



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 520, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2100 FAX: (831) 454-3420

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Robin Musitelli
831-454-2200

AGREEMENT REACHED ON BEAR CREEK PROPERTY

The Boulder Creek Recreation and Park District (BCRPD), the Patterson family and the County of Santa Cruz are pleased to announce an agreement to purchase and increase public access at the Bear Creek Country Club.

A beloved jewel to generations of San Lorenzo Valley residents, the Bear Creek Country Club spans seven acres about two miles west of downtown Boulder Creek. Until recently, it was operated by George Patterson and Mary Beth Patterson as a private county club, with tennis courts, a swimming pool, clubhouse, fitness room, hiking trails and picnic areas.

George Patterson passed away in 2015. When Mary Beth Patterson offered the property for sale, the BCRPD and local residents recognized an opportunity to provide needed swimming and recreational opportunities in the northern San Lorenzo Valley. The County and Land Trust of Santa Cruz County were brought in to help facilitate the \$1.2 million purchase.

“This agreement allows us to provide tremendous recreational facilities for the people of San Lorenzo Valley and the entire County,” Board of Supervisors Chair Bruce McPherson said. “We expect that this facility will become an even bigger part of the community, and be appreciated by future generations of local residents.”

“We really wanted to give our community access to this once-in-a-generation opportunity,” said George Galt, chair of the BCRPD board of directors. “Our partnership with the County and the Land Trust is a truly creative solution which will allow us to make the most of this unique facility for years to come.”



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Bounded by Bear Creek, the property includes beautiful old- and second-growth redwood trees. It has a junior-sized Olympic pool, tennis courts, a volleyball and basketball court, weight room and locker rooms and several structures that support indoor activities and public gatherings.

“This is such an exciting opportunity for not only San Lorenzo Valley residents, but the rest of the County as well. It is not often that you get to be part of such a great legacy project,” Parks Director Jeff Gaffney said. “The County has been fortunate to be involved in this amazing collaboration, including working with the Boulder Creek board and staff.”

The deal allows a cooperative property use agreement between the County and BCRPD, and includes a \$450,000 County contribution. The proposal will go before the Board of Supervisors for consideration on Nov. 15. The BCRPD board unanimously authorized the agreement on Nov. 7.

As a result of the County’s participation, residents beyond BCRPD boundaries will have access to facilities and programs, some of which will be offered on a fee basis. In exchange, Boulder Creek residents would see reduced costs for countywide programs and facilities.

The County financial contribution was made possible by state “unfunded mandate” reimbursements, which McPherson worked to have returned to counties. Those efforts resulted in a one-time payment to Santa Cruz County of more than \$5 million, a portion of which was dedicated to parks.

The BCRPD provides recreational opportunities in the greater Boulder Creek area of the San Lorenzo Valley. The District currently owns and operates the Boulder Creek Recreation Hall and three parks: Barbara Day Park (The Dam), Junction Park and Garrahan Park.