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Open space purchases in Santa Cruz Mountains will create new trail connections, wildlife corridor

By Judy Peterson | June 7, 2018

Nearly 500 acres in the Santa Cruz Mountains are being added to South Bay open space preserves, after the recent purchase of two prime pieces of land that will eventually connect with 200 miles of trails.

The properties are just south of San Jose's Almaden Reservoir and include portions of Barrett and Alamosas creeks that drain into the reservoir. The creeks provide drinking water for people and wildlife.

"Rainbow trout in Barrett Creek were so plentiful that fishermen used to catch them by the hundreds," said Vice President Marti Tedesco of the Peninsula Open Space Trust, which announced the purchase this week. "There are a lot of different species and creek-type animals that use the creek for water and passage, including salamanders, frogs, toads, bobcats, mountain lions, pumas and deer."

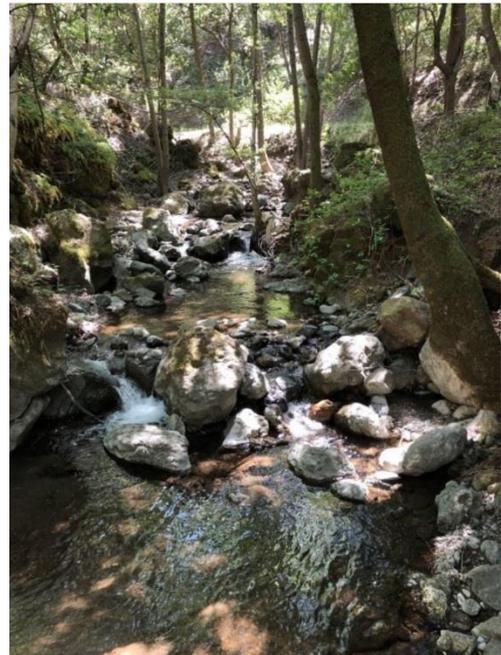
The properties were purchased by the Peninsula Open Space Trust, the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District for \$4.82 million. The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation contributed \$1.65 million toward the purchases.

The properties border the Rancho Canada del Oro and Sierra Azul open space preserves, and will provide a permanently protected corridor for wildlife to travel the Santa Cruz Mountains.

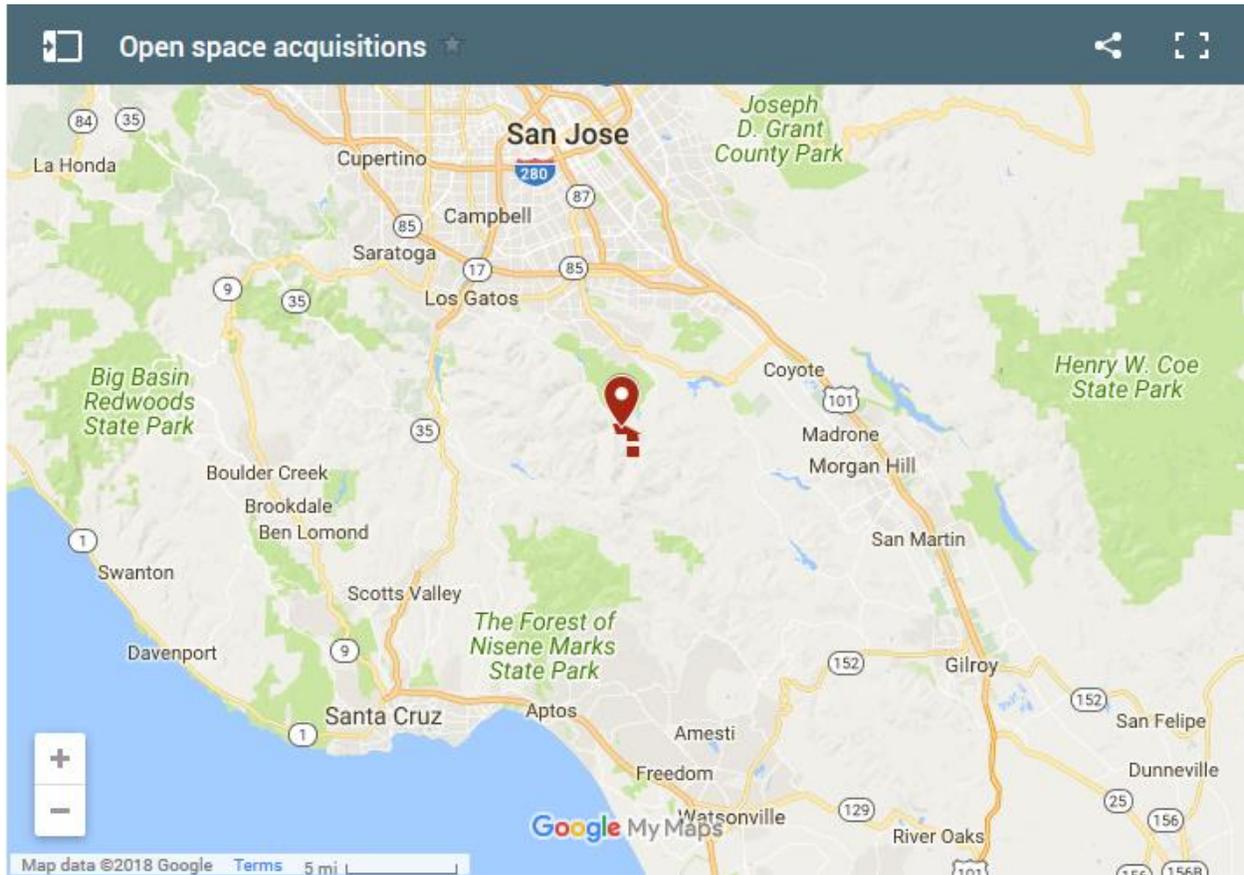
Eventually, they'll link 31,000 acres of protected lands that include Almaden Quicksilver and Calero county parks.

"The vision is that the properties will link with 200 miles of existing trails in the surrounding preserves," Tedesco said. "That wouldn't have happened without these properties."

There are some uninhabitable cabins and structures on both properties that need to be removed, and the Barrett Creek area in particular requires significant restoration and cleanup.



That will probably take three to five years, so it will be quite some time before the areas are open to the public, Tedesco said.



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