



# San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY

*Connecting communities. Protecting nature.*

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## **Lands for Wildlife and People Expand by 77-Acres in Encinitas** **San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Secures 77-Acre Open Space Property**

Encinitas—Imagine more hiking trails in coastal San Diego North that will connect parts of Encinitas to eight miles of trails within San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. The protection of nature and the connection of coastal communities was strengthened October 30 when San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy closed escrow on a 77-acre property located in coastal upland Encinitas. Now, more land is added for the benefit of current and future generations of native plants, animals and outdoor enthusiasts.

“I stared at that jewel of nature, still wild, for hours from the top of Annie's Canyon Trail at San Elijo Lagoon,” said Ann Dunne, a longtime Conservancy supporter and Solana Beach resident who made this land acquisition possible by a generous donation. “It belongs in safe hands, and now it is.”

The 77-acres is the largest addition to these protected lands in more than 30 years.

“We’re thrilled to add this new property to the assets of our future and healthier communities,” said Doug Gibson, Executive Director and Principal Scientist for San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, now in its 30<sup>th</sup> year. “One of the key trail access points will connect Lake Drive in Encinitas westward to the 16 acres of land at the western “Strawberry Fields” that the Conservancy secured last year—totaling 93 acres of continuous habitat at the lagoon.”

Beginning in 2018 San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy’s habitat restoration staff will work with community volunteers to restore the property for native plants and animals and to establish trail connections for people. Volunteers and financial investments are needed to help with this expanded initiative in community conservation.

Conserving rare Coastal Sage Scrub and Southern Coastal Bluff Scrub habitats is essential. A recent Conservancy survey of the land identified several special status plants on the property, including California adolphia, Del Mar manzanita (federally endangered), wart-stemmed ceanothus, Orcutt's pincushion, Del Mar Mesa sand aster, cliff spurge, San Diego barrel cactus, beach golden aster, sea dahlia and Nuttall's scrub oak. At least two endangered species call this place home—the San Diego Pocket Mouse and the California Gnatcatcher.



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San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy is a Southern California nonprofit land trust, and is a managing partner of the nearly 1,000-acre San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, along with County of San Diego Department of Parks & Recreation and California Department of Fish & Wildlife. The Conservancy currently owns more than 143-acres in and adjacent to the reserve through fee-title ownership, and holds more than 70-acres of conservation easements on private and public property.

**SanElijo.org**

**#77MoreAcres**

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***San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY, founded in 1987, is a Southern California nonprofit land trust for San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve.***

**VISION**—a world where biodiversity is preserved and people act to conserve nature and embrace it as central to a healthy community. **MISSION**—to protect and restore the resources of the 1000-acre reserve, its watershed, and related ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations.