

Program Application: 82490202

Linked Pre-Application Form - DO NOT DELETE

Building Healthy Communities: Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigos Hiking Club

Grant Amount Requested

\$50,000.00

Organization Name

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council

Urban Grant Program Application Questions

Overview

Type of project (check all that apply)

Grant category (check all that apply)

Environmental Stewardship and Restoration, Parks, Trails, and Public Access, Environmental Education

Project Location: Address / Neighborhood

What is the physical location of the project? If there is no physical location, please enter "N/A." If the project will be in multiple locations, please list all. Note: project location(s) must be within the Authority's jurisdiction.

1. Máyyan 'Ooyákma – Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve - District 1
Malech Rd, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

2. Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve - District 1
550 Palm Ave, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

3. Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve - District 1
4289 Casa Loma Rd, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

4. Little Uvas Open Space Preserve - District 1
16541-16905 Uvas Rd, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

5. Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve - District 2
5341 Sierra Rd, San Jose, CA 95132-3419

Project Location

Open Space Authority District of Project Location(s)(check all that apply)

Authority District 1, Authority District 2

Who does the project serve? Please indicate which Open Space Authority Districts are served (where do the people served by the program live) (check all that apply)

Authority District 1, Authority District 2, Authority District 3, Authority District 4, Authority District 5, Authority District 6, Authority District 7

Project Abstract

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (Ridge Trail), in partnership with No Worries Amigos Hiking Club (NWAHC), proposes Building Healthy Communities—a community-driven wellness and outdoor access initiative running from August 2026 through December 2027. The project will offer 15-18 unique outings within Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (Authority) boundaries, including night hikes, Wellness Wednesday series, overnight camping, and a stewardship event, reaching up to 1,000 participants across Santa Clara county and the wider Bay Area. Combining Ridge Trail's regional leadership with NWAHC's innovative peer-led "Hike Therapy" model, the program helps participants manage anxiety, depression, and daily life challenges through joyful, inclusive hiking experiences. With a \$50,000 budget (grant request), this collaboration directly advances the Authority's priorities by connecting urban communities to nature, improving public health, and building lasting constituencies for open space.

Project Planning

Describe the proposed project.

The Building Healthy Communities project responds to the overlapping crises of the lack of equitable outdoor access and mental health inequities. The Ridge Trail brings decades of experience activating regional trails and stewarding open space. NWAHC offers a peer-led, culturally relevant, and joy-centered approach to building wellness in community. Together, they will create inclusive outdoor experiences that are fun, safe, creative, and therapeutic—bottling up the feeling of joy that hiking provides and distributing it widely.

Intended Audience:

All outings will be free and open to the general public. The NWAHC community reflects a wide breadth of individuals, many of whom are new to hiking and outdoor recreation. The program is specifically designed to welcome first-time hikers, families with children, and individuals from communities that have historically faced barriers to outdoor access. Participants often bring family members across multiple generations, creating an intergenerational community of care and wellness.

Educational Standards Alignment:

Building Healthy Communities focuses on community wellness, mental health support, and inclusive outdoor access rather than academic curriculum. Informal environmental education components—including citizen science activities and stewardship practices—will be integrated to enhance participants' connection to local ecosystems. This program is not designed for school-based delivery and will not meet Common Core or Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Location(s) and Geographic Scope:

Programming will take place across Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority preserves and Ridge Trail segments throughout Santa Clara County. The project includes focused outreach to South Bay residents, with particular emphasis on reaching Deep Engagement Communities in the region. Through strategic partnerships with community-based organizations and transportation support from BART stations and community hubs, the program will extend its reach to the broader Bay Area community, connecting urban residents to nearby natural spaces.

Potential outing locations:

1. Máyyan 'Ooyákma – Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve - District 1
2. Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve - District 1
3. Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve - District 1
4. Little Uvas Open Space Preserve - District 1
5. Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve - District 2

Additional locations within Authority jurisdiction are under consideration in coordination with Santa Clara County Parks, pending permit approval. Given the limited camping options on Authority properties, overnight outings may take place at nearby Santa Clara County Park campgrounds that are within the Authority boundaries, such as Calero or Uvas Canyon county parks.

Program Offerings:

Night Hikes & Wellness Wednesday Series (up to 16 outings): Evening and daytime hikes across Santa Clara County designed to be accessible, social, safe and fun. Outings may include yoga or breathing warm-ups, icebreakers, and shared snacks.

One Overnight Staycation: A local camping experience fostering deeper connection, peer support, and nature immersion.

One Ridge Trail Service Day (Nov. 2026): Volunteer event to support trail stewardship, with programmatic aspects (education, community building) fully integrated.

Describe key project deliverables and estimated completion dates.**KEY DELIVERABLES**

15-18 public outings across Santa Clara County.

Up to 1,000 participants served, with focused outreach to Deep Engagement Communities.

Transportation support provided for up to 9 outings.

20+ volunteer and co-leader opportunities to build leadership pathways.

Participant surveys and storytelling outputs capturing impact and feedback.

Project landing page on Ridge Trail website sharing project event information and outing photos.

KEY TASKS AND TIMELINE

Phase 1: Planning (Aug–Oct 2026)

Recruit and formalize partnerships with community organizations including 209 Hikes, Bay Soul Love, Garlic City Run Club, SIREN, and local mental health advocates

Identify and secure hike locations across Santa Clara County, within Authority preserves and Ridge Trail segments

Finalize permits, insurance, and coordinate with the Authority on site access and logistics

Develop culturally responsive outreach strategy, including multilingual materials, social media content, and partnership-based promotion

Design and launch Building Healthy Communities project landing page on Ridge Trail website to serve as central hub for event information, registration, and resources

Design evaluation tools and participant feedback mechanisms

Phase 2: Program Delivery (Oct 2026–Nov 2027)

Host up to 18 diverse outings across Santa Clara County, including night hikes, Wellness Wednesday series, one overnight staycation, and Ridge Trail Service Day

Coordinate transportation logistics with shuttle pickup locations at BART stations and community hubs

Plan, purchase and provide food, beverages, safety supplies for participants. Coordinate camping gear lending options for overnights.

