

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** March 30, 2015

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** April 9, 2015

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Sam Herzberg, Senior Planner, AICP

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Designations of Priority Conservation Areas in San Mateo County

**RECOMMENDATION**

Review and recommend to the Board of Supervisors proposed designations of Priority Conservation Areas in San Mateo County.

**BACKGROUND**

The designation of Priority Conservation Areas (PCA; PCA Program) was created through Plan Bay Area, a long range, integrated transportation and land use/housing strategy through 2040 for the San Francisco Bay Area, approved by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Executive Board and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in July 2013. The PCA Program was updated in July 2014 to provide a public process for nominating new PCAs.

PCAs are intended to identify lands of conservation significance that are broadly supported by public and local jurisdictions to be eligible for future PCA Program funding. PCA designations are strictly for grant funding purposes only. PCAs are neither regulatory in nature, nor do they have any effect on land use or zoning designations or future local land use decisions. They are intended to align with and build upon local General Plan strategies for open space conservation to remain consistent with local policies and objectives. This PCA designation process creates a list of regionally significant areas that have the potential for conservation, restoration, agriculture, and/or public access. Specific projects within a designated PCA may be eligible and/or better positioned for future funding. In fact, specific funding sources may favor PCAs.

**DISCUSSION**

Park staff has been working with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) staff on two of their proposals for PCA designation that have a direct County Park impact: 1) Teague Hill and 2) South San Mateo County Coast. Teague Hill is unplanned open space located between Huddart and Wunderlich County Parks. The Huddart/Wunderlich Master Plan recommends collaboration with MROSD when a Master Plan is proposed for Teague Hill and parking lot and trail improvements are considered.

MROSD is also proposing the South San Mateo County Coast be designated a PCA from a regional recreation and agriculture protection standpoint as the Coastal Trail is developed. County Parks' interests in this area include a scenic 14-acre parcel south of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse where the Parks Department recently had fence and bollards installed to prevent off road access, and will be restoring compacted areas from prior vehicle access.

The Coastal Conservancy has requested County support for the California Coastal Trail and San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail PCA designations in San Mateo County. The Coastal Conservancy is soliciting resolutions in support of California Coastal Trail designation from the cities of Half Moon Bay, Pacifica and Daly City. Types of County Park projects that may benefit from this designation include completion of gaps in the California Coastal Trail such as the 1- acre property south of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse, Green Valley Trail, and Point Pedro Headlands in the future. The San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail PCA designation may help with future improvements at the Eastern Coyote Point Promenade and Coyote Point Marina.

The County has worked with San Bruno Mountain Watch to secure resolutions from the cities of Brisbane, Colma, Daly City, and South San Francisco on a PCA proposed within the San Bruno Mountain State and County Park. The cities of Brisbane and South San Francisco are also interested in some additional lands within their jurisdiction being included outside of the State and County Park for habitat and watershed protection purposes as well as to facilitate regional recreational trail (Bay Trail and Ridge Trail) as well as public transit access.

As mentioned in last month's Director's Report to this Commission, the Point Pedro Headlands currently owned by the California Coastal Conservancy and City of Pacifica, are expected to be transferred to San Mateo County Parks in the future. While the County is not the property owner at this time, the agencies owning the property are in agreement that the County should be the applicant to nominate Pedro Point Headlands for a PCA. The City of Pacifica has adopted a resolution supporting PCA designation. A PCA designation would create opportunities for not only California Coastal Trail funding, but also grant funding for restoring prior motorcycle park legacy erosion impacts and vegetation management.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Designating a PCA in itself has no fiscal impact. PCA designations have great importance for this Department as these designations will affect future funding opportunities for land conservation and recreation on the Peninsula. There may be future staff costs applying for any grant funds and could be handled under existing staff funding.

Attachments:

- A. ABAG PCA Frequently Asked Questions
- B. January 29, 2014 MPROSD Letter to County Manager John Maltbie
- C. Map of Existing and Proposed PCAs in San Mateo County



# Priority Conservation Areas

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What types of agencies/organizations are eligible to apply for PCAs?**

Cities, counties and park/open space districts are eligible to apply to ABAG for PCA designation. Federal and state agencies, as well as non-profit organizations, are not eligible to apply, but may work with local jurisdictions or park/open space districts to encourage a PCA application to ABAG.

### **Is a PCA a land use designation? Does it change the local zoning requirements or restrict development rights?**

No. A PCA designation does not in any way change the land use status for a piece of property. The local jurisdiction maintains planning and permitting authority over the property and private property owners maintain their development rights.

