HISTORIC FIRST AT EAGLE RANCH
OUR LARGEST DONATED CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Three thousand two hundred and fifty-five acres of rolling oak woodlands, shimmering grasslands, and cascading waterfalls in North County will forever be protected through a gift by Eagle Ranch, LLC. The protection of Eagle Ranch is the largest conservation easement gift in the Land Conservancy’s history and was made possible by the generosity of the Smith Family who has owned the ranch for decades.

The easement covers 36 separate parcels containing 3,255 acres of pristine grazing land and the iconic Eagle Peak which was named for the eaglets discovered on its rocky crest many years ago, according to local legend. The property, located on the western side of Highway 101 south of Atascadero, is adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest and contains oak woodlands, oak savannah, sagebrush, chaparral, productive rangeland and the headwaters of Atascadero Creek. The conservation easement area is not part of the north ranch property proposed for annexation into the city of Atascadero.

Brothers Greg and Jeff Smith, two of the principals of Eagle Ranch, LLC and descendants of family members who purchased the ranch more than a half century ago, note the conservation agreement reflects their family’s commitment to protecting the property for future generations. “Eagle Ranch is a very special place for our family,” said Greg Smith. “This agreement has been more than ten years in the making, and it is so gratifying to finally realize our longtime dream of permanent preservation.” Smith added that Eagle Ranch currently supports a modest herd of cattle and will remain a working cattle ranch into the foreseeable future.

Protecting Eagle Ranch with an agricultural conservation easement provides numerous benefits to our community. Eagle Ranch remains in private ownership, although The Land Conservancy will host one docent-led hike on the property per year. To get a bird’s eye view of the property, visit https://youtu.be/oC5TlKsDwLU.

The Smith Family has made a visionary and meaningful contribution to our community by voluntarily donating perpetual protections over their pristine and beautiful land.

—Kaila Dettman, Executive Director
SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANK YOU
• Amber Cross for donating her time and musical talent during our Annual Reception.
• Turley Wine Cellars, J. Dusi Wines, and Niner Wine Estates for donating wine for our guests at the Annual Reception.
• Joe Bowman from SLIME and Genuine Innovations for providing giveaways for the Pismo Preserve Trail Building Volunteer Appreciation BBQ.
• Paul and Linda Malakar for donating a brand new pair of binoculars.
• Special Events & Fun Committee Mary Sampson, Kathy Cohon, Peggy Penney, and April Paletas for all their efforts in spearheading the Annual Reception party planning and food logistics.
• CCCMB and SLOPOST for all their support with the Pismo Preserve trail building project.
• Lynda and Sid Orlando for donating bookshelves, cabinet, arc welder, and an office chair.
• Hal and Kathleen Schatt for donating a painting of the late Kathleen Goddard Jones.
• Roxsund for donating crushed asphalt for work at Pismo Preserve.
• KCI for donating hydraulic ditching services at Pismo Preserve.

CONGRATULATIONS
• Scott Couture and Hilary Lisenberg on the arrival of their baby boy!

FAREWELL
• Wendie David, LCSLO’s former Major Gifts Officer, has relocated with her family out of state. Their family is expecting their second child any day now. We wish Wendie and family the best of luck!
• Stacey Smith, LCSLO’s former Conservation Project Manager, has also relocated with her family out of state. Their family is happy to be roaming in the Midwest. We wish Stacey and her family the best in their adventure!
• Thank you and good luck on your new endeavors to our restoration crew members Elise Robinette, Jaryd Block, Sara Seiler, and Michael Byrd.

WISH LIST
• Tractor (John Deere or Kubota, mower attachment desirable)
• Inclinometers (examples: Suunto PM-3/360 Clinometer or Trupulse 201)
• Cuddeback Black Flash Model C3 wildlife camera
• EZ Up canopy tents
• Samsung Galaxy tablet with waterproof case
• Wood chipper
• Santa Maria style BBQ Grill
• Check out our Wish List on www.amazon.com and enter “land conservancy” to find us

Donated goods are tax-deductible. Call us at 544-9096 or e-mail LC@LCSLO.org.

PISTON PRESERVE
MILES OF TRAILS CREATED FOR OUTDOOR ENJOYMENT

If you had told Scott Couture back on January 5th when the first crew of volunteers showed up for work, that come April, we would have 11 miles of completed trail on the Pismo Preserve, he would have laughed. Just wishful thinking on his part! Come April the trail system we envisioned, since the purchase of the Pismo Preserve, is essentially in place. With an amazing machine operator, our flag lines became a serpentine bench winding its way through beautiful oak woodlands to stunning ocean vistas. We had the help of 230+ volunteers who put in an incredible 6,000 volunteer hours to turn a rough cut into a finished trail.

