property as a park and open space preserve. This is an opportunity to preserve a rather large property on the west edge of Cloverdale and help the City expand its offering of open space and recreation, as well as provide a greenbelt for the City. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

**Healdsburg Montage Park MGP**  
 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

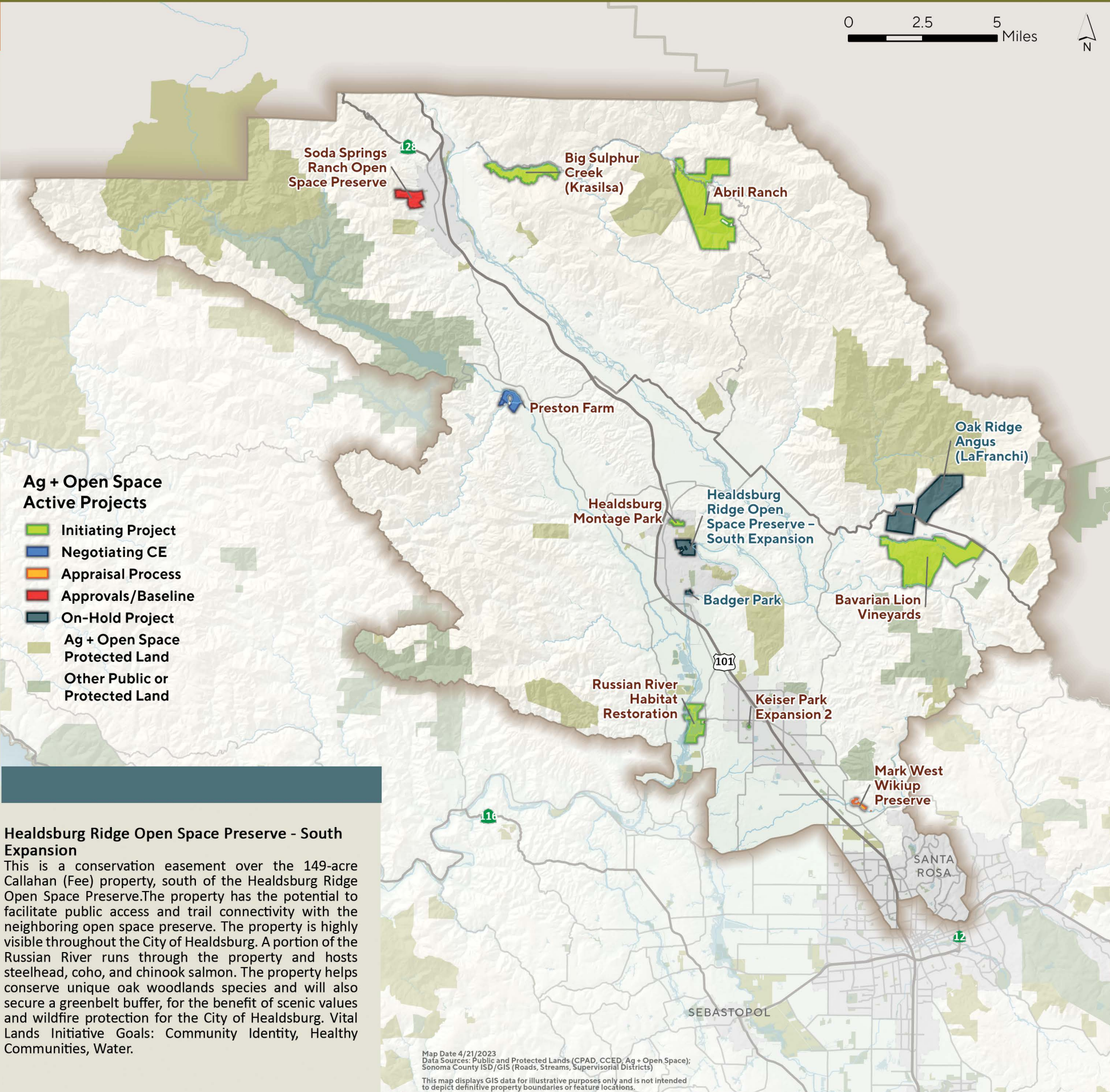
### On Hold

**Keiser Park Expansion 2 MGP**  
 With funding from the Matching Grant Program, the Town of Windsor will acquire new parcels adjacent to the existing Keiser Park to expand public recreational opportunities and offer a new access point from an adjacent neighborhood. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities

**Badger Park MGP**  
 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

**Mark West Wikiup Preserve**  
 This project would include a conservation easement on up to 31 acres in the Wikiup/Mark West neighborhood. The project provides an opportunity to preserve 0.5 miles of the north bank of Mark West Creek, as well as facilitate public recreational use. The project is a partnership with the Banke-Jackson Family (landowners), Sonoma Water, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Department of Fish and Wildlife. Sonoma Water will own the property after closing. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

**Oak Ridge Angus (LaFranchi)**  
 This project would include 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 Ag + Open Space 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. This project would meet Vital Lands goals in the Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, and Wildlands categories.



**Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve - South Expansion**  
 This is a conservation easement over the 149-acre Callahan (Fee) property, south of the Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve. The property has the potential to facilitate public access and trail connectivity with the neighboring open space preserve. The property is highly visible throughout the City of Healdsburg. A portion of the Russian River runs through the property and hosts steelhead, coho, and chinook salmon. The property helps conserve unique oak woodlands species and will also secure a greenbelt buffer, for the benefit of scenic values and wildfire protection for the City of Healdsburg. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Community Identity, Healthy Communities, Water.

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### Active Projects

**A Place to Play MGP**  
 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 MGP**  
 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

**Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve - Ayers Addition**  
 This project is a partnership between State Parks, the current landowners (Jonathan and Laura Ayers) and Ag + Open Space to acquire a conservation easement and recreation covenant over a 320-acre addition to Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve. This property contains eight acres of old-growth redwood forest and the headwaters of Hulbert Creek. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

**Baumert Springs**  
 This project includes a conservation easement and recreation covenant over approximately 375 acres of property around Camp Meeker. The Camp Meeker Recreation & Parks District will secure ownership of the property from St. Dorothy's Rest, a camp owned by the Episcopal Diocese. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Healthy Communities, Water, Wildlands

**Blucher Creek Headwaters**  
 This 212-acre cattle ranch is located on the southwest edge of exurban Sebastopol, near the Dougan Dairy conservation easement. The property is visible from much of the valley floor and the central and southwestern arm of the Mayacamas Mountains. A portion of the property drains into Atascadero Creek and there is a healthy population of American badger on the property. The landowner put the property on the market; however, the listing agent is talking to prospective conservation buyers. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, Wildlands

**Bodega Bay Trail, North Harbor MGP**  
 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

**Denner Ranches**  
 This is a conservation easement over the 489-acre Denner Ranch, adjacent to the Laguna de Santa Rosa. The project will protect agricultural lands and riparian areas, as well as provide restoration opportunities around Mark West Creek, Laguna de Santa Rosa, and Ballard Lake. This conservation easement is being partially funded through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Community Identity, Water, and Wildlands

**Gillis Ranch Preserve**  
 This 138-acre dairy is currently operating at marginal capacity for meat goat and dairy cow grazing as it undergoes intergenerational transition. It is one of the largest land ownerships in the area. The conservation easement will seek to protect and enhance Blucher Creek, Volkerts Creek, and Cunningham Marsh, with associated beneficial grazing of livestock. Cunningham Marsh is a biologically important site, with rare and disjunct plant populations and the extent immediately upstream is already protected with conservation easements. Staff is working with Sonoma Land Trust to secure state funding for a conservation easement and potential habitat restoration. This project is on hold as the family recently put the property on the market. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Wildlands, Agricultural Lands

**Lafranchi (Laguna)**  
 This project is a conservation easement on 127-187 acres (still being negotiated) within the Laguna de Santa Rosa, on a property upstream from the confluence with Mark West Creek and immediately south of Denner Ranch. The interest is in conserving only a portion of the property, over which Sonoma Water plans to implement a wetlands restoration project. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Water, Wildlands

**Miguel-Tocci**  
 This is a 489-acre conservation easement project located in the wildland urban interface between Freestone and Occidental. The property hosts a mosaic of habitat types as well as a livestock grazing operation. A portion of Nolan Creek runs through the property, and hosts steelhead habitation below a natural waterfall. It can be subdivided into as many as seven parcels and is in an area with some rural residential development. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Water, and Wildlands

**River Lane MGP**  
 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

**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

**Wolf Creek Ranch**  
 This 1,195-acre ranch is located off Skagg Springs Road. Host to a mosaic of conifers mixed-conifer hardwood forests and with diverse topography, this property is a stronghold for climate change. This natural resources conservation easement would extinguish some of the development rights and ensure that the landscape will continue to provide essential resources to plants and animals now and into the future. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Wildlands, Water, and Agricultural Lands



### Ag + Open Space Active Projects

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

### On Hold

**Fornage Ranch**  
 This project includes a conservation easement over a 1,360-acre ranch located off Skaggs Springs Road. The project is on hold until we confirm the reported landowner's interest in selling a conservation easement. Vital Lands Initiative Goals: Agricultural Lands, Water, Wildlands

**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

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