



# THE LAND

The Newsletter of The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County • Summer 2014

## *853 Acres Protected by New Conservation Bank* First in Santa Barbara County



The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County has recently helped to permanently protect 853 acres in the Purisima Hills near Lompoc that are critical habitat for the threatened California Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*).

Through an innovative public/private partnership, known as a “conservation bank”, the first of its kind in Santa Barbara County, the Land Trust will hold a conservation easement on the property known as the Rancho La Purisima. A private company, the Conservation Land Group will in turn sell mitigation credits.

The Land Trust received formal approval for the project from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a requirement for establishing the conservation bank.

### HOW DOES THE CONSERVATION BANK WORK?

A conservation bank presents an option for local developers, agencies, utilities, and energy producers who propose projects that will have a negative impact on the habitat areas of protected species such as the California Tiger Salamander. The US Fish and Wildlife Service requires those negative impacts to be mitigated in some way. The purchase of credits from the conservation bank is one way to meet that requirement. The number of credits mandated by the regulatory agency is determined on a project by project basis, and the price of the credits is determined exclusively by the market dynamics of supply and demand.

### A WIN-WIN APPROACH TO CONSERVATION.

Conservation banks provide an incentive for owners of high-value properties with “critical habitat”\* to reap a financial reward from their land

and protect it at the same time. Income from the conservation bank can off-set the potential profits a landowner forfeits when they give up their development rights through a conservation easement. With an easement in place to protect the land in perpetuity, the La Purisima Conservation Bank turns a regulatory constraint into a financial opportunity and an ecological advantage. The conservation value is far greater when concentrating the protected habitat in a large, ecologically intact area rather than in a patchwork of small, unconnected mitigation plots.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL THE CREDITS ARE PURCHASED?

Once all of the conservation bank’s credits are sold (we estimate that may take 5-10 years) the conservation bank simply ceases to exist, but the underlying easement that protects the habitat lives on forever. Like the Land Trust’s other properties and projects, we will continue to own and monitor the La Purisima easement in perpetuity.

Conservation banking is an important tool that can benefit Santa Barbara County by securing important critical habitat for a local species facing the prospect of extinction. We are grateful to each of our partners that



were involved in establishing this complex bank; The Conservation Land Group, Debra Geiler, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Rancho Purisima, LLC.

\* “Critical habitat” is a habitat area essential to the conservation of a listed species. It is a specific term and designation within the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

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# WHO WE ARE

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County protects natural resources, agricultural land and open spaces for the benefit of present and future generations.



Executive Director, the Land Trust has tremendous forward momentum and is poised for greatness!

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Change seems to be a theme here lately at the Land Trust. In the past year, we have moved to new offices, hired two replacement staff, welcomed two new board members and a new board president, and we are in the midst of a nationwide search for a new Executive Director. These transitions have been both challenging and exciting, and with change comes opportunity. From my perspective as a 20 year veteran of the organization and now Acting

We are excited to launch into our 30th year with a renewed commitment to be the go-to organization for protecting the open spaces that you care about, the trails you like to hike, the farms and ranches where you get your local food, and the vistas you love to see. We are developing more programs for you to visit the places we have protected, more opportunities for you to volunteer on the land, and more partnerships with community groups who can help us protect our county's special landscapes.

The Land Trust's dedicated Board of Trustees has recently initiated a visioning process that will help us define and focus our conservation priorities in the county and make us a more relevant community land trust.

In this newsletter I hope you enjoy reading about our new team players, the launch of our NextGen program, and about the first-ever conservation bank in Santa Barbara County.

We want you by our side as a member of our Land Trust family as we navigate these exciting times. I encourage you to keep your membership current. I also hope you sign up for our events and contact us about volunteering at one of our preserves. If you are not getting our monthly e-newsletter *The Lowdown* let us know! Email our Outreach and Membership Coordinator, Jennifer Stroh at [jstroh@sblanndtrust.org](mailto:jstroh@sblanndtrust.org) or (805)966-4520.

