



NEWS RELEASE

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MARIN COUNTY
PARKS
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Marin County Parks and Local Partners Celebrate Expansion of the Gary Giacomini Open Space Preserve *Vital habitat protected and restoration planned for the future*

San Rafael, CA – At 10:00 a.m. on October 5, 2012, Marin County Parks and partners Marin Open Space Trust, the San Geronimo Valley Planning Group and the San Geronimo Valley Land Trust invite the public to celebrate the acquisition of the Manzanita Fire Road property in the San Geronimo Valley. The acquisition represents many years of hard work by both the department and its public and private partners. It is the largest addition to Marin's open space in almost a decade. "What excites me most is how many people and organizations stepped forward to secure this last jewel in the crown of our largest Open Space Preserve. What a royal achievement," said Steve Kinsey, president of the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

The \$650,000 purchase was funded by a grant of \$450,000 from the California State Coastal Conservancy, a \$100,000 contribution by Marin County Parks, and the balance of \$100,000 provided, in record time, by community and local organizations. "We are proud of this successful public-private partnership that will allow us to better connect visitors to our incredible open space in the San Geronimo Valley. The property provides a key access point to the Gary Giacomini Preserve and protects special status species including the northern spotted owl, two endangered Manzanita species, and coho salmon, for future generations," said Linda Dahl, Director and General Manager of Marin County Parks. "This transaction ensures that the trail through this property to the beloved Spiral Circle is preserved in perpetuity" added Jean Berensmeier, Chairperson of the San Geronimo Valley Planning Group.

The Manzanita Fire Road parcel is comprised of 22 acres of undeveloped forest and chaparral habitat in San Geronimo and Forest Knolls. It had been the subject of multiple development proposals dating back to the early 20th century and was included as part of the proposed Skye Ranch subdivision in the 1980's. In 1995, the Open Space District purchased most of the Skye Ranch property creating the 1,478-acre Gary Giacomini Open Space Preserve. However, the developer retained the Manzanita Fire Road parcel, with the potential for construction of up to three new homes.

For more information about the event, or to RSVP, please contact Katherine Mindel Jones at kmjones@marincounty.org.

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