Evaluate community language needs to determine requirements for bilingual materials and multilingual hike leader support, with capacity to accommodate Spanish, Vietnamese, and additional languages

Recruit, train, and coordinate 20+ volunteers and co-leaders to support outings and build leadership pathways

Integrate environmental education, citizen science activities, and mental health discussion into programming

Document outings through photography, participant stories, and social media engagement

Phase 3: Reflection and Reporting (Nov–Dec 2027)

Conduct participant surveys of attendees to assess wellness outcomes, sense of belonging, and program satisfaction

Facilitate structured debriefs with partner organizations to evaluate collaboration and identify lessons learned

Collect and curate participant testimonials, photos, and impact narratives

Compile comprehensive final report including program outcomes, climate resilience impact, mental health metrics, demographics, and recommendations for future programming

Update Building Healthy Communities project landing page with final documentation and resources

Does this project require permission, permits, or other approvals? If so, please describe the status of these.

Ridge Trail's 20+ year partnership with the Authority includes a proven track record of successful permit coordination. All site locations for Building Healthy Communities outings will secure necessary permits and permissions. Ridge Trail staff will work directly with Authority partners to coordinate site access, secure all required approvals, and ensure compliance with Authority policies. This coordination will occur during the planning phase (August - October 2026) and continue throughout program delivery. All required approvals will also be secured with any outside partners, as needed.

What is the lifetime of this project? If applicable, describe plans for operating and maintaining the project in the future.

Today, over 400 miles of Ridge Trail are open and permanently protected as we work toward completing all 550 miles of continuous trail, including over 122 current miles in Santa Clara County. Expanding the Bay Area Ridge Trail network in the South Bay Region for public enjoyment is one of the Authority's public access vision goals for its Open Space Preserves. As identified in our Strategic Plan, the Ridge Trail strives for increased public access and will continue to expand program offerings on Authority lands to both members and the general public, in partnership with community-based organizations. By supporting NWAHC's capacity building as a newly established nonprofit, this project establishes a foundation for financial sustainability that will enable our collaborative partnership to grow and deepen over time.

Describe the project's readiness for implementation.

Ridge Trail and NWAHC are ready to begin immediately upon grant approval. The organizations have worked together for two years, establishing a strong partnership and deep understanding of NWAHC's "Hike Therapy" model. Throughout the past year, they have successfully co-hosted Wellness Wednesday outings, demonstrating their collaborative capacity. Building Healthy Communities is integrated into Ridge Trail's 2026 workplan with staff capacity allocated and key personnel committed. Ridge Trail's 20+ year relationship with the Authority and successful implementation of two recent Authority grants further demonstrates organizational capacity for timely project delivery.

The Building Healthy Communities grant would allow Ridge Trail and NWAHC to expand access and bring safe, enjoyable outings to more diverse audiences and underserved communities throughout the region.

Project Budget

Budget Summary - Grant Request & Budget Summary - Matching Funds

Grant request: Personnel

\$10,195.30

Grant request: Contracted Services

\$29,000.00

Grant request: Supplies / Materials

\$1,300.00

Grant request: Other Direct Costs

\$2,700.00

Grant request: Indirect Costs

\$6,804.70

Total Matching Funds

\$6,698.00

Total Budget

\$50,000.00

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

UGP_OSA 2025 - Building Healthy Communities Budget (final) - 10-14-25.xlsx

Materials and Budget Template (item #9) found here: <https://www.openspaceauthority.org/programs/grant.html#Materials>

Provide a brief budget narrative to explain the expenses listed in each of the budget categories (e.g. Personnel).

Total Budget: \$50,000 (Grant Amount Requested from Authority)

Matching Funds: Volunteer Hours - \$6,698

Matching hours for 20 volunteers as co-lead hiking guides and for general outing support.

Total Project Cost: \$56,698

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Ridge Trail – \$21,000 (breakdown below)

Personnel – \$10,195.30

Ridge Trail staff support for comprehensive project coordination, including event planning, promotion and outreach, permitting, insurance compliance, evaluation, and documentation.

Communications & Outreach – \$300

Development and production of outreach materials, promotional items, and digital media to reach diverse communities.

Evaluation & Documentation – \$500

Participant surveys, photography, collection of participant stories and testimonials, final program report.

Transportation – \$2,700

Van rentals and ride-share services to provide accessible transportation from BART stations, community hubs, and other central locations for up to 9 group outings.

Overnighting Permits and supplies - \$500

Overnighting camping permits and camping essentials.

Indirect Costs - \$6,804.70

Administrative support and organizational overhead necessary for successful program implementation.

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No Worries Amigos Hiking Club, Contracting Services – \$29,000

NWAHC will receive a flat contracting fee covering all coordination, facilitation, and program delivery costs for up to 17 single-day outings, including a service day project (\$1,500 per event = \$25,500) and 1 overnight experience (\$3,500). This bundled fee includes NWAHC staff time, volunteer coordination, community partnership stipends, snacks, drinks, and supplies.

Award Amount: The Board reserves the right to award partial funding on projects. If your project were to receive partial funding, what would this mean for your project?

If the Building Healthy Communities project were to receive partial funding, it would require us to either delay the implementation of the outings while we sought additional funds, and/or reduce the number of outings offered.

Project Goals

Describe the specific problems, issues, or unserved needs the project will address.

Building Healthy Communities is more than a hiking program—it is a transformative wellness model that tackles two pressing needs: equitable mental health support and equitable outdoor access. With the Ridge Trail’s deep regional expertise and NWAHC’s innovative, peer-led approach, this partnership will engage up to 1,000 participants in healing, joyful, and inclusive outdoor experiences.

With the Authority’s support, we will reduce barriers to access, strengthen resilience, break stigma, and build a lasting love for the land—one hike at a time.

Mental Health and Community Project Goals:

- Reduce stigma around mental health by creating safe, joyful outdoor spaces where participants can openly discuss mental wellness while experiencing the therapeutic benefits of nature.
- Improve mental health and wellbeing through nature-based experiences that reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while promoting mindfulness and emotional regulation.
- Increase sense of belonging and connection across diverse communities through shared outdoor experiences that build trust, social support networks, and collective joy.
- Support physical and mental wellness through regular group hikes and outings that combine cardiovascular exercise with the restorative effects of time spent in natural environments.

How does this project serve the community?

Number of people served

1,000

Number of youth served

150

Number of programs provided

18

Other Grantee Goal #1 (optional)

Quantify conservation impact through Ridge Trail Service Day metrics, including trail miles maintained or restored, number of native plants installed, invasive species removed, and/or volume of trash and debris collected from Authority lands.

Other Grantee Goal #2 (optional)

Seek opportunities to present the Building Healthy Communities partnership model and community impact findings at a regional conference or panel discussion, sharing replicable strategies for collaboration between trail organizations and community-based outdoor initiatives focused on mental health.

Impact

Describe the lasting impact of the project. Please include whether the program is open to the public and whether any materials developed will be available to the public.

