



Mailing: PO Box 12206, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
Office: 1137 Pacific Street, Suite A, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

☎ 805 544 9096
☎ 805 544 5122
✉ lc@lcslo.org
🌐 lcslo.org

March 30, 2026

City of San Luis Obispo
990 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Attn: Mayor Stewart and City Council
Via: Whitney McDonald, City Manager
Bob Hill, Sustainability & Natural Resources Official

RE: Righetti Fiscalini Ranch Conservation Easement

Dear Mayor Stewart and City Council,

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (“The Land Conservancy”) respectfully requests the City Council’s consideration of a \$65,000 contribution to help fund a conservation easement on the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch, located on Orcutt Road south of San Luis Obispo in the scenic greenbelt surrounding the City of San Luis Obispo (“City”). A conservation easement on this ranch will permanently protect a suite of scenic, agricultural, and environmental conservation values.

Project Overview

The Righetti Fiscalini Ranch conservation easement project will protect 199 acres within the City’s Greenbelt. The property is situated within Edna Valley’s complex of long-standing agricultural lands, including the adjacent Dixon Ranch which was protected by The Land Conservancy in 2023 with modest matching funding from the City. The Righetti Fiscalini Ranch is a prominent part of the southern San Luis Obispo Greenbelt and is visible from many City vantage points and open space areas. Two seasonal streams converge on the ranch which ultimately feed into San Luis Obispo Creek. Wildlife including black bear and various raptor species are