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**Trust for Public Land Along with the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and the Amah Mutsun Land Trust Announce the Conservation of the Historic Harvey and Gladys Nyland Property**  
*Conservation and Cultural Easements Provide Permanent Protection of the Historic 540-Acre Ranch in San Benito County*

**San Francisco, CA** – Trust for Public Land along with local land trust partners including the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and the Amah Mutsun Land Trust announced the permanent protection and conservation of the historic Harvey and Gladys Nyland Property in California’s Central Coast region.

Today’s announcement represents the long-time vision for the property and reflects the formal conveyance of the property to the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust, with a conservation easement protecting agriculture and wildlife habitat held by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and a cultural easement providing access for indigenous land stewardship, and cultural and educational activities held by the Amah Mutsun Land Trust.

“Conservation opportunities like this are rare and could not be done without partners,” said Guillermo Rodriguez California State Director with Trust for Public Land. “We are incredibly proud to work with local land trusts to design and deliver a multi-benefit conservation outcome that ensures the natural health and indigenous, historic and agricultural heritage of this property are preserved for future generations to enjoy.”

The Nyland Property is located across Highway 156 from the City of San Juan Bautista. The 540 acres of oak studded grasslands, wetlands, and seasonal streams supported the indigenous Amah Mutsun people for thousands of years, before they were taken to Mission San Juan Bautista and Mission Santa Cruz as part of the Spanish conquest of California.

The property, which is currently leased for cattle grazing by 101 Equipment Company and was once the site of a land grant era 40-room adobe, provides a scenic western gateway to San Juan Bautista and San Benito County for travelers along Highway 156.
“Permanent conservation of the ranch will ensure this land can support viable grazing operations that contribute to our local economy, feed people, and protect our scenic views,” said Lynn Overtree, Executive Director of the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust. “We are excited about owning these 540 acres, which are adjacent to the 520-acre Rancho Larios Open Space that we have owned since 2004. Together with the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County’s Rocks Ranch, there is a chain of protected working lands from the San Juan Road exit of Hwy 101 to the City of San Juan Bautista. We are honored to continue the Nyland family’s loving stewardship legacy.”

On the first Sunday of every month, members of the public are invited to join San Benito Agricultural Land Trust staff for a work party and or hike on their land. San Benito County lacks the public park systems that are common throughout the greater San Francisco Bay area. The extensive open spaces in the county are generally privately-owned ranches without public access. The San Benito Agricultural Land Trust calls their monthly events “Ranch Days”, in recognition of the need to provide county residents access, and with it, a window to understanding of the importance of the working cattle ranches that are the foundation of the local agricultural economy and scenic beauty.

One of the unique and intentional outcomes of this multi-benefit conservation project is not only protecting grazing land but establishing a framework through a cultural easement for the Amah Mutsun people to return to their lands. The cultural easement will provide the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band special access to the property for cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial traditions. Their guidance will also facilitate restoration, conservation, and stewardship of the lands and waters using traditional and contemporary indigenous knowledge and methods.

“The Amah Mutsun people have lived in Popoloutchum, which is now recognized as San Benito County and beyond for millennia,” said Valentin Lopez, President of the Amah Mutsun Land Trust and Chairman of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. “Our ancestors worked to fulfill their sacred obligation to take care of Mother Earth and all living things for thousands of years. Today we are happy to return to Popoloutchum through this Cultural Easement. This easement will ensure this land remains undeveloped and intact. We hope to share our traditional indigenous knowledge and practices regarding land management with our partners and the public so we can all learn from each other.”

In response to the imminent sale of the property, Trust for Public Land, with support from Wildlife Conservation Network and generous donors, stepped in to purchase the property, providing time for local land trusts to work together to complete fundraising that ensures the permanent protection and stewardship of the land. The three local land trusts worked together to raise the funding to buy the property from TPL and will collaborate on an ongoing basis to steward and maintain its conservation and cultural values.

