



NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Kaila Dettman, *Executive Director* (805) 544-9096

City of Pismo Beach Awards \$900,000 to Pismo Preserve

The Land Conservancy's proposed Pismo Preserve, which aims to transform a 900-acre private ranch above Pismo Beach into a public open space for world-class outdoor recreation, was awarded \$900,000 by the Pismo Beach City Council during last night's standing-room only public meeting. The award included a mix of unallocated monies from LBID, Parks, and the City's General Fund.

"The Pismo Beach Council showed tremendous leadership and visionary thinking by allocating nearly a million dollars towards the Pismo Preserve," said Kaila Dettman, Land Conservancy Executive Director. *"This will send a positive and powerful message to other project contributors. We are elated!"*

To successfully create Pismo Preserve, The Land Conservancy must raise \$12 million by August 2014. The \$12 million project cost covers the bargain sale property acquisition, infrastructure improvements, and a maintenance endowment. All are requirements of opening the site for community use.

FUNDING STATUS

Including the funding from the City of Pismo Beach, The Land Conservancy has secured \$6.5 million with an additional \$4 million request pending from the Wildlife Conservation Board. The remaining \$1.5 million is expected to come from a combination of sources including the Regional Water Quality Control Board, regional Business Improvement Districts, the City of San Luis Obispo, and private donors. With \$500,000 raised via private donations in under six months, the project represents the most ambitious community fundraising effort undertaken in The Land Conservancy's history.

"No other nonprofit organization in San Luis Obispo County history has ever undertaken such a herculean fundraising effort in such a short amount of time for a project which benefits all county residents," claimed Land Conservancy Director of Development, Wende David.

The Pismo Preserve project has the widespread support of elected officials at the federal, state, regional, and local level and of various leaders of the business industry including the Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo Chambers of Commerce and the Pismo Beach Hospitality Association.

"In the past, major land conservation projects like Hearst Ranch and Carrizo Plains were funded 90% or more through State funding. But those days are over," noted Kara Woodruff, Land Conservancy Trustee and longtime conservation advocate.

PROJECT DEADLINE

By negotiating an escrow extension, The Land Conservancy now has until August to raise the remaining \$2M required to complete the deal. (The \$4M award from the Wildlife Conservation Board will be determined at an August 28 Board meeting in Sacramento.)

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

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.

“The Pismo Preserve will contribute to the environmental health, economic health, and social health of our communities,” noted Land Conservancy Board President Herb Kandel.

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 project in the region.

PISMO PRESERVE FUNDING BREAKDOWN

\$12 million – Total Needed

\$8 million Goal - State Agencies

\$4 million – California State Coastal Conservancy COMPLETED

\$4 million – Wildlife Conservation Board PENDING

\$2.3 million Goal - Local & Regional Government

\$2.045 million – SLO County Parks, City of Pismo Beach, AG, Grover Beach COMPLETED

\$.255 million – City of Pismo, SLO; Regional Water Quality Control Board

\$1.7 million Goal – Private Donors, Businesses, Foundations

\$0.5 million – COMPLETED

\$1.2 million – Major donors, foundations, local businesses, and community contributors

\$1.5 million – Current Funding Gap

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

San Luis Obispo County – \$1,100,000

City of Pismo Beach - \$900,000

City of Arroyo Grande - \$40,000

City of Grover Beach - \$5,000

City of San Luis Obispo - Undetermined

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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