



NEWS RELEASE

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Land Trust Protects Rare Sand Parkland from Development; 9.82 Acres in Scotts Valley

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The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County purchased 9.82 acres of Sand Parkland bordering Quail Hollow County Park near Zayante Creek last Wednesday. Sand Parkland is a rare sub-habitat of the Sandhills and is unique to Santa Cruz County's San Lorenzo region. The purchase will permanently protect the land from development.

Sand Parkland comprises fewer than 200 acres in the world. "We protect land for a variety of purposes and in this case, the seven plants and animals that live here, and nowhere else on Earth, take precedence over desired human use" said Land Trust President Terry Corwin.

Rare Sandhills species include the Mount Hermon June Beetle, Zayante Band-winged Grasshopper, Santa Cruz Kangaroo Rat, the Ben Lomond Spineflower, Santa Cruz Wallflower, Bonny Doon (Silverleaf) Manzanita, and Ben Lomond Buckwheat. Biologist Peter Raven likened the Sandhills to the Galapagos because of its biological diversity.

Dr. Jodi McGraw, ecologist and lead scientist for the development of the Land Trust's *25-year Conservation Blueprint* (2011), began working with the Land Trust in 2004. Dr. McGraw's *Sandhills Protection Plan* guides the Land Trust's ongoing effort to protect Sand Parkland in the greater San Lorenzo area.

To date, the Land Trust has protected six properties totaling 291 acres of Sandhills habitat, including the 189-acre Randall Morgan Sandhills Preserve in Scotts Valley.

Corwin added that the Land Trust hopes to transfer the Sand Parkland property to county parks one day, to be incorporated into Quail Hollow Ranch County Park.

In 2009, the Land Trust sought grants from the Wildlife Conservation Board and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to protect three Sandhills properties, totaling 221 acres. \$116,800 remained from

the grant which allowed the Land Trust to seek the protection of the Sand Parkland property. Total purchase price for the property was \$350,000, and the Land Trust's commitment, \$233,200.

About the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Formed in 1978 by local residents concerned about protecting the lands that make Santa Cruz County special, the Land Trust has protected more than 13,500 acres by working with willing landowners and conservation partners. The trust protects both working lands, like farms and timberland, and natural lands with high conservation value – thus protecting water supplies, wildlife habitats, and open space. Visit www.LandTrustSantaCruz.org for more information.

About Wildlife Conservation Board

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) was created by legislation in 1947 to administer a capital outlay program for wildlife conservation and related public recreation. Originally created within the California Department of Natural Resources, and later placed with the Department of Fish and Game, WCB is a separate and independent Board with authority and funding to carry out an acquisition and development program for wildlife conservation (California Fish and Game Code 1300, et seq.). WCB consists of the President of the Fish and Game Commission, the Director of the Department of Fish and Game and the Director of the Department of Finance. Legislation that created WCB also established a Legislative Advisory Committee consisting of three members of the Senate and three members of the Assembly, which meet with WCB, providing legislative oversight.

The primary responsibilities of WCB are to select, authorize and allocate funds for the purchase of land and waters suitable for recreation purposes and the preservation, protection and restoration of wildlife habitat. WCB approves and funds projects that set aside lands within the State for such purposes, through acquisition or other means, to meet these objectives. WCB can also authorize the construction of facilities for recreational purposes on property in which it has a proprietary interest.

WCB's three main functions are land acquisition, habitat restoration and development of wildlife oriented public access facilities, which are carried out through its programs.