Building Healthy Community outings will be free and open to the public.

Building Healthy Communities builds on a strong foundation of demonstrated impact. Ridge Trail has led public outings and programs on Authority lands for over 20 years, establishing deep expertise in connecting diverse communities to Open Space Preserves. NWAHC has been leading wellness outings since 2017 with equally tangible results: over 4,000 people brought outdoors, including 1,633 new visitors to Authority lands. Together, this model is scalable, inclusive, and built on trust and engagement—laying the foundation for sustained regional growth.

Building Healthy Communities is designed to create lasting impact in four key ways:

Organizational Partnership: The project establishes a replicable collaboration model between Ridge Trail and NWAHC, providing NWAHC—a newly established 501(c)(3)—with a solid financial foundation for future growth while deepening the partnership between both organizations and the Authority.

Knowledge Sharing: We will seek opportunities to present the partnership model and community impact findings at regional conferences or panel discussions, sharing replicable strategies for collaboration between trail organizations and community-based outdoor initiatives focused on mental health.

Public Engagement: All outings will be actively promoted through social media and community networks to inspire participation and document impact. Participant stories, outing highlights, and photographs will be shared publicly through a dedicated project page on ridgetrail.org, showcasing the program's approach and outcomes to encourage similar initiatives.

Volunteer Leader Development: The project will strengthen the capacity of NWAHC by training and supporting "Vibe Leaders"—experienced club members who serve as volunteer event leaders, safety monitors, and community ambassadors. Vibe Leaders will receive training in trail safety, group management, and inclusive facilitation techniques. This investment in volunteer leadership ensures the sustainability and scalability of the wellness outing model, empowering NWAHC to expand its reach while maintaining the welcoming, high-energy atmosphere that defines the club.

Climate Resilience

How does this project enhance and/or raise awareness about climate resilience? Please include any metrics that can be used to help quantify or understand the climate benefits of the project.

The Building Healthy Communities project builds climate resilience by cultivating outdoor advocates through experiential learning. Guided hikes and events will integrate informal discussions around environmental issues—including wildfire adaptation, native species conservation, and watershed health—helping participants understand their role in ecological stewardship and climate response.

By connecting people emotionally and physically with natural spaces, we empower long-term environmental champions and strengthen community resilience through three core approaches:

Environmental Education: Hikes explore wildfire recovery areas, serpentine grasslands, native species habitats, and watershed dynamics, building participants' understanding of local ecosystems and climate adaptation strategies.

Citizen Science: Participants use tools like iNaturalist to identify birds, plants, and animals while learning to distinguish native from invasive species, contributing to regional biodiversity data.

Stewardship: Hands-on trail maintenance and habitat restoration during Ridge Trail Service Day events demonstrate participants' direct impact on green infrastructure and ecosystem health.

Community Engagement / Stakeholder Support / Community Building

Describe the community support and/or community engagement process. Please upload any community support letters in the Documents Upload section below.

To effectively reach communities with sensitive populations and individuals who have historically had limited access to parks, trails and open spaces we will partner with trusted local organizations and community groups that have established relationships with residents. Through these partnerships, we will:

- Co-design programs and outreach strategies that reflect community needs and cultural contexts
- Provide culturally appropriate information and resources
- Offer transportation solutions and remove financial barriers to participation
- Create welcoming, inclusive programming that addresses concerns about belonging
- Meet communities where they are through neighborhood-based events and familiar gathering spaces

By leveraging the trust and knowledge of community-based partners, we ensure our outreach is authentic, accessible, and responsive to the specific needs of historically underrepresented populations.

During the planning phase, Ridge Trail and NWAHC will recruit and formalize partnerships with organizations that can contribute expertise in outreach, promotion, planning, facilitation, and community engagement. These partnerships will be strategically selected to ensure authentic connections to South Bay communities and culturally responsive program delivery.

Potential Community Partners:

- Santa Clara County Parks – Park and trail use approval and permitting
- 209 Hikes – Community co-leadership and regional outreach
- Bay Soul Love – Health and healing outdoor experiences
- Garlic City Run Club – Mental and physical health training, and outreach
- SIREN (Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network) – Outreach to immigrant communities
- REI Co-op – Gear, in-kind supplies and outing support
- Local educators and mental health advocates – Program enrichment and facilitation

Additional community input will include targeted outreach to San José, Gilroy, and all Santa Clara County residents, trail users and other community stakeholders. Outreach methods include email and postings on social media outlets for both Ridge Trail and NWAHC to share opportunities for input and program participation with the broader community.

Underserved Communities

Describe how the project addresses open space needs for sensitive populations such as residents of park-poor neighborhoods, under-served, or disadvantaged communities, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, or is located within an under-resourced community.

Building Healthy Communities will reach out to residents in Deep Engagement Communities who face disproportionate barriers to outdoor access, including limited transportation, distance to preserves, financial constraints, social or language isolation, and concerns about belonging in outdoor spaces. This project outreach includes a focus on those who struggle with mental health issues.

Mental health challenges are urgent and pervasive. In California, more than 5.5 million people live with mental health conditions. In Santa Clara County alone, more than 340,000 residents suffer from major depression. In the greater Bay Area, up to 11% of residents in communities such as San Francisco, Fremont, and Oakland experience major depression annually. These numbers represent only those formally diagnosed, while countless others struggle silently with anxiety, isolation, or stress. Barriers such as stigma, cultural taboos, lack of resources, language isolation, and transportation difficulties often prevent people from seeking or accessing support.

Building Healthy Communities provides a unique solution to sensitive populations such as residents of park-poor neighborhoods, under-served, or disadvantaged communities, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities. Group hiking and nature-based activities have been proven to reduce stress and anxiety, boost creativity, increase physical health, improve self-worth, and build stronger relationships.

NWAHC describes this as their "Hike Therapy prescription." For many participants, these experiences are the only supportive and stigma-free spaces where mental health can be discussed openly. Outings are deliberately designed as safe spaces to talk about mental health while enjoying nature. Participants often bring family members, including children, creating an intergenerational community of care. Activities such as stretching and breathing exercises, shared meals, and themed events foster belonging and joy.

Testimonials:

"It's the first time I've felt safe talking about my depression. These hikes are like therapy, but outside, with friends who get it."

– Wellness Wednesday Attendee

"There is no therapy or drug that makes me feel like I do when I'm looking forward to an event or after I just finished one!"

– Drew, San José Fire Department

Organizational Capacity

Briefly describe the organization and its ability to successfully implement this project. This might include successful past projects, key staff qualifications, financial resources, etc.

