

EDGEWOOD NATURAL PRESERVE MASTER PLAN

APPENDIX B

HISTORICAL SETTING

Appendix B

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GEOLOGIC AND VEGETATIVE HISTORY OF EDGEWOOD

By Susan Sommers, Friends of Edgewood
1996

GEOLOGIC HISTORY

Between about 160,000,000 and 35,000,000 years ago, much of the clastic rock (composed of fragmented materials resulting from the breaking up of other rocks) that underlies western California in the coast ranges formed between two converging tectonic plates, the oceanic Farallon plate and the North American plate. Only small remnants still exist of the Farallon plate, which subducted beneath the North American plate.

Many of the rocks that make up the coast ranges east of the San Andreas fault are clastic and include predominantly graywacke and argillite that were deposited along trench, trench slope, and slope basins that formed along the active margin. Small blocks of chert, limestone, basalt, diabase, and ultramafic rock, including serpentinite, were also scraped off the descending oceanic plate as it subducted along the margin.

The rarest and most spectacular rock type that formed part of the subduction complex is moderate- to high-grade metamorphic rocks, including eclogites, glaucophane, bearing blueschists, and garnet amphibolites, which formed many tens of kilometers deep in the subduction zone. These rock types are now often found in association with serpentinite and are commonly associated with major fault zones.

Serpentinite is a metamorphic rock type formed by the hydration of ultramafic rocks under a variety of conditions. The ultramafic rock is of mantle origin and typically underlies the crust at depths of 5 to 35 kilometers. Ultramafic rock is common in the oceanic crust; much of it was probably associated with either the subducting slab or, at considerable depth, with the upper plate of the subduction zone. Serpentinized ultramafic rock has a very low density. Like salt, it tends to be fairly mobile in the upper crust and is frequently found along major crustal fault zones within active plate margins.

During the middle Tertiary, the converging Farallon and North American plate boundaries changed from subduction to strike-slip with the evolution of the San Andreas fault zone between the Pacific and North American plates when the ancient spreading center, the Pacific Rise, impinged on the margin. Folding and faulting of Tertiary and Quaternary strata and uplift of the coast ranges have been consequences of the deformation associated with the active strike-slip plate boundary.

Present-day horizontal displacements along the active strands of the San Andreas system are measured on the order of cm/year. Vertical uplift rates are typically on the order of mm/year, except during catastrophic seismic events, when displacements can be on the order of meters/event. Thus, tectonic activity, sedimentation, and rock deformation are ongoing processes that continue to modify the landscape today.

VEGETATIVE HISTORY

The California floristic province has been roughly defined as an area starting in southern Oregon in the north and extending south into northern Baja California in Mexico. On the east, it is delimited by the eastern slopes of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada ranges, and reaches west to the Pacific Ocean. Within this area is a very diverse flora. Edgewood County Park is but a small window on that diversity.

The diverse vegetation and abundant plant life in the preserve have a rich heritage, the result of geological and climatological changes on landforms and on the ancient geofloras. Throughout California, three Tertiary period geofloras (Neotropical, Arctic, and Madrean) colonized and intermingled over long periods of time and over many climatic shifts. Relic endemic species from the Tertiary times survived in sheltered locations. This history resulted in a flora that richly supported wildlife and provided amply for the needs of early man.

Relics of Neotropical forests at Edgewood are the California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), the rare western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*), and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*).

Relics of the Arctotertiary forest at Edgewood are the coast redwood, (*Sequoia sempervirens*), purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*), milkmaids (*Cardamine californica*), sandworts (*Arenaria spp.*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), saxifrages (*Saxafraga spp.*), and various members of the snapdragon family (*Scrophulariaceae*).

The Madrotertiary is the most recently developed geoflora (one million years ago). It colonized the dry icy slopes and rocky outcrops in the Eocene epoch and occupied California by the mid-Eocene. During this time, newly evolved endemics developed prolifically in mountainous regions where soils were diverse, local climates were varied but temperate, and plant species from different sources and/or geofloras intermingled.

