



NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Spirit of Giving Spurs Locals to Match \$55K for Pismo Preserve

The \$10,000 or “a little something” as local philanthropist, Richard Alberts called it, spurred local businesses and individuals to continue pledging matched funds to The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County’s **Pismo Preserve** project to the tune of \$55,000.

In late February, Alberts challenged the community to stand behind the efforts of acquiring this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for public open space. His \$10,000 dollar-per-dollar match was quickly met in one week’s time.

Since then, individual donors and local businesses have lengthened the challenge until the most recent deadline this past April 15th where an additional \$31,000 was pledged by Kim Scheulen and Bob Wells and local hotelier Henry Myers of Kon Tiki Inn, then successfully matched by individuals.

The Land Conservancy has extended the “Double Your Impact” challenge as another local business, Best Western Casa Grande Inn and individual donor Mary Lou Wilhelm spur on the matching challenge for an additional \$14,000 total pledge.

These matching gifts ensure that additional contributions from other donors will also be matched. For every dollar given by a community donor, \$2 will be put towards the Pismo Preserve project.

To successfully create the proposed Pismo Preserve, The Land Conservancy must raise \$12 million by July 2014. The organization is requesting \$10.3 million from state agencies and regional funding sources but the remaining \$1.7 million gap leaves the project’s future in the hands of the community.

To date, The Land Conservancy has raised \$300,000 (18%) towards its community fundraising goal of \$1.7 million.

“We are honored that our donors have shown such great leadership and generosity. They sparked the creation of this ongoing matching challenge and the response has been tremendous! We have received nearly 300 donations, both big and small, since we went public with the Pismo Preserve project. We have individuals and organized groups going door-to-door to talk about this project and starting their own grassroots fundraising. It’s inspiring to witness this energy. What this shows us is that the community wants this project to succeed,” said Kaila Dettman, Executive Director

Land Conservancy staff is feeling confident about the \$8 million funding being requested from state agencies but won't have final approval until June at the earliest. The \$2.3 million being requested from local governments and regional agencies is actively being pursued. Community members can help by attending public meetings, sending letters of support to elected officials, and setting up meetings with local leaders.

The Land Conservancy is hosting a Community Rally in support of Pismo Preserve on May 4th during Art in the Park at Dinosaur Caves. Attendees will be able to draft letters of support, donate via a silent auction, and get updated information about the project.

The Land Conservancy's proposed Pismo Preserve is the first in a series of conservation projects over the next five years under its Heart & Soil Campaign, a five-year plan aimed at permanently protecting 15,000 acres of San Luis Obispo County's most critical landscapes.

The proposed **Pismo Preserve** would transform a 900-acre private ranch above Pismo Beach into a public open space for outdoor recreation opportunities including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and bird watching.

More information and a video tour of the proposed Pismo Preserve are available at The Land Conservancy's website WWW.LCSLO.ORG/PISMOPRESERVE.

Matching Challenge by the Numbers

Richard Alberts - \$10,000

Kim Scheulen and Bob Wells - \$11,000

Kon Tiki Inn (Henry Myers) - \$20,000

Best Western Casa Grande Inn - \$5,000

Mary Lou Wilhelm - \$9,000

TOTAL MATCH CHALLENGE PLEDGES-\$55,000

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. Now in its 30th year, The Land Conservancy has led collaborative efforts to permanently protect over 14,500 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. Details at www.LCSLO.org or call (805) 544-9096.

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