



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LandPaths acquires 266-acre parcel adjacent to Rancho Mark West Preserve to create a 386-acre nature preserve 25 minutes outside of downtown Santa Rosa**

SANTA ROSA, CA.—LandPaths has finalized the purchase of a 266-acre property in the Mayacamas Mountains east of downtown Santa Rosa. Currently named for the previous owners as Lobban Preserve, the parcel is located directly next to Rancho Mark West, a 120-acre protected nature preserve acquired by LandPaths in 2012. The combined 386 acres ensures hundreds of protected, contiguous habitats in one of Sonoma County's most biologically rich areas. Lobban is located in the traditional homeland of the Wappo people, with the closest tribe being the Mishewal-Wappo Band of Alexander Valley.

"Having access to a property so close to Santa Rosa, where the youth who participate in LandPaths' environmental education programs and nature camps can connect with nature in a truly wild place, is such a great gift," said Jessica Holloway, LandPaths' Education Lead. "I am also looking forward to longer hiking and camping opportunities that may come from connecting with Saddle Mountain, which is owned by Ag and Open Space, to the west."

Severely burned in the 2020 Glass fire, Lobban is a place of rugged, natural beauty with forests of redwood and Douglas fir, oak woodlands, healthy stands of native grasslands and wildflowers, and a portion of Mark West Creek that supports reproducing populations of federally threatened coho salmon and steelhead trout. It's also a crucial part of a network regional connectivity, with over 80% of the property identified by the Conservation Lands Network as one of the last natural linkages for mountain lions and other wild creatures that make their home in the area.

LandPaths will steward Lobban and Rancho Mark West as one preserve, reconnecting lands once divided, through public participation including large-scale volunteer stewardship days. The new preserve will be accessible through open access weekends, youth programming, and volunteer stewardship days.

#### **About LandPaths**

Established in 1996, LandPaths is an environmental education and conservation leader with the mission to foster a love of the land in Sonoma County. Annually, we engage thousands of participants in joyful, caring, and transformative relationships with the land. We do this mainly through creative outings led in both English and Spanish, environmental education, nature camps, and volunteer land stewardship of local open spaces. [www.landpaths.org](http://www.landpaths.org).