## CHANGE, RENEWAL, REVITALIZATION – BRING IT ON!

Carolyn Chandler, Acting Executive Director

*Over the past 20 years, Carolyn has been a consultant, director, staff member, volunteer and Trustee for the Land Trust. In February she stepped in as the interim Executive Director while new leadership is sought.*



# NEW FACES AT THE LAND TRUST



Christine Riesenfeld

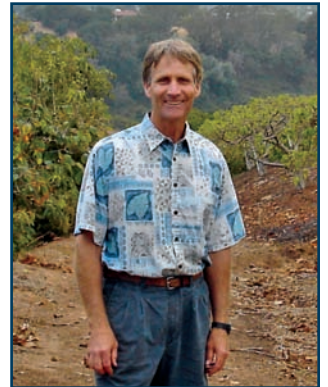
Christine Riesenfeld, from rural south central Pennsylvania, never lost her love of dark, star-filled skies and endless stretches of cornfields and apple orchards. Following a career in law that began in litigation and led to Assistant General Counsel for Unisys Corporation, she volunteered at Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia where she worked in propagation and gave public tours. Wanting to expand her plant knowledge, she completed a three-year certificate program at Longwood Gardens during which she joined the Board of Trustees of Morris Arboretum. Her husband's business pursuits led her to London and the Chelsea Physic Garden where she guided public tours and spread elephant manure on the Linnaean order beds. Happily now gardening in Santa Barbara, she volunteers at the Botanic Garden, will co-chair the Women's Fund Research Committee for 2014-15 and attends all SB Symphony performances.

*"Preserving the county's rural character and wonderful open spaces for future generations to explore is my focus as a board member."*

Scott Van der Kar served on our Advisory Board before recently joining as a Trustee. Scott's farming experience began at the age of five years when, in 1959, his parents bought a small avocado orchard in the Carpinteria Valley. The original orchard was more of a hobby than a business, but it was the beginning of what is now known as Pinehill Ranch.

As the Van Der Kar family's interest in farming grew, so did the size of the farm, reaching its present size of about 300 acres, with 150 acres under cultivation. Since 1994, he has served on the board of directors of Calavo Growers of California. He has also served as the agricultural representative for the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Advisory Committee, on the Santa Barbara County Ag Advisory Committee to the Board of Supervisors, and on the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau.

An interest and dedication in land and rural protection began with his early years on the farm, working with his father and brothers. Later participation in a grassroots organization named Preserve Rural Carpinteria was a catalyst for further community involvement, working for better urban/rural relations, eventually leading to service on the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County Advisory Board.



Scott Van der Kar



Carla Frisk

We're pleased to announce that Carla Frisk, long-time Santa Barbara County resident and former District Director to Senator Jack O'Connell, has joined the Land Trust team as a land conservation and development consultant.

Carla spent the last decade working on land conservation projects in Santa Barbara County for San Francisco-based The Trust for Public Land, providing her with expertise in land transactions and grant writing.

"As a long-time supporter of the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, I couldn't be more excited about the opportunity to work for this well-respected community organization, to help further its goals to protect the iconic landscapes of our precious County," stated Ms. Frisk.

*"We are infinitely lucky to have such an important organization as part of our community and I am proud to be joining its prestigious team!"*

# TIGER SALAMANDER MANAGEMENT

## FROM WATER TO LAND ON LA PURISIMA

To prepare for the Land Trust's on-going management responsibilities on the new La Purisima Conservation Bank property, our Conservation Manager, Bruce Reitherman, attended a workshop in Monterey County at the Elkhorn Slough in early June presented by renowned California Tiger Salamander (CTS) expert Pete Trenham. Resource managers from all over California gathered around salamander breeding ponds located on the scenic Dorrance Ranch, a property protected by the Big Sur Land Trust overlooking the Salinas Valley. Here is an excerpt of his report on the workshop:

*A number of CTS were captured, observed and returned to their breeding ponds during the afternoon session. The one pictured is a larval phase in a late stage of development, on its way toward becoming a "metamorph" ready to walk out onto dry land in search of a squirrel or gopher burrow in which to spend the long hot summer. While this*



Born under water, the California Tiger Salamander goes through several stages one of which embodies both gills and legs.

*tadpole's form clearly shows adaptations for the aquatic environment (external gills for breathing and a tail that is strongly flattened to aid in propulsion) where it has spent the last several months developing from an egg, it also shows the well-developed legs that will continue to grow and become more robust over the next few weeks as the gills and tail "fins" are reabsorbed and disappear.*

This excerpt describes just one of many miraculous transformations that salamanders and other amphibians undergo during the course of a life that moves from water to land and back again. Detailed understanding of the remarkable life histories of these ancient creatures will inform prudent management of the La Purisima Conservation Bank, a responsibility entrusted to the Land Trust in perpetuity.