Many of Edgewood's endemic plant species developed in the Madrotertiary period. Edgewood and some adjacent sites have several endemic representatives from Madrotertiary geoflora, including madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos spp.*), buckbrush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), several species of oaks (*Quercus spp.*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), locoweed (*Astragalus spp.*), morning glory (*Calystegia spp.*), sunflower family members (*Helianthemum spp.*), Lotus, Prunus, and clovers (*Trifolium spp.*).

Nearly half of the species in the California floristic province (non-desert California) are endemics, that is, native to a well-defined geographic region and restricted to that region. Indeed, endemism is prevalent throughout the California floristic province. Two factors responsible for the high endemism in California are the Mediterranean climate that developed in the latest of Tertiary times, and the geographic isolation from other Mediterranean climate regions. In the Xerothermic period (8000 years ago), rising temperatures stimulated a virtual explosion of speciation that especially affected the flora of California.

Edgewood exhibits a number of such endemics as well as those known to occur in the San Mateo County serpentine grasslands. Many plant species at Edgewood are restricted to serpentine soils; these species are found both narrowly and broadly throughout serpentine grasslands from Marin County south into Santa Clara County.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK AND NATURAL PRESERVE

By Nita Spangler, Friends of Edgewood
1997

4000 B.P.

Before the arrival of the Ohlone-speaking peoples, hunters occupied a camp in in East Palo Alto dated 4000 B. P. by archeologists. In 1993, archeologists discovered a campsite of 6000 years ago on an earthquake fault at Moss Beach on the Fitzgerald Marine Preserve.

500 A.D.

Ohlone-speaking peoples came into the San Francisco Bay Area about 500 A.D. from the San Joaquin-Sacramento areas, coinciding with what the archeologists have referred to as a Late Horizon assemblage. (fn. 8 L. J. Bean)

However, the Ohlone knew nothing of these earlier residents, but found the San Francisco Peninsula so inviting that they established several villages between San Francisco and Monterey Bay. They were probably the largest tribe in California at the time the Spanish first visited their lands in 1769 with their population centered in the San Andreas valley west of Redwood City. From the great rift valley of the San Andreas Fault where they settled, the largest groups of Ohlone enjoyed a diversity of climate and foods within a few miles of ocean beaches, bayland marshes, freshwater streams, forests, and grasslands. They acquired intimate knowledge of their environment, enjoyed a Mediterranean climate, and enjoyed the abundance of foods that made their lives as hunters and gatherers relatively comfortable. Simple structures sufficed for shelter. The Ohlone had little need for household goods as they moved short distances to harvest the variety of seasonal foods. Expertly made baskets carried their food supplies and what few personal possessions they had. They acquired great skills in making stone tools which they often left at work sites, and they produced reed boats and wove mats and nets from a variety of natural materials.

Studies of these Ohlone tell us today that they were different from most other California Indians in that their social organization was less structured. The Ohlone were dependent upon the season, they saw themselves as part of animal and plant life about them, and they observed frequent rituals, singing and dancing. They were among the first California Indians to enter the Spanish Mission system, the colonization plan authorized by the King and the Church. They were among the first California natives to leave their homelands and to be decimated by this acculturation.

Their villages in the San Francisco Peninsula rift zone, the Canada de Raymundo, are noted by a number of archeological sites, including those at Filoli and the newly acquired Phleger addition to the GGNRA. Both are within view and a mile or two of Edgewood County Park and Preserve.

A main trail from the San Andreas to the Bay followed Cordilleras Creek.

1769

In 1769, the Spanish army exploring party led by Captain Don Gaspar de Portola, marched through the Canada de Raymundo and camped on San Francisquito Creek at the edge of the Bay marsh. The arrival of expedition in the Bay Area was the first Spanish-Ohlone encounter, and it introduced domestic livestock to the area.

Portola's men were seeking to encircle the South Bay in order to reach Punta del Reyes, and while scouts went ahead, the main party of 64 men and about 200 horses and mules remained in camp to recover from fatigue and illness. When the scouts could not cross the Carquinez Straits, they returned, and the entire expedition retraced their steps through the canada on the long way back to San Diego.

