

Connecting with Nature on Fiscalini Ranch Preserve: A Long Journey Shared by Many Travelers



By KITTY CONNOLLY, Executive Director, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (fiscaliniranchpreserve.org)

So many Cambrians (and fans of Cambria) were involved in the saga of saving the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve. As the 20th anniversary approaches, it is worth refreshing our memories with a few highlights from that daring and perilous journey.

March 1999: North Coast Small Wilderness Area Preservation (NCSWAP) is formed as local non-profit for Ranch acquisition to work with the owners of East West Ranch.

June 1999: A purchase agreement is signed between owners of East West Ranch and the American Land Conservancy (ALC) for an appraised value of \$11.1 million with the stipulation that the community would be responsible for raising \$2 million of the purchase price.

September 1, 1999: ALC pays \$300,000 to secure an option to purchase the Ranch with a nine-month deadline to complete the purchase.

November 1999: ALC announces that the purchase price for the Ranch has been established at \$11.1 million with a one-year purchase option! Friends of the RanchLand works with NCSWAP and ALC launch a campaign to raise matching funds from the community.

January 22, 2000: The race is on! The fundraising campaign for the Ranch Purchase begins with a dinner dance at the Brambles Dinner House.

February-March 2000: Fundraising activities ramp, including a giant rummage sale, benefit movie screenings, and a book signing brunch at Robin's Restaurant.

March 23, 2000: The California State Coastal Conservancy takes a giant leap and pledges \$3.5 million toward the purchase of the Ranch.

March-June 2000: Fundraising events continue with almost \$20,000 raised. State Water and Parks Bond funds provide for a management plan and other enhancements. The County of San Luis Obispo directs \$500,000 in park fees to the purchase. CCSD pledges \$1.5 million as part of the matching funds required by the Coastal Conservancy grant.

June 2000: State legislators approve an additional \$3.5 million in the budget toward the purchase of the Ranch!

July-September 2000: More fundraising events, including the first annual kitchen tour, a bike-a-thon, another rummage sale, bring in over \$31,000 toward the community match.

October 2000: Only a little over one month until the option to buy the Ranch runs out and the community is still short of matching funds. In an "11th hour" save, Mid-State Bank agrees to donate 19 acres adjoining the Ranch property valued at \$1 million match...fulfilling the local commitment and completing the deal!

November 2000: American Land Conservancy announces the \$11.1 million purchase price for the East West Ranch has been met. The Ranch is ours!

November 17, 2000: Over 1,000 people join hands on the Ranch's Bluff Trail with a mile-long red ribbon to celebrate the Ranch purchase. We did it!

Please join us **Saturday, November 7, 2020**, as we celebrate those who saved and sustain Fiscalini Ranch Preserve with an online concert and fundraiser: **20 YEARS ON THE RANCH.**

Get your free tickets at bigbigslo.com/ffrp

**Sources of Funding
for the Purchase of
Fiscalini Ranch
Preserve**

