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## PRESS RELEASE

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### NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2013

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### **Octagon Barn Center Awarded \$263K** Major Site Changes Planned for 2014

**S**an Luis Obispo, CA – The Land Conservancy’s Octagon Barn Center was awarded \$263,538 in funding from the 2012-2013 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) administered by the California Natural Resources Agency and the California Transportation Commission.

The grant funds Roadside Recreation amenities at the Octagon Barn Center including the installation of 150 trees, over 1,000 shrubs, and a ¼-mile walking path. Funding also covers grading, electrical, irrigation and water system improvements required to use the site. The grant helps offset the impacts of the Los Osos Valley Road Interchange project, and provides direct benefits to residents and community members impacted by the transportation modification. In partnership with San Luis Obispo County Parks and Recreation, The Land Conservancy plans to develop the site as a staging area for the Bob Jones Pathway. An additional \$150,000 needs to be raised to cover fire sprinklers and electrical infrastructure requirements to make the Barn safe for public use.

Community groups and individuals often inquire about educational tours or are interested in renting the Octagon Barn for private events. Bicyclists use the site as a stopping or meet-up place because there is no southbound staging area on that side of the highway. New stories pop up from conversations with old-timers that help fill in gaps about the Barn’s vibrant history. These are obvious signs that the future Octagon Barn Center will fulfill important community needs and become a beloved icon of our local character. Yet, funding this ambitious project remains nearly as challenging as the decade-long process of saving the sagging structure from crumbling. Today, The Land Conservancy is one step closer to opening the Octagon Barn Center for community use.

Statewide, 37 projects totaling \$10 million are being recommended for funding. All projects contribute to the mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities.

With this state-awarded grant for roadside recreation amenities, the future has never looked brighter for the only 8-sided Barn on the Central Coast.

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**The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County** is a local nonprofit land trust working to protect and restore special 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. Since its formation in 1984, The Land Conservancy has led collaborative efforts to permanently protect over 14,000 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. Details at [www.LCSLO.org](http://www.LCSLO.org) or call (805) 544-9096.

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