1776

There were subsequent land explorations in expeditions led by Lieutenant Pedro Fages (1700), Captain Fernando Rivera y Moncada (1774), and Captain Juan Bautista de Anza (1775). They and their soldiers traveled from Monterey through the canada to explore and determine a settlement site close by the opening of San Francisco Bay. In 1776, a year after he led his own exploration, Anza in a march from distant Sonora and accompanied by two Franciscan priests, led the first settlers to the northern part of the Peninsula where they began a presidio and mission. The mission lands extended south to San Francisquito Creek which was the northern boundary of Santa Clara Mission. Anza's party included 14 soldiers, 7 settlers, the missionary priests Francisco Palou and Pedro Carbon, the women and children (one more than had started at Sonora!) and a retinue of 13 young Indian servants who drove a large mule train and a herd of 286 cattle.

Seventy-five people set up a 15-tent city in Mission Valley, immediately attracting the natives within walking distance, who were cordially treated by the Spanish and given gifts of red flannel cloth and beads. The cattle astonished the Indians who watched them move into convenient pastures near springs.

In 1777, the Spanish established another mission 40 miles south of the Golden Gate in the Santa Clara Valley, and more livestock were imported. By year's end, the Mission at Santa Clara had 117 cattle, 18 mules, 16 horses, other horses and mules of the soldiers, 20 sheep, 16 goats, four pigs, 20 chickens, and three roosters. The livestock were set out in the fields that supplied the local tribes with greens, root crops, and seed harvests. The livestock multiplied rapidly after being introduced.

The Indians were denied ownership of any horses or guns, although some men were put to work as vaqueros. By 1780, the town of San Jose already had 600 head of various animals on the meadows, and livestock grazed the herbs and seed meadows

which belonged to the women of the surrounding native towns, causing extensive damage to root and seed crops. In the fall of 1782, natives near the San Francisco Presidio and the at the Pueblo of San Jose were killing cattle and horses. The Governor took action to punish the aggressors, while priests noted that livestock were already damaging the wild crops upon which the natives depended. Livestock were also damaging the some of the fields planted by the Indians.

Within two decades of the Spanish arrival, the principal tribes of the upper Peninsula--the Urebure at San Bruno, the Pruristac at Pedro Valley, the SSalson at San Mateo, the Chiguan at Half Moon Bay, and the Lamchin near Redwood City--had left their native villages for the missions. In 1784, most of the Yelamu, the Urebure and Pruristac villages had been brought into the San Francisco community.

1786

In 1786, the outstation of San Pedro y San Pablo was founded by Mission San Francisco, its purpose to reduce crowding at the Mission, to produce more food, and to strengthen contacts with tribes living near the Coast. As early as 1784, military officials at the Presidio wanted to move the growing numbers of government cattle from nearby overgrazed lands onto recently vacated tribal lands south of the mission, but when the governor thought the move would cause grave harm to the Indians, it was not allowed. Three years later, in 1787, missionaries complained that the Christian Indians of Mission San Francisco were seeing their fields cut to pieces and their pinole seeds despoiled, and the Presidio herds were moved south to the Royal Ranch near Monterey.

1793

A way station for travelers and a farm for small animals was established at San Mateo in 1793. The harvests of crops at this estancia were substantial by 1810. At one time, the padres reported 10,000 sheep.

1797

In 1797, a new royal ranch (Rancho Buri-Buri) was established on the abandoned lands of the Urebure Group. (FN Milliken 1995)

1830

Still another expansion of mission facilities, the Rancho de las Pulgas of 35,000 acres between San Mateo and San Francisquito Creeks, was established for the mission's large animals. After 1830, when the missions were secularized, it was claimed by Jose Arguello and his son, Luis. Each had served as Comandante of the Presidio. They proved their claim with U.S. Officials in 1856, but were unsuccessful in their claim to the adjoining Canada del Raymundo. The latter, containing valuable redwood forest lands, was a 2 1/2 league grant to John Coppinger by Mexican officials in 1840, and was patented in 1859 by his widow.

