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Edgehill Mountain

Established: 1985

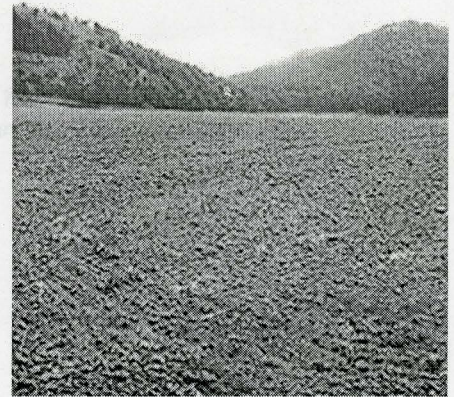
Location: Kensington, between Ulloa and Vasquez

Bus: L to West Portal, walk to Kensington Way

Contact: Joan Kingery or Mary McDermott, (415) 753-8373

Edgehill Mountain is part of a western San Francisco greenbelt which stretches through the center of the city, connecting Mt. Davidson, Hawk Hill, Twin Peaks, and the area around Laguna Honda reservoir. Originally part of Adolph Sutro's San Miguel Ranch, the property was sold following his death in 1898. After the land became one of the city's first subdivisions, known as Claremont Court, houses were built on the mountain's western and southern slopes. The first major problems began in 1952 and '53 when winter rains sent part of Edgehill Way and one home sliding down the mountain. In 1985, Edgehill Mountain Park was established when the city purchased one acre of the mountain's undeveloped western slope and designated the area an Open Space Park. In 1997, a slope above some newly constructed homes collapsed during rainstorm, cascading mud and rock onto the houses below and sending an unmistakable warning that the park could not survive the environmental destruction generated by further residential development.

Source: Edgehill Mountain Open Space Committee



To protect the area, the community, represented by the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association, formed the Edgehill Mt. Open Space Committee (EMOSC), a subcommittee. Its goal was to acquire seven additional lots adjacent to the park and the proposal for acquisition was submitted by EMOSC's Joan Kingery, Mary McDermott, Tim Colen and Stephen Suacci. It has garnered a commitment from the Open Space Citizen Advisory Committee in its last three budgets--\$355,000 in seed funding and the challenge to match city funds at 50% the project cost. The OSCAC is also in the process of purchasing a second lot to enlarge the park's Kensington Way entrance and make it possible to construct a traverse to the beautiful but less accessible upper areas. To date, neighborhood benefactors have pledged \$300,000 toward matching the OSCAC funding, and EMOSC has received pro bono professional services worth thousands of dollars as well as more than 2000 hours of work by volunteers.

Joining with the Recreation and Park Department in a public/private stewardship to restore, enhance, and maintain the park, volunteer residents devote their monthly workdays to renewing trails, eliminating non-native invasive plants and planting some of the 18 indigenous plants unique to this region. To involve young people in learning about and protecting the environment, EMOSC is working with local

schools and youth organizations. At nearby McAteer, Hoover and West Portal Schools, students in science and ecology classes have used the park as an environmental laboratory and Boy Scouts have involved their troops in the restoration project as part of earning their Eagle Scout badges in community leadership.

On their first trip Edgehill Mountain, visitors are often surprised to find this oasis natural beauty in the middle of the city. The wooded hillside presents a stunning view of Mt. Davidson, the Sunset, and, in the distance, the deep blue Pacific. Red tailed hawks hunt in the area and nest in its pine trees. Says Kingery, "We want to preserve this unique spot in the center of the city for residents who enjoy the peace and charm of its setting-- now and in the future."

– **Jeanne Alexander**, *Neighborhood Parks Council*

Go to L to West Portal, walk to Kensington Way
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