

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Historic Acquisition: Save Mount Diablo acquires its first Conservation Easement ever and protects fourth Curry Canyon property

Wednesday, October 12, 2016 was a historic day for Save Mount Diablo as we successfully sold our 5-acre Rideau property at 1650 Curry Canyon Road, Clayton to private buyers, Joseph Favalora and Jane McGuire, as part of our newly expanded Conservation Buyer Program - and with this transaction we acquired our first perpetual Conservation Easement on the same land.

The parcel's preservation has been a three year process, and expands preservation of 4.3 mile Curry Canyon and beautiful Curry Creek to almost 85%. The Rideau property's oak woodland and riparian habitat along Curry Creek will be protected and strategic trail connections retained to other Save Mount Diablo Curry Canyon properties.

The transaction purchase price also allowed Save Mount Diablo to help pay off remaining debt on our historic Curry Canyon Ranch acquisition. This transaction has also reduced Save Mount Diablo's liability and expense from ownership of the Rideau property while gaining a new partner --the buyers-- in the stewardship and management of that land going forward.

The Conservation Easement that Save Mount Diablo acquired on the Rideau parcel upon the sale of the land to Joseph Favalora and Jane McGuire protected the property's conservation values while also providing the buyers a one-acre building envelope around an existing house where they now live.

Ted Clement, Save Mount Diablo Executive Director, said "We welcome Joe and Jane to our team of terrific people who are helping us protect and steward the important open space lands of the Mount Diablo area. Our newly expanded Conservation Buyer Program is bringing in more people and resources to help us with our time-sensitive land conservation work while also providing a new tool, the perpetual Conservation Easement, to use where appropriate."

"We've searched, for the past year, for a home in the average neighborhoods that a first time homebuyer would look. Nothing caught our attention until we encountered the outstanding beauty of this Curry Canyon property," said Joe.

Jane added, "We knew at first sight that Curry Canyon is where we wanted to call home. Waking up to the green hills, the trees and the many families of deer we share the property with is all we've ever dreamed. We couldn't be more happy."

Curry Canyon is the largest remaining unprotected canyon on Diablo's main peaks, between the Diablo summit and the Blackhills—4.3 miles from Curry Point within Mt. Diablo State Park, northeast down to Morgan Territory Road. The top of the canyon was among the first state park acquisitions in the 1930s. Upper Curry Canyon was acquired in 1965 and 1987.

Save Mount Diablo has now protected approximately 1200 acres in lower Curry Canyon starting with the Wright property in 2001. Nearly 85% of the 4.3 mile canyon has now been protected.

The Rideau conservation easement was a new strategy for SMD and its Conservation Buyer Program. As we have done for many years, we sell strategic land to governmental partners to become part of a public park system and we then utilize the revenue to further our land conservation mission.

Now, in addition to our traditional approach, we also sell some lands to private buyers subject to permanent Conservation Easements, which we will hold, and then utilize the revenue to advance our work. This method allows us to protect properties with important conservation values (wildlife habitat, water resources, scenic vistas, agricultural resources, etc.) that may not be well suited additions to a government park because of their size, location or other factors.

A Conservation Easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified organization, such as a land trust like Save Mount Diablo, which restricts activities on the land to protect its conservation values forever.

Save Mount Diablo is a nationally accredited, non-profit land trust founded in 1971 with a mission to preserve Mount Diablo's peaks, surrounding foothills, and watersheds through land acquisition and preservation strategies designed to protect the mountain's natural beauty, biological diversity, and historic and agricultural heritage; enhance our area's quality of life; and provide recreational opportunities consistent with the protection of natural resources. The organization is currently involved with its important year-end appeal to raise critical resources for its time-sensitive land conservation mission. To learn more and support Save Mount Diablo please visit www.savemountdiablo.org

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High Resolution Images and Press Release Files

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2d3hl6817mjnx8i/AAA39_87tiydbKwXyj9Xm2SMa?dl=0

Image Captions & Credits:

Rideau (sa)_20100726_077.JPG – “Mount Diablo rises just to the west of the property.” *Credit: Seth Adams*

Rideau (sa)_20100726_093.JPG – “A portion of Curry Creek runs along the property, providing rare riparian habitat for wildlife.” *Credit: Seth Adams*

Rideau Closing - 1st Conservation Easement Signed (mhendricks).JPG – “Ted Clement, Executive Director of Save Mount Diablo, signs the Rideau Conservation Easement in a historic acquisition moment for Save Mount Diablo. He is accompanied by Linda Moore from Old Republic Title Company, who oversaw the closing.” *Credit: Meredith Hendricks*

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