



S O N O M A C O U N T Y

**AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

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One Step Closer to Protecting Jenner Headlands Forever

Board approves \$11.1 million District expenditure for historic acquisition

SANTA ROSA, Calif.—As a next step in the preservation of the 5,630-acre Jenner Headlands coastal property, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, acting as the District's Board of Directors, approved the expenditure of \$10,150,000 to allow the District to fund approximately one-third of the \$36 million acquisition, and an additional \$1,000,000 toward the restoration, public access improvements and management of the property.

"Conservation of this magnificent property will not only ensure the protection of extraordinary natural and scenic resources, but it will eventually provide a premier outdoor recreation experience," said Efen Carrillo, Fifth District Supervisor. "The Sonoma Coast is a site of international significance, and we—the County, the voters, and the conservation community—have remained steadfast in our commitment to the preservation of all that is Sonoma County."

In 2005, a robust collaboration led by then-Fifth District Supervisor Mike Reilly and involving the Sonoma Land Trust, the District, the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration committed to preserving the property adjacent to Sonoma Coast State Park. Additionally, the U.S. Forest Service will contribute \$1,000,000 for the acquisition upon the close of escrow, which will be reimbursed to District.

"Our public and private funders have found a way, in these challenging times, to make sure we don't lose this incredible opportunity to protect this extraordinary landscape," said Amy Chesnut, Acquisitions Director of the Sonoma Land Trust. "By leveraging the District's funds with federal, state and private funding, the community will reap the benefits. Key ingredients in any complex conservation transaction are a willing landowner and strong partners who go the extra mile to ensure success. We have that and more with this project. It is a remarkable collaboration."

Jenner Headlands will become part of 20,000 acres of interconnected public and privately-protected coastline between Bodega Head and Fort Ross. It will eventually include a 2.5-mile stretch of the California Coastal Trail. Close of escrow is expected by mid-December and the Sonoma Land Trust will own and manage the property. During the management planning process, Interim public access will be provided through guided hikes by the Trust and its partners.

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Next steps for acquisition include the consideration of the project by the Wildlife Conservation Board on November 17, and securing the remaining \$16 million in loan funding to bridge the gap left by frozen State bond proceeds.

In return for its investment, the District will hold a conservation easement which will restrict development and require a management plan to protect and enhance the ecological and cultural resources of the property. This represents the largest conservation land acquisition in Sonoma County, and will bring the total land protected by the District to more than 80,000 acres.

“The District works every day to protect our diverse natural heritage by investing in the restoration and conservation of major ecosystems and wildlife habitats throughout our County,” said Bill Keene, Interim General Manager of the District. “Protecting Jenner Headlands is vital to a healthy environment and vibrant economy, and we applaud the leadership of our partners for bringing together the necessary commitments to make this project a reality.”

Jenner Headlands, also known as Rule Ranch, represents the largest coastal conservation easement held by the District, in terms of acreage and investment. In total, the District has protected nearly 15,000 acres along the Sonoma Coast, including the nearly 3,400-acre Willow Creek addition to Sonoma Coast State Park. This expenditure represents more than one-third of the approximately \$30 million budgeted for FY 09-10 District acquisitions.

About the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resource and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. Since 1990, the District has protected approximately 80,000 acres. Agricultural and open space lands have been protected through a 1/4-cent sales tax approved by voters in 1990 and reauthorized in 2006. For more information, please visit www.sonomaopenspace.org.

About the Sonoma Land Trust

The independent non-profit Sonoma Land Trust preserves scenic, natural, agricultural and open land for future generations. Since 1976, the Sonoma Land Trust has protected nearly 20,000 acres of beautiful, productive and environmentally-significant land. For more information, please visit www.sonomalandtrust.org.

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