

OSA Outlook



Authority Releases Compelling Vision for Protection of Coyote Valley

Protection and restoration of the Coyote Valley is a top priority for the Open Space Authority. Coyote Valley was identified as a Conservation Focus Area within the Authority's 2014 *Valley Greenprint*, due to its unparalleled natural resources. The Coyote Valley serves as a critical recharge area for the groundwater upon which Santa Clara Valley depends, the Laguna Seca wetland is the largest of its kind in the County, agricultural operations make use of valuable farmland in the Valley, potential for a variety recreational opportunities abound, and – significantly – Coyote Valley is simply irreplaceable as a wildlife linkage connecting over 1.1 million acres of habitat in the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range.

From mountain lions to amphibians, accommodating wildlife movement is paramount to species survival. Without large landscapes to roam, keystone species like mountain lions are at risk of dying out. Lacking accommodations for their natural movement, animals could become "landlocked," which interferes with genetic diversity, food sources, and safety.

The Open Space Authority worked with a team of scientists and conservation planners to develop the just released **Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage** report. This report articulates a vision to protect and restore areas within Coyote Valley that are critical to create a landscape linkage for wildlife, connecting and protecting biodiversity between the



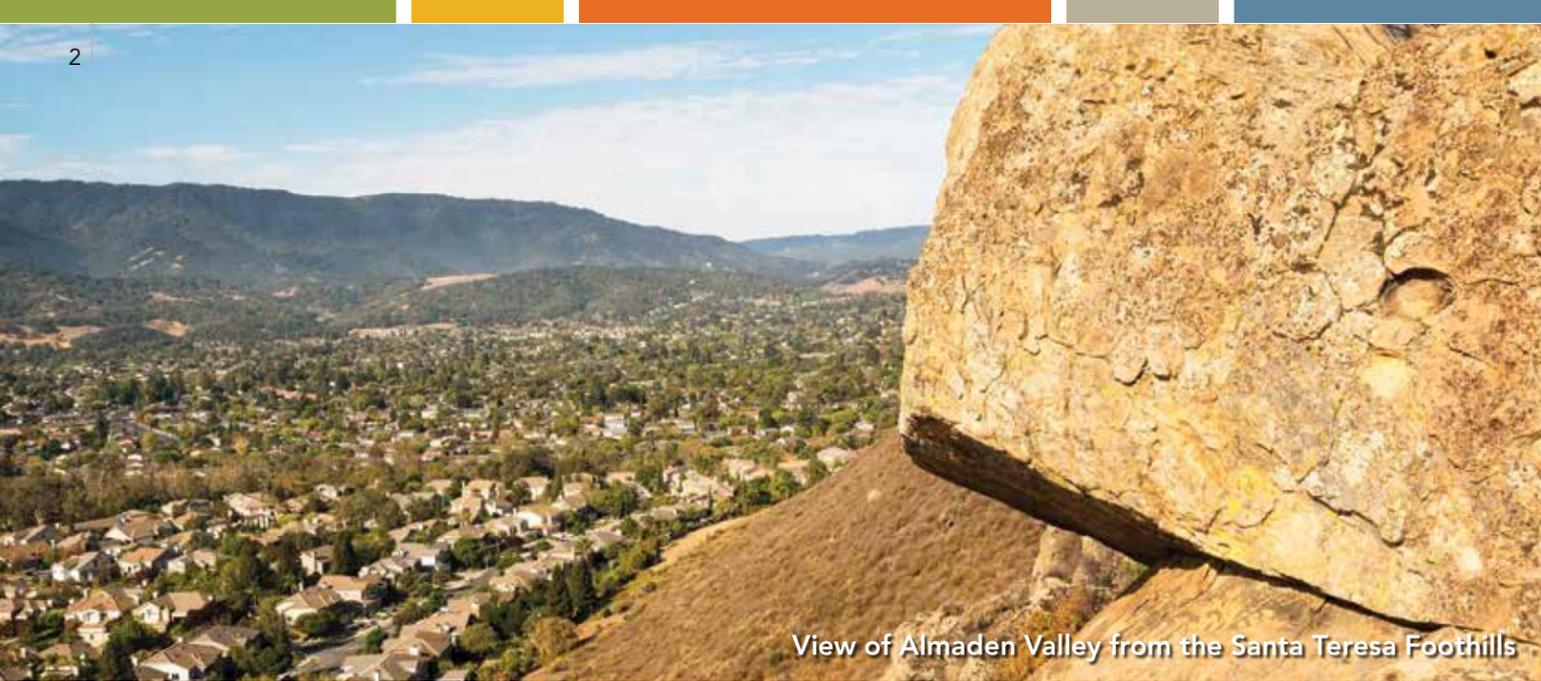
mountain ranges. This science-based design integrates wildlife movement, habitat restoration, water resources, and agriculture to provide long-term resilience to a changing climate.