A small adobe house was headquarters for The Pulgas Rancho at the edge of the foothills west of today's San Carlos. Another small adobe for herders was in today's Menio Park. A governor's report in 1796, stated three straight years of drought was destroying pasture lands. While animals moved to greater distances for grazing, this meant more destruction of Indian seed harvest lands, conditions that forced Indians to rob cattle and grain fields. In 1835, a census declared there were 4000 cattle and 2000 horses.

The mission system went into steep decline as Indians suffered high disease rates, the disintegration of tribal culture, environmental deterioration resulting in significant loss of food resources, and oppression by the Spanish. Seed crops were reduced by the cessation of native fire management practices which had been banned by the Spanish authorities in order to protect the cattle.

In 1821, when Mexico won its independence from Spain, Mexican authorities attempted to isolate Alta California and to control its commerce with the outside world, but San Francisco Bay and Coastal areas were attractive to sea otter hunters, smugglers, yankee traders, the hide and tallow trade, and military ships. All brought sailors who had their own reasons for leaving their ships. The forests bordering Canada de Raymundo offered refuge for a growing community of foreign rogues—most were illegals—who made a living with their sawpits and carpentry. Mexican authorities welcomed their production. After the Gold Rush, they led the way for commercial agents and the pioneer lumbermen who made it possible for San Francisco to rebuild quickly after four major fires.

WEST UNION (1851)

In 1851, Willard Whipple brought a steam mill which he installed on the site of an abandoned Ohlone village on West Union Creek, just north of the crossroads store of Parkhurst and Tripp. Along the Indian trail that followed Cordilleras Creek to San Francisco Bay, Whipple constructed a crude road to Redwood Embarcadero where he delivered his lumber to small boats. As lumbermen brought their families, the village of West Union grew alongside Whipple's Mill Road. In 1859, the community hired a school teacher and in 1861 constructed a school building.

Miles Swift moved there in 1857 with his wife, Mary Hedge, and began farming, but he had to cut cordwood to supplement his income. With the help of his 14-year-old son, James, in 1876, with two horse teams, he delivered wagon loads of firewood to tidewater in Redwood City for shipment by barge to San Francisco's wood stoves. Two years later, James was hired by a Redwood City newspaper where he became owner and publisher.

Jacob Kreiss built a small farmhouse on the western slope of today's Edgewood County Park, and he and his wife reared a family. Kreiss was active in the school

district where his children attended the one room school.

1881

In 1881, a party of Italian capitalists bought 2000 acres of the Miramontes Ranch fronting on Canada Road at a sheriff's sale "at an exceedingly low price", and they constructed a large brick winery. A year later, S. Scalmanini & Co. planted 1700 acres of vineyard. One of their employes was Cesar Lodi who reared his family on a small farm before moving to Redwood City in 1913. His son, Joseph, later was Chief of the Redwood City Fire Department

Timothy Guy Phelps, a New Yorker who made a fortune during the Gold Rush and invested in a San Carlos acreage, in 1868 purchased 3500 acres from the Arguellos at the western edge of the Pulgas Ranch. On Whipple's Mill Road, he surveyed a grid for a Canada townsite, but his speculation came to naught. Phelps had recently been in Washington, D.C., as a San Mateo County Congressman. Although he liked to wear overalls and call himself a farmer, Phelps actively promoted construction of the Pacific Railroad. Phelps still owned the property at the time of his death in 1899, and later owners in 1927 sold a site to the City of San Francisco for its Hassler Health Farm, a sanitarium for tuberculosis victims.

Agriculture on the overgrazed West Union lands at best was marginal, but even when lumbering ran out, some residents were reluctant to leave. In the 1930s, the San Francisco Water Department bought West Union lands to expand its watershed and all buildings were demolished. A few surviving fruit trees and trees and shrubs that were planted to mark driveways or homes are remaining reminders of the community.

