



Santa Clara County

## Open Space Authority

6980 Santa Teresa Blvd., Ste 100 • San Jose, CA 95119 • Tel: 408- 224-7476 • Fax: 408- 224-7548 • [www.openspaceauthority.org](http://www.openspaceauthority.org)

### PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OSA Contact: Patrick Congdon, General Manager, [pcongdon@openspaceauthority.org](mailto:pcongdon@openspaceauthority.org)

Lark Burkhart, Public Information Specialist, [lburkhart@openspaceauthority.org](mailto:lburkhart@openspaceauthority.org)

Office: 408-224-7476

San Jose State University Contact: Tina Daniels at 408-924-1123 or [tina.daniels@sjsu.edu](mailto:tina.daniels@sjsu.edu).

### **A Win for Open Minds and Open Space**

San Jose, CA June 28, 2010 – In a transaction that adds up to a big win for all parties, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA) is purchasing 228 acres donated by an alumnus to San Jose State University.

The property is adjacent to Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, 4,106 acres of woods, chaparral, meadows and creeks that offer trails for hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers.

The land is extremely remote; most of the roads in the area are private, one lane and dirt. To achieve the greatest value from such a generous gift took some creativity. After considering several possible uses for the property, San Jose State decided to offer the site to the Open Space Authority. The purchase price was \$572,450, which will support the programs and goals of the university.

As open space, the land has significant habitat value for animal species in the area that need room to roam, including deer, bobcats, mountain lions and coyotes. The bay laurel and oak woodlands, as well as stands of chaparral, are a haven for many native plant species. And protection for tributaries that cross the property will aid in maintaining the water quality of Llagas Creek.

In addition, future trail connections from Rancho Cañada del Oro could expand access to the landscapes so many people enjoy. Additional purchases in the area, a mutual

goal of several open space and park agencies, could also lead to a regional trail network that includes the property.

“We would like to posthumously thank the donor, Richard Olin Pea, and his family,” SJSU President Jon Whitmore said. “This transaction will not only support students aspiring to follow in Mr. Pea's footsteps, but it also gives San Jose State the means to collaborate with the Santa Clara Open Space Authority to open the property for all to enjoy.”

Born in 1925 in Oklahoma, Pea migrated with his family to the Bay Area to escape the Dust Bowl. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard in World War II and the Naval Reserves in Korea. In 1954, he graduated from San Jose State College (now SJSU) with a bachelor's in electrical engineering. Pea went on to work for NASA for over three decades, retiring in 1989. He died in May 2009 at age 84.

Pea valued education and the outdoors, priorities reflected in the way he lived and the way he died. He owned two pieces of real estate – a home in San Jose, and the acreage in the foothills, where he had a small cabin with a wood stove and bee hives. In his will, Pea donated both properties, the home to his high school and the foothill property to his university.

“Prior to Mr. Pea's passing we spoke several times about the possibility of selling to the Open Space Authority,” said OSA general manager Patrick Congdon. “He wasn't interested, but enjoyed talking about the property and the times he spent there. Looks like he had a much bigger vision in mind, one of giving to others and how it might help an institution that gave much to him and the community.”

##

The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA) is an independent special district created in 1993 to help preserve, protect and manage urban and non-urban open space in the areas of Campbell, Milpitas, Santa Clara, San Jose, Morgan Hill, and southern Santa Clara County.

OSA has protected over 12,000 acres of land through purchase or easement and contributed to conservation easements covering an additional 2,500 acres.

**[www.openspaceauthority.org](http://www.openspaceauthority.org)**