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council

The Ridge Trail Council has a 20+ year partnership with the Authority, activating and stewarding the 425+ mile regional Ridge Trail network, including segments within Santa Clara County. This deep collaborative relationship includes successful implementation of Authority grants in 2017, 2018, 2020, and the Very Important Trails Access: Connecting Communities to Mayyan Ooyakma - Coyote Ridge project in 2023 (<https://www.openspaceauthority.org/projects-programs/very-important-trails-access-connecting-communities-mayyan-ooyakma-coyote-ridge>), thus demonstrating the Ridge Trail's capacity for effective project delivery and community engagement. For over 35 years, the Ridge Trail has brought extensive expertise in trail outings, stewardship planning, volunteer coordination, and public engagement. With a proven track record of connecting diverse communities to open space and building lasting constituencies for trail access, Ridge Trail is well-positioned to lead the planning, coordination, and evaluation components of Building Healthy Communities.

No Worries Amigos Hiking Club

Founded in 2017, NWAHC uses epic, fun, creative, and educational outdoor experiences to help people manage anxiety, depression, and everyday struggles. Its mission is to make it totally rad to talk about mental health. Since its inception, NWAHC has introduced more than 3,000 people to outdoor hiking, including 1,633 first-time visitors to Authority properties, demonstrating significant impact in connecting new audiences to local open space. NWAHC's founder, Jeff Ganz, created an innovative "Hike Therapy" model that combines peer-led mental health support with joyful outdoor experiences, creating stigma-free spaces where participants feel safe to share their struggles and celebrate their wellness journeys. Guided outings feature food, safety support, celebratory giveaways, and an infectious spirit of joy that transforms traditional hiking into a therapeutic community-building experience. With strong community trust and a growing base of repeat participants and volunteer co-leaders, NWAHC brings proven expertise in inclusive programming, culturally relevant outreach, and creating meaningful pathways to outdoor access for underserved communities.

Leadership & Innovation

Describe how this project employs innovative approaches or encourages collaboration and partnerships.

PROJECT TEAM

Natalia Cortes (they/them) – Project Lead, Ridge Trail

Natalia will oversee planning, outreach, and implementation. As Ridge Trail’s Event & Volunteer Manager, they have extensive experience in community engagement, digital outreach, and culturally relevant programming. Their previous roles include Youth Programs Catalyst at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History and volunteer organizer with Radical Adventure Riders/Bay Area, where they created inclusive outdoor events for non-binary, queer, and women cyclists of color. Natalia holds a B.A. in Art History and Visual Culture from UC Santa Cruz.

Jeff Ganz (he/him) – Program Lead, NWAHC

Jeff is the founder of No Worries Amigos and the creative force behind its “Hike Therapy” model. He brings years of experience in leading inclusive, peer-centered outdoor experiences and building community through joy, openness, and creativity. Under Jeff’s leadership, NWAHC has grown into a trusted community platform for breaking stigma and making mental health conversations accessible and fun.

COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION IN ACTION

No Worries Amigos Hiking Club was built on a transformative approach to outdoor recreation by prioritizing radical inclusivity and joy over traditional performance-focused hiking culture. What sets NWAHC, and the Building Healthy Communities project, apart is its intentional design to welcome participants of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds—from families, LGBTQIA+ community members, elderly hikers, and first-time trail users—without targeting a single demographic. NWAHC’s leadership brings a refreshingly flexible, wellness-centered philosophy that integrates unique partnerships directly into the hiking experience: sound bath practitioners, yoga instructors, and "sober-curious" social gatherings at trailheads that transform standard hikes into holistic wellness experiences. This isn't a competition or an exclusive club—it's a movement that makes people return again and again because outdoor recreation feels accessible, welcoming, and genuinely fun.

The partnership between Ridge Trail and NWAHC exemplifies collaborative innovation in action, seamlessly merging Ridge Trail's trail connectivity and access work with NWAHC's wellness-focused community building. Together, we're expanding the definition of who feels welcome on the trail while fostering deeper connections to the landscape. Additional partnerships with organizations like REI, Bay Soul Love, along with other regional parks and land managers, further amplify our reach and resources, ensuring participants have access to education, equipment, and ongoing support. This collaborative framework—built on open communication, shared values, and mutual respect—demonstrates how non-competitive partnerships can create sustainable, scalable impact that benefits both people and the environment.

Documents Section

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

UGP_OSA 2025 - Appendix - Letters of Support.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

UGP_OSA 2025 - Appendix - Partner Program and RT map infographic.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

Submitted Date - Internal

Summary Field:

Name: Average Score (no bonus)

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: average

Field: Base Score Total

Decimal: 2

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:
 - isComplete | is | true

Summary Field:

Name: Total Count of Submitted Reviews

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: count

Field: NONE

Decimal: NONE

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:
 - isComplete | is | true
 - Folder | is | Submitted

Program Application: File Attachments

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

UGP_OSA 2025 - Building Healthy Communities Budget (final) - 10-14-25.xlsx

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

UGP_OSA 2025 - Appendix - Letters of Support.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

UGP_OSA 2025 - Appendix - Partner Program and RT map infographic.pdf

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority 2025 Urban Grant Program				
PROJECT BUDGET				
PROJECT				
Project Name:	Building Healthy Communities: Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigos Hiking Club			
Organization:	Bay Area Ridge Trail Council			
PERSONNEL				
Estimate employee and volunteer time <u>directly related</u> to the project. Hourly rates for employees can include salary plus fringe benefits, payroll tax, etc, but can not include indirect costs. Note: please list position titles only.				
Position Title	Description of Budget Item	(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
Manager	evaluation. 150 hours @ \$53.06.	\$ 7,959.00		\$ 7,959.00
Trail Project Manager	64.07	\$ 1,281.40		\$ 1,281.40
Communications Manager	promotional efforts. 15 hours @ 63.66	\$ 954.90		\$ 954.90
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL PERSONNEL		\$ 10,195.30	\$ -	\$ 10,195.30
CONTRACTED SERVICES				
Labor, supplies, and materials to be provided by consultants/contractors for project implementation.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
Club (Contractor)		\$ 29,000.00		\$ 29,000.00
NWAHC Volunteers	volunteers)		\$ 6,698.00	\$ 6,698.00
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL CONTRACTED SERVICES		\$ 29,000.00	\$ 6,698.00	\$ 35,698.00
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS				
Supplies and materials that are <u>directly related</u> to the project.				

