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Martha Property Acquisition

Tiburon Ridge, San Francisco Bay

The 110-acre Martha Property near the tip of the Tiburon Peninsula offers priceless panoramic views of the San Francisco Bay Area; well-established social trails; native habitats that support five special status species; and climate change resilience. The community--including Tiburon Open Space Committee--has been working to protect the property for more than 50 years. The Trust for Public Land has a purchase option agreement and a bond measure was recently passed (with nearly 80% support) to help fund the acquisition. Once protected by TPL, ownership will be transferred to Marin County Open Space District for management as a public open space preserve.

Critical Habitat

The Martha property has 11 acres of serpentine prairie, 47 acres of oak woodland and one acre of wetland, all of which are rare and/or high value plant communities. The property is rich in biodiversity and supports five special status species. These include the Marin dwarf flax, a federally threatened (FT) plant with fewer than two dozen extant populations, and serpentine reed grass, a CNPS4 rare species. And the property provides habitat for special status animals such as the California red-legged frog (FT and SSC) and peregrine falcon (state endangered). The entire property is mapped by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as providing suitable habitat for red-legged frog, with a significant area mapped as having high-value suitable habitat.

A long sought conservation priority



The 110-acre Martha Property is one of three undeveloped properties near the tip of the Tiburon Peninsula that have priceless views of the San Francisco Bay. These properties support native habitats and sensitive species and are traversed by readily accessible trails. Two of these properties are already owned by Marin County Parks and Open Space District (MCOSD): the 122-acre Old St. Hilary's Preserve and the 24-acre Tiburon Uplands. These popular preserves border the Martha Property to the north and west. Together, the three properties will create 256 acres of contiguous, protected open space.

The Tiburon Ridge runs down the middle of the Tiburon Peninsula and reaches its highest elevation on the Martha Property. This elevated location, less than a half-mile from the bay, provides irreplaceable 360-degree views encompassing nine Bay Area counties. The property includes native grasslands at its upper elevations and then slopes down toward the water, with dense coast live oak woodlands and wetland areas covering the slopes.

Community members and conservationists have been working to protect the site for more than 50 years. In June 2022, Marin County entered into an agreement to acquire the property from The Trust for Public Land (TPL), once protected. In November 2022, Tiburon and Belvedere voters approved a parcel tax measure - Measure M - to help fund the property's acquisition.

A path forward

The acquisition of the Martha Property will cost \$42.1 million. Thanks to the success of Measure M and donations and pledges from Marin County, the City of Tiburon, and community members, over \$32 million has already been secured for the property. TPL is now focused on raising \$10 million in additional public and private funding to complete the acquisition. TPL has over 50 years of experience working with state agency partners and private foundations to protect land in California.

While our progress to date has been significant, private donations will be critical to closing the funding gap. To that end, TPL is working closely with the Tiburon Open Space Committee to raise an additional \$1-\$1.5 million from individual donors to ensure permanent protection of the Martha Property.

Once funding is secured and the property is acquired, TPL will transfer the Martha Property to Marin County Open Space District to own and steward as public open space. Local partners envision a preserve that enhances recreational and wildlife corridors, completes trail connections, and expands foraging and habitat opportunities for the red-legged frog, peregrine falcon, long-eared owl, gray fox, bobcat, and many other species.



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Contact Information

Nicole Brown
California Director of Philanthropy
208.720.7188
nicole.brown@tpl.org

Photos: Jocelyn Knight