

# OSA Outlook



FALL 2015



## Join us to celebrate the harvest with community, tradition, and fresh food

Around the world, the harvest is a time to celebrate. Whether it's a ceremony that honors the land, a ritual to ensure an abundant harvest, or a gathering for sharing the bounty, harvest celebrations represent our connection to the foods we grow.

In our region, many crops are harvested in late summer, sometimes under the so-called Harvest Moon, the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox. Chinese and Vietnamese communities celebrate the Autumn Moon or Full Moon with festivals that honor the bounty of the summer harvest. Each August, San Jose's Tamale Festival celebrates the corn harvest with this traditional food that dates back to 5,000 BC.

You may celebrate the harvest with a ceremony started by your ancestors, or you may simply savor a peach or garden tomato still warm from the sun. The growing farm-to-table movement is a way of honoring these harvest celebrations in our own dining rooms.

Here in the Santa Clara Valley, local farms and ranches provide us with an abundance of

fresh, healthy food, from apricots to peppers to salad greens. While we have lost many acres to development, The Valley of Heart's Delight still offers an abundant harvest, with more than 40 certified farmer's markets overflowing with locally-grown fruits and vegetables.



In addition to providing us with nutritious food, our agricultural lands support a vibrant economy, generating more than \$260 million in revenue in 2012. This food also helps keep our communities healthy. Dr.

Daphne Miller, a family physician and Associate Clinical Professor at U.C. San Francisco, showed in her book *Farmacology* the connections between healthy soil, the production of nutritious foods, and a healthy population.

We'll be celebrating all of this — the delicious local harvest, our diverse community, and the protection of our agricultural heritage — at our Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast on September 19. It's our biggest event of the year, and it all takes place at our new Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve. We hope to see you there!



**Saturday, September 19**  
**11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**550 Palm Avenue**  
**Morgan Hill**

**FREE ADMISSION!**  
**Register now at [cv-family-farm-feast.eventbrite.com](http://cv-family-farm-feast.eventbrite.com).**

Delicious, healthy food and lively entertainment for the whole family!

Musicians, dancers, live animals, storytelling, games, guided hikes — and delicious, affordable multicultural food and beverages!

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## Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve

### Open for hiking, cycling, and horseback riding!

With a blessing of the land from the President of the Amah Mutsun Land Trust, Valentin Lopez, and the cutting of a ribbon by local dignitaries, a slice of our agricultural and natural heritage is now protected in perpetuity and open for all to enjoy.

More than 500 people gathered on June 27 to open the new Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve and to explore its 348 acres of heritage valley oaks, rolling hills, native grasslands, and serpentine rock outcroppings.



The new preserve was celebrated by families and open space fans from all over, including Open Space Authority General Manager Andrea Mackenzie and Mayor Sam Liccardo (R).

The grand opening ceremony included San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, who supported last November's vote on Measure Q to fund protection of open space. "The Open Space Authority," he said, "should feel it has a mandate from the public to move aggressively."

In the midst of Coyote Valley, the preserve represents what some are calling a new era of conservation. It offers visitors a unique outdoor opportunity to connect with our farming heritage and discover the many natural wonders of the region.

The preserve has four miles of trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding, and is now open every day from 7 a.m. to sunset. Entrance and parking are free.

## Regional strategy: Open Space Authority nominates Priority Conservation Areas

Since its adoption in 2013, Plan Bay Area — a state-level regional transportation and land use strategy overseen by Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) — has supported sustainable communities and a growing economy. The identification of Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) helps direct growth to urban areas within the nine-county Bay Area and away from significant natural resource areas.



Beginning in 2008, the initial identification of 101 PCAs included several important landscapes within the Open Space Authority's jurisdiction. The designation has led to grant funding for projects within those areas, including \$712,000 for improvements to the Coyote Creek Trail in San Jose.

Earlier this year, ABAG called for nominations of new PCAs, specifically looking to identify significant natural landscapes, agricultural lands, urban green spaces, and regional

recreational opportunities. In response, the Open Space Authority conducted a GIS-based conservation analysis and worked closely with our partner agencies and local governments to identify candidates. In June, we submitted a portfolio of 27 proposed Priority Conservation Areas.

"Our goal was to identify areas with the highest conservation values and that provide multiple environmental benefits," said Matt Freeman, Assistant General Manager of the Open Space Authority. The Authority's nominees include portions of the **Coyote Valley**, the **Upper Pajaro River**, the **Southern Santa Cruz Mountains**, and the **important agricultural lands south and east of Gilroy** — areas that emerged as Conservation Focus Areas within the Valley Greenprint.

