



FACT SHEET

About the Open Space Authority

Who We Are

The Open Space Authority is an independent special district governed by its own elected seven-member board of directors. The public is also represented by a 15-member Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Created by the California Legislature in 1993, the Authority's purpose is to protect sensitive lands, preserve natural communities and manage open space in ways that also promote agriculture and compatible recreation.

The Authority serves Campbell, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Santa Clara and San Jose, and unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County.

Benefit assessments provide most of the Authority's funding. Grants and gifts are additional sources of revenue.

Lands Open to the Public

The Open Space Authority is working to open additional lands to the public. The Authority maintains multi-use trails for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians on Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve west of Morgan Hill and Sierra Vista in the east foothills. The trails are open every day of the year and are free.

Rancho Cañada del Oro offers more than eight miles of trails for exploring the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. A staging area provides paved parking, a restroom, picnic tables and a gravel lot for horse trailers.

There is also a half-mile paved trail, which begins at the parking area and winds through the adjacent meadow.

Wheelchair-adapted picnic tables are situated at several spots along the path.

Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve comprises 1,676 acres and provides vital watershed protection for Penitencia Creek. It is home to the red-legged frog, tiger salamander, golden eagle, mountain lion, bobcat and grey fox. A portion of the trail is a designated segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Urban Open Space

The Authority has invested nearly \$8 million in local communities through its Urban Open Space Program. Funds have been used for urban trails, parks, greenbelt and restoration projects. These urban open spaces extend the many benefits of nature to the doorsteps of city residents.

Resource Protection

The Open Space Authority has conscientiously and selectively preserved over 16,000 acres of critical open lands in Santa Clara County including mountain tops, rolling hills, ranches and farmland.

OSA is responsible for the plants, animals, water and soil resources, and cultural and recreational assets on its lands.

Management goals include:

- Improving biodiversity
- Protecting rare, threatened and endangered species
- Maintaining compatible recreation and agricultural activity

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