Workshop participants seine (net) for amphibians in a cattle pond built to provide water for livestock.

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### FEDERAL INCENTIVE FOR VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION

Since 2006, when California ranchers or rural landowners voluntarily agreed to protect their land from development, the federal government gave them a deduction on their income taxes to recognize the charitable gift they were making. A survey by the national Land Trust Alliance showed that the incentive helped America's 1,700 land trusts increase the pace of conservation by a third – to over a million acres a year.

Unfortunately, this tax benefit that helped "land rich, cash poor" working farmers and rural landowners expired on Dec. 31, 2013. However, new federal legislation is pending in the House (H.R. 2807) that would renew this important land protection tool, encouraging more farmers and rural landowners to voluntarily conserve their land and receive a direct economic benefit. A bipartisan group of more than 212 Members of Congress have co-sponsored the bill. If you are interested in learning more, you can go to the Land Trust Alliance's website: <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/tax-matters>

### PROPOSED 2014 CALIFORNIA WATER BOND

A bipartisan, multi-billion dollar Water Bond Measure (SB848) is currently moving its way through the California Legislature. It includes significant funds for environmental projects that protect water sources and water quality, including funds for wetland restoration and acquisition of watershed lands. The deadline for placing the new measure on the November 2014 ballot is at the end of June and as we go to press with our newsletter, the bill was due for a vote by the full Senate. For updates visit the California Council of Land Trust's website: <http://www.calandtrusts.org/>

# NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATIONISTS

BY JENNIFER STROH

Over the past 30 years, the Land Trust has completed 46 land deals, protected nearly 24,000 acres, spearheaded hundreds of acres of successful restoration projects, and sponsored on-going programs to educate both children and adults about the importance of protecting ranch, farm and open space land for future generations.

As our organization has matured, so have our membership base and our board leadership. In order to fulfill our mission in the years ahead, the Land Trust has launched our NextGen Program so that ultimately land conservation becomes an multi-generational stewardship effort. We hope to involve younger members of the community whose interests will become the driving force of the land conservation movement.

## WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATIONISTS?

NextGenners are a younger demographic composed of professionals, entrepreneurs, non-profit organizers, students, families, government officials, land stewards, land owners, nature lovers, farmers, ranchers... Basically, they are people across all professions and disciplines with one thing in common; they care about the health of the land and its conservation and they are willing to do something about it.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO INVOLVE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATIONISTS?

If you are a NextGenner it is the Land Trust's goal to learn about your interests, discover ways to work together, and empower you to become leaders of land conservation so that we may continue to create a legacy of permanently protected natural lands.

**FIRST STEPS:** Since the launch of the Next Generation Program in February, the Land Trust has actively engaged with people, organizations, and initiatives with innovative ideas and cutting-edge work, such as the following:

### *Fostering farms - food at our fingertips*

We have teamed up with the **Santa Barbara Permaculture Network**, the **Food Bank of Santa Barbara County**, and the **Santa Barbara Food Alliance** - and potentially several others - to support a local food system, expanding the concept of a Food Hub. This project may house a farmer incubator system with the potential for an animal husbandry program, a processing facility, and a community kitchen. Eventually, we envision a farmer's market, a farm-to-table restaurant, a bread maker, a wine maker, and a cheese maker - all working together to provide food for our community!

### *Community partnerships*

We continue to support and promote the work of **SproutUp**, an organization that connects college student-instructors with children to communicate vital concepts in environmental science and sustainability during the earliest stages of their educational development, cultivating the next generation of passionate caretakers of the earth. We have partnered with **Cultivate Events** (CE), an effort to promote the local food movement by re-connecting people to their food. The Land Trust supports this effort wholeheartedly as we reach out to event participants and create more opportunities for Land Trust supporters to experience CE's food adventures and farm and music festivals that celebrate small farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and food and beverage artisans. We have begun coordinating with the **City of Goleta** in their efforts to educate and lead tours through the **Coronado Butterfly Preserve**. With a few of our easement holders - **the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens**, **Midlands School** in Santa Ynez, and **Hibbits Family Ranch** in Lompoc - we have offered several events to provide the community with opportunities to learn about and become more intimate with the land you help us protect.