### **Can PCAs be designated on private property?**

Yes. Designation of a PCA on private property does not change the local land use designation, zoning or the ability for the property to be developed in the future.

### **Is the PCA designation process also a grant program?**

No. The PCA designation process creates a list of regionally-significant areas that have the potential for conservation, restoration and public access. Specific projects within these designated PCAs may be eligible for future funding.

### **What types of future funding sources would designated PCA's qualify for?**

The One Bay Area PCA Grant Program requires that all projects be located within a designated PCA. Other sources of funding for natural landscapes, agricultural lands, urban greening and regional recreation may or may not use the PCA designation in the set of criteria for grant awards. It is possible that other grant funding sources, such as a potential new state park bond, would also include PCA designation as part of the evaluation criteria.

### **When will the next One Bay Area Grant Program start?**

The first PCA grant program was launched in 2013. A new PCA grant program has not been scheduled yet.

### **If a regional open space district nominates a PCA in a local jurisdiction and it is approved, can the local jurisdiction use this PCA designation for future grant applications?**

Yes.

### **Does modifying an existing PCA boundary require that it go through the designation process as if it was a new PCA?**

The process of identifying designations and community benefits for existing PCAs presents an ideal time to modify PCA boundaries. A two to three sentence request to modify PCA boundaries and a clear description of the proposed boundary modification should be included with the submission identifying the PCA category designation and community benefits selection.

### **What city and county departments should be notified of new or existing PCAs?**

PCA notifications should be sent to county planning administrators and city planning directors.

© 2014 Association of Bay Area Governments

101 Eighth St. Oakland CA 94607

(510) 464-7900

[Contact Us](#)



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

GENERAL MANAGER  
Stephen E. Abbors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Pete Siemens  
Yoriko Kishimoto  
Jed Cyr  
Curt Riffle  
Nonette Hanko  
Larry Hassett  
Cecily Harris

January 29, 2015

County Manager John L. Maltbie  
County of San Mateo  
400 County Center  
Redwood City, CA 94063

SUBJECT: Proposed Priority Conservation Area within San Mateo County

Dear County Manager Maltbie:

In July 2013, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Executive Board and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) approved Plan Bay Area, a long-range, integrated transportation and land-use/housing strategy through 2040 for the San Francisco Bay Area. Plan Bay Area includes the designation of Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) to balance housing and transportation demands with the need to preserve the region's diverse farming, recreational, scenic, and natural resource lands and their many ecological values and ecosystem functions for future generations.

PCAs are intended to identify lands of conservation significance that are broadly supported by the public and local jurisdictions to be eligible for future PCA Program funding and potentially other conservation-based funding. PCA designations are strictly for grant funding purposes only, to identify lands of key open space importance that merit grant funding. PCAs are neither regulatory in nature, nor do they have any effect on local land use or zoning designations or future local land use decisions. They are, however, intended to align with and build upon local General Plan strategies for open space conservation to remain consistent with local policies and objectives.

PCAs are of high importance to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen), as these designations will affect future funding opportunities for land conservation and recreation on the Peninsula. Midpen is reaching out to the County of San Mateo at this time to notify you of the proposed new PCA designation that is being considered within your jurisdiction, for which Midpen has already initiated conversations with staff from the County Planning Department and County Parks and Recreation Department (see Attachment 1 for PCA Map and Attachment 2 for PCA description). Over the next three (3) months, Midpen will continue to work alongside County Planning and County Parks and Recreation Department to further develop and refine these PCAs to ensure that the PCAs are aligned with the County's conservation strategies. Midpen anticipates submitting an application to ABAG by the May 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for PCA nominations.

If you have questions about the PCA Program and Midpen's proposed PCAs within San Mateo County, please do not hesitate in contacting me at (650) 691-1200 or via email at [SAbbors@openspace.org](mailto:SAbbors@openspace.org).