In a related effort to better understand the ecological importance of Coyote Valley, the Authority in collaboration with the Peninsula Open Space Trust and researchers at U.C. Santa Cruz, is studying the migration patterns of native species by using radio-collaring devices on gray foxes and bobcats to map out where they move across the Coyote Valley floor. "The study's detailed data will enable us to make well-informed decisions about where to locate wildlife crossings to provide safe passage," said Galli Basson, Resource Management Specialist at the Open Space Authority.

The Authority is using the data collected in both of these landmark studies to collaborate with other partners to ensure this key pathway remains safe for species such as mountain lions, American badgers, Swainson's hawk, Western burrowing owl, California tiger salamanders and the Bay checkerspot butterfly. A flourishing animal community signals a healthy environment for all—and underscores the importance of securing this irreplaceable Landscape Linkage.

Learn more about the **Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage** in the special pull-out section starting on page 3.

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View of Almaden Valley from the Santa Teresa Foothills

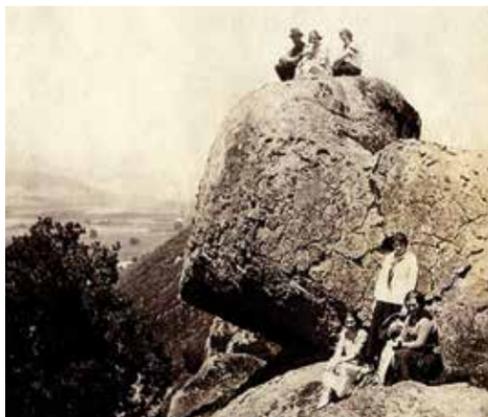
Open Space Authority Purchases 52 acres in the Santa Teresa Foothills

Unique rock outcroppings, stunning views of the valley and one family's love of the land are just a few things that stand out about the Open Space Authority's latest purchase of 51.78 acres that was finalized in May.

In the heart of Almaden Valley, just blocks from bustling city life and residential homes, the parcel was once the site of the Greystone Quarry, which supplied stone for several local historic buildings including the San Jose Museum of Art, Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph and buildings on the Stanford University campus.

German immigrant Jacob Pfeiffer came to the quarry in 1875 and managed it until 1904—and the rest, as they say, is history. His descendants would work, lease, and own the land for generations to come, creating a Santa Clara Valley legacy. Norbert Pfeiffer, Sr. and Victor Pfeiffer later purchased more than 100 acres in the 1940s.

After selling some of the land for development, the Pfeiffer family



Pfeiffer family, 1920s.

decided to sell the remaining land to the Authority, preserving its integrity as an undeveloped hillside in perpetuity. The parcel holds many fond memories for the Pfeiffers—from exploring to huge family barbeques. At one point, much of the family lived in the neighborhood just below the hill.

"We were all over the hills, hiking and biking as kids," said Norbert Pfeiffer, Jr. of his boyhood years. "Now, it will be an added value to the community. It's

time to let someone else enjoy it."

