



**2013-2018
STRATEGIC PLAN**

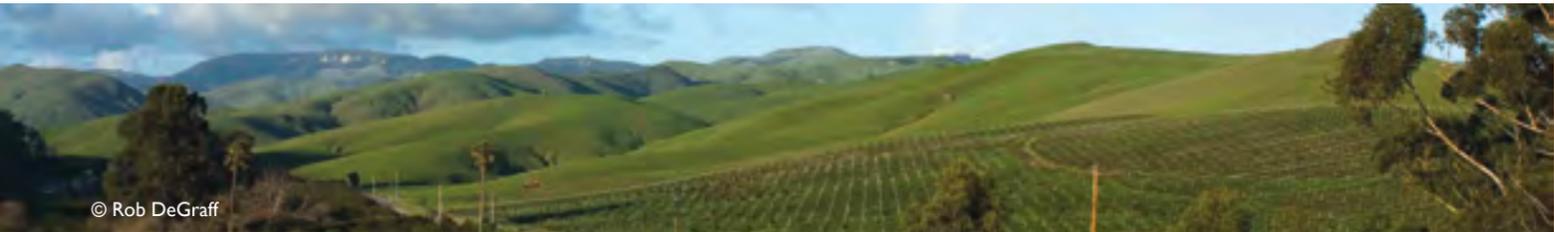




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“Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow... creation of new wilderness in the full sense of the word is impossible. —Aldo Leopold

MISSION STATEMENT

Through voluntary and collaborative measures, The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County works to permanently protect and enhance lands having important scenic, agricultural, habitat and cultural values for the benefit of people and wildlife.

VISION STATEMENT

San Luis Obispo County is composed of distinct and thriving communities surrounded by productive farms and ranches, beautiful scenery, and publicly accessible natural areas. Agriculture remains viable as a way of life; clean air and water nourish our population; future generations have access to outdoor experiences; and wildlife thrives on local lands.

CORE VALUES

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County has many important principles that guide its work. The organization emphasizes the following as core to its mission: *integrity, respect, excellence, accountability, service, inclusiveness, knowledge, and discipline.*

PLANNING AHEAD

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County works to protect local lands for wildlife, recreation, ranching, and farming. With support and involvement from our community, we will ensure that San Luis Obispo County has wild natural areas, productive family farms, clean fresh water, and stunning landscapes—forever.

The short-term future holds both exciting opportunities and considerable challenges for us. The Land Conservancy must support ongoing projects and commitments while allocating resources to develop and pursue new conservation opportunities in our county.

Throughout 2012, our leaders deliberated on the overall goals of the organization in the context of the organization’s strengths and weaknesses and the community’s pending needs. The Land Conservancy’s Board of Trustees and staff agreed that the organization’s mission, vision, and core values are in line with the needs of the community. Recognizing that there are many outstanding opportunities to implement meaningful conservation, our leaders worked to fine-tune where the organization would strategically focus its efforts and resources. As a result, the following plan was developed and will be implemented in the next five years to maximize benefit to local people and wildlife.



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CONSERVE

Goal 1 Increase the land under our protection from 14,500 to 20,000 acres by 2018 to conserve places that safeguard drinking water and wildlife habitat, provide recreation opportunities, and expand the existing network of protected landscapes in San Luis Obispo County.

Goal 2 Ensure that all land conservation projects are self-sustaining upon closing to support future stewardship needs and increase the funding available for new projects.

Goal 3 Lead regional efforts to conserve local lands, including serving in roles that support the efforts of other land trusts and government programs.

CARE

Goal 4 Raise an endowment of sufficient size by 2020 to care for conservation lands already under our watch, forever.

Goal 5 Safeguard our land holdings through registration in the Terrafirma insurance program by 2013.

Goal 6 Ensure the organization’s permanence by achieving Accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance by 2014.

Goal 7 Implement three major restoration projects by 2018 on Land Conservancy-owned properties that enhance wildlife habitat, promote biological diversity, and/or improve water quality and quantity.

Goal 8 Implement ongoing legacy restoration programs in riparian and dune habitats to foster natural resilience to climate change, improve wildlife habitat, and protect property and infrastructure.

Goal 9 Participate in the development of conservation, restoration, and climate change adaptation planning documents that facilitate the successful completion of goals in this plan.

CONNECT

Goal 10 Increase private philanthropy to ensure that we can focus on new projects while attending to lands already protected.

Goal 11 Create two new public access opportunities at protected places by 2018 that promote land conservation in San Luis Obispo County.

Goal 12 Improve community awareness and public support for our mission.

