

PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2014

# THE CAMPAIGN FOR GATEWAY PARK

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## **New Gateway Property Sign Encourages Campaign-End Donations** *San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Seeks To Finalize Land Acquisition*

Solana Beach—The latest sign on the Gateway property will be installed this weekend to remind residents and visitors in North County that the land is secure—but not yet saved. It's not too late for donors to lend their name and support.

The Gateway property is a small yet critical piece of open space tucked between Solana Beach and San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, just east of Cardiff Seaside Beach and along Scenic Highway 101.

“We are nearing our goal of securing this land for open space in perpetuity,” said Doug Gibson, executive director and principal scientist for San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy. “We took a risk in 2011 reaching out to our supporters for a loan to purchase the property. With the conservancy’s expertise in successful land acquisitions, they knew it was the right decision.”

To-date, the conservancy has raised \$3.4 million in gifts and pledges from more than 1,100 donors toward the goal of \$3.75 million to permanently acquire the property.

For decades, Gateway was the site of numerous hotel and condominium proposals. A succession of story poles on the property outlined various commercial plans. The community rallied to defeat each development scheme, knowing that construction on Gateway would eliminate one of the most spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean that could be enjoyed in coastal North County.

In 2011 the property went into foreclosure. San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy secured loans to place the winning bid to purchase Gateway for \$3.75 million. Acquiring Gateway was the first step to ensure it would never be developed.

When the Gateway property is officially added to San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, it will provide a secure environment for native plants and animals, including Cassin’s Kingbird, Bewick’s Wren, and Cooper’s Hawk.

Once acquired, new trails will connect the Coastal Rail Trail with San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. Gateway will be restored with native plants that will enhance the scenery and provide enriched habitat for wildlife. Sitting areas will provide unobstructed views of the coast, surf, and setting sun from Seaside Beach to Swami’s. A stone and



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mosaic decorative welcome trail entrance is in design with local artist Betsy Schulz, who also created the Solana Beach rail trail entrance and Del Mar Library retaining wall, among other notable projects.

Community members can be part of this historic *The Campaign for Gateway Park* by contributing so that the property can be conserved forever. Each gift helps save a part of California's coastal heritage. For more information about giving to Gateway, the phone number is (760) 436-3944 x 708 and web site is [www.SanElijo.org/Gateway-Park](http://www.SanElijo.org/Gateway-Park)

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*About San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy*

More than 2,500 residents and community members currently support San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy. For 27 years, the conservancy has worked to protect and enhance San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, its watershed, and related ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. Together, with County of San Diego and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, we manage nearly 1,000 acres of wetland and upland habitat within the Escondido Creek watershed. The reserve provides all North County residents with close-to-home hiking, jogging, dog walking trails, and spectacular bird watching and photography opportunities.

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