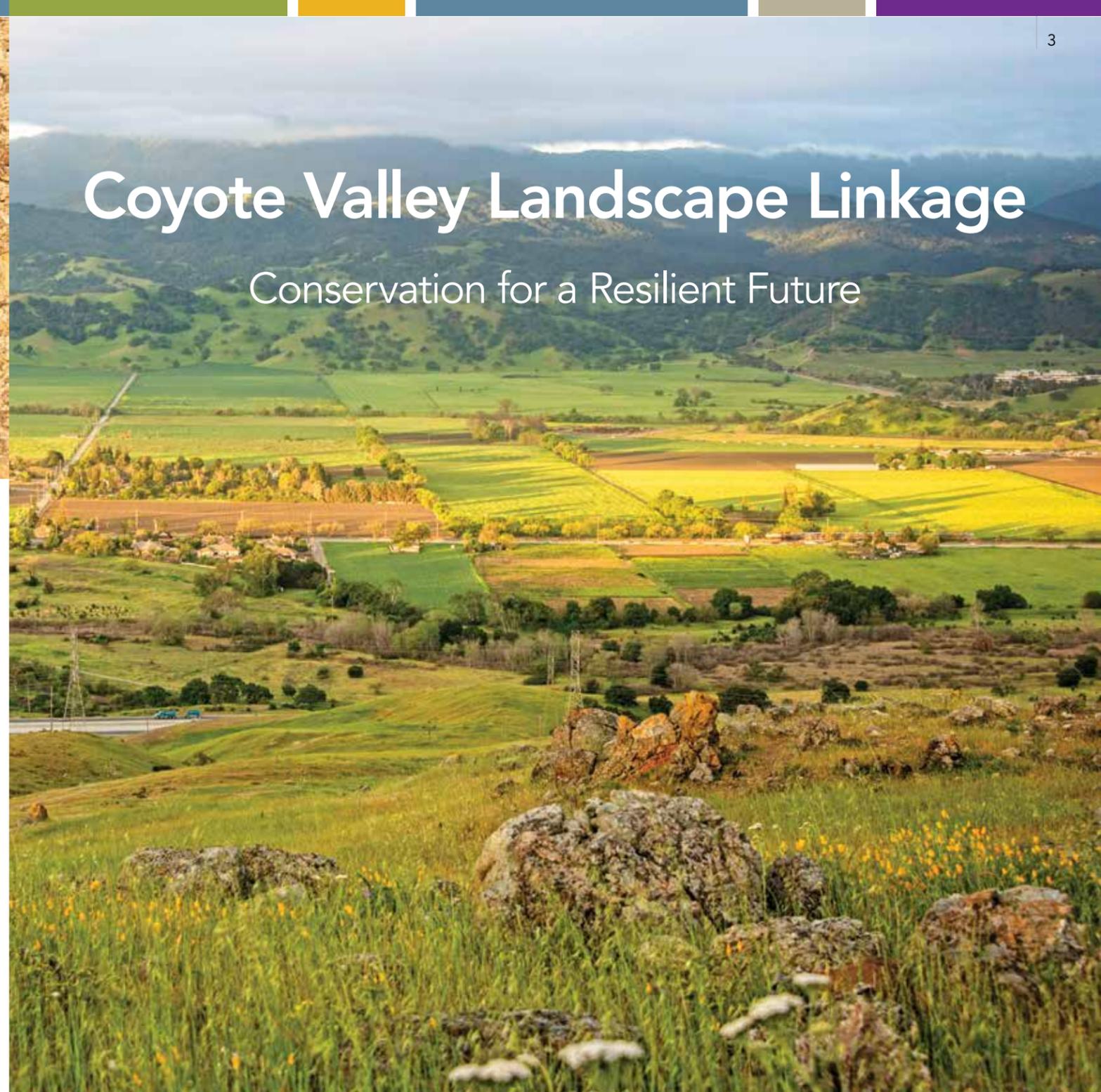
"The family has had great pride in taking care of the property," said Kevin O'Day, Norbert's cousin. "After 146 years, it's time to take it public. Seldom do you see what will be a public park so close to an urban area."

The property has prominent sandstone rock outcroppings along the ridge and provides stunning views across the Almaden Valley towards Mt. Umunhum. The *Santa Clara Valley Greenprint* identifies the Santa Teresa Ridge region as an important habitat for Bay Checkerspot butterfly and Santa Clara Valley dudleya, among other species. The area is also a key point in a long-planned network of parks, open space, and trails.