### *Internships*

To help with the development of the NextGen Program, we are offering 6-month internships. Our first two interns, Niki Beigi and Sean Harwood, are recent UCSB graduates who assist with outreach, event planning, presentations and administrative work. A few of their contributions include:

- Surveying you, our community members, to discover what's important to you
- Inviting you to visit our properties and to learn something new, like 'History of Hot Springs Canyon', a hike led by local historian, Hattie Beresford
- Providing a smile, a warm welcome, and information for you at the trailheads of Franklin Trail, Hot Springs, and the Coronado Butterfly Preserve

*Intern Positions available! The Land Trust is currently accepting resumes for our next round of intern positions, each 10 hours per week. Please send resume to [info@smlandtrust.org](mailto:info@smlandtrust.org).*



Our first interns of the Next Generation of Conservationists Program, Sean Harwood and Niki Beigi, reaching out to the community at the downtown Santa Barbara Farmer's Market.



# ***NEXT GENERATION*** (Continued)

## *Our survey (First Steps continued)*

To better understand the interests and goals of the Next Generation and to find out what ways are best to communicate with you, we have created a short survey that is available online or by mail. We conducted this survey recently with seventy NextGen participants and received very useful feedback such as the ranking of the categories for the question “What is the Land Trust working on that is most important to you?” The following three categories were selected in order of popularity:

1. Natural resource protection and management (including air, water, climate)
2. Protecting and restoring sensitive wildlife habitat and helping endangered species
3. Community open space, trails, and public access

We invite you to participate, even if you are not a NextGener. Take our online survey by visiting:  
<http://www.sblandtrust.org/generation-conservationists> You may also print and mail it.

## **YOU ARE INVITED – SAVE THE DATE!**

We recognize that not everyone can do everything, so whether you just want to learn more about the Land Trust and what we do, would like to volunteer, join a Land Trust committee, or donate, we want you to get involved!

**This fall, on October 4th**, the Land Trust will host another gathering of the NextGen Program over lunch to discuss current issues, ideas, and the financial viability of land conservation in Santa Barbara County. With this exchange, we hope to better understand the next generation’s priorities and how we might work together to increase awareness about land conservation in our community. You can get involved now! Please contact: Jennifer Stroh, Outreach/Membership Coordinator 805-966-4520 [jstroh@sblandtrust.org](mailto:jstroh@sblandtrust.org)

## **GROUP LEADERS AND PARTICIPANTS, ARROYO HONDO PRESERVE PICNIC AREA, FEBRUARY 2014.**



Our introductory meeting at Arroyo Hondo Preserve, February 2014, where we were inspired and impressed by the thoughtful and motivated group who joined us. Foreground Center: Ken Marshall, Land Trust Co-Vice President talking with Blakeney Sanford.



Director of Fairview Gardens & Center for Urban Agriculture, Mark Tollefson, with his children, Esher and Elsie.

## ***EVENT REGISTRATION***

For more information and to register for events, visit <http://www.sblandtrust.org/whats-happening/>. You may also register by sending a check in the enclosed remittance envelope. Please indicate which event you would like to attend on both the check and the envelope.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## History & Harvest in the Santa Rita Hills • Sunday, July 27th • 10:00am - 2:30pm



La Purisima Mission State Historic Park Tour 10:00-11:30am  
Hibbits Harvest Lunch 12:00-2:30pm

This excursion will start with a private, docent led tour through the grounds of La Purisima Mission. After the tour, join us at the Hibbits Family Ranch, less than a mile west of the Mission, for a farm to table lunch including a sample of Hibbit's walnuts and wines, and a talk about local walnut harvesting by ranch owner, Art Hibbits. We will wrap up the afternoon with a casual walk through the orchards and vineyards with exceptional views of the valley. **Cost: \$30**

## Birds of Carpinteria Salt Marsh • Saturday, September 27th • 8:00 - 10:00am



Enjoy a morning of bird watching at the Carpinteria Salt Marsh with our own Conservation Manager and expert birder Bruce Reitherman. After walking the marsh with this brilliant and engaging biologist, you'll have a better understanding of this unique environment and be able to identify many of the birds found along our coast. **Cost: \$20**

## NextGen Gathering • Saturday, October 4th • 10:00am - 2:30pm



Docent led hike 10:00am-12:00pm  
Lunch and Discussion 12:00-2:30pm

Calling all NextGenners! Hike and have lunch at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve on the Gaviota Coast. Followed by a discussion about land conservation and how we might work together. **Free event. Lunch provided.**