The proposed PCAs generally close gaps between existing parks, open space preserves, and other protected areas, facilitate regional trail connections, help promote habitat connectivity, maintain watershed integrity, and provide additional resilience to climate change.

The ABAG Executive Board is now considering all of the nominees, and will be announcing the new PCAs shortly. For more information about the Priority Conservation Areas, visit [abag.ca.gov/priority](http://abag.ca.gov/priority).



# Open Space Round-Up

## Climate Change grant will help preserve at-risk farmland

Preserving farmland has many benefits, including protecting access to locally grown foods and reducing carbon emissions associated with development sprawl. A recent \$100,000 grant awarded to the County of Santa Clara — in partnership with the Open Space Authority— will support the first effort to create a regional strategy that aligns agricultural conservation with the reduction of greenhouse gas emission and climate resiliency.

Funded through the implementation of AB32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, the grant supports the creation of an approach for identifying and protecting at-risk agricultural lands in the South County. The *Sustainable Agricultural Policy Framework for South Santa Clara County* will show how limiting conversion of farmland to other uses will help reduce effects of climate change, and will develop an innovative framework for regional action.

"If agriculture is to survive in South County," says Andrea Mackenzie, Open Space Authority General Manager, "we need an innovative regional action plan. The time is now to align plans, programs, policies and investment affecting undeveloped agricultural lands and demonstrate that conserving farmland from development is a critically important climate change strategy."

The grant was made through the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program, a program of the California Strategic Growth Council. The County will lead development of the report, with the Open Space Authority as a partner and input from experts in agriculture, government, open space and industry.



You're not likely to see me, as I am solitary, and more active at night than during the day. Moving quickly and quietly, I can travel great distances in search of food. I am a devout carnivore and will sometimes store my food and come back for it later.

## Teri Rogoway Educational Programs Coordinator



Each year, thousands of adults and children experience open space and nature through programs designed by Teri Rogoway, our Educational Programs Coordinator. With a BA in Environmental Studies and a Masters in Park Interpretation

for Special Needs, Teri is well acquainted with the classroom. But she knows that the best way for people to learn is by letting them explore the outdoors in creative, flexible ways.

Teri has run educational programs and trained rangers for California State Parks up and down the coast, has been a Park Ranger for the City of San Jose, and has led programs for the Youth Science Institute and Santa Clara County Parks. "I am passionate about helping people remember that we are a part of the natural world," she says. "Our connection with nature makes us better people."

She shares her joy of the natural world wherever she goes. "I am the fun auntie who sends the nieces and nephews home with creek-soaked shoes, sticks in their hair, and tiedye on their hands," says Teri. "I think a home should be full of nature and laughter — and that's what I hope to help people find when they come to our programs."

## Children in nature!

Summertime means being outside and our free Outreach to the Outdoors series brought dozens of children and their parents together to learn about nature and wildlife. Designed for elementary-school aged children and their parents, the three-day program held at Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve focused on giving families the opportunity to experience nature together and build lasting memories.



The participants enjoyed a series of hands-on, interactive activities including arts and crafts for all ages, day hikes, and time with experts in mammals and birds. They learned to track mammals and look for birds — even finding a magpie nest that had fallen from a tree.

Thanks to our friends from the Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, the group met (up close!) a great horned owl, a pygmy owl, and a peregrine falcon. And on the third day, the group learned outdoor skills such as how to use a compass, and what to do if you get lost. Children and parents alike were enthusiastic about the program, what they learned, and the fun they had.

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## Activities in Your Open Space

### STARRY NIGHTS

**Saturday, September 5 | 8:30 to 10:30 p.m.**

**Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve**

Join our astronomers for a peaceful and cool evening under the stars, and your stress will melt away as you look at the Milky Way and learn about the night sky. Our volunteer astronomers are happy to share their telescopes — so you don't need any gear of your own! Please dress warmly and bring water to drink and a flashlight. Rain or clouds cancel.



### TARANTULA TREK!

**Sunday, September 13 | 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.**

**Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve**

It's that magical time of year when our local tarantulas leave their burrows in search of mates. Now's your chance to look for these fuzzy, slow-moving locals. Come join our docents for an easy, mostly flat walk. Bring water to drink. Families welcome. Rain cancels.

**Free for all — no registration necessary. For details and directions, visit [OpenSpaceAuthority.org/activities](http://OpenSpaceAuthority.org/activities).**

who  
am I  
?



**ANSWER:** I am a mountain lion, also known as a puma or cougar. If you are lucky enough to spot me, you'll recognize me by the black tip on my long tail. I need large swatches of habitat with hunting areas, water sources, and a place for my den. Because much of my habitat has been developed, I depend upon habitat linkages (like the new Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve) that let me move between pieces of remaining habitat.