1894

On the eastern slope of Edgewood County Park, John Isaac, employed in San Francisco by the State Horticultural Commission, purchased land onto which he moved the dismantled Monterey Building when the 1894 Midwinter International Exposition closed in San Francisco. For his labor in removing the building, the materials were hauled to Redwood City by the railroad. A year later, he married and commuted to his job, being driven daily by his bride the 3 1/2 miles to and from the Redwood City railroad station in a horse drawn buggy. Winter weather and bad roads eventually discouraged this suburban life, and when Isaac was offered work in Sacramento early in 1900 he sold to Henry C. Finkler, another San Francisco commuter. Finkler was secretary to the State Supreme Court, was once a large wheel bicycle champion in California, and soon turned to the automobile for his commute.

He and his wife, Betty, became well known in Redwood City where she was a founding member of the Redwood City Women's Club. He had a strong interest in civic affairs. They entertained frequently at their large house, adding to their lands

until they had 200 acres. In the summer of 1917, Finkler prevailed upon the County road department to build a concrete bridge which is still in use as the entrance to Edgewood County Park. Maps still show it as Finkler's Bridge. He is also credited with keeping weather records that were used when a prize winning slogan in a Chamber of Commerce promotion declared Redwood City to have "Climate Best by Government Test".

Finkler was getting ready to subdivide his lands when his wife died in 1927. He took his own life three years later, leaving a contested estate which by court order was divided between two of his working associates from the Supreme Court office. The family of B. Grant Taylor occupied the home until the property was sold in 1967 in anticipation of construction of a new State college campus.

Months before, a real estate agent had been consolidating land in the area for a major subdivision, but the speculation encountered delays, and when state officials announced a search for an additional college site, the Edgewood site was offered and chosen. The western slope of Edgewood was consolidated for the site and some San Francisco Watershed land was included, but by 1970, the state had abandoned the idea.

Early in 1971, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission authorized first steps for a \$7 million recreation complex in the watershed west of Redwood City. Although the idea was almost void of environmental concerns, the Commission announced its plans for four 18-hole golf courses, at least three swimming pools, and 30 tennis courts. The PUC manager was ready to call for bids, when San Mateo County Supervisors and Peninsula conservationists asked for a delay and called for a "noble plan". It would not be until 1995 that a million dollar watershed study with a plan was finally completed. It was conspicuously without any recreation development.

Meanwhile, the 250-acre Edgewood site was appropriated and misused by off road vehicles and motorcycles whose drivers brought out special motorcycle and small airplane patrols by county park rangers and sheriff deputies. Scarred hillsides have been slow to heal.

Golfing advocates intensified their lobbying, and in 1979, a purchase plan for the Edgewood site was implemented in which half of the acquisition money came from the U.S. Land and Water Conservation Fund, one quarter from the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, and the remaining quarter from the County Charter for Parks Fund. It was finalized in October 1980.

A year later, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Supervisors approved a concept plan for a park featuring an 18-hole public golf course, clubhouse, and limited recreational and picnic area. Supervisors agreed to go ahead

and hired a consulting team to develop a master plan and an EIR. Paul Ehrlich and other scientists at Stanford University's Center for Population Studies immediately protested, citing the danger to the Bay checkerspot butterfly population.

In September 1984, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a rule to give the Bay Checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydras editha bayensis*) endangered species status. A year process of input and review would follow. Supervisors intensified their intent and the Grand Jury suggested the Supervisors delay.

In December 1985, two lawsuits filed by the California Native Plant Society were settled out of court. The settlement called for a financial analysis and it gave CNPS review rights for future plans. In other developments, the San Mateo Thornmint (*Acanthamentha obovata*) is listed as a federally endangered species.

A public hike organized by Margot Patterson Doss brought out a crowd in April 1986. Golfers announced that they were advertising and circulating petitions.

SEPTEMBER 1987

The Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service issued a final rule that the Bay Checkerspot was endangered. Supervisors were told that this would add \$250,000 or \$500,000 to the golf course costs. Supervisors asked for proposals for developing only part of the 467 acre site as a golf course.

1981

Opposition to any golf course in the watershed was growing. The Town of Woodside, the Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Filoli, and the chairman of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission all objected to a course.