RT 2025 submission

Item	Description of Budget Item	(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
Communications & Outreach	promotional items, and digital media	\$ 300.00		\$ 300.00
Evaluation & Documentation	testimonials, final program report.	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00
Supplies	camping essentials.	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS		\$ 1,300.00	\$ -	\$ 1,300.00
OTHER DIRECT COSTS				
Other direct costs that are <u>directly related</u> to the project. This might include travel, service fees for fiscal sponsorship, or newly-acquired equipment.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
Transportation	to 9 group outings.	\$ 2,700.00		\$ 2,700.00
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS		\$ 2,700.00	\$ -	\$ 2,700.00
INDIRECT COSTS				
Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are <u>limited to 20%</u> of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
Admin & Overhead	Administration and Overhead Expenses	\$ 6,804.70	n/a	\$ 6,804.70
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS		\$ 6,804.70	n/a	\$ 6,804.70
PERCENT OF GRANT REQUEST		13.6%	n/a	n/a
GRAND TOTAL				

RT 2025 submission

		(\$)	Funds (\$)	Total
TOTALS		\$ 50,000.00	\$ 6,698.00	\$ 56,698.00
COST SHARE				
				in-kind)
A minimum of 25% of grant request in matching funds may be required.				13.40%
MATCHING FUNDS				
Please describe the source of matching funds listed above. The total matching funds listed here should match the total matching funds listed under Grand Total above. This might include cash match (e.g. grantee's own funds, donations, grants, etc) or in-kind match (non-cash contribution such as volunteer time).				
Source	Description	kind)	or Pending)	Funds (\$)
Worries Amigos Hiking Club		in-kind	secured	\$ 6,698.00
TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS				\$ 6,698.00

County of Santa Clara

Parks and Recreation Department

5965 Silver Creek Valley Road
San Jose, California 95138
(408) 355-2200 FAX (408) 355-2290
Reservations (408) 355-2201
www.parkhere.org



October 9, 2025

Review Committee
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San José, CA 95119

RE: Letter of Support for *Building Healthy Communities: Bay Area Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigo Hiking Club*

Dear Review Committee,

On behalf of Santa Clara County Parks, I am writing to express our support for the *Building Healthy Communities* project, led by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (Ridge Trail) in partnership with the No Worries Amigo Hiking Club (NWAHC).

The Bay Area Ridge Trail is an important regional trail identified in Santa Clara County's Countywide Trails Master Plan, which envisions a comprehensive network of regional, sub-regional, and connector trails throughout Santa Clara County. Santa Clara County Parks supports funding to complete and increase the utilization of regional and recreational trail networks, such as the trails in the Countywide Trails Master Plan. Santa Clara County Parks also supports funding for projects and programs that reduce barriers to nature, local and regional parks, and open spaces for all communities, including communities historically excluded from such spaces. The *Building Healthy Communities* project will help increase utilization of the Bay Area Ridge Trail and reduce barriers to parks and open spaces for diverse communities.

This program addresses two pressing regional challenges: inequities in mental health support and barriers to outdoor access. NWAHC's dynamic, peer-led, and culturally relevant approach to outdoor adventures, combined with the Ridge Trail's 400+ miles of connected trails and years of experience partnering with local land managers, creates a welcoming pathway for community members to engage with nature in ways that foster wellness, resilience, and belonging.

Through a series of inclusive outings—ranging from guided hikes to an overnight campout—the program will reach up to 1,000 participants from the South Bay and the broader Bay Area region. By providing transportation, multilingual support, and activities designed for participants of all abilities and experience levels, the *Building Healthy Communities* project lowers barriers that too often prevent diverse communities from enjoying the benefits of time in nature.

We believe this initiative will make a meaningful and lasting difference for the individuals and communities it serves, strengthening connections, promoting mental health in a supportive



Board of Supervisors: Sylvia Arenas, Betty Duong, Otto Lee, Susan Ellenberg, Margaret Abe-Koga
County Executive: James R. Williams

environment, and encouraging long-term stewardship of our shared open spaces.

For these reasons, Santa Clara County Parks is proud to endorse *Building Healthy Communities* and strongly encourages your full consideration of this proposal.

If you need additional information about our programs or our partnership efforts with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, please contact me at todd.lofgren@prk.sccgov.org or visit www.parkhere.org.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Todd Lofgren

D23B480C062B4C3...

Todd Lofgren

Director of Parks and Recreation



Review Committee
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San José, CA 95119

Dear Review Committee,

RE: Letter of Support for *Building Healthy Communities: Bay Area Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigo Hiking Club*

On behalf of REI I am writing to express our support for the *Building Healthy Communities* project, led by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (Ridge Trail) in partnership with the No Worries Amigo Hiking Club (NWAHC).

This program addresses two pressing regional challenges: inequities in mental health support and barriers to outdoor access. NWAHC's dynamic, peer-led, and culturally relevant approach to outdoor adventures, combined with the Ridge Trail's 400+ miles of connected trails and years of experience partnering with local land managers, creates a welcoming pathway for community members to engage with nature in ways that foster wellness, resilience, and belonging.

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We believe this initiative will make a meaningful and lasting difference for the individuals and communities it serves, strengthening connections, promoting mental health in a supportive environment, and encouraging long-term stewardship of our shared open spaces.

For these reasons, REI is proud to endorse *Building Healthy Communities* and stongly encourages your full consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Haley Caruso
Regional Manager, California, REI Marketing
Co-Lead, Recreate Responsibly CA Coalition

7 October 2025

Grants Administrator
Review Committee
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San José, CA 95119

Dear Review Committee,

RE: Letter of Support for *Building Healthy Communities: Bay Area Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigo Hiking Club*

As a member of the Ridge Trail's Board and its South Bay Trail Advisory Group, I am writing to express our support for the *Building Healthy Communities* project, led by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (Ridge Trail) in partnership with the No Worries Amigo Hiking Club (NWAHC).

This program addresses two pressing regional challenges: inequities in mental health support and barriers to outdoor access. NWAHC's dynamic, peer-led, and culturally relevant approach to outdoor adventures, combined with the Ridge Trail's 400+ miles of connected trails and years of experience partnering with local land managers, creates a welcoming pathway for community members to engage with nature in ways that foster wellness, resilience, and belonging.

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We believe this initiative will make a meaningful and lasting difference for the individuals and communities it serves, strengthening connections, promoting mental health in a supportive environment, and encouraging long-term stewardship of our shared open spaces.

