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COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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 - 301 EAST CARRILLO STREET, SUITE A
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 - 1101 SOUTH BROADWAY, SUITE A
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April 15, 2015

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

Chairman Bosco and Commissioners:

I want to take this opportunity to express my strong support for the application for a grant from the State Coastal Conservancy by the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County for a Conservation Blueprint that will encompass the entire Santa Barbara County which, in spite of its varied geography, significant agricultural economy, diverse and rich natural resources and abundant undeveloped open space, has no such report.

The goal of the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project is to create a comprehensive county-wide plan that identifies conservation values and prioritizes conservation opportunities. This proactive effort represents a strategic approach to land conservation that focuses upon preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem interactions, promoting resiliency to climate change through protecting habitat and valuable open space. Not only will this process involve the collection and compilation of existing data, now currently underway, but it also includes an important outreach process that will involve a variety of stakeholders, from land conservation groups to government entities to advocacy groups. This inclusive outreach process will result in the receipt of input and knowledge from a broad segment of the community which will help identify community conservation priorities.

The Land Trust, which has a respectable reputation in Santa Barbara County, will be working closely with the Santa Barbara Foundation's Landscapes, Ecosystems, Agriculture and Food (LEAF) Initiative on the Conservation Blueprint. Together, the Land Trust and the Santa Barbara Foundation have already received the bulk of the funding needed to move this project forward. A \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy will put them that much closer to their goal and encourage others to close the funding gap for this innovative project.

Again, I urge you to give the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County's grant request your full and fair consideration, consistent with all relevant rules and regulations. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Wendy Motta in my Santa Barbara District Office, at (805) 730-1710.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois Capps". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress



April 24, 2015

Post Office Box 1099
Goleta, CA 93116
(805) 683-6631
gavcoast@silcom.com

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

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- Janet Koed
Administrator

On behalf of the Gaviota Coast Conservancy (GCC), I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County's \$75,000 grant application to the State Coastal Conservancy for development of a county-wide Conservation Blueprint.

The GCC was formed with primary goal of supporting long-term strategies for the protection of the nationally renowned Gaviota Coast, including the acquisition, restoration and permanent protection of key parcels of land.

The goal of the Conservation Blueprint is to create a comprehensive plan that identifies conservation values and prioritizes conservation opportunities. This proactive effort represents a strategic approach to land conservation that focuses upon preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem interactions, promoting resiliency to climate change through protecting habitat and valuable open space. Not only will this process involve the collection and compilation of existing data, now underway, but it also includes an important outreach process that will involve a variety of stakeholders, from land conservation groups to government entities to advocacy groups, including the GCC.

This Blueprint will be of great value to the community as it will provide a document that can be used by a plethora of organizations for a variety of purposes, including funding conservation and environmental policy and planning. The Gaviota Coast Conservancy is believes that the information about the Gaviota Coast, especially with regards to climate change will be crucial in preserving this extremely complex, nationally significant biological transition zones in the world.

Since the bulk of the funding needed to move this project forward has already been raised, this \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy will bring the Land Trust and its partner, the Santa Barbara Foundation, that much closer to their goal and encourage others to help close the funding gap for this very innovative project.

It is for all of these reasons that the GCC is strongly supporting Coastal Conservancy funding for this very innovative project. Should you have any questions about the GCC's support, please contact me at 805 682-0302.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



April 24, 2015

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

Dear Chairman Bosco and Commissioners:

On behalf of the Environmental Defense Center (“EDC”), I am pleased to submit this letter expressing our support for the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County’s application for a \$75,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project. The EDC is a public interest law firm headquartered in Santa Barbara that represents community organizations dedicated to a wide variety of environmental causes. Since 1997, the EDC has been proud to advance environmental protection efforts in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo Counties.

Funds from this grant would be used to help complete a Conservation Blueprint for Santa Barbara County, which was launched earlier this year in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Foundation’s Landscapes, Ecosystems, Agriculture and Food (“LEAF”) Initiative. In spite of Santa Barbara County’s varied geography, significant agricultural economy, diverse and rich natural resources and abundant undeveloped open space, no comprehensive report describing those resources currently exists. The Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint will remedy that situation by creating a product that identifies those conservation values and prioritizes conservation opportunities. The Blueprint will focus on identifying, mapping and analyzing all natural resources in the County, including habitats, wildlife corridors and watersheds, as well as agricultural soils. This effort will also seek to identify recreational lands that should be available to the public for access, while protecting more biologically sensitive lands.

Developing the Conservation Blueprint will also incorporate an important outreach process that will involve a variety of stakeholders, from land conservation groups to government entities to advocacy groups, including the EDC. While the outreach process will be geared to obtain input and knowledge from all stakeholders, it will also provide a mechanism to heighten awareness of land conservation issues within a broad segment of the community.