1991

In January Brian O'Neill, superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area opposed a golf course. Supervisor Tom Huening then withdrew his support for a golf course there, but suggested a committee be formed to see another site.

That fall, members of the California Native Plant Society again testified against a proposal for a nine hole course and driving range. On September 10, they met with the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, the California Oak Foundation to organize, and in a week, they had support from the Committee for Green Foothills and other groups. The Save Edgewood Park Coalition was ready to obtain signatures on a petition and hand out information fliers to park users. There were 25 organizations and 3 businesses when the group held its first press conference in November.

1992

In January, San Francisco officials began a long range planning project that would

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deal with all aspects of the San Francisco Peninsula Watershed of 23,000 acres. In May, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors recommended that Edgewood County Park be declared a Preserve.

1993

An election placed two new members on the Board of Supervisors to strengthen the environmental vote.

In July, Thomas Reed Associates declared that as a result of a new feasibility study, "there is insufficient land for a regulation golf course unless significant use is made of serpentine vegetation from 50 to 100 acres... Given the status of the listed Bay checkerspot butterfly, it is unlikely that the County could obtain the permit required by federal law." There were now 43 organizations, three local homeowner groups and a business member of the Coalition to preserve Edgewood.

AUGUST 27, 1993

The Board of Supervisors unanimously passed an amended Joint Powers Agreement with the MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District, removing all references to a golf course and other intensive development, and to declare all of Edgewood County Park a Natural Area Preserve.

That fall, the Coalition set up Friends of Edgewood County Natural Preserve to work with County Parks and Recreation on a program to provide docents, to remove invasive weeds, to maintain trails and signs, to revegetate eroded areas, and to provide informal trail patrol.

NOTES:

1. A comprehensive history entitled "A Short History of Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve" is available from Parks & Recreation Division's administrative office (phone: 415-363-4020).
2. References for this "Brief History of Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve" are found in the Bibliography section of this Master Plan.

EQUESTRIAN TRAIL HISTORY OF EDGEWOOD PARK

By Adda Quinn
1996

Since before the beginning of the century, equestrians have used trails through what is known today as Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve. A string of private and commercial stables ran the length of San Mateo County for riders to access the area. Some of their names were: Carolands (Hillsborough), the Polo Grounds, Walter Johnson's, the Gymkana Club, House on the Hill, Tobin-Clark, Bar Pasture, Borel Estate (San Mateo), Green Briar, Lazy J and H&H (Belmont), Buck Marsh, Pat Lenfoot, Outlaw Ranch (Redwood City), Lazy Day Ranch (Portola Valley), the Circus Club (Menlo Park), Cavanaugh Ranch and the Stanford Farms (Palo Alto). With civilization accumulating along the El Camino Real and Alameda de las Pulgas, these nearby stables in the foothills provided both transportation and recreation into the beautiful Santa Marina Mountains west of mid-peninsula urban settlements. Equestrians from Daly City to Palo Alto frequented trails up the Farm Hill, Skyline Road and 42nd Avenue to take in the spectacular views afforded by the numerous ridges, then continued on to picnics in the watershed (then owned by the Spring Valley Water Company), or for further westward adventures. Despite the encroachment of civilization and subdivisions in the county foothills, many of the original barns continued in operation until the mid-1950s.

Because it was open property (except for intermittent fencing for livestock containment) and adjacent to both Canada Road and Edgewood Roads, Edgewood was often used as a dumping ground throughout its history. Equestrians learned very early in the century the importance of sticking strictly to well established trails in order to avoid hidden hazards in the Edgewood grasslands.