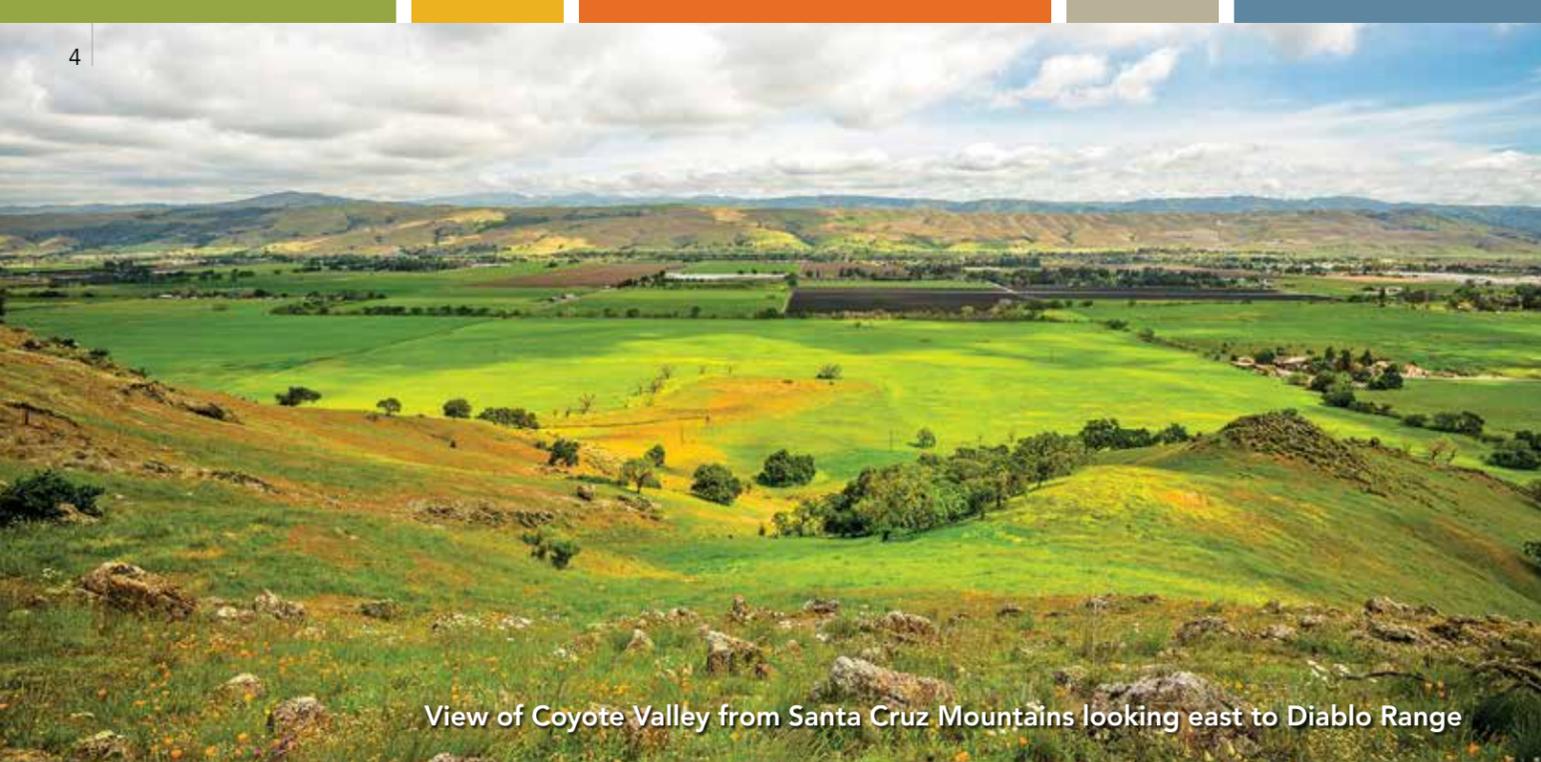
"The property will provide residents an opportunity to connect with nature, while also preserving habitat for wildlife and taking steps towards creating an interconnected system of trails and parks," said Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager for the Authority.

Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage

Conservation for a Resilient Future



I have a bright orangish-red chest and black-and-white markings elsewhere. I'm found in California year-round, but I have relatives throughout the Eastern United States. I was raised in a nest built of sticks, bark, and vegetation high in a tree. My parents are likely to return to the same nesting territory each year.



View of Coyote Valley from Santa Cruz Mountains looking east to Diablo Range



Mountain Lion



Red-Legged Frog

Protection and restoration of the Coyote Valley will benefit a wide variety of wildlife including:

- Mountain Lion
- Gray Fox
- Bobcat
- American Badger
- Swainson's Hawk
- Western Burrowing Owl
- Tricolored Blackbird
- California Tiger Salamander
- California Red-Legged Frog
- Western Pond Turtle
- Bay Checkerspot Butterfly

A Unique Resource

Nestled between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range, Coyote Valley is the vital connection between these two mountain ranges, allowing wildlife to migrate, find mates, and adapt to climate change. Situated at the southern reaches of San Jose, the stunning Coyote Valley encompasses a unique combination of plant and wildlife habitat, farmland, important water resources, and an essential open space buffer to a bustling Silicon Valley.

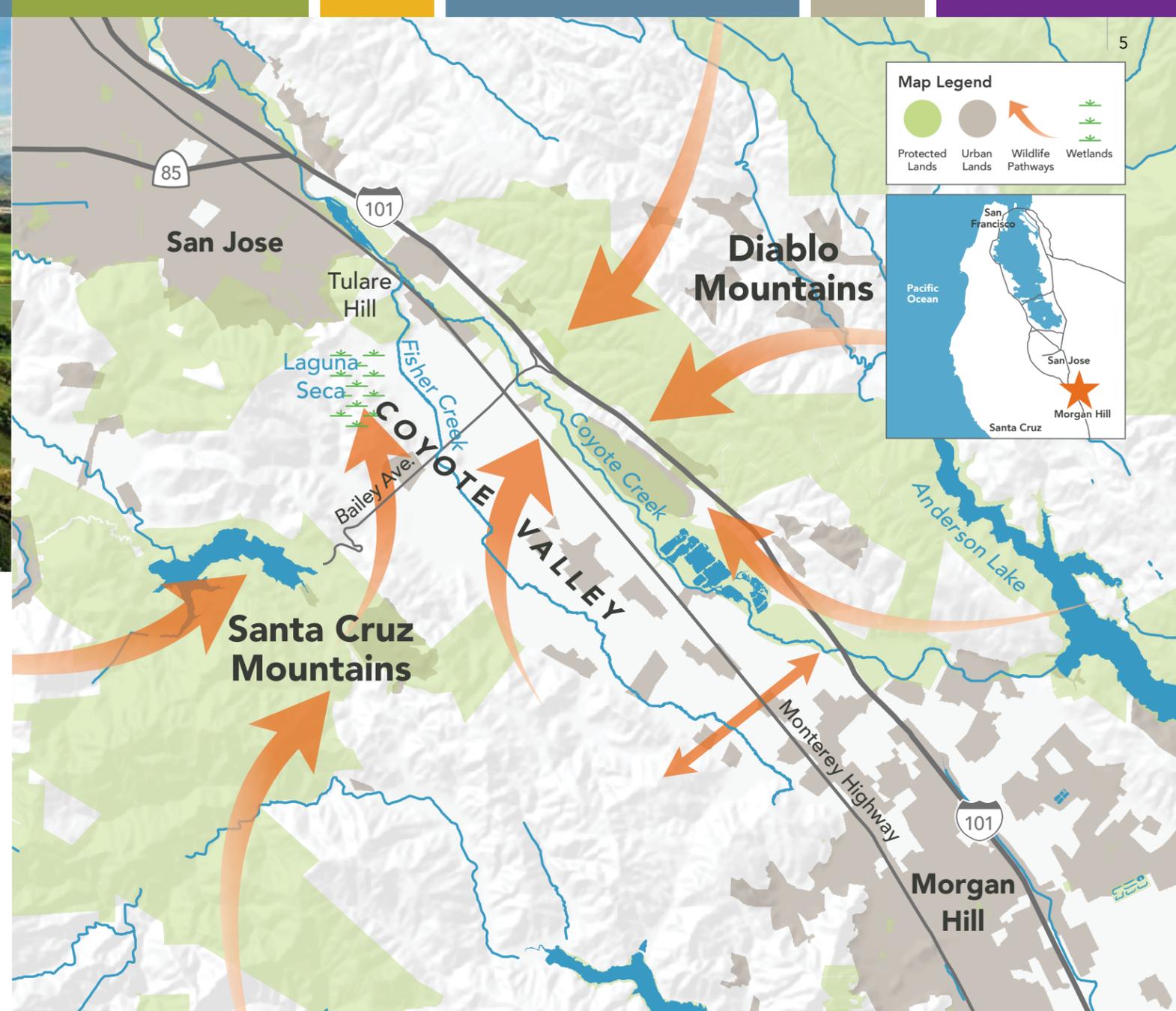
Recent scientific studies have documented rare species and animal movement in the Coyote Valley. Mountain lions, badgers, gray foxes, bobcats, and hundreds of bird species are all living in and moving through Coyote Valley. These species and others depend on Coyote Valley as a linkage to live in and move between mountain ranges, in order to maintain genetic diversity and overall ecological health, especially in the face of a changing climate.