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen E. Abbors for SEA". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stephen E. Abbors  
General Manager

Attachments: Map of proposed PCAs within San Mateo County  
Table of PCA Designations

CC (email): Joanna Bullock, Association of Bay Area Governments  
Steve Monowitz, Planning Director, County of San Mateo  
Marlene Finley, Parks and Recreation Director, County of San Mateo

ATTACHMENT

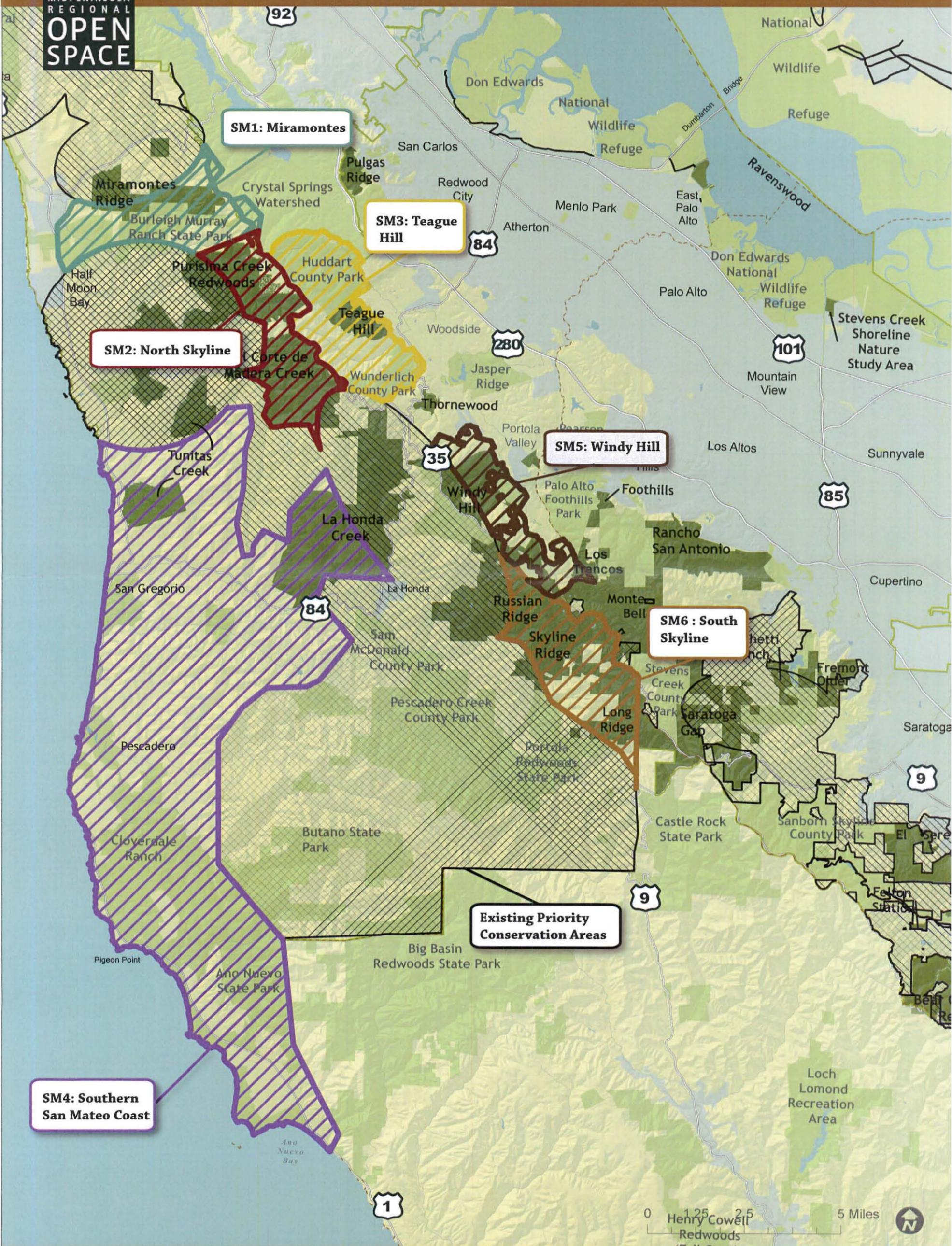
Proposed PCAs within San Mateo County

Map Key	Open Space Preserves	Affected Jurisdictions	Midpen Open Space Vision Plan Priority Areas	Proposed Designations
SM1	Miramontes Ridge	County of San Mateo	1, 27 & 28	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes, Agricultural Lands
SM2*	North Skyline	Menlo Park and East Palo Alto	2 & 38	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes, Urban Greening
SM3	Teague Hill	Woodside	34	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes
SM4	Tunitas Creek	County of San Mateo	3, 4 & 33	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes
SM5	Windy Hill	County of San Mateo	7, 13, 14, 32, 39, 42, 43, 44 & 48	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes, Agricultural Lands
SM6	Russian Ridge, Skyline Ridge, and Long Ridge	County of San Mateo	15, 16, & 46	Regional Recreation, Natural Landscapes, Agricultural Lands

\* The City of Menlo Park is the lead nominating agency for this PCA and will be sending a separate notification letter.