## Fall Foliage at Arroyo Hondo Preserve • Saturday, November 8th • 9:00 - 11:00am



Leaf Peepers unite! Come enjoy a walk through Arroyo Hondo to experience California's colors of the season with our Education Coordinator, Sally Isaacson, a local rancher, nature lover, and incredible photographer. Hike level moderate. **Cost \$20**



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

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JULY 1, 2013 – JUNE 30, 2014

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*Thanks to support from the John S. Kiewit Foundation and others, 806 students have studied, biked and explored at Arroyo Hondo Preserve already this year!*

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*We sincerely thank Bruce Reitherman, Land Trust Conservation Manager, and other Land Trust Friends for their photo contributions.*



# IN MEMORY OF...



Mercedes Eicholz with her granddaughter Alexa at Figueroa Mountain in 1993.

The Land Trust is grateful for the generous bequest from **Mercedes Eicholz**, a talented, resourceful woman who dedicated much of her life to photography, the arts, and philanthropy. She even took a mechanic course in preparation for a 7,000 mile road trip with her husband. Throughout her life, she believed in service to others - from her early years as a nurse's aid in hospitals in Portland, to her service of many years in organizations in Santa Barbara, including the Santa Barbara County Arts and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. She also contributed to countless organizations in the areas of social justice and the environment. The Land Trust greatly appreciates her commitment to the preservation of the natural beauty of this county. Mercedes left a legacy gift that will help us to conserve land and enable her family and others to enjoy special places saved forever.

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The Land Trust sincerely thanks the people who have made special gifts in memory of friends and family members who have passed this year:

- **June Standley**, Coronado Butterfly Preserve
- **Peter Tiersma**, Coronado Butterfly Preserve
- **David K. Robinson**, Carpinteria Salt Marsh
- **Babbs Hollister**, Arroyo Hondo Preserve
- **Cynthia Hollister Nagel**, Arroyo Hondo Preserve

## YOU TOO, CAN LEAVE A LEGACY...

One of the simplest ways to make a future gift is with a bequest, which can take the form of cash, appreciated securities, closely held securities, real estate and personal property. Please let us know if you have already included the Land Trust in your will or if you would like more information. Contact Jennifer Stroh (805) 966-4520 or [jstroh@sblandtrust.org](mailto:jstroh@sblandtrust.org)



*Ceanothus spinosus*, Rancho Dos Vistas, Gaviota Coast

## Land Conservation

*"It's everything – our present and our future."*  
- NextGen survey respondent



The Land Trust for  
Santa Barbara County  
P.O. Box 91830  
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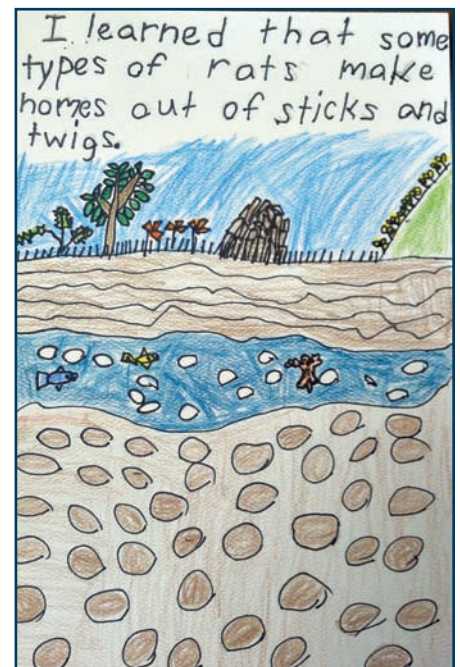
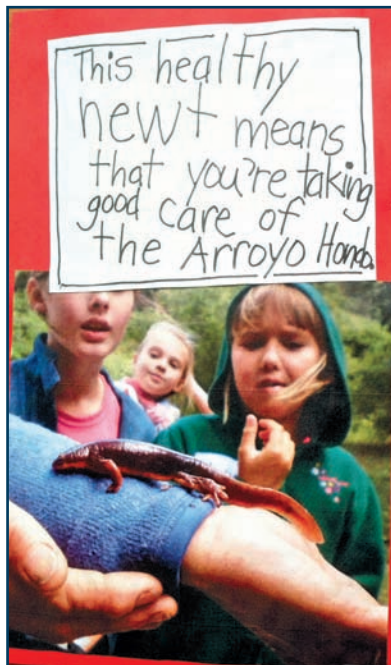
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