Water resources also play an important role in Coyote Valley, as storm waters spread into open spaces, reducing the risk of flooding in Coyote Creek downstream. The waters also replenish groundwater basins that supply more than half of the Santa Clara Valley's drinking water.

Coyote Valley at a Crossroads

Coyote Valley was once filled with oak woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands but development has resulted in a loss and fragmentation of these habitats. Protecting critical habitat within a Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage is essential as climate change causes wildlife to adapt to rising temperatures by forcing them to move to different areas.

Nevertheless, there is still an opportunity to protect and restore the most unique portions of the valley. Over the years, billions of dollars have been invested to connect over 1.1 million acres of open space on either side of Coyote Valley, and the northern region is one key to linking these two mountain ranges. The incredibly rich biodiversity of our region depends on protection and restoration of Coyote Valley's connection, or "linkage" before this opportunity is lost.



A Clear Vision for Conservation

To establish a clear vision of a functional land connection for wildlife and protected water resources, the Open Space Authority assembled a team of scientists to design a landscape linkage for Coyote Valley. More than a dozen scientists and conservation planners determined the necessary essential elements for protecting and restoring a broad and resilient landscape linkage; one that can sustain biodiversity and facilitate wildlife movement in a changing climate.

- A focus on **northern Coyote Valley**, where the two mountain ranges are the closest, and the landscape is the most intact as a crossing point for wildlife, flood protection, and aquifer recharge
- **Fisher Creek**, a tributary to Coyote Creek that already supports wildlife movement across the Valley and is the centerpiece of the landscape linkage design
- **Laguna Seca**, the County's largest freshwater wetland, which slows storm waters and serves as habitat for rare amphibians and a wide range of birds and waterfowl, including many stopping along the Pacific Flyway
- **Tulare Hill**, which comprises terrain dense with sensitive species and serves as a stepping stone for the threatened Bay Checkerspot Butterfly



Laguna Seca, Santa Clara County's largest freshwater wetland

Bringing the Landscape Linkage to Life

Coyote Valley is the best opportunity we have to preserve a lifeline between the Diablo Range and Santa Cruz Mountains. The Open Space Authority is leading a collaborative conservation effort that will benefit plants, wildlife, and the resilience of our entire region. These efforts include working with willing landowners to help protect Coyote Valley's natural and agricultural landscape and designing with transportation and wildlife agencies to implement safe wildlife crossings across roads, such as culverts and bridges. Our partners, including those listed below, are vital to this landscape linkage design:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- CalTrans
- City of San José
- High Speed Rail Authority
- Pathways for Wildlife
- Peninsula Open Space Trust
- Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department
- Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- Valley Habitat Agency
- Valley Transportation Authority

For more information or to download the full report, go to openspaceauthority.org/preservation/wildlifelinkage.html



**Santa Clara Valley
Open Space Authority**
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Photo credits: Derek Neumann, Pathways for Wildlife, Cait Hutnik, Stephen Joseph, Deborah Mills, Patty Eaton, Tom Ingram

H I G H L I G H T

Citizens' Advisory Committee Profiles

The Open Space Authority's Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) helps educate the public about the work of the Authority and gives residents the chance to make a lasting difference in their community.

