



URBAN OPEN SPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CORNER – FEBRUARY 2019



When Measure Q was passed by voters in 2014, the Open Space Authority made a commitment to invest in nature within our communities and created the Measure Q Urban Open Space & Environmental Education Grant Programs. Here is an update from one of the funded programs.

Environmental Education Through “Park Crawls” - Bay Area Older Adults



One local organization is getting seniors outside and teaching them about nature. Bay Area Older Adults is a local nonprofit dedicated to improving health and wellness of older adults through active living, lifelong learning, and fostering social bonds.

The organization received \$8K in funding through the Open Space Authority's Measure Q Environmental Education Grant Program to host a series of “Park Crawls,” educational hikes in local parks and preserves. Each hike is led by a knowledgeable guide, who shares information about the local environment, wildlife, and history. The hikes include lunch and transportation, covered by the grant program. Attendees are asked to wear something green, to share their dedication to protecting our green spaces.

Bay Area Older Adults is no stranger to outdoor events - in the last six years, they have hosted 98 walks in more 30 parks and 39 trails, in Santa Clara County alone. More than 3,000 older adults have walked 9,200 miles on their recent outings. Founder Anne Ferguson said she was inspired to start the organization by her own grandparents who were always active, and shared their love of nature with her through outdoor activities including birding, foraging mushrooms, and watching butterflies.

Since the grant was awarded, the organization has completed 5 of the 8 proposed group events, plus one additional classroom-based lecture on mountain lions, hosted by Open Space Authority volunteer, Michael Hundt. There are three more educational park crawls coming in 2019, all in the Authority's open space preserves, and other events scheduled throughout the year.

To find out more about Bay Area Older Adults and future Park Crawl events, check out their website www.bayareaolderadults.org