



Welcome to your Reimagine San Geronimo Update!

Balancing Public Access and Public Health

First and foremost, we hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones in robust health and good spirits during this challenging time. We know that the San Geronimo property is a source of physical and mental wellbeing for many of you, and we are grateful to be able to provide this resource to the community. Please help us be good neighbors by using the land responsibly.

In the short term, that includes following the guidelines set forth in the [public health orders](#) issued by Marin County to slow the transmission of COVID-19. As most of you know, in addition to the [stay-at-home order](#) currently in place, Marin County has [restricted](#) motorized access to public parks and open spaces – and prohibited parking near these areas – to encourage residents to stay close to home. Accordingly, we have closed the parking lot, and posted signage at trailheads and throughout the property to remind visitors of the temporary restrictions and social distancing guidelines in place.



We all know the important guidelines by now – maintain six-feet of physical distance between yourself and those outside your household, wash your hands before and after your visits to the property, bring hand sanitizer with you, and of course, stay home if you are feeling sick or have COVID-19 symptoms. As always, keep your dogs on leashes and on pathways when using the property to minimize waste and to protect sensitive habitats. We appreciate your efforts to remove dog waste and avoid leaving litter behind.

Please know that we are in communication with public agency partners and neighbors regarding concerns we are hearing about parking on the public roads adjacent to the property. Parking on roads adjacent to parks and open space areas is prohibited by the County of Marin to ensure public health and safety. The Sheriff's Office is the lead on this, and violators are subject to steep fines. Walking, jogging, hiking, or bicycling in parks and on trails is permitted, under limitations including the physical distancing and face covering protocols outlined in Section 7 of the [Facial Covering Health Order](#).

We encourage you to stay abreast of Marin County [public health orders](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) - and we thank you for taking such good care of the land and of one another during this time!



Making Space for the Fire Department

You may have noticed the former clubhouse buzzing recently with activity. The Trust for Public Land is honored to provide use of the building to the Marin County Fire Department for administrative and emergency response meetings during the pandemic. The Department needed room for staff to spread out and socially distance while at work, and we had the space to offer! While the main parking lot is currently closed to the public, the Fire Department has access to the lot. Permission to use the lot has also been provided to community garden members when tending the garden, as food gathering is considered an essential activity under the public health orders. We hope that you are as reassured as we are by the Fire Department's presence on the property and in the community!

Newsletter continues below!



Photo courtesy of the Marin County Fire Department

Welcoming New Team Member, Christy Fischer

Another exciting development for the [Reimagine San Geronimo team](#) is the arrival of Christy Fischer, The Trust for Public Land's new Bay Area and Central Coast Conservation Director. A Marin County native with three decades of conservation work under her belt, Christy brings tremendous integrity and experience to her new role. Prior to joining The Trust for Public Land, Christy served as the Executive Director of the [Santa Lucia Conservancy](#) for nine years, where she managed 20,000 acres of natural lands in the Carmel Valley and implemented bold, science-based programs focused on habitat restoration, wildfire and climate resiliency, and community stewardship. In 2016, the Santa Lucia Conservancy partnered with The Trust for Public Land to purchase and restore the former [Rancho Canada](#) golf course in Monterey County, now a public park. Christy is excited to roll up her sleeves, and will be working closely with Project Manager (and fellow Marin County native) Erica Williams and the entire San Geronimo team.



Envisioning the Future of the Property

Last year, The Trust for Public Land launched a community engagement process to identify the best ways to protect, connect, and restore the San Geronimo property now and in the future. Over the past twelve months, we have received hundreds of emails through our [Reimagine San Geronimo website](#), and held numerous events, including one-on-one and group stakeholder meetings; listening sessions; stakeholder site tours; a public open house; and an interactive Visioning Workshop for over 70 participants representing a diverse array of interests and perspectives. The team is now analyzing that feedback, and incorporating it where appropriate into a Vision Document to be released in July 2020. Restoration planning, currently underway by The Trust for Public Land's restoration partner, Trout Unlimited, will underpin the Vision Document.

At the interactive Visioning Workshop held in January 2020, the team introduced the community to the key site planning frameworks that have emerged from the visioning process. These reflect The Trust for Public Land's [mission](#), values, and conservation commitments; the community's values; and the property's real-world opportunities and constraints. Guided by these frameworks, the Vision Plan will set forth suitable conservation and community uses for the property, and serve as a guide for future owners and managers of the land.

