

Morgan Territory is north of Livermore in eastern Contra Costa County. Morgan Territory's



San Joaquin kit fox.

Photo courtesy of Steve Bobzien

sandstone hills are adorned in spring with more than 90 species of wildflowers. Deer, coyote, and mountain lion are found there, and a variety of raptors frequently soar overhead. Expansive ridgetop views reveal Mount Diablo to the west, Mount St. Helena to the north and the snow-covered Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east. Acquisition of the 480-acre Elworthy parcels brought Morgan Territory to 4,700 acres. This property contains the highest portions of Highland Ridge at about 2,500 feet. The ridge extends in a north-south direction through the central portion of the site, descending to a rolling plateau on the eastern portion of the site and dropping down precipitous slopes to the west.

Ecological Value

The property's habitats include open grasslands, rock outcrops, oak woodland, deep canyons, riparian, scrub, ponds and wetlands. It sits on the divide between the two major East Bay watersheds: Marsh Creek and Alameda Creek. It serves as an important landscape linkage for numerous plants and animals. Larger mammals including mountain lion, bobcat, kit fox, and deer likely use the property and travel through it to other open space areas. The property contains two stock-ponds that host the federally threatened California red-legged frog. Chaparral

areas also provide habitat for the threatened Alameda whipsnake.

Project Actions

Shapell Industries dedicated the 480-acre Elworthy Parcels to the Park District to compensate for the environmental impacts of two developments which will remove 40 acres of San Joaquin kit fox habitat and fill seasonal

waterways. In addition to donating the property, Shapell

constructed approximately \$100,000 in restoration improvements and provided about \$600,000 as a long-term management endowment. The existing stockponds were improved to reduce downstream erosion and enhance their value as California red-legged frog habitat. Erosion control measures and repairs were done to both ponds.

A new spillway and inlet were constructed for the eastern stockpond. Both ponds will be monitored to



Eroded gullies were repaired.



Stock ponds serve as habitat for California red-legged frogs.

determine the health of aquatic amphibian species and communities, and to ensure no competing predators establish in the ponds.



*The California red-legged frog makes its home in the stockponds on the Elworthy Parcel.
Photo courtesy of Joe DiDonato*

To maintain optimal habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox, the site will be seasonally grazed. Fencing and gates were installed to protect sensitive areas from grazing impacts. Construction was completed in 2002.

A hiking trail will be established through the eastern portion of the property on existing ranch roads

Quick Facts

Action: Land Acquisition

Acres: 480

Funding: ~\$3,000,000

Provided by: Shapell Industries

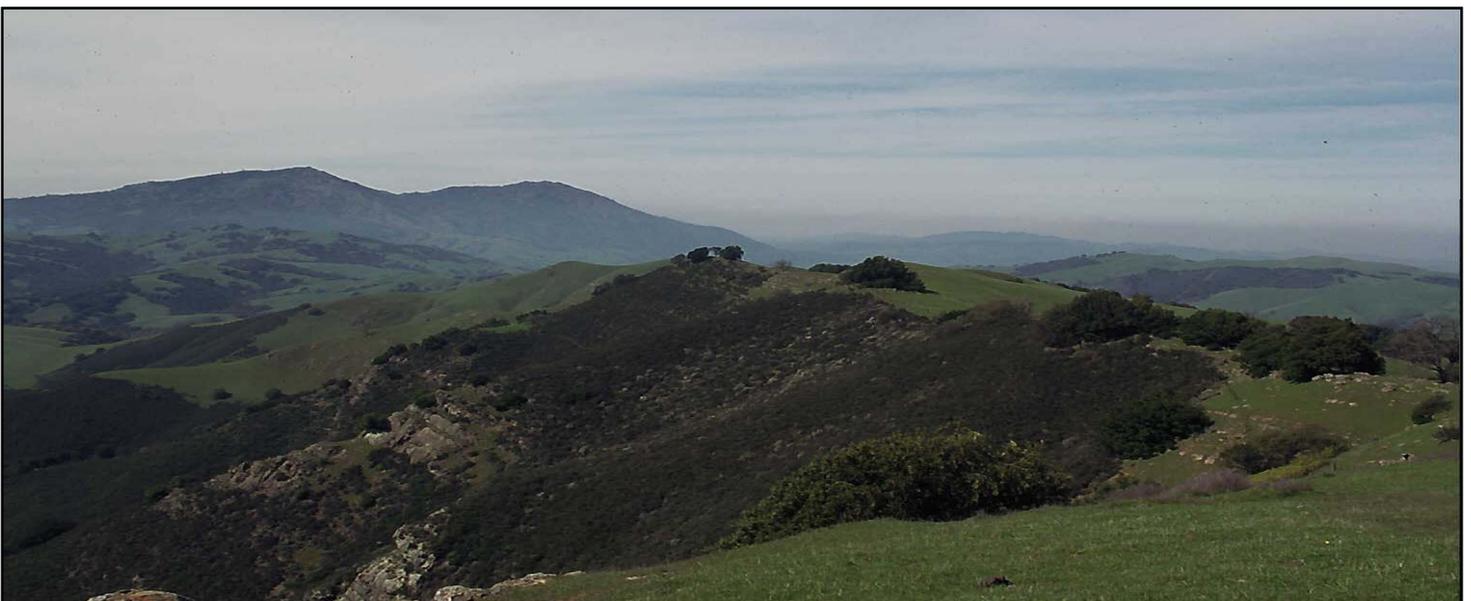
Constructed: 2002

Target Habitats: Grassland, ponds, riparian.

Target Species: Red-legged frog, San Joaquin kit fox.

Improvements: Rehabilitate existing habitat ponds, fence ponds, erosion control, future hiking trail planned.

connected by a new single-track segment. This hiking trail will link the property to existing trails in the Morgan Territory Regional Preserve. The Elworthy Resource Enhancement Project at Morgan Territory Regional Preserve adds to one of the most scenic areas in Contra Costa County.



The Elworthy Parcel contains the highest portion of Highland Ridge, shown above.