



Shade Trees for the East Side Connector Trail

Preserving dramatic views and open space
while adding comfort, mitigating climate change,
and reducing air pollution.

Our efforts are respectful and admiring of the peoples that stewarded this land before us. What was the Petaluma Valley like in the pre-industrial era?



By then (1870) the Petaluma region had changed radically: The immense redwood forests on the western hills were gone (Captain Smith clear-cut hills throughout Bodega and as far south as Petaluma), **most of the oak groves were gone**, what few elk remained in Sonoma County now inhabited an area around the Laguna de Santa Rosa, startled waterfowl didn't obscure the sun, there were farms and a town. Condors, those remarkable creatures with wing spans of up to 14 feet, whose feathers the Lekatuit used for ceremonial capes and aprons, were last seen in Coast Miwok territory in 1847, when citizens of Fairfax observed "more than a dozen."

Last Woman From Petaluma

Greg Sarris - Chair of Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

Human health benefits of planting trees along our Open Space trails

- Reduces air pollution from airport and Highway 101
- Provides more sense of place for people to socialize
- Cools the trail and neighborhood
- Provides a sense of well being



Other Benefits

- **Biodiversity:** Provides sustenance and habitat for song birds, dragonflies, pollinators, tree frogs and other wildlife necessary for our agriculture and our way of life
- **Land Preservation:** Helps prevent erosion
- **Greenhouse Gas Reduction:** Trees eliminate carbon from the air
- **Active Transportation:** A cooler, more sheltered trail encourages walking



What is the East Side Connector Trail?

The East Side Connector Trail runs north to south in the Petaluma Valley, from Corona Creek School to Casa Grande Road, for 4 miles. It is bordered by more than 130 acres. The City of Petaluma and a few school districts own most of the open space up to the urban/rural separator. We will focus on approximately 68 acres that is owned by the City.

Our plan is to plant trees primarily along the Trail, with some clusters scattered in the open spaces.



What is the East Side Connector Trail?



Petaluma DMV

Lucchesi Park

Petaluma
Municipal
Airport

Petaluma
Adobe State
Historic Park

Casa Grande High School

101

Our urban forestry approach versus restoration: striking a balance of shade, sun, views, safety.

Limbing Up - removal of lower limbs



Clustering



Not a wall of trees



Not bottom-heavy evergreens



Protection and watering for seedlings



The Oak Species that we would return to the Trail:

Black Oak

Blue Oak

Valley Oak

Oregon White Oak

Coast Live Oak

Interior Live Oak

Today: 4 acres south of Corona Creek School



Today: South of Kenilworth JHS to Santa Rosa JC



Today: Views of Sonoma Mountain



Today: secondary off-trail foot paths



Proposed Approach

- Planting would begin during rainy season for three years.
- Seedlings and saplings will be planted first. Next fall, acorns will be harvested and planted.
- Predator protection will be installed.
- They will be watered for 3 summers.
- They will be thinned.
- They will be limbed up, when young, to preserve views and open feeling and allow for mowing.

Next Steps

- Obtain input from community members along East Side Trail and users of the Trail
- Incorporate community input into selecting locations for seedlings and saplings
- Identify any native plant communities along the Trail for preservation
- Plant a pilot project before end of March, 2024
- Observe and care for the pilot project with our Tree Stewards volunteer program
- Expand to other sites in the fall or winter of 2024-2025

Partners and Funders for this wonderful opportunity:



**Cool
Petaluma
2030**



**PETALUMA PEOPLE
SERVICES CENTER**



**Point Blue
Conservation
Science**

A Beautiful Trail for the Ages

ReLeaf Petaluma's vision of 10,000 new trees planted by 2030 will ensure that generations to come will have the opportunity to walk and sit under the shade of many trees and experience the wonder of biodiversity that planting trees brings.



1,000 TREES 🌿 DECEMBER 2023

Invitation to Plant with ReLeaf Petaluma

Watch our web site www.releafpetaluma.org for dates and registration.