For these reasons, I am proud to endorse *Building Healthy Communities* and stongly encourages your full consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely, 
Ross Heitkamp
Bay Area Ridge Trail board member
2044 Carol Ave.
Mountain View, CA 94040



Review Committee
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Lane
San José, CA 95119

Dear Review Committee,
RE: Letter of Support for Building Healthy Communities:
Bay Area Ridge Trail + No Worries Amigo Hiking Club

My name is Jeff Ganz, founder of No Worries Amigo Hiking Club (aka NWAHC), born and raised right here in the South Bay, I attended Leland High School just a few miles from many of the OSA preserves! Long story short: I spent my entire childhood and much of my adult life struggling with anxiety and depression until about 9 years ago, when I found a love for hiking which truly changed everything for me. Once I found that, all I have been thinking about is how can I help as many others that struggle as well. So, I set out on a mission to create a totally rad, welcoming and very approachable community in support of mental health awareness to do just that! In the last 8 years we've created one of the largest hiking communities and safest places for people from all over the Bay Area, hyper focused here in my home of the South Bay. Over the last few years of hiking and hosting our group I've built an incredible relationship with Bay Area Ridge Trail and about two years ago, I had the pleasure of connecting with two amazing individuals, Annamarie Pilon and Teri Rogoway from OSA who helped us start some of the most unique gatherings in the area as well. We started with an incredible sunset hike series that led to a night hike program where we set out to CANCEL SEASONAL DEPRESSION and help keep people moving during the off season and stressful holidays, you know the time...once the sun starts setting early, trails start closing and so many of us get depressed. Last year, Teri asked us to host "Hike Your Pie Off" for OSA too which was a blast and our OSA relationship has just continued to flourish since then. It's truly been a pleasure building these relationships with everyone and I really hope we can continue to strengthen our partnership, collaborations and overall efforts to get more people out on the trails FEEL'n GOOD together with proper funding and support.

I'm writing to throw our full, no-holds-barred, 100% support behind the Building Healthy Communities project, an epic collaboration between Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and our crew at NWAHC.

This project isn't just another hiking program – it's a total game-changer. It's all about breaking down the walls that keep way too many awesome people and families in under-resourced communities – especially right here in the South Bay, San Jose, East Side, Gilroy, Morgan Hill Area – from getting outside and feeling the healing vibes of nature.

Let's be real: access to the outdoors and solid mental health support shouldn't be a luxury. But for a lot of people in these local neighborhoods, it still is. That's where this epic partnership comes in. With NWAHC bringing our super welcoming, peer-led, culturally rooted approach to outdoor adventures – and the Ridge Trail bringing 400+ miles of trails and a ton of trail-building know-how – we're teaming up to create something truly inclusive and totally transformative for ALL!

We're talking guided hikes, chill nature walks, wellness outdoors, and even an overnight campout – all designed to bring up to 1,000 South Bay and Bay Area people and families (from all walks of life) into the great outdoors, spread mental health awareness and educate people on the importance of leaving no trace, taking care of the outdoors and how to properly use open spaces for generations to come. We're making it easy and accessible with transportation, multilingual support, and activities that meet people where they're at – no experience necessary, just a good attitude and some totally awesome snacks for everyone too.





This project isn't just about getting people outside. It's about building confidence, community, and connection – all while giving people a chance to unplug, breathe deep, and discover how totally awesome it feels to be part of nature. We're helping spread mental health awareness, we're playing a massive role in helping break the stigma around mental health issues, we're planting seeds for lifelong wellness and trail stewardship too.

Bottom line: this project is rad. It's real. And it's ready to make an epic impact right here in the South Bay and beyond.

We're stoked to be part of it, and we totally encourage you to give this proposal the big thumbs up!

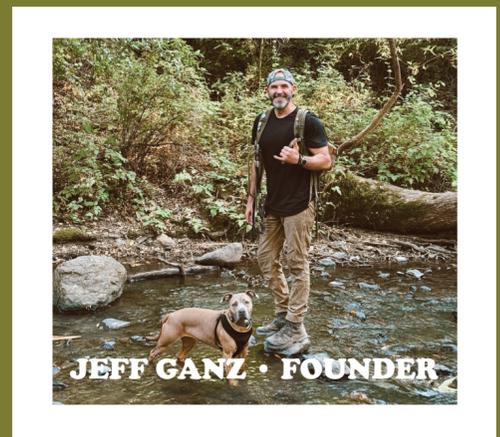
Mucho Mahalo,

Jeff Ganz
Founder
No Worries Amigo Hiking Club





2025 Partner Introduction & Reflections





About

- **Founded in 2017**
- **Mission: Get as many people out on the trails as possible FEEL'n GOOD!**
- **ALL SKILL LEVELS, ALL INCLUSIVE, ALL THE TIME!**
- **Families, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, immigrant communities, ALL AGES and backgrounds**
- **Bay Area-based, over 30 group hikes per year and growing**
- **Over 10k active members in the South Bay Area**
- **15000 and growing database including north bay and east bay**
- **Hiking group size on average 25 - 100 people**
- **Extremely unique, fun and creative experiences for all!**
- **Weekly hikes, social gatherings, local campouts and more!**
- **In 2025 our annual Earth Day cleanup had over 450 people from around the Bay Area**
- **Introduced over 1600 hikers to OSA that had never stepped foot on an OSA property before**
- **Will have RT partnership numbers at the end of 2025**



HIKE MORE. WORRY LESS. FEEL GOOD.



**WE WANT TO BOTTLE
UP HOW HIKING MAKES
US FEEL AND DISTRIBUTE
IT TO EVERYBODY!**



Why We Hike / The Problems:

- 5.5 Million people struggle with mental health & substance abuse in California
- San Francisco, Oakland and Fremont near 400k ages 12 or older suffer from substance abuse or a major depressive episode
- Santa Clara County over 300k
- Personal struggles with Anxiety, Depression, Self Doubt...
- Need for community and friendship
- Safe spaces for all
- More social and fun things to do for the sober curious

Our Solution = Hike Therapy!

- Weekly and Monthly hikes
- Guest mental health and wellness speakers
- Community vibe leaders
- Large and small groups
- Wellness Shots & Activities
- Campouts, yoga, team building experiences and more

Ridge Trail Partnership Highlights

Words From Our Community



- By the end of 2025 will have hosted 8-15 hikes with RT, average of 25 - 50 people per hike
- Extended Night Hike Series
- Launched Wellness Wednesday Sunset Series
- Co-Host first San Jose Campout
- We've now attended 3 Ridge to Bridges events
- Shared contacts and emails
- Hosted hikes with full proceeds donated to RT
- Our events are averaging 50% new hikers and introductions to RT

Hard numbers to come at the end of 2025

Dana, San Francisco
First time member 6/19

"No Worries Amigo isn't just a hiking club—it's a community. From the moment I arrived, everyone was welcoming and genuinely kind. I left feeling grateful. I can't wait for my next hike with this amazing group!"

