

Property Will Provide Trail Links, Habitat

By The Independent ~ 11/5/2009

The final piece of funding fell into place last week that will allow completion of the purchase of the Bobba Property in Livermore. The land has value both as habitat and for trail connections.

The Tri-Valley Conservancy (TVC) is purchasing the 74 acre parcel adjacent to Sycamore Grove Park. The Conservancy used \$300,000 of its own money. The remainder of the \$1.5 million pricetag came from a variety of resources.

The Altamont Open Space Committee, last week, provided the final \$300,000. The committee members will now go back to their governing bodies, the Livermore City Council, Alameda County Board of Supervisors, and the Sierra Club, for the final go-ahead to spend the money.

Laura Mercier, associate director of the TVC, was pleased with the participation of outside groups, which allowed TVC to use less of its own money. The Coastal Conservancy provided \$600,000. The East Bay Regional Park District and Livermore Area Recreation and Park District, \$150,000 each.

“This is a project people will be able to put their feet on. We will be able to create trail loops for people,” she stated. TVC will hold a permanent open space easement over the property. Title of the land will be turned over to LARPD. Prior to the transfer, a resource management plan will be developed.

The acquisition will provide linkage to public access trails in parks that surround the property: Del Valle State Park, Sycamore Grove Regional Park, Camp Arroyo, and Veteran’s Park. The trails include the Ohlone Wilderness Trail, Heron Bay Trail, Sycamore Grove Trail, and the Shadow Cliffs to Del Valle Regional Trail. It is expected that trails will eventually connect the Ohlone Wilderness to the Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area in South Pleasanton, connecting with the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

This land has been used for grazing and will remain available for grazing until 2018.

The upper portion of the property is open grassland—mostly non-native annual grasses—and some eucalyptus. The property’s low-lying acreage includes grasslands, oak woodlands, and a riparian area along a seasonal creek fringed by oaks, buckeyes, and willows that provide habitat for raptors.

A biological survey, conducted by Karen Swaim of Swaim Biological Incorporated, noted, “Preservation of the Bobba property is a valuable conservation action for target species discussed in this report. (They include the Alameda Whipsnake, Red Legged Frog, California Tiger Salamander and Western Pond Turtle.)

“In addition to providing habitat for listed and special status species, the site preserves a valuable stretch of riparian corridor along Arroyo Del Valle. Well developed riparian corridors provide a valuable habitat and passage for many wildlife species. The sites location adjacent to existing preserved open space is also of great value for conservation as larger blocks of preserved open space typically have more sustainable wildlife populations.”