Site Planning Frameworks

- **Restoration and Ecological Management:** Prioritize restoration activities that enhance the region's biodiversity and climate resiliency, and maximize the opportunity to restore the Bay Area's last great salmon run in the greater Lagunitas Creek watershed.
- **Recreation:** Continue to provide and expand upon passive recreational opportunities on the property, while supporting the health of its ecological resources.
- **Access & Connectivity:** Ensure safe access for all and better connectivity to adjacent public lands through a regional trail network.
- **Community:** Support opportunities to create a social and community hub and related amenities on the property.
- **Fire Safety:** Support fire-safety for the Valley by making space for a new fire station and ensuring that the uses of the property are consistent with fire safety management.
- **Partnerships and Funding:** Create a vision that is financially feasible, creates opportunities for strategic partnerships, and furthers conservation, land stewardship, and public access objectives.

The visioning process has revealed several areas in particular where there is broad community support. These include: habitat restoration and protection of endangered coho salmon; relocation of Marin County fire facilities to the property; public access and multi-use recreational trails; regenerative land management practices and community stewardship opportunities; community-serving amenities; public art; and recognition of the property's history, including its indigenous history. These themes will be considered and incorporated into the Vision Document where appropriate and feasible. You will be hearing more from us as this visioning effort proceeds!



Supporting Fisheries Restoration Work

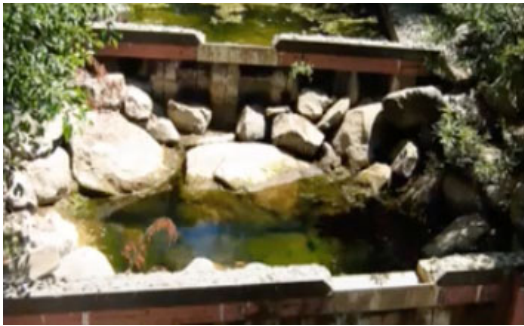
Initiated in 2012 with the support of the Lee Family, the prior owners of the San Geronimo property, SPAWN's Roy's Pools restoration project has received permits and is moving forward this summer! The pools were built on the property in 1999 to replace Roy's Dam, which was impairing the ability of spawning coho salmon and steelhead to migrate from the ocean up Lagunitas Creek to San Geronimo Creek. Unfortunately, while helping adult salmon, the pools ultimately created poor habitat conditions for young coho salmon and steelhead trout, and limited juvenile fish migration downstream.

The SPAWN project will resolve these issues by removing all man-made structures, creating valuable corridors for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife movement, providing critical off-channel floodplain habitat for young salmon, and greatly increasing the number of trees and plants available for nesting birds and other ecosystem species. The project has been designed to protect the extraordinary heritage oaks along the creek, and to create a richer, more biodiverse riparian corridor. It will replace the failing pedestrian bridge over San Geronimo Creek – linking trails and providing fish viewing opportunities – and improve downstream conditions by creating a wider, gentler, and more stable creek channel.

The Lagunitas Creek Watershed is one of the most important habitats in the state for

endangered California Coastal Coho Salmon, and this project is considered a top priority by both federal and state agencies. A collaborative effort between SPAWN, NOAA, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and others to remove the highest priority fish passage obstacle in central California, the project will serve as an important foundation for future restoration work on the property.

If you would like to learn more, please check out SPAWN's recent webinar at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Efl8HAsTO0c> or contact Project Manager Preston Brown, SPAWN's Director of Watershed Conservation at preston@tirn.net. For opportunities to tour the restoration area or volunteer on the project, please visit <https://seaturtles.org/take-action/volunteer/>.



Thanking the Community

Finally, we want to take a moment to acknowledge all of you who have participated in the visioning process and/or communicated with us about the San Geronimo property over the last year. We are deeply grateful to the residents, neighbors, conservationists, recreationists, community leaders, educators, artists, parents, and many others who have provided constructive feedback about the property. We know that you treasure this special place, and we thank you.

In these challenging and uncertain times, public parks and open space areas are a lifeline and a salve. Great parks make stronger and more resilient communities - parks are associated with reductions in stress and depression as well as improved physical health. They serve people of all ages and backgrounds, and they [bring friends and families together](#). We work hard every day to ensure that every community has access to parks and to the countless benefits they provide! **Until next time, enjoy, be safe, and be well!**



Visit Our Website to Learn More

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