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### **Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), and Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Form Partnership to Secure Pivotal Property**

**San Jose, CA – October 20, 2014:** An innovative private/public partnership between the Open Space Authority, POST and Santa Clara County Parks Department came to fruition with the purchase of 285-acres of open space land in the ruggedly beautiful and water rich Southern Santa Cruz Mountains region. Permanent protection of this property will serve the public's interest by expanding outdoor recreation and education opportunities, while closing gaps in regional trail connections.

"Permanent protection of this property will help implement a shared vision between the Authority, POST and County Parks to protect and ensure public access to open space in this important region of the Santa Cruz Mountains," said Matt Freeman, Assistant General Manager for the Open Space Authority. "In many ways, this is a plug and play property in terms of public access, as existing ranch roads will serve as the backbone of a future trail system." The Open Space Authority has immediate plans to offer docent-led hikes on the property. Future plans include creating an open space preserve open to the public 365 days per year free of charge.

The Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) initiated the purchase of the property, coordinated details of the transaction and conducted the environmental due diligence. "An important component of POST's vision is creating a network of protected lands where people and wildlife can thrive," says POST President Walter T. Moore. "Partnering with the Open Space Authority and Santa Clara County Parks is key to making that vision a reality."

The Open Space Authority will purchase the property from the Melchor family for \$1,436,000, with Santa Clara County Parks contributing \$718,000 (one-half of the total purchase price). The Open Space Authority will take ownership of the property and the County will hold a conservation easement which ensures the property will serve a public park purpose by providing future trail access, and be preserved in perpetuity.



“Purchase of the property is key to completing this critical trail route to connect Uvas Canyon County Park to Uvas Reservoir County Park and the West Valley Trail,” said County Supervisor Mike Wasserman, in whose district this parcel is located. “We will continue to work with POST and the Open Space Authority to secure the land necessary to implement these regional trails.”

The Southern Santa Cruz Mountains is identified in the [Santa Clara Valley Greenprint](#) as one of ten Conservation Focus Areas in Santa Clara County. This mountainous region provides habitat for many rare, threatened and endangered species and offers critical refuge for plants and animals in the face of a changing climate. The 285-acre property consists of open, rolling grasslands that feature six scenic, spring-fed ponds. Much of the property is underlain with rare, serpentine soils with potential for rare plant and animal populations. The land is part of an important connection between the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Gabilan Range and Pinnacles National Park which provides safe passage for animals through a critical wildlife corridor, according to the Bay Area Open Space Council’s Conservation Lands Network biodiversity report.

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The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority has protected over 16,000 acres of open space, natural areas, watersheds and wildlife habitat — providing outdoor recreation opportunities and preserving the natural beauty and environmental health of Santa Clara County since 1993.

POST is a leading private, nonprofit land trust that protects and cares for open space, farms and parkland in and around Silicon Valley. Since its founding in 1977, POST has been responsible for saving more than 70,000 acres as permanent open space and parkland in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties.

The Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department has provided recreational opportunities, beautiful parks and precious natural resources for Santa Clara County residents for more than 50 years. This golden legacy has resulted in one of the largest regional park systems in the State of California with over 49,000 acres.