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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve opened June 27th  
348-acre preserve south of San Jose protects water resources, wildlife and habitat,  
and invites year-round hiking, cycling, riding, and picnicking**

**San Jose, CA, June 27, 2015:** A stunning new open space preserve in the renowned Coyote Valley is now open to the public as of Saturday, June 27, immediately following the free public grand opening celebration, which was completely booked shortly after it was announced.

The 348-acre Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve is located at the western edge of Coyote Valley, which lies in the 7,400 acre Valley floor and greenbelt between San Jose and Morgan Hill. The Open Space Authority has identified the Coyote Valley as one of top ten priority natural landscapes remaining in Santa Clara County that are critically important to protect from development. The preserve's many conservation values include rich cultural history, valuable water resources, exceptional recreational opportunities, farm and ranchland, and a critical wildlife corridor.

"Coyote Valley is truly a jewel in the crown of Silicon Valley," said Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager of the Open Space Authority. "The Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve offers visitors a unique new outdoor opportunity to step back in time, connect with the Valley's rich farming heritage and discover the many natural wonders of the region."

**Natural and cultural resources protected**

For decades, this scenic property has been eyed for corporate campuses, tract homes, and other commercial development. The economic downturn in 2010 opened up an opportunity for the Open Space Authority to purchase the land for \$3,481,000.

The Authority's inventory of the site's natural and cultural resources determined that the preserve's archaeological sites were inhabited for some 6,000 years, and that the land once served as a village and a ceremonial site for the Ohlone People.

The preservation of Coyote Valley is integral to protecting Silicon Valley's water supply -- the Coyote Valley floor contains the last remaining undeveloped groundwater recharge area for Silicon Valley. In addition, the land surrounding Coyote Creek is critical for rainfall capture and provision of water supply. Preservation of this land helps to conserve and protect Silicon Valley's water supply.

**Multi-use trails offer sweeping vistas**



Heritage valley oaks and rare serpentine grasslands dot the preserve. The land encompasses rolling hills, oak woodland, serpentine rock outcroppings, and remnant native grasslands, with sweeping blankets of wildflowers in the spring months.

Recreation amenities include a multi-use trail for hikers, cyclists and equestrians. The 4-mile long Arrowhead Loop Trail leads to a ridgetop with stunning views of Mount Hamilton, Mount Umunhum and the entire Coyote Valley. Authority staff have removed dilapidated structures, constructed 6 sturdy redwood bridges and built a scenic trail, parking area, picnic areas and restroom in preparation for public use. Visitors can also learn about the area's important wildlife, cultural resources and water resources through a series of beautiful educational panels.

### **Coyote Valley Provides Critical Wildlife Corridor and Habitat for Rare Species**

These lands provide habitat for some of the Bay Area's most important plant and animal species, including the Bay checkerspot butterfly, Opler's longhorn moth, golden eagles, Santa Clara Valley dudleya, smooth lessingia, and most beautiful jewelflower. Cattle grazing enhances critical habitat for the Bay checkerspot butterfly and other threatened species by reducing invasive plants. The Authority leases pasture to Tilton Ranch who graze a small herd of cattle on the preserve.

A destination for avid birders, the Coyote Valley houses a wide array of raptors such as golden eagles and red-tailed and other hawk species, as well as circling turkey vultures. The preserve provides a key connection for wildlife looking to traverse the valley from the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Diablo Range. Wide-ranging animals such as tule elk, mountain lion, bobcat, deer, coyote, and badger that require wide swaths of habitat to find food, shelter, and mates have been especially affected by encroachment on their habitat. One of the Open Space Authority's goals is to connect remaining native habitats and maintain corridors that allow animals to move between patches of habitat and find the resources they need.

Starting June 27th, the Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve will open to the public 365 days a year, from 7:00 a.m. to sunset, free of charge. This is the third public preserve opened by the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority.

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### **Directions: 550 Palm Avenue, Morgan Hill**

From Highway 101, exit Bailey Ave. Turn right on Bailey, left on Santa Teresa Blvd., and right on Palm Ave.; the preserve entrance is at the end of Palm Avenue.

*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 16,000 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.*