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Andrea Mackenzie Lauded for Conservation Action and Vision

San Jose, CA, November 30, 2015: *Bay Nature* magazine's prestigious 2016 Local Hero for Conservation Action award recognizes leadership in conservation of the natural landscapes, wildlife, and flora of the SF Bay Area. The award will be presented to the Open Space Authority's General Manager Andrea Mackenzie on March 20, 2016 at *Bay Nature's* Local Hero Awards Dinner. (For more details visit: <https://baynature16.eventbrite.com>)

"I am grateful to receive this award, while recognizing that major conservation gains are not won by individuals but by a determined and vigilant community of people," said Andrea Mackenzie.

For more than 25 years, Mackenzie has been a passionate leader for open space protection; working at the intersection of urban and open space planning, policy and funding to preserve the region's most significant natural and working landscapes. Her passion is fueled by a deep love of nature, and strong belief in the power of collaboration. She believes that investing in the preservation and stewardship of our natural and working landscapes is *essential* to ensuring a sustainable future for the Bay Area.

Mackenzie is now focused on catalyzing decision-makers, the business community and the public to see nature as a critical life support system for our cities and urban populations. Joining conservation colleagues in Sonoma and Santa Cruz Counties, she helped launch the *Healthy Lands, Healthy Economies Initiative and Nature's Value in Santa Clara County*, the first ever comprehensive assessment and economic valuation of the services provided by open space, natural areas and working lands.

David Loeb, publisher of *Bay Nature* magazine and executive director of the nonprofit Bay Nature Institute, said " We're just thrilled to honor Andrea Mackenzie for her many years of leadership on open space issues all around the Bay Area. She has a truly regional vision that has translated into protection of open space, habitat, and working lands from Healdsburg to Morgan Hill. And she understands the critical importance of building public support for conservation, as evidenced by her effective leadership of two successful open space funding measures over the past decade."

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority conserves the natural environment, supports agriculture, and connects people to nature, by protecting open spaces, natural areas, and working farms and ranches for future generations. Since 1993, the Open Space Authority has protected more than 17,500 acres of open space, preserving the region's scenic beauty, protecting water resources and other natural capital, and providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Santa Clara County residents.