

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA)

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Fiscal Year:
2009

Acreage:
4,076

Estimated Price to National Park Service:
\$5,000,000
(Total: \$13,050,000)

Natural Resources:
Threatened and endangered species, coastal scrub and chaparral habitat, riparian habitat

Cultural Resources:
Rancho Corral de Tierra

Programmatic Significance:
Scenic viewshed protection, habitat preservation, public access



In 1839, a Mexican Land Grant was awarded to Francisco Guerrero y Palomares. On what is now known as “Rancho Corral de Tierra,” he built the first adobe on the San Mateo Coast. Located seven miles from San Francisco and 20 miles from the Silicon Valley, this 4,000-acre parcel in isolated and near undisturbed condition provides a unique habitat for a diverse array of plant and animal species. Peregrine falcons, San Bruno elfin butterflies, coast rock cress, Montara Manzanitas, and San Francisco wallflowers can be found in and around the coastal scrub and chaparral habitats. The headwaters of four major watersheds provide important riparian habitat as well as a vital source of water. Montara Mountain, visible for more than 25 miles, provides pristine views from the scenic Highway 1.

All of this is available for immediate acquisition by the National Park Service. Rancho Corral currently shares more than three miles of border with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Easily accessible by private and public transportation from Highway 1, adding this land to Golden Gate would establish a southern entrance, which the park is currently lacking. National park programs and

experiences could be extended to domestic and international visitors, especially the 6 million people who live within an hour’s drive of the Rancho Corral. Unfortunately, the opportunity to give permanent protection to many threatened and endangered species and provide an enhanced visitor experience is currently not available and could be lost forever without National Park Service management.

In 2003, the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) purchased the land in a series of payments, bringing the total cost to about \$30 million. Through matching grants from state and private funding sources, POST is able to make these 4,076 acres available to the National Park Service for slightly more than \$13 million. This is an opportunity that the National Park Service cannot afford to pass up, and Congress should move immediately to ensure that this natural landscape continues to be preserved for future generations.