



NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eleven Miles of Phenomenal Trails Built in Just Three Months at Pismo Preserve

Safe, Sustainable & Sensational

On April 7th, 2016, just three months after the start of construction, over eleven (11) miles of brand new and expanded trails on the Pismo Preserve were completed. The trails were constructed with a mini-excavator and small professional crew, with the outstanding support of 20 to 30 volunteers per day, five days per week since January 6th, 2016. The Land Conservancy and its partners set out with the goal to create a trail system that would be *safe* for all visitors, *sustainable* to protect fragile natural resources and reduce maintenance costs, and *sensational* and fun for all who traverse the new tread. The new trails meet or exceed the expectations of all involved. Volunteers braved the rain, the heat wave in February, rugged terrain, and the eight-foot tall mustard plants that grew this spring, and they never stopped smiling. There is still a fair amount of finishing work that needs to take place, but the vast majority of the work has been completed.

“I am truly inspired by the work our trail building team completed on the Pismo Preserve. The highly skilled management by our project leaders and equipment operators, the outstanding coordination provided by our partners such as CCCMB, and the dedicated hard work of our volunteers, all came together seamlessly in an effort that will last for generations. The trails meander through idyllic oak woodlands and quiet canyons, and then emerge onto ridges and hilltops with some of the most dramatic views of the Pacific Ocean, Edna Valley and the Five Cities. Our team worked hard to create a trail system for everyone while treading lightly on the land. We are all proud of what has been accomplished and look forward to the day it will be open to all.” - Kaila Dettman, Land Conservancy’s Executive Director

In the end, 6300 volunteer hours of work by over 230 volunteers made this project happen efficiently, effectively, and at a low cost to the community. Some individual volunteers served over 100 shifts at four hours per shift. The trail build project was made possible by the outstanding support and help provided by Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers (CCCMB), San Luis Obispo Open Space and Trails (SLOPOST), RideNipomo, Atascadero Horsemen’s Association, Backcountry Horsemen’s Association, Rocky Mountain Horse Club, Tom Becker Landscaping, and Wallace Group.

“The volunteer effort during the Pismo Preserve’s Trail Project was nothing short of incredible! I feel so lucky to have shared the experience of designing, and building an entirely new trail system with so many wonderful people from our community. The project went so smoothly thanks in large part to our project partners and the dedication of so many individuals. This project was the highlight of my trail building career.” – Scott Couture, Land Conservancy’s Field Crew Leader

The Pismo Preserve Remains Closed to the Public

Although the trails are largely complete, the Pismo Preserve remains closed to the public. The trails were built in advance of the parking areas to give the trails time to “season” or settle over time. Heavy use of the trails too soon can damage the work performed by our trail-building team. The Preserve also remains closed because the parking areas, restrooms and roadway improvements are required to be completed prior to community use. It has taken time to design and permit these improvements, and the sensitive natural resources found at the site

have added to the complexity of the project. The Land Conservancy hopes to open the Preserve to the public by late 2016, however the timeline is contingent on final permitting, construction scheduling, and funding. The Land Conservancy is currently seeking in-kind services from local contractors to supplement funding already secured to support construction of the amenities on the Preserve. The minor use and coastal development permits have been completed and approved by the County of San Luis Obispo. Once the subsequent building permits and other agency reviews are approved and completed, professional contractors will begin construction of the parking lots and other amenities.

How to get Involved

There are still volunteer opportunities to help with trail finishing work, preparation for construction, and general property maintenance and restoration. Plans are taking shape to establish a volunteer docent program at the site. These docents will be trained to talk with visitors about the property and its resources. Because Pismo Preserve is still closed to the public, we are offering regular guided hikes for Land Conservancy members, donors, and volunteers. Visit www.lcslo.org/events to RSVP online.

About the Pismo Preserve

Thanks to community support and thousands of contributions from donors and volunteers, The Land Conservancy raised over \$12 million dollars in a matter of months to purchase and permanently protect this exceptional property in 2014. As the backdrop to the Five Cities, the Pismo Preserve offered an exceptional opportunity to protect important wildlife habitat, preserve the scenic corridor along Highway 101, and offer a truly one-of-a-kind outdoor experience for visitors and residents alike. The 900-acre coastal ranchland, with over 11 miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails is forever conserved for the benefit of people and wildlife. To make a tax deductible charitable donation to The Land Conservancy to support the Pismo Preserve and other exceptional projects, please visit www.lcslo.org.

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County is a local nonprofit land trust working to protect and restore local landscapes for the benefit of people and wildlife. The land trust's efforts help protect drinking water sources, prevent poorly planned development, restore wildlife habitat and promote family farmlands and ranches in our region. The Land Conservancy has led collaborative efforts to permanently protect over 18,400 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. Details at www.LCSLO.org or call (805) 544-9096.