



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 27, 2017

CONTACT: Dylan Skybrook, 415-489-0819

## Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network Launches “Spotlight Stewardship”

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network, a coalition of 19 large landowners and land managers in the Santa Cruz Mountains allied to support good land stewardship on both public and private lands, today announced an education initiative for community leaders, elected officials and other influential figures about unique environmental issues facing the region.

Called **Spotlight Stewardship: Santa Cruz Mountains**, the initiative will begin accepting applications on February 1 for its inaugural academy. The curriculum will include field studies on a variety of topics spread over four days, and classroom instruction located at SCMSN members’ properties in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The inaugural class will include up to 20 members.

“Stewardship issues are often complex and often require cooperation between public and private sectors,” said Dylan Skybrook, manager of the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network. “The Santa Cruz Mountains Network made immense strides toward collaboration since being founded in 2015, and we think it’s time to reach out. The Spotlight Stewardship classes are a way to share information about the stewardship issues we face in the Santa Cruz Mountains.”

Spotlight Stewardship topics include timber and forest health management; fire prevention and management; water quality and supply; sensitive species, wildlife corridors and working lands; agricultural, ranching and environmental resources; responsible recreation and public access; and cannabis cultivation.

“There are immense public benefits to well-stewarded lands -- from clean and adequate water supply to healthy economies,” said Terry Corwin, president of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, a member of the SCMSN. “We want to help promote understanding of these values and engage decision-makers and influencers in a provocative dialogue, inspiring action that promotes excellent resource outcomes.”

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network is an unprecedented collaboration between public, private and nonprofit groups that stretches from the San Francisco Peninsula to the Pajaro Valley. It aims to enhance water quality and watershed health, protect habitat and biological diversity, provide access to public land and build citizen engagement throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, and promotes a wide range of beneficial uses of the land, including ecological, economic, recreational, aesthetic, cultural and spiritual.

SCMSN members have collaborated on nearly two dozen projects, ranging from the Pescadero Marsh to Mt. Umunhum. For more information about the SCMSN and a list of members or to apply to participate in “Spotlight Stewardship”, visit [www.scmsn.net](http://www.scmsn.net).