The CAC consists of seven district representatives and ten interest group representatives. A Chairperson is appointed every two years to provide the CAC with leadership and vision. Because of the CAC's dedication to conservation and community education, the Authority Board of Directors is more closely connected to the public it serves and better informed as it considers important issues presented by staff.



Kathy Sutherland, current Chairperson and Civic Organizations representative, has lived in San Jose nearly her entire life and has dedicated much of her free time to bettering her community.

She's a well-rounded volunteer who has worked at schools, with neighborhoods, for parks, and is always finding new ways to take community action to another level.

"The CAC has a very important role," she said. "We add another layer of community engagement."

Voter approval of Measure Q was particularly thrilling for Sutherland because it was a high benchmark and demonstrated what local communities value.



Former Chairperson **Gloria Chun Hoo**, and Authority Board District 5 representative, is the first to admit she's not the type to sit still. Between her work with the Authority and the League of Women Voters, she stays very busy.

Chun Hoo enjoys every minute though, soaking up knowledge about conservation in the Bay Area, local watersheds, and the history of others who have contributed to change.

"We all stand on the shoulders of others," she said. "Serving on the CAC, there are everyday people like myself who spend the time because they appreciate the value of nature. The little I do is helping the preservation of open space."

Gloria is most proud of work that's been done to increase public awareness about the Open Space Authority and the passage of Measure Q.



Perseid Meteor Shower Viewing Party

We earthlings are in for a treat as we pass through the dust and debris of Comet Swift-Tuttle again this August. All you need to watch the Perseid meteor shower is a place away from bright city lights and some patience—that's where the Open Space Authority comes in.

Getting away from light pollution is important if viewers want a glimpse of the 50 or more meteors an hour that will streak across the sky. The Open Space Authority will again host a special viewing party at the peak of the meteor event, which has always been a huge hit with the community.

This year we'll be set up at Little Uvas Creek Open Space Preserve (west of Morgan Hill) and encourage registrants to bring a blanket or chair, plenty of snacks, and a jacket. Registrants can also tailgate in the parking area instead of walking up the ¼-mile trail.

Astronomers will be set up with viewing gear and telescopes to get a better look at the night sky but the meteors will be visible to the naked eye.

Space is limited and only those who pre-register will be admitted to the event.

When: August 12 at 8:00 p.m.

Where: Little Uvas Creek Open Space Preserve

Register: <https://osa-perseids.eventbrite.com>



ANSWER: I'm a red-shouldered hawk, *Buteo lineatus*, not to be confused with a red-tailed hawk, which has a white tummy and is larger. Although my Eastern cousins prefer forests, hawks in California have adapted to open expanses and oak woodlands. If you keep your eyes peeled, I may be found over any of the preserves, or even perched on a pole near your home. Although, it may be easier to hear me than see me. My call is squeaky, short, and descending. My favorite foods include frogs, lizards, and occasionally small birds. I also have a combative relationship with crows - we chase each other and steal food.

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We've Moved!

As of July 1, 2017 the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority has a new address!

33 Las Colinas Lane
San Jose, CA 95119

Our phone numbers and emails remain the same. Please update your records.



Summer in the Preserves

Summer in the Santa Clara Valley brings long, hot, sunny days. It is a perfect time to hit the trails. As you plan your summer vacation and adventures, don't forget to take some time to enjoy your local open space preserves. Here is a quick reminder of **trail etiquette and hiking safety tips**.

Most importantly, know your limits. There's no shame in cutting a hike short if you are feeling hot or tired. Pack more water than you think you need. Wear a hat, comfortable clothes, and sturdy shoes and bring sunscreen. Days are long, but plan carefully to ensure you are out of the preserve by sunset. Also, use our trail maps to know the name of the trail you are on and pay attention to distinctive landmarks, such as creeks. If you or someone else is in need of help, you'll be able to direct rescuers to your location. And above all else, have fun and enjoy the beautiful outdoors!