The trail system has truly changed the feel of the property. To see the Pismo Preserve through a narrow tread, a bench wide enough for your feet and big enough for your mind to wander, is a different experience. The place feels a little less touched, and a little more a part of the natural setting. An organic line under the canopy of the oaks suddenly feels like it has always been there, and lets us know that we are welcome, too.

We still have several sections of trail to refine and complete, a few technical drainage crossings and a bridge or two to build. But these projects feel like icing on the cake. With small groups of volunteers, these projects should be finished over the next few months. 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. 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. Thanks to all the volunteers and supporters who made the Pismo Preserve Trail Building Project a resounding success!
HONORING A NATURALIST, ARTIST, & POET

MARGUERITE COSTIGAN

Marguerite Costigan on the Learning Among the Oaks trail with students from Santa Margarita Elementary School. © LATO

Marguerite has inspired countless kids to explore, learn and care for nature. If you’ve read Marguerite’s poems, you’ve been touched by her remarkable ability to use words, not many, to express emotions that most of us have but feel powerless to communicate. For her many years of LATO support, Marguerite will be honored, hopefully this June, with the dedication of a special oak educational landscape in development at the LATO trail entrance. Thanks to the Atascadero Unified School District, Penny Nyunt of Las Pilitas Nursery, garden designer Jacki Williams, and many volunteers, this should be a fitting tribute to our beloved “Chief Nature Detective,” and dear friend. If you’d like to be invited to the dedication, please contact Bev Gingg, bevg@learningamongtheoaks.org

OAK AMBASSADORS
CLASS OF 2016

Oak Ambassadors are 5th and 6th students from Santa Margarita Elementary School who have completed nine weeks of specialized youth environmental leadership classes to prepare them for service as nature guides on the LATO trail. They are now busy guiding spring nature hikes on the LATO trail.

CHARITABLE GIFT FOR COMMUNITY SPACE

OCTAGON BARN CENTER

The trust of the late Harold J. Miossi, a San Luis Obispo rancher, public servant, and tireless advocate for both the environment and conservation, recently awarded the Octagon Barn Center with a $250,000 gift. The Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust has a long and dedicated history of supporting multiple Land Conservancy projects including: $10,000 towards permanent conservation of the 530-acre Highland Ranch, which protects prime farmland and scenic views in Los Osos Valley; $100,000 towards the purchase of the 900-acre Pismo Preserve property which will serve as an outstanding public park open to hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians; and $10,000 in financial support for the engineering designs and permits needed to renovate the Milking Parlor building adjacent to the Octagon Barn.

The Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust’s visionary contribution to the Octagon Barn Center gets us one big step closer to opening the Barn as a cherished community gathering place. The Barn stands as a unique and iconic symbol of our County’s rich agricultural history, and reminds us of the critical role that agriculture still plays to this day. It is also a symbol of the positive impact working landscapes and natural areas have on our quality of life. Harold J. Miossi’s passion for our local lands lives on in the legacy gifts his trust has made to our organization. I am deeply grateful for his contribution to the Octagon Barn Center Project.” - Kaila Dettman, Executive Director

It is an exciting time in the evolution of the Octagon Barn Center’s creation. We recently started construction on the pumphouse installation and water system. We are on track to open the Barn to the public in early 2017, but we need the help of our donors, supporters and partners. Of $5,300,000 in projected costs, we have only $540,000 left that we need to raise by the end of 2016 to get the barn doors open. To make a contribution directly to the Octagon Barn Center Project, please visit our website or give us a call and note that you want your gift to go to the Barn.

HOW DOES THE BARN BENEFIT LCSLO & LAND CONSERVATION?

The Octagon Barn Center is expected to host thousands of people and hundreds of events and activities each year. Exhibits and docents will provide extensive information to the public about our natural areas, sustainable agriculture, and the work of The Land Conservancy and its community of supporters and volunteers. Any additional revenue from events that is not invested back into the facility will be used to fund land conservation throughout the County.

Most importantly, the Octagon Barn Center will serve as an educational venue, a place where children and adults alike can learn about our local food systems, the importance of protecting nature, and how to get involved in local land conservation.

Construction begins at the Octagon Barn Center! Pete Jenny (Honorary Board Trustee), Chris Helenius (Board President), and B.K. Richard (Board Trustee) at the site for a mini ground-breaking ceremony. To view project plans, visit octagonbarn.org. © Kaila Dettman
NEW FACES AT LCSLO

KYLE WALSH
Conservation Project Manager

Kyle grew up exploring the forests and streams of New Jersey’s Sourland Mountains. He learned to enjoy working on and for the land as a farm hand and with an agricultural non-profit in New Jersey. With the West calling, he moved to California and completed a graduate program at San Diego State University focused on land use change and rangeland conservation in San Luis Obispo County.

