



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

December 3, 2014

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager ^{GT}

SUBJECT: Approve transfer of funds from the Fairfax Open Space Committee to the Marin Open Space Trust for the purchase of Sky Ranch

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Town Manager to do everything necessary and appropriate to transfer funds from the Fairfax Open Space Committee to the Marin Open Space Trust for the purchase of Sky Ranch.

DISCUSSION

The Fairfax Open Space Committee (FOSC) has been working with the County of Marin, San Anselmo Open Space Committee, and the Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) to fundraise for the acquisition of the Sky Ranch property (see attached MOST webpage). The Town's General Plan identified Sky Ranch as a property to acquire for open space purposes.

In May 2014, the Town Council allocated \$50,000 in Measure A park funds for the acquisition of Sky Ranch. FOSC indicates all of the groups were successful in raising the funds necessary to acquire the property. Since May 2014, FOSC has received approximately \$14,600 in donations for Sky Ranch (Note: staff will need to confirm with an anonymous donor if his/her contribution can be used for Sky Ranch).

Staff will be contacting MOST to discuss the transfer details. We anticipate that we will need to prepare and/or sign documents such as escrow instructions in order to effectuate the transaction. Our understanding is that transaction is slated to close in January 2015.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The funds to be transferred to MOST include the \$50,000 in Measure A funds allocated to the FY14-15 FOSC budget, as well as any funds donated to FOSC for the Sky Ranch acquisition.

ATTACHMENTS

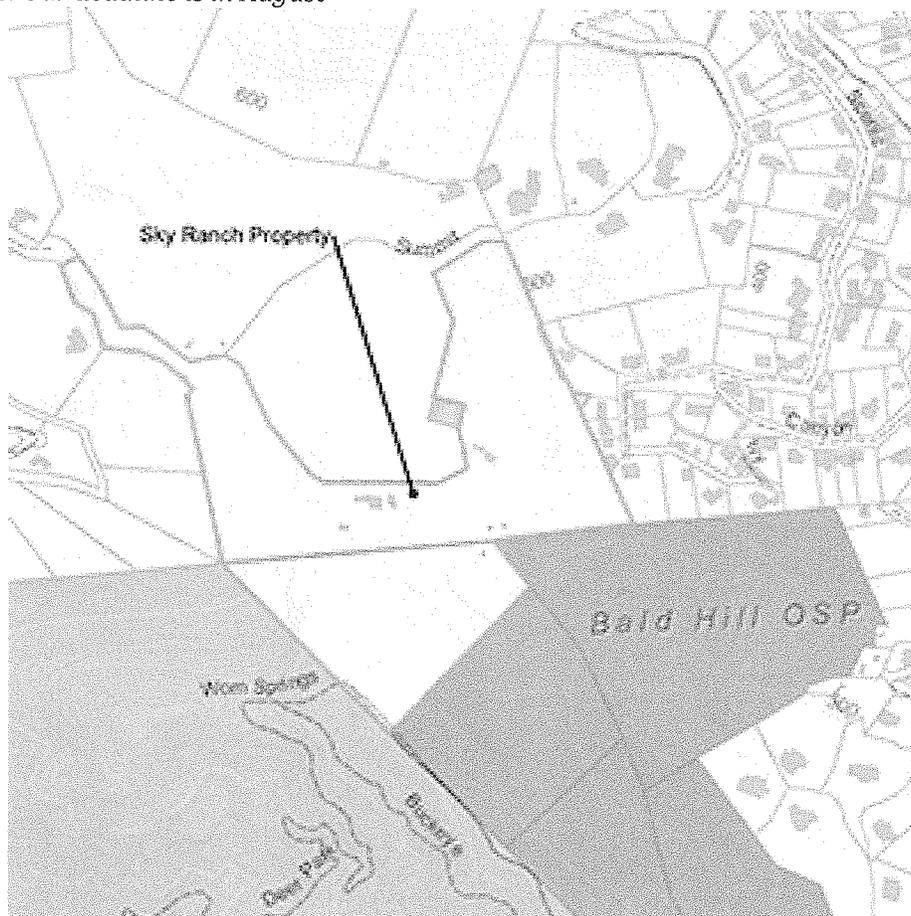
MOST website excerpt on the Sky Ranch

From the MOST website

Preserve this 16-acre property for public open space

Residents of *Marin County* have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to preserve a strikingly beautiful 16-acre property for public open space. This parcel, known as **Sky Ranch**, is **pivotal to connecting existing open space on the Mt. Tam watershed and Bald Hill area to our community, and preserving it for future generations.** The property is located in both San Anselmo and Fairfax, and would be readily accessible to hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. Current zoning allows for residential development of the whole property. The only way to ensure access for recreation, protect the ridge top and secure wildlife habitat is to purchase the land for open space.

Time is of the essence: Our deadline is in August



Area Map: [Select to view full image](#)

Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) has a contract to purchase Sky Ranch for a very limited time before the property goes back on the market. MOST, along with Fairfax and San Anselmo, has launched a major fundraising campaign to save Sky Ranch for public open space in perpetuity. The purchase price is \$1.2 million. Time is short; we must secure the funding by mid August 2014. Sky Ranch will be a gateway to over 100,000 acres of MMWD, GGNRA and Marin County Open Space and hundreds of miles of public trails stretching all the way to the Golden Gate and Point Reyes. The addition of the Sky Ranch as open space has been a long-anticipated goal, and has been in the Town of San Anselmo's General Plan since the 1980's. When the purchase is completed it will expand Marin County Parks adjoining 30-acre Bald Hill Preserve to 46 acres. Long used as a horse ranch, the property would undergo extensive restoration. Wildlife including deer, bobcats, coyotes, rabbits, songbirds and raptors will benefit from protected habitat and our community will gain a parcel with striking views into the Ross Valley, and San Francisco Bay. In addition, the restoration activities would improve water quality in the Corte Madera Creek watershed, which supports steelhead trout, a state and federally listed threatened species. Preservation of this parcel is far from guaranteed. The opportunity to purchase it is fleeting. Although many public and private organizations including the towns of Fairfax and San Anselmo have already come together to support this unique project, we are a long way from attaining the funds needed to secure the purchase. Please consider a donation to save Sky Ranch. Go to: marinopenspacetrust.org.