



**FAIRFAX OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
TWO-YEAR ANNUAL REPORT for JULY 1, 2013 thru JUNE 30, 2015**

Fairfax Open Space Committee Members

Michael Ardito	Chris Powers
Ray Burgarella	Nancy Rogers
Ruth Horn	Michael Simler
Jack Judkins	Hannah Salaverry (<i>ex officio member</i>)

Acquisitions:

Sky Ranch

Since May 2014, the Marin Open Space Trust (MOST), in collaboration with the Town of Fairfax and the Fairfax and San Anselmo Open Space Committees, raised \$1.2 million in donations and grant funding to purchase the 16-acre property for open space. The property was transferred and is now under the jurisdiction of the Marin County Parks and Open Space. In addition, they raised \$120,000 for site restoration, with the land now being restored to its natural beauty with removal of unsafe building structures and invasive species. With 11 acres in Fairfax and 5 acres in San Anselmo, the property is a gateway to over 100,000 acres of MMWD, GGNRA and Marin County Open Space with hundreds of miles of public trails stretching all the way to the Golden Gate and Point Reyes. The land is adjacent to the Mount Tam watershed and Bald Hill Open Space Preserve and will soon be available for safe recreational activities including hiking and equestrian day use. The privately-owned property served as an equestrian facility for about 50 years.

Upper Ridgeway Property

On September 26, 2013 the Fairfax Open Space Committee (FOSC) completed the acquisition of three open space parcels on Upper Ridgeway in Fairfax, as approved and on behalf of the Town. Two of the parcels, totaling over one-third acre, which are merged, were purchased with \$47,500 in funds that FOSC had secured through fundraising activities and prior FOSC donations. The two parcels contain a now-public trail that leads from the paved street up to the ridge and to the adjoining Hawthorne Canyon Open Space and all the connecting trails along the ridgeline. The two purchased parcels provide permanent public access between the Willow Avenue neighborhood and the open space and ridgeline trails and also provide an important wildlife corridor. As a result of the purchase, a third parcel was donated to the Town by the owner in the same transaction. The donated parcel is immediately adjacent to the Town's Triangle Park, to the north, and increases the acreage of the Triangle Park and provides public access to it from the currently unimproved Upper Ridgeway Avenue right-of-way.

The formal dedication was held on April 26, 2014. Mr. Reid, the former property owner, spoke at the ceremony. Marin County Supervisor Katie Rice, Fairfax Town Councilmembers Larry Bragman and John Reed, the Fairfax Town Manager Garrett Toy, and FOSC Open Space Chair Mimi Newton attended.

Fund-Raising: (primarily for the MOST acquisition and restoration of Sky Ranch)

- 19 Broadway fundraiser for Sky Ranch with Jamie Redford's band, Olive & the Dirty Martinis on July 17, 2014 (over \$2,000 received at the door; nearly \$5,000 in other donations; plus a special \$100,000 donation from the California Wildlife Foundation to the Marin Open Space Trust)
- Annual Give Back Tuesdays at Iron Springs: June 17, 2014 (received \$490); June 16, 2015 (received \$537)
- Special 10th anniversary for both FOSC and Iron Springs at the benefit concert there on Saturday, October 18, 2014 (received \$2,270)
- The Eleven benefit concert on May 4, 2014 (received donations of \$790); on May 3, 2015 (received donations of \$1,093 with \$400 provided to band for expenses – total FOSC income was \$693)
- Town events: annual Fairfax Festival (June 2014 and June 2015); Fairfax Town Picnic (September 2013 and September 2014)
- Treasure Hunt (October 2013 – received \$225)
- 415 Mile Race / Walk (July 21, 2013 – received \$33.13 in February 2015)

Maintenance / Stewardship Projects:

- Jolly Hill annual broom pull (March 28, 2015 and spring 2014)
- Volunteers Park (newly named, restored and dedicated at corner of Frustuck, Cascade and Bolinas property – in honor of Former Mayor & Councilmember Larry Bragman)

Designation of Priority Conservation Areas:

The Town Manager on behalf of FOSC submitted a grant proposal for Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) to ABAG on May 30, 2015. PCAs are envisioned as a means to direct regional funding for acquiring open space and conservation easements. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) initiated the PCA program in 2007 to identify open spaces that provide regional significance, are in urgent need of protection and are supported on the local level. FOSC proposed three PCAs which cover wide areas of open space in and adjacent to Fairfax. The PCAs were subsequently approved by ABAG.

Committee Participation Activities:

- General Plan Implementation Committee (representatives Mimi Newton and Ray Burgarella). GPIC discussions, among other things, included the Affordable Housing Incentives Guidelines (for implementing the state density bonus law).
- Fairfax Tree Committee (FOSC member Jacob Feickert served as the FOSC representative to the monthly Tree Committee from July 2013 thru May 2015.)

FOSC Strategic Plan: (Calendar Year 2015)

Under the Fairfax General Plan, the Fairfax Open Space Committee is tasked with numerous responsibilities for implementing the policies that the Town of Fairfax has undertaken through the adoption of the General Plan in 2011. FOSC is also tasked with conducting other activities related to the preservation and maintenance of open space within the Fairfax Planning Area, in accordance with the Committee's creation in 2004. In an effort

both to focus FOSC's efforts on all aspects of its responsibilities and create realistic goals for the volunteers that comprise the FOSC, the following Strategic Plan was developed for calendar year 2015:

- 1) General Plan. The Town's General Plan includes the following Elements which assign responsibility to FOSC: the Open Space Element, Conservation Element, Housing Element, and Land Use Element. In 2015, FOSC continued the Parcel Inventory for Open Space Objectives (General Plan, Appendix OS-A); worked towards the creation of a complete base inventory, upon which overlays could be placed; worked to include the Assessor's Parcel Number for each open space parcel; and began the process of identifying the Inventory parcels' characteristics.
- 2) Fundraising. Members agreed to create an index of grant opportunities to be used for FOSC's planning and acquisition purposes and activities. Members agreed to focus on one fundraising event per year.
- 3) Annual Stewardship Project. Members agreed to undertake one per year; the 2015 event was the March 28 Jolly Hill broom pull.

FOSC Membership and Structure:

- Chair was Mimi Newton (during reporting period July 2013 thru June 2015)
- New members: Ray Burgarella August 2013; Nancy Morita November 2013
- Ex-officio youth members (November 2013 thru June 2015): Beatrix Berry and Hannah Salaverry
- Resignations: Mia Andler November 2014; Jacob Feickert May 2015

Other: Liaison/Networking/Coordination:

- Bay Area Open Space annual conference participation (Nancy Morita May 2014; Michael Ardito May 2015)
- Regional Road and Trail Management Report: Implementation is underway for Region 2 which includes Loma Alta, White Hill and Cascade Canyon open space preserves.

The above masthead lists Fairfax Open Space Committee members at the time of report approval with revisions submitted on February 24, 2016. Additionally, former members who participated during development of this report between August and December 2015 were Chair Mimi Newton, Treasurer Ted Bright, Secretary Susan Adams, and member Nancy Morita. New FOSC members after the period of this report include Chris Powers and Michael Simler.

This report was respectfully submitted for the Fairfax Town Council meeting of March 2, 2016 by Michael Ardito, FOSC Co-Secretary.