



Rancho San Antonio

60 seconds

Rancho San Antonio consists of 3,988 acres of Open Space Preserve as well as a 165-acre County Park. The preserve is made up of about 24 miles of trails with varying difficulties allowing the opportunity for many different recreational activities. The preserve is also home to an extensive range of wildlife such as bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions, Northern Checkerspot butterflies, California red-legged frogs, wild turkeys, and more. Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve is significant as it protects the West Fork Permanente Creek watershed. The areas of riparian corridor along this creek are essential for local wildlife passing through.

Rancho San Antonio overlooks the unsightly Lehigh Southwest Cement Factory. This is significant because, thanks to the perseverance of your Loma Prieta Chapter, the Lehigh Southwest Cement Factory has been cited and is now being held accountable for contaminating the Permanente Creek with toxic discharges of selenium and other metals from the cement making processes. The company reached a settlement in which they will spend \$5 million constructing and implementing a wastewater treatment facility to properly treat the plant's toxic discharge. The actions of the Lehigh Southwest Cement Company were found to be violating the Clean Water Act as well as many of their permits.

Stopping the Lehigh Southwest Cement Company from further polluting Permanente Creek, and in turn the San Francisco Bay, is a huge win for the environment as now local ecosystems will no longer face the threats of this plant's harmful pollution. The high concentrations of selenium in the Permanente Creek were toxic to fish, birds, and other animals using the creek as a means of survival. The construction of the wastewater treatment plant will aid in the process of restoring the Permanente Creek back to a more wildlife friendly location.

Rancho San Antonio borders the Hidden Villa Ranch, the site where your Loma Prieta Chapter was founded back in 1933.

Support the Loma Prieta Chapter activism educating the public and elected officials about the importance of protecting Rancho San Antonio and the Permanente Creek. Become a member, donate to our conservation programs, and help one of our conservation teams described on our website.

Additional 180 seconds

Value as Wildlife Linkage

Rancho San Antonio is an Open Space Preserve that provides habitat for many different species and serves as a stop for a wide variation of migrating wildlife. Open

Space Preserve has announced mountain lion sightings and believe a couple reside in or around the preserve. Similarly, endangered species such as the Northern Checkerspot butterfly or the California red-legged frog rely on the preserve for protection.

Threats

In December of 2011, the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club filed a lawsuit against the Lehigh Southwest Cement Company citing that the factory was contaminating the Permanente Creek with toxic discharge without a legitimate permit to do so. After about two years, the lawsuit was scheduled for federal court, however, the two parties were able to reach a settlement. The Lehigh Southwest Cement Company will significantly diminish the amounts of selenium released from the factory as well as other toxic pollutants over the course of the next two and a half years. Additionally, they will restore about 3.5 miles of Permanente Creek which has been affected by the years of pollution from the plant. Stopping the Lehigh Southwest Cement Company from further degrading Permanente Creek would not have been possible without the persistence of your Loma Prieta Chapter and the support from our members.

Additional Resources

<https://www.openspace.org/preserves/rancho-san-antonio>

<https://www.epa.gov/pacific-southwest-media-center/epa-justice-department-and-state-california-require-lehigh-cement-cut>

https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/map_RSA.pdf

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2013/05/02/lehigh-cement-sierra-club-reach-settlement-on-permanente-creek-suit/>