Char, Mountain View

"Through the years, I was a solo hijet but being a part of No Worries Amigo Hiking Club brought a sense of community and connection that truly boosted my mental well-being and has helped me through many rough patches."

Mera Burton, San Jose

"As the Board Chair of OSA's CAC and a wellness contributor, joining the No Worries Amigos Hiking Group has been both inspiring and restorative. The group offers a beautiful blend of healing, movement, and connection in some of the most breathtaking natural locations. From a hiking club perspective, it's rare to find such an inclusive, well-organized, and heart-centered experience. It's also a safe, welcoming space—especially for single women—to build community while prioritizing well-being. The host's warmth and intention create a truly transformative journey every step of the way."





HOW WE MAINTAIN ONE OF THE MOST DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN THE BAY AREA AND KEEP PEOPLE COMING BACK!

THE VIBES AND OUR CULTURE!

- People first mentality
- Language and our warm welcome
- Sharing stories and personal struggles
- Creating a safe space
- The way we reach out and follow up
- Promote inclusivity and body positive events
- Consistency, consistency, consistency!



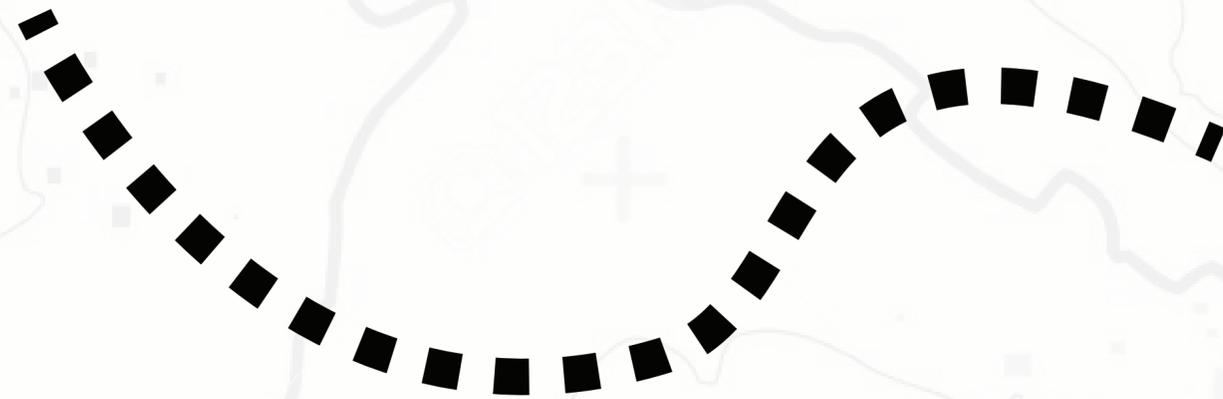
There are so many of us out here that suffer alone through all the things life hands us, No Worries Amigo Hiking Club offers a people a place to go, to be and to grow.

NWAHC Hiking Club Member, San Jose

What's Next?

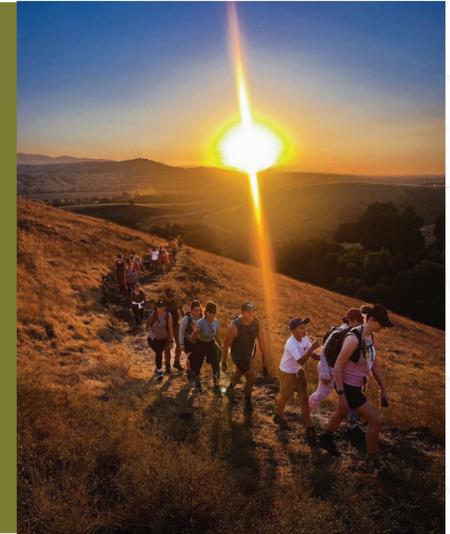


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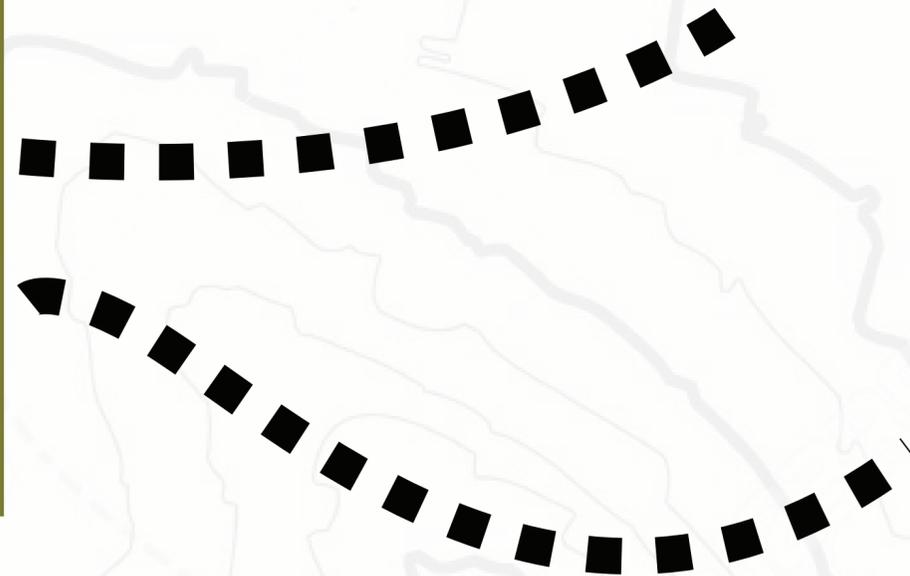
Summer 2025

- Complete first series together
- Generate more members for both communities
- Prepare for Fall Campout
- Get more people out FEEL'N GOOD!



Fall/Winter 2025

- Extend Night Hike Programming
- LET'S CANCEL SEASONAL DEPRESSION TOGETHER!
- Introduce Movie Night
- Get more people out FEEL'N GOOD!



2026 + Goals:

- Funding hike offering through OSA grant in 2nd half of 2026
- Launch 2026 programming
- Host family day hikes with Ridge Trail
- Trail Stewardship Day November
- Extend Winter and Summer Programs
- Get more people out FEEL'N GOOD!

