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PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST TO PURCHASE AND PRESERVE SAN GREGORIO RANCH IN 2026

The 195-acre San Mateo oceanfront property offers more than one-half mile of beach, rare and sensitive habitats and opportunities for future public access

The nonprofit seeks to raise $14 million to protect the property from private development and support its long-term stewardship

San Gregorio Ranch. Photo: Teddy Miller for Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)

PALO ALTO, Calif. (April 22, 2025) – Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) today announced that it has entered into a purchase and sale agreement to acquire and protect San Gregorio Ranch for $10 million. The 195-acre oceanfront property is located at Highway 1 and Highway 84, just north of San Gregorio State Beach. The transaction is expected to close in May 2026. POST is seeking to raise a total of $14 million for both the acquisition of the property and the creation of a stewardship and public access fund.

San Gregorio Ranch boasts sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean and miles of coastline from the top of the bluffs. It also has an expansive beach. The flat bluff-top has been used for parking in recent decades, as part of limited public beach access via the privately owned property. Over time, San Gregorio Ranch has become one of California's oldest and best-known clothing-optional beaches and is an important part of Bay Area LGBTQ+ history and culture.

In 1996, the property's owner donated a conservation easement to POST. Their intent, as stated in the easement, was to protect the property's natural, scenic, historic, open space, agricultural and recreational values. POST's planned purchase of the land further secures that intention in perpetuity for the benefit of people and wildlife.

"San Gregorio Ranch is a stunning and beloved coastal property, with incredible ocean views, important native grasslands and beach access," said **Gordon Clark**, president of POST. "It is a great example of a multi-benefit landscape that will provide people and nature with so much in the decades to come. Purchasing it outright means that POST can protect it from development and ensure continuous, safe public access. It also means that this sensitive landscape and its many conservation values will be cared for so that all can experience the beauty and wonder of San Mateo County's coast."

The Environmental Treasures of San Gregorio Ranch

The topography of San Gregorio Ranch ranges from sea level to 500 feet of elevation and contains a mix of vegetation. Along the coast, it boasts one of the region's largest stands of American dune grass (*Elymus Mollis*), an important native grass that helps to stabilize the dunes and prevent beach erosion.

The property also features excellent habitat for numerous native species, such as California king snake, California red-legged frog, acorn woodpecker, American badger, California quail and more. The eastern portion of San Gregorio Ranch has supported a small grazing operation; POST will explore the possibility of continued grazing for ecological benefits. The property's border to the south runs along the San Gregorio Creek watershed, the second largest along the

San Mateo County coast. It offers critical habitat for several listed anadromous fish species and has been prioritized by state and federal agencies for protection and restoration.

Opportunities for Safe Public Access

San Gregorio Ranch also offers a unique opportunity to create a safe oceanside connection for the California Coastal Trail (CCT) in the future. A recent study revealed that this segment of the coast is dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists and has been the site of multiple fatalities on the highway within the last 10 years. It also revealed that there is no feasible route for the coastal trail within the highway right-of-way or on adjacent public lands. With POST's acquisition of San Gregorio Ranch, POST creates an opportunity to route the CCT through the property in the future, establishing a safer connection than would have been likely to occur under a new private owner.

The extended closing period for this purchase will provide POST with the time needed to better study the species and habitats of the property and develop both interim and long-term plans for land stewardship and public access. Due to its proximity just north of San Gregorio State Beach, POST will explore the many opportunities for permanent stewardship of San Gregorio Ranch in the years ahead with state and local agencies.

POST is working to raise $14M to fund the purchase and property maintenance necessary to support public access and future property transfer. Those interested in contributing to POST's fundraising efforts on behalf of San Gregorio Ranch can find more information here.

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About the Peninsula Open Space Trust

POST protects open space on the Peninsula and in the South Bay for the benefit of all. As a private nonprofit land trust, POST has been responsible for saving more than 90,000 acres since its founding in 1977. POST works with private landowners and public agencies to create a network of protected lands so that present and future generations may benefit from the careful balance of rural and urban landscapes that makes our region extraordinary. Visit openspacetrust.org for more information.

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