Exhibit 3: Project Letters

April 24, 2015

Re: Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

Page 2

Most of the funding needed to move this project forward has already been raised by the Land Trust and the Santa Barbara Foundation. However, a \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy will put them that much closer to their goal and encourage others to close the funding gap for this very innovative project.

It is for these reasons that I strongly encourage you to approve this grant request. If you have any questions regarding the EDC's support for this project, please feel free to contact me at (805) 963-1622.

Sincerely,



Linda Krop
Chief Counsel



April 21, 2015

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

Chairman Bosco and Commissioners:

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Bill Shelor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ken Hough

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Jeanne Sparks

SB CAN

P.O. Box 23453
Santa Barbara, CA 93121
805.563.0463
ken@sbcn.org

On behalf of Santa Barbara County Action Network (SB CAN), I am pleased to submit this letter expressing our support for the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County's application for a \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy for funding to complete a Conservation Blueprint for Santa Barbara County.

The Land Trust, which has an excellent reputation in Santa Barbara County, is working closely with the Santa Barbara Foundation's Landscapes, Ecosystems, Agriculture and Food (LEAF) Initiative on the Conservation Blueprint, which will create a plan that identifies conservation values and prioritizes conservation opportunities. The Blueprint will focus on identifying, mapping and analyzing all natural resources in the County, including habitat for wildlife corridors to watersheds, as well as agricultural soils. This proactive effort will focus on preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem interactions, promoting resiliency to climate change and increasing/enhancing habitat corridors. While the County has many plans, none combines all of these factors.

The Conservation Blueprint will be developed using a collaborative process involving land conservation groups, government entities, advocacy groups including SB CAN, developers, land owners, farmers and ranchers, housing advocates, and energy advocates. While the Blueprint will primarily benefit the County, its residents, and many organizations concerned with resource protection and conservation, it will also have an impact beyond our boundaries, inspiring others regarding state-of-the-art conservation planning just as other, similar efforts in the Bay Area and Santa Cruz County helped to inspire this project.

The impact of population growth on open space, especially agricultural lands, has been a major concern of SB CAN's since it was founded in 2012. Accordingly, we find it essential to have a broadly supported long-term plan to preserve our natural and agricultural landscapes.

Together, the Land Trust and the Santa Barbara Foundation have already received the bulk of the funding needed to move this project forward. A \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy will put them that much closer to their goal and encourage others to close the funding gap for this innovative project.

For these reasons I urge you to approve this grant request. If you have any questions regarding SB CAN's support for this project, please contact me at (805) 563-0463.

Sincerely,

Ken Hough
Executive Director



April 24, 2015

Douglas Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Santa Barbara County Conservation Blueprint Project

Chairman Bosco and Commissioners:

On behalf of Los Padres ForestWatch (LPFW), I am pleased to submit this letter expressing LPFW's support for the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County's application for a \$75,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy for funding to complete a Conservation Blueprint for Santa Barbara County.

Earlier this year, the Land Trust launched the Conservation Blueprint in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Foundation's Landscapes, Ecosystems, Agriculture and Food (LEAF) Initiative. With its Mediterranean climate which supports large numbers of species that exist nowhere else, its substantial coastline and significant watersheds, it is surprising that Santa Barbara County does not already have such a comprehensive report describing the natural resources and conservation values/opportunities in the County. This proactive effort will focus on preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem interactions, promoting resiliency to climate change through protecting habitat and valuable open space.

Once the critical data has been collected – a process that is already underway – the Land Trust will begin the outreach and engagement process by contacting local technical and scientific advisors, as well as conservation stakeholders in the county, such as landowners, government agency staff, elected officials, and stewardship and advocacy organizations like LPFW. While the outreach process will be geared to obtain input and knowledge from all stakeholders, it will also provide a mechanism to heighten awareness of land conservation issues within a broad segment of the community. The ultimate goal is to provide a document that can be used for a variety of purposes, including funding conservation and environmental policy and planning.

Los Padres ForestWatch is a community-based nonprofit organization that works to preserve and restore wildlife, open space, watersheds, and outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the Los Padres National Forest. Given that roughly 608,520 acres of the forest are located in Santa Barbara County (about 44% of the county) and include three formally-protected wilderness areas – the San Rafael, Dick Smith, and Matilija wilderness areas – this Conservation Blueprint will be extremely helpful to LPFW in our future planning and implementation efforts.

Exhibit 3: Project Letters

Fortunately, the bulk of the funding needed to move this project forward has already been raised by the Land Trust and the Santa Barbara Foundation. However, a \$75,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy will put them that much closer to their goal and encourage others to help close the funding gap for this very innovative project.

It is for these reasons that I am strongly encouraging you to approve this grant request. If you have any questions regarding the LPFW's support for this project, please feel free to contact me at (805) 617-4610.

Sincerely,



Jeff Kuyper
Executive Director