In addition to his graduate studies, he worked as a program assistant for the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey. Kyle worked with a team to acquire land and build New Jersey’s first incubator farm designed to offer low-cost acreage to new sustainable growers.

From oak woodlands to rocky shorelines and coastal peaks, he joined The Land Conservancy to help protect and conserve the County’s diverse landscapes. In his free time he enjoys trail running, hiking, playing guitar, and traveling with friends and family.

JIM BRABECK
Board Trustee

Jim Brabeck serves as President/CEO of the San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company, a 2,700 member agricultural supply cooperative.

Jim has served on numerous boards and councils including his most notable service of twenty years as an appointed Outside Director of Farm Credit West. He currently serves on Cal Poly’s College of Agriculture Advisory Council and Board of Directors of the SLO Community Foundation. He is an active Rotarian and past President of the Rotary Club.

Jim has quite a few accolades and accomplishments, the most recent one being the 2015 Agriculturist of the Year for SLO County. Professionally, Jim has owned and operated a nursery and landscaping business, farmed hay, and served as water conservation manager for the Atascadero Mutual Water Company. Jim served two terms on the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, 2005 to 2013. In addition to LCSLO, Jim currently serves on six other local boards among others.

JIM PATTERSON
Board Trustee

For Jim Patterson, public service is a way of life. He has served his community and led by example throughout the 30+ years he has lived and worked in SLO County. A native Californian, Jim attended Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and graduated with a degree in Natural Resources Management. He did graduate work in horticulture and forestry and is a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture.

Professionally, Jim has owned and operated a nursery and landscaping business, farmed hay, and served as water conservation manager for the Atascadero Mutual Water Company. Jim lives in rural Atascadero and enjoys the outdoors including hiking, biking and kayaking.

Please visit lcslo.org/board/jimypatterson/ to read more.
SAVE THE DATE!

SLO ULTRA
Saturday | September 10, 2016

Do you like to run? Or hike? Would you like special access to a gorgeous stretch of the Central Coast that is normally inaccessible? Take an up-close and personal view of special LCSLO property located in beautiful Wild Cherry Canyon. The SLO Ultra, which will benefit LCSLO will take place in Wild Cherry Canyon and features a 50-mile Ultra Trail Run, a Trail Marathon, Trail Half-Marathon and a 5-mile Trail Run. Even if you aren’t participating in the run, come out and cheer for the participants. Fun, BBQ, and live Bluegrass Festival await you! Visit sloultra.com for more info.

EVENTS CALENDAR

MEMBERS-ONLY HIKE AT PISMO PRESERVE
Wednesday | May 18 | 3:00-6:00 pm

Summer Solstice Hike Tuesday | June 21 | 6:00-8:00 pm
Exclusive opportunity for current Land Conservancy members. Get a sneak preview of the Pismo Preserve on a hike up to the ridgetop at Pismo Preserve for expansive views of the Central Coast. Space is very limited. First-come, first served reservation. RSVP required at www.lcslo.org/events.

LATIO NATIVE OAK EDUCATION DEDICATION CEREMONY
Sunday | June 5 | 4:00 pm
The dedication of the LATO native oak education landscape planted in honor of Marguerite Costigan will take place at the Learning Among the Oaks trail entrance in Santa Margarita. To attend, please contact bevg@learningamongtheoaks.org or 805-459-3138 for details.

KATHLEEN GODDARD JONES MEMORIAL HIKE AT BLACK LAKE
Saturday | July 9 | time TBD
In coordination with the Dunes Center, take a hike through our Black Lake Ecological Area in honor of the late Kathleen Goddard Jones’ birthday. In the 1960s, Kathleen Goddard Jones worked for the preservation of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes as open space for the enjoyment of the general public. Contact the Dunes Center at (805) 343-2455 or www.dunescenter.org for additional info or to reserve your spot.

APPLE FESTIVAL DINING EXPERIENCE
Saturday | September 17 | 5-8:30 pm
The festival, hosted by Avila Valley Barn is a celebration dinner held to celebrate our micro region of apple farms. The festival will benefit LCSLO. For tickets or more info, visit www.avilavalleybarn.com.

We hope to add more events and hiking opportunities in the upcoming weeks. Please check back on our website for updated event information www.lcslo.org/events or on our Facebook page.