After World War I, Californians passed a series of bond issues for the "erection of concrete auto highways" which were a standard feature in the County by the mid-1920s to accommodate the rapidly accepted "motor de luxe" which had soon replaced the horse as the preferred form of transportation.¹ Cattle raised on the San Francisco peninsula were still being "driven" to the slaughterhouse at Hunters Point in the 1930s by cowboys who stopped at Olson Nolte Saddlery and Tack Store to repair and reprovision their gear.² The Woodside Trail Club was started in the early 1930s by the families of Judge Chamberlain and William Roth of Filoli. By 1939, it had a well developed series of equestrian trails throughout the private property of their friends in the Edgewood/Woodside area, including the Folgers and the

Spreckles.³ The San Mateo Horsemen's Association was founded in 1940 for the promotion of equestrian events and interests.⁴

When World War II began Olson Nolte Saddlery was impressed into provisioning the US Army Cavalry with belts, and gas masks were still being made by others for mules! During the War, parts of the Santa Marina Mountains were closed to equestrian traffic because the government was using large tracts of land to train attack dogs, notably the ridge just above the "poor farm" north of Edgewood.⁵ The Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County was founded during the war in 1942, to watch for invaders and provide security in the western hills which were too rugged for vehicles to patrol. Manpower was in critical short supply at that time. They were specifically invited by the San Francisco Water Department into watershed property and provided with keys to gates to allow access to property which had been closed to the public after its purchase from Spring Valley. The Mounted Patrol continues to provide volunteer search and rescue activities throughout remote portions of the Bay Area to this date.⁶

After the war, local equestrians were active in creation of the Statewide Trails Program which became the backbone of the present day trail systems in many of our public lands. They also secured permission for "right to pass" from private property owners and the Watershed. One equestrian who rode in Edgewood in 1949 reports: "We crossed what is now Edgewood Park's Southwest section and exited a gate at the top of Emerald Hill's backside, around Rocky Way or Hillcrest Way. We rode to Buck Marsh's barn. Picked up a horse and ponyed it over to Pat Lenfoot's (DVM) barn where Roy (Swineger) sold the horse to Peggy Schuman. The horse was a palomino mare called 'Penny'. We then delivered the horse to the Carolands Barn in Hillsborough", again crossing Edgewood.⁷

Aerial photographs obtained from the USGS and made available during the Edgewood Master Plan process in 1996, clearly show well established trails across Edgewood in 1948, 1956 and 1968. The Town of Woodside (southern neighbor of the current park) incorporated in November 1956. During the 1950's and 1960's, the people in Woodside liked to joke that its population of over 5000 horses exceeded the human head count.⁸ Many of these horses were stabled around this parcel and were amongst its most frequent users. The property, which was to become Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve, was owned by a succession of private land holders until 1960-1970, when the State of California acquired most of it as a prospective site for a school campus.⁹

In 1966-1968, when Highway 280 was under construction, equestrians and the Town of Woodside successfully negotiated the construction of the overpass on the West border of the Park contiguous with one side of the Watershed's "Triangle" with CalTrans and the State of California in order to allow equestrians continued safe access on the historic route from Palomar Park

across the north side of the property overlooking Edgewood Road to its intersection at Canada Road.¹⁰ In the mid 1970's, a 4-H equestrian club which stabled at the Outlaw Ranch (by the Watershed aqueduct right-of-way bordering Edgewood Road) further negotiated with state and county agencies for permitted access along this same historic route. In 1977, a Trail Day was attended by 30 people marking the first coordinated effort which brought awareness of the importance of the Edgewood property to public attention.¹¹ In 1980, San Mateo County concluded financing and negotiations which secured Edgewood as a Park, and the Edgewood Trail is frequently used by both hikers and horsemen today.

The Town of Woodside was an active participant in development of the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the first Edgewood Master Plan of 1982. Woodside specifically requested four formal entrances: Canada Road, Edgewood Road, Hillcrest Way and at the Old Stage Day Camp where existing trails already linked the horse community at the top of the hills around Edgewood with Woodside, barns (now predominantly to the South), and connected to park trails in Huddert, Wunderlich, Pescadero Creek, Memorial, Junipero Serra, the Woodside Trail Club and the Watershed. The trail system in Edgewood also has served as a potential escape route for residents in the event of off-shore wind driven fires such as struck Oakland in 1970 and 1991.¹²

Once the park was secured, it took over three months for the County to clean up litter. Truckload after truckload of broken pipe, rusted barbed wire, garbage, and over 200 abandoned cars were hauled away. In 1982, the present trails system was laid out by the County in consultation with scientists from Stanford, the California Native Plant Society, and equestrians. Equestrians have participated in trail maintenance activities annually since creation of the Park.

