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PRESS EVENT

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Contact:

Brian Stark, Land Conservancy Executive Director (805) 544-9096 x12

Jan DiLeo, SLO County Senior Park Planner & Bob Jones Trail (805) 781-4089

Octagon Barn Center Aims to Double Size as Last Shingle is Nailed in Place

On November 12, 2008, The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County unveiled site plans and partnership agreements with local government agencies to effectively double the size of the Octagon Barn Center site. The announcement came alongside the placement of the final roof shingle, signaling the end of the Barn's restoration, but The Land Conservancy still needs substantial funding to prepare the site for public use.

A conceptual agreement has been reached with CalTrans to effectively double the size of the Octagon Barn Center by providing a lease on a portion of the CalTrans property adjacent to the site. The additional two acres will be used as a parking area to service special events at the Octagon Barn Center and provide adequate parking for the trailhead.

A formal memorandum of understanding between The Land Conservancy and the County of San Luis Obispo formalizes the Octagon Barn Center as the trailhead to the Bob Jones Trail and commits county funds to the project.

The Octagon Barn Center, when completed, will include the fully restored historic Octagon Barn intended as a community gathering place, a renovated Milking Parlor for use as a classroom/meeting space, an open air plaza complete with octagon-shaped picnic tables, and the County's trailhead & staging area for the Bob Jones City to Sea Trailhead complete with ample parking, restrooms and bike racks. The Land Conservancy estimates that an additional \$200,000 worth of work and materials is needed to realize its vision of a historic but usable public amenity. *See Octagon Barn Center site plan.*

The "Great 8" major funding areas for the Octagon Barn Center include:

1. Barn Roof Panels (*completed*)
2. Restroom Facilities (*funding pending*)
3. Water System & Infrastructure
4. Site Preparation, Parking & Drainage (*partial funding pending*)
5. Barn Concrete Floor & Site Accessibility
6. Milking Parlor Structural Improvements
7. Landscaping & Site Design
8. Electric System & Lighting Plan

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County
PO Box 12206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 ~ (805) 544-9096
Fax (805) 544-5122 ~ www.lcslo.org

To date, The Land Conservancy has completed the roof and funding by the County of San Luis Obispo is pending to cover restroom and parking lot costs associated with the trailhead. Donations from the public are requested in addition to in-kind support from local businesses to cover the funding gap. Naming opportunities and donor benefits have been established. More info is available at www.OctagonBarn.org.

Spanning a century of history, today the Octagon Barn continues to build bridges between generations. As eighty year-old Ed Carson pounded the last nail into the roof this morning, teenage Eagle Scout, Jim Walker, officially donated his handmade octagonal picnic tables for community use at the Barn. Despite the generation gap, both recognize the importance of the Octagon Barn as a community icon and gathering place. *See photo of Ed Carson; Photo credit BK Richard*

Looking ahead to its 25th anniversary in 2009, Executive Director Brian Stark remarked on The Land Conservancy's new strategic plan which calls for the completion of the Barn Center by the end of next year and establishes the Land Conservancy as the premiere land trust and the voice of conservation in San Luis Obispo County.

Exciting developments at the Octagon Barn in the last several months:

- The completion of the **new Barn roof**
 - Help from **Ed Carson, BK Richard, Jim Buenrostro and other volunteers**
 - Thanks to Greg & Jane Hind of the **Hind Foundation** for funding completion of the roof
 - Thanks to **Kyle Roofing Company** for donating professional roofers.
- Partnership with **SLO County Parks and Rec** for the trailhead for Bob Jones Trail
 - Thanks to Jan DiLeo, Senior Parks Planner at SLO County
- Conceptual agreement with **Caltrans** for land for the parking lot
 - Thanks to John Maddox for his vision and commitment to the community
- Octagon Barn Center **Site Plan**
 - Thanks to **RRM Design Group** and local planners who helped us put our vision on paper
- The final phase involves **fundraising**;
 - Major donors
 - Private funding
 - In-kind business donations

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County is the preeminent local nonprofit land trust working to protect and restore lands having scenic, cultural and historic values. Our efforts help protect drinking water sources, prevent poorly planned development, restore wildlife habitat and promote family farmlands and ranches in our region. Since our formation in 1984, we have permanently protected over 9,500 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. For more information visit www.LCSLO.org or call (805) 544-9096.

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SUMMARY: San Luis Obispo's Octagon Barn Center

The historic Octagon Barn has been an important feature of the San Luis Obispo landscape for over 100 years. A true rarity, our local Barn is one of only three similar octagonal structures left standing in California. Built at the turn of the century, The Octagon Barn is a symbol of the quintessential landscape of San Luis Obispo County, paying homage to our agricultural and multicultural beginnings.

As an important historical, cultural, and architectural landmark, the Octagon Barn speaks to values we hold dear as a community. As a cultural icon and direct link to our agricultural past, it is a symbol of our community's reverence for its history. As a unique architectural form, it symbolizes our community's unique *sense of place*. As the future trailhead for the Bob Jones Trail, the Barn will also represent our community's commitment to bike-friendly transportation and recreational trails. Once fully restored, historic displays will tell the story of our region and its important agrarian roots to residents and visitors alike.

Since 1998, The Land Conservancy has led community efforts to restore this county icon. Since that time, thousands of volunteers have contributed countless hours, and hundreds of generous donors have supported the project. Today, the restoration project is reaching its conclusion and plans underway to open the Barn and its surrounding area to be known as the *San Luis Obispo Octagon Barn Center*.

Unveiled in the fall of 2009, to coincide with the Land Conservancy's 25th anniversary, the Octagon Barn Center will be a community asset that provides for local private and public events. The site will consist of the Barn itself, the Milking Parlor, an open plaza area with a small bandstand, and parking for 125 vehicles. These amenities will surely make the Barn a popular rental facility. In fact, lease income will make the Barn a self-sustaining operation once the site improvements are complete.

Today, the Barn is poised for new activity at the center of the county's life, and you can help to make it happen. Please take a moment to consider your important role in helping to complete the Barn restoration, and celebrate this symbol of our county's architectural, cultural and agricultural history.

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