"We're more than a hiking club and a bay area trail system coming together, we're building community and most importantly we're helping combat mental health issues, breaking the stigma and making a massive impact together"



Thank You Bay Area Ridge Trail Team & Board Members!

JOIN THE CLUB!

CONTACT

JEFF GANZ
PHONE:
949.945.3156
EMAIL:
JEFF@NOWORRIESAMIGO.COM
WEBSITE:
NOWORRIESAMIGO.COM
INSTAGRAM:
@NOWORRIESAMIGOHIKINGCLUB



Our Supporters





400+ MILES OF INSPIRATION

The Ridge Trail is a multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail that follows the ridge lines encircling the San Francisco Bay Area. Over 400 miles are open today and ready to explore. When complete, the full 550-mile trail will connect over 145 parks and open space preserves.

COME EXPLORE WITH US

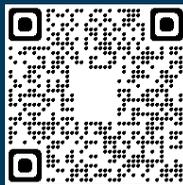
Maps and Tools - Use Ridge Trail section maps and other resources to get outside and explore.

Events - Join a guided trail outing, overnight trek, or signature annual event like *Ridge to Bridge*.

Circumnavigation - Get out there and challenge yourself to traverse all 400+ miles!



The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You can keep the Ridge Trail growing with a gift today!



Bay Area Ridge Trail Council es una organización sin fines de lucro 501(c)(3). ¡Mantenga Ridge Trail creciendo con un regalo hoy!



400+ MILLAS DE INSPIRACIÓN

Ridge Trail es un sendero de usos múltiples (senderismo, ciclismo de montaña y equitación) que sigue a lo largo de las crestas que rodean el Área de la Bahía de San Francisco. Más de 400 millas están abiertas hoy y listas para explorar. Cuando esté completo, el sendero completo de 550 millas conectará más de 145 parques y espacios abiertos.

VEN A EXPLORAR CON NOSOTROS

Mapas y herramientas - Utilice los mapas del Ridge Trail y otros recursos para salir y explorar.

Eventos - Únase a una excursión guiada por un sendero, una caminata nocturna o un evento anual exclusivo como *Ridge to Bridge*.

Circunnavegación - ¡Sal y desafíate a ti mismo para recorrer las más de 400 millas!

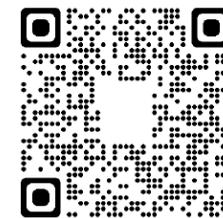


Bay Area Ridge Trail Council

Connecting people, parks and open space for today and future generations.

Conectando personas, parques y espacios abiertos, ahora y para las generaciones futuras.

PO Box 3367, Berkeley, CA 94703
415-561-2595



- RidgeTrail.org
- info@ridgetrail.org
- [@BayAreaRidgeTrail](https://www.instagram.com/BayAreaRidgeTrail)
- [@RidgeTrail](https://www.facebook.com/RidgeTrail)



Discover your next adventure on the

BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL

Descubre tu próxima aventura en el Sendero de la cresta del área de la bahía (Bay Area Ridge Trail)





Bay Area Ridge Trail

Current Trail
Sendero actual

Future Trail
Sendero futuro

Parks and Open Space
Parques y espacios abiertos

Campgrounds
Campamentos



Map updated June 2025.

Mapa actualizado en junio 2025.



The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council is supported by members, agency partners including the California Coastal Conservancy, institutions, and dedicated volunteers.

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council cuenta con el apoyo de miembros, agencias asociadas incluyendo California Coastal Conservancy, instituciones y voluntarios dedicados.

THE WORK WE DO

The Ridge Trail Council's mission is to plan, promote and sustain a connected hiking, cycling, and equestrian trail on the ridge lines around San Francisco Bay—linking people, parks and open space for today and future generations. Our work includes:

- Trail Planning
- Advocacy
- Fundraising
- Trail Stewardship
- Events & Outings

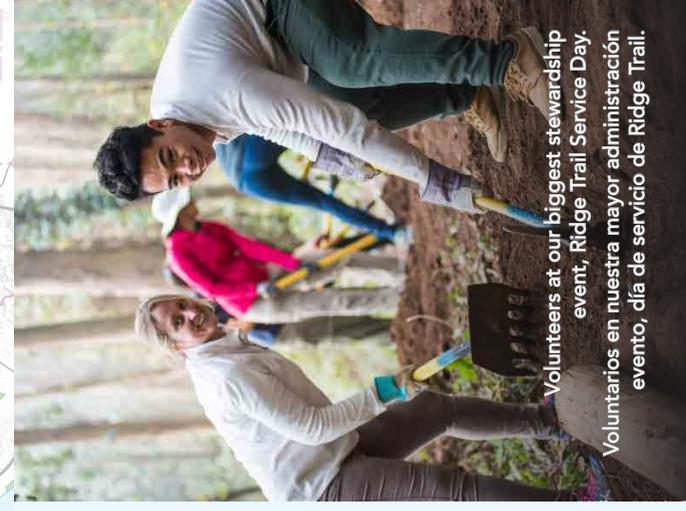
Join us! Find out how at RidgeTrail.org.

EL TRABAJO QUE HACEMOS

La misión del Ridge Trail Council es planificar, promover y mantener un sendero conectado para caminatas, ciclismo y equitación en las costeras alrededor de la Bahía de San Francisco, conectando personas, parques y espacios abiertos para las generaciones actuales y futuras. Nuestro trabajo incluye:

- Planificación de senderos
- Abogacía
- Recaudación de fondos
- Administración de senderos
- Eventos y excursiones

¡Únete a nosotros! Descubre cómo en RidgeTrail.org.



Volunteers at our biggest stewardship event, Ridge Trail Service Day. Voluntarios en nuestra mayor administración evento, día de servicio de Ridge Trail.



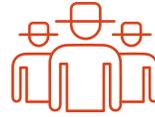
BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL

A multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian) trail that follows the ridge lines encircling the San Francisco Bay Area.

400+ miles

of the planned **550 miles** are open to explore today

2.5 million people live within **2 miles** of the Ridge Trail



Connects

145

parks and open spaces



Travels through **9** counties and **24** towns & cities

3 Highest Peaks along the Ridge Trail:

Mount St. Helena - 4,342'

Mount Umunhum - 3,486'

Monument Peak - 2,594'



In 2024, **395** volunteers contributed **1,262** hours to care for the Ridge Trail

The Ridge Trail Council partners with

40+

land managers



3,000+ people joined a Ridge Trail outing last year

Long Connected Stretches:

80 miles
IN THE WEST

45 miles
IN THE EAST



- Current Trail
- Future Trail
- County Line