The Clarkia Trail was flagged by Harry Dean and E. R. Sheehan at its present location to provide a buffer zone between wetlands/chaparral and the grasslands and replaced previous historic routes on the south side of the property. Tractoring to lay trail tread was begun in 1983, but had to be suspended due to wet weather. Work resumed in 1984, but was impeded by vandals who attacked the tractor rig when it was left overnight. Horsemen stayed with the tractor until wee morning hours subsequently and prevented further damage. Because of this cooperation, the Clarkia Trail was then finished very rapidly. Its construction cost \$20,000.¹³ As a result of the type of problem experienced here and occurring in other open space properties in the Bay Area, a need was evident for help in the growing park system. The Volunteer Horse Patrol was created in 1985.¹⁴ Equestrian volunteers sought training and began to provide San Mateo County with a responsible presence in its parks to augment limited county staff. Today with nearly 15,000 acres of public lands, horsemen continue to provide this valuable service to both the County and the Watershed.

In the 1980's, equestrians joined a coalition of citizens interested in preserving the grasslands of the Park from development as a golf course. Through a series of public hearings and environmental reviews, this coalition was successful in demonstrating the value of this property for recreation and preservation, as well as the economic unfeasibility of trying to plant grass on infertile soil produced by serpentine. The golf course concept was defeated and the Edgewood charter amended in 1993 to include a Natural Preserve.

Today, increasing urban development on the hills around Edgewood has resulted in paved streets and automobile traffic dangerous for equestrian access to the Park's trails via Hillcrest Way. Because of the trails, barns and services available now primarily to the South, the Clarkia Trail has become of critical importance. Equestrians are exploring new connector routes with the County to try to obtain safe access to the existing trail system which is environmentally protective of the Park.

With almost a century of historic use, being one of the first groups to bring its potential for recreational purposes to the County's attention, and with active interest in operation and maintenance pertinent to present day trails as connecting corridors to the rest of the County, equestrians have long had a special relationship with Edgewood. We hope that the County in its current Master Planning process, will continue to preserve and enhance trails in Edgewood for use by both hikers and equestrians.

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1. Henry Finkler letter Sept. 21, 1926.
 2. "Olson Nolte, A Local Institution". Spring 1994. The San Mateo Horseman, p. 5 and cover picture.
 3. "Reminisce, Memories in Barns". April 1976. California Horseman article by Bernice Scharlack, a journalist-historian raised in San Francisco.
 4. San Mateo County Horseman's Association 1940-1990 - 50 year history
 5. July 25, 1996 interview with Chris Olmo of Redwood City, age 90.
 6. San Mateo County Mounted Patrol 50 Year History 1943-1993.
 7. July 23, 1996 notes from Janet Estep of Woodside on a horseback ride she took with Roy Swineger in 1949.
 8. San Mateo County Horsemen's Association, Ibid., and Woodside Trail Committee members tales retold by Harry Williams and Lew Reed.
 9. Nita Spangler. "History of the Edgewood Park Site", Rev. Nov 19, 1995.
 10. Recreation Development Plan, San Francisco Peninsula Watershed Lands, Technical Report, August 1975, p. 11.
 11. Notes and articles from (retired) San Mateo County Park and Recreation Superintendent Bob Emert on William D. "Mike" Mikesell, 4-H leader.
 12. Public hearing San Mateo County Park and Recreation Commissioners July 16, 1981, Minutes, P. 6. Also: Site Development Guidelines Section V, item B. and Equestrian Trails, Public Meeting, February 24, 1982, Status Report, May 1982.
 13. San Mateo County Park and Recreation Commission Minutes, August 4, 1983.
 14. July 9, 1996 Trails Advisory Committee meeting statement by Marian van den Bosch, Volunteer Horse Patrol President.