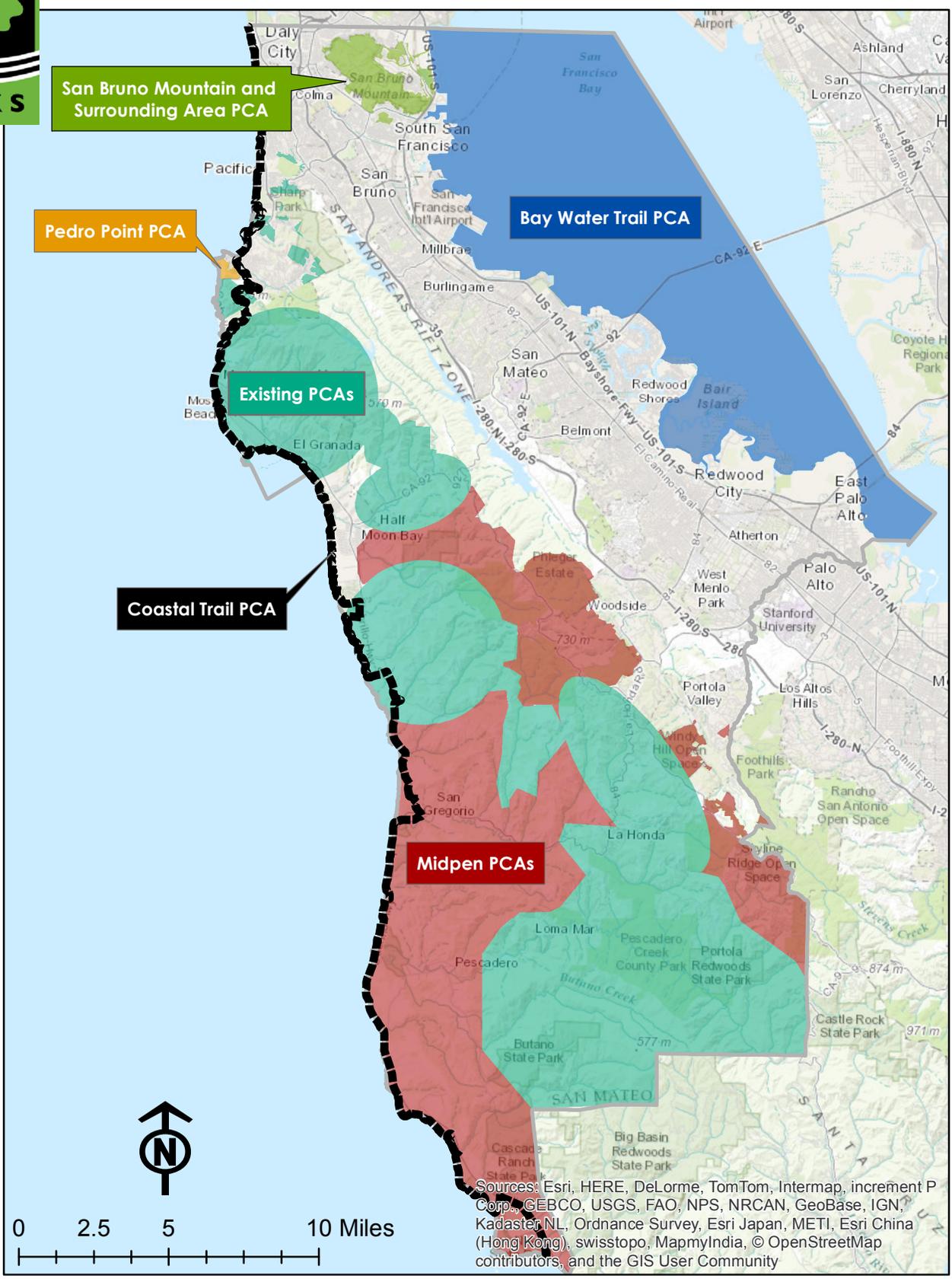


# Proposed Priority Conservation Areas San Mateo County





# Proposed and Existing Priority Conservation Areas



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

## Legend

- Existing Priority Conservation Areas
- Pedro Point PCA
- County Boundary
- San Bruno Mountain and Surrounding Areas PCA
- Bay Water Trail PCA
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District PCAs
- Coastal Trail PCA