



NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAND CONSERVANCY SEALS THE DEAL ON PISMO PRESERVE

\$12 Million Raised in the Nick of Time

San Luis Obispo, CA – It was down to the wire for the team at The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County as they huddled around the conference table awaiting news from their leadership staff, who attended the state Wildlife Conservation Board meeting, to hear if the \$4 million dollar grant was awarded to complete the ambitious goal to raise \$12 million dollars to purchase the 900-acre ranch known as the Pismo Preserve. The deadline to raise the money is the end of August.

With a resounding cry, “We did it!” Executive Director, Kaila Dettman, announced that The Land Conservancy just completed a historical and unprecedented coup to raise \$12 million dollars in just six months.

“It was exciting to address the Wildlife Conservation Board in the State Capitol knowing that so many people back home were anxiously waiting for the news that would seal the fate of the Pismo Preserve. I am inspired by the Wildlife Conservation Board's decision to support our community's project and cannot wait to close this deal on behalf of the people and wildlife of our County. Make no mistake, the project spoke for itself and was a compelling place to protect, but our community's enthusiasm and outstanding support made this an easy decision for the Wildlife Conservation Board,” says Kaila Dettman, Executive Director of The Land Conservancy.

Boasting coastal ridgelines with stunning panoramic views, serene oak woodlands, and over ten miles of existing trails for hikers, bikers, and equestrians, this property is adjacent to scenic Highway 101, just off Mattie Road in Pismo Beach and serves as a backdrop to the Five Cities region. The Land Conservancy expects to open this free, world-class amenity to the public in 2015.

The campaign for the Pismo Preserve began with a silent phase with board members and staff raising enough funds for the initial option agreement. Then once the option agreement was in place, The Land Conservancy began a daunting endeavor to gain support from businesses, individuals, and members throughout the community. Once the word about the Pismo Preserve got out, community groups and individuals started their own fundraising efforts and became Land Conservancy ambassadors because they were so compelled to see this project succeed.

“We succeeded in meeting an ambitious fundraising goal in a short time because the entire community embraced this vision and made it their own,” says Herb Kandel, Immediate Past President of The Land Conservancy.

Escrow will close during the month of September and in the meantime, the staff will continue working on this project to get the preserve open and ready for public use. In the upcoming months, plans are underway to meet with stakeholders in the community to design trails and plan for the staging area, parking lot, signage, permits and all the behind-the-scenes actions that are necessary, while the community anxiously waits to set foot upon the ten miles of scenic trails.

For those still wanting to contribute to the project, The Land Conservancy is still accepting donations which will go towards the site improvements rather than the land acquisition. Every dollar raised beyond the \$12 million will enhance the opening of the park.

“Many people representing diverse sectors of our community recognized this phenomenal opportunity and participated wholeheartedly with donations and volunteer support. Elected officials demonstrated visionary leadership and the highly professional and dedicated staff of The Land Conservancy exhibited a herculean effort to meet this goal. To all those who contributed to this success: listen to the voices of future generations in the wind on the ridge top of the Pismo Preserve whispering thank you,” says Kandel.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

With world-class outdoor recreation opportunities for locals and tourists, preservation of sweeping scenic vistas, protection of drinking water and filtration of runoff onto beaches, and as a destination for healthy active lifestyles - the proposed Pismo Preserve project has received no opposition and remains a beloved community project.

As a regional public park, Pismo Preserve will provide many benefits to residents and visitors throughout the county. The project will most significantly impact the 5-Cities Area which is the most densely populated region in San Luis Obispo County, but has no upland trail system for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Further, two communities adjacent to the proposed project - Grover Beach and Oceano - are classified as disadvantaged communities (those having median household incomes at or under 80% of the California Median Household Income of \$61,400 according to the 2008-2012 census) and will directly benefit from the recreation, health, and environmental benefits provided by the permanent protection of this open space. As a free amenity for the public which protects air and water quality, the Pismo Preserve will contribute to San Luis Obispo County residents' quality of life.

PISMO PRESERVE FUNDING BREAKDOWN -\$12 MILLION GOAL

STATE AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS

\$4,000,000 –California State Coastal Conservancy
\$4,000,000 -Wildlife Conservation Board

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

San Luis Obispo County – \$1,500,000
City of Pismo Beach - \$900,000
Regional Water Quality Control Board – \$350,000
City of San Luis Obispo - \$75,000

City of Arroyo Grande - \$40,000
City of Grover Beach - \$5,000

PUBLIC DONATIONS

Private foundations, local businesses, and individuals - +\$1,230,000

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

San Luis Council of Governments - \$175,000

For a link to pictures of Pismo Preserve available for your use with appropriate credit, click here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wj90iqibghnpvxx/AAeQWB8mKnJs2t1EFyjp8oMa?dl=0>

More information is available at The Land Conservancy's website with a video tour of the proposed Pismo Preserve www.LCSLO.org/pismopreserve.

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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