“The partnership between our organizations is what makes this project so exceptional,” said Sarah Newkirk, Executive Director of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. “This property is important for so many different reasons – wildlife connectivity, agriculture, and cultural history and practice. We all bring something unique to the table, and our collaboration is what will make this conservation project a success.”
An array of native plants and wildlife can be found on the ranch, as well as a historic barn that marks a visitor’s arrival to San Juan Bautista. In addition to providing valuable wildlife habitat, the property contributes to an important regional wildlife corridor linking the Gabilan Mountains to the Santa Cruz Mountains a few miles to the north.

“California is changing rapidly, so protecting open space for people and wildlife is more important than ever. Conserving the Nyland property is an important milestone that demonstrates how people are working creatively together to safeguard wildlife and ecosystem health,” noted Neal Sharma, Senior Manager, California Wildlife Program of the Wildlife Conservation Network.

The Nyland property supports native habitat for numerous wildlife species, including raptors, migratory birds, and waterfowl along with mountain lion, grey fox, and bobcat. Several rare species reside at the ranch including tri-colored blackbirds, American badger, and western pond turtle.

The protection of the property also supports Trust for Public Land’s broader climate conservation efforts in the region. Protecting this property from development for public purposes aligns with California’s ambitious climate goals and “30 x 30” initiative that calls for the protection of 30% of the state’s land and coastal waters by the year 2030.

“Conserving and restoring this historic property to protected open space can help mitigate impacts from a rising climate, by sequestering carbon in area wetlands and providing habitat for several endangered and threatened species and native plants, all while allowing managed public access and providing a cultural easement that honors the land and Amah Mutsun people who have called this home since time immemorial,” continued TPL’s Guillermo Rodriguez.

Funds for the Harvey and Gladys Nyland Property’s closing were made available through the California Strategic Growth Council’s Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC) in collaboration with the Department of Conservation. SALC is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities.

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**About Trust for Public Land**
Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors. As a leader in equitable access to the outdoors, TPL works with communities to create parks and protect public land where they are needed most. Since 1972, TPL has protected more than 4 million acres of public land, created more than 5,364 parks, trails, schoolyards, and iconic outdoor places, raised $93 billion in public funding for parks and public lands, and connected nearly 9.4 million people to the outdoors. To learn more, visit tpl.org.

**About the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County**
The mission of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is to protect, care for, and connect all people to the vibrant natural and working lands that are essential for our community.
and nature to thrive together for generations to come. For more information, visit landtrustsantacruz.org.

About the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust

The Mission of the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust (SBALT) is to conserve regionally significant lands that sustain productive agriculture, preserve open space, and maintain the rural character of the county. As San Benito County’s only local land trust, we permanently preserve over 6,700 acres of agriculture and open space lands through conservation easements and other tools, in partnership with local landowners. Learn more or donate at www.sanbenitolandtrust.org

About the Amah Mutsun Land Trust

The Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT), an initiative of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, is the way in which the Amah Mutsun access, protect, and steward lands that are integral to their identity and culture in central coastal California. The goals of the AMLT are to preserve and protect culturally important sites, conduct research on traditional knowledge, educate tribal members and the general public, and restore Indigenous stewardship to the traditional landscapes of their ancestors. By restoring sacredness to ancestral lands and waters, AMLT serves as a vehicle for healing people and the places they inhabit.

Wildlife Conservation Network

Wildlife Conservation Network's (WCN) mission is to protect endangered wildlife by supporting conservationists who ensure wildlife and people coexist and thrive. For over 20 years, we have helped conservationists protect endangered wildlife on every continent. We provide a network of Conservation Partners with the financial resources, tools, and services they need to effectively protect wildlife. Through our Wildlife Funds, WCN offers flexible grants to projects from a wide range of organizations in order to protect a threatened species across its entire habitat. WCN also invests in the education and growth of local conservationists to strengthen their skills, build their organizations, and advance their careers. As no one organization or person can save wildlife alone, WCN emphasizes collaboration, connecting conservationists and supporters and creating a community united in a passion for wildlife. Learn more about WCN's unique approach to saving wildlife at wildnet.org.