Goal 13 Provide meaningful and sustainable education and service opportunities for the community to learn about and engage in local land conservation.

ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY

Goal 14 Attract, retain, and support professional and skilled staff to implement projects that benefit local communities.

Goal 15 Engage and support the Board of Trustees and the organization’s committees to ensure the permanence and accountability of The Land Conservancy.

Goal 16 Seek funding for general operating support and seek to reduce office expenses to allow staff to focus on project development and execution.

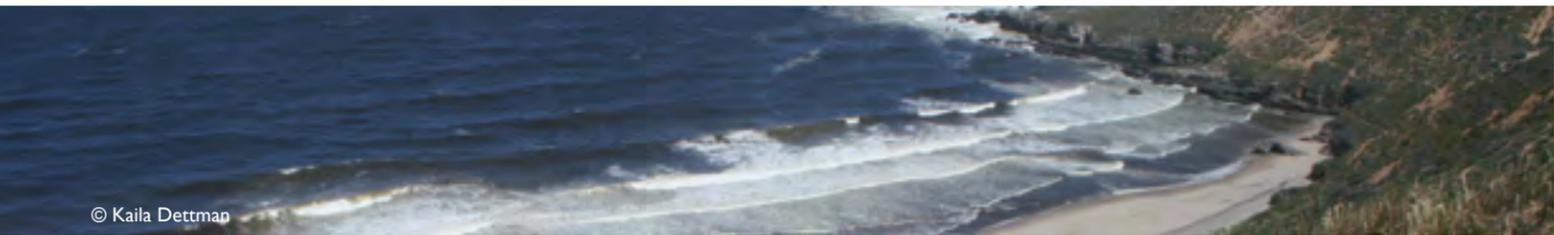
Goal 17 Prioritize projects that address or engage all three program areas: *Conserve, Care and Connect.*



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“Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children’s children. —Theodore Roosevelt

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 1984

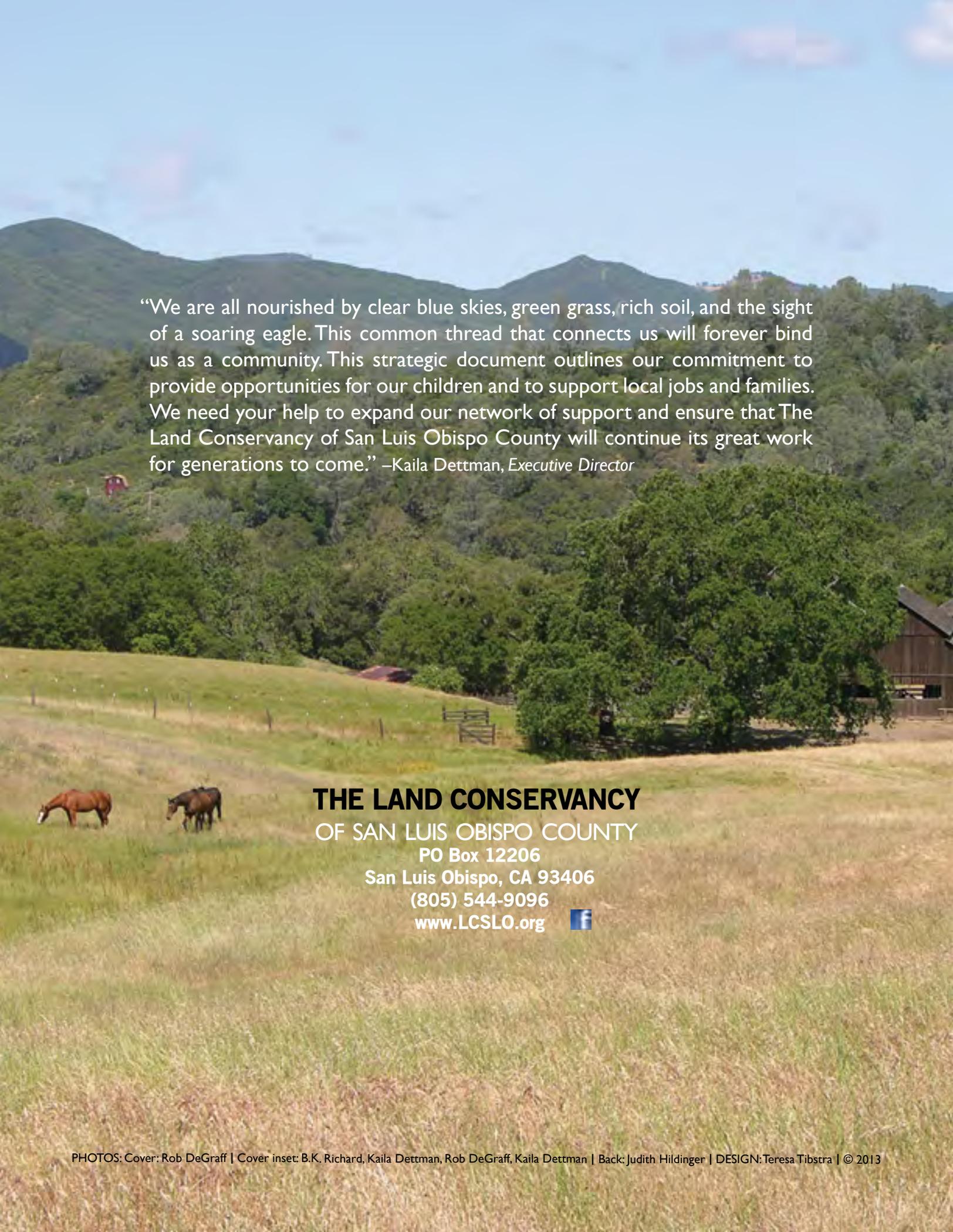
- Permanently protected over 14,500 acres of family farms and ranches, and vital natural areas that make San Luis Obispo County a special place.
- Raised over \$14 million in the last 5 years from state and federal sources to fund local conservation.
- Assisted in the creation of the existing Bob Jones City-to-Sea Trail and purchased lands along 1.3 miles of the planned extension route.
- Supported the conservation of a “greenbelt” around the City of San Luis Obispo which protects 5,500 acres of open space and agricultural lands.
- Planted more than 70,000 native trees and shrubs in San Luis Obispo County.
- Engaged nearly 10,000 volunteers in hands-on local conservation.
- Restored access to 12 miles of stream for spawning and migrating steelhead by removing 11 fish passage barriers.
- Repaired 5 miles of unhealthy creek stretches and removed invasive *Arundo donax* from 20 miles of streams.
- Worked to restore hundreds of acres in the world class Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes.
- Rescued the 100-year-old historic Octagon Barn from collapse.
- Preserved rare Monterey Pines in Cambria by retiring 350 lots and establishing Fern Canyon Reserve.
- Established the Terra Firma Planned Giving Society and raised \$1.5 million in realized and future estate gifts.
- Increased private annual donations by 200% since 2006 and partially funded an organizational endowment.
- Served as the non-profit sponsor for the Port San Luis Lighthouse and the Dunes Center prior to their incorporation.
- Received 2013 Best of SLO County Award from the New Times Readers Poll, Congressional Honors from Barbara Boxer on Earth Day 2009, 2008 Collaboration of the Year Award from the Non-profit Support Center, First Place SLO County Environmental Award in 2003, and Coastal America Partnership Award in 2000.

THE FUTURE OF LOCAL LAND CONSERVATION

In the first 30 years of its life, The Land Conservancy grew from a small grassroots volunteer organization to one of the preeminent local land trusts in California. In that time, we have protected special places throughout San Luis Obispo County that contribute to our region’s natural beauty and irresistible allure. The Land Conservancy has been instrumental in creating a vibrant community with a strong local economy and high quality of life; however, there is more work to be done.

The Land Conservancy is poised to implement another 30 years of compelling projects that will benefit our community. We are working on board-approved land conservation projects totaling over 30,000 acres and have identified over \$10 million in restoration projects throughout San Luis Obispo County that could be implemented by our staff and volunteers. These projects will safeguard community drinking water, provide outdoor recreation and therapy opportunities, preserve local food systems, protect native plants and wildlife, and build a strong conservation ethic among residents.

Over the next three decades, The Land Conservancy aims to become a household name and to boost the local economy by establishing a cherished public conservation park, expanding the Bob Jones City-to-Sea Trail, opening the Octagon Barn Center, and funding voluntary easements on private lands. We intend to train a team of docent volunteers to help more youth and families experience protected conservation lands, and we seek to educate future conservation leaders through a Junior Board of Trustees. The Land Conservancy will lead the charge to protect the diversity and vibrancy of San Luis Obispo County for the benefit of all who call this place home.



“We are all nourished by clear blue skies, green grass, rich soil, and the sight of a soaring eagle. This common thread that connects us will forever bind us as a community. This strategic document outlines our commitment to provide opportunities for our children and to support local jobs and families. We need your help to expand our network of support and ensure that The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County will continue its great work for generations to come.” –Kaila Dettman, *Executive Director*

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