



September 7, 2018

William Keene, General Manager
Sonoma County Ag + Open Space
747 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Re: Helen Putnam Regional Park Extension Matching Grant

Dear Mr. Keene,

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council enthusiastically supports Earth Island Institute's application for a matching grant to purchase property that would extend Helen Putnam Park to D Street in Petaluma.

As you know, the Bay Area Ridge Trail mission is to create a long-distance hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trail on the ridgelines around San Francisco Bay linking communities, people, parks and open spaces for today and future generations. 375 miles are connected so far, and we're working to connect the entire 550-mile loop, creating opportunities for both close-to-home outings in nearby nature, and epic multi-day trail adventures.

This purchase would help close a gap in the Ridge Trail between a beautiful dedicated trail in Helen Putnam Park and completed trail in McNear Park connecting to downtown.

In addition to completing a key section of Ridge Trail, the Kelly Creek Protection Project offers a multitude of benefits including preservation and protection of important habitat and open space, enhanced connectivity for Petaluma residents to nearby parks, and opportunities for environmental education and nature study.

The community has demonstrated strong support for the goals of this project over many years, including raising over \$3 million toward purchase of the land. On behalf of the Ridge Trail Council, we ask for your support for this acquisition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet McBride".

Janet McBride
Executive Director

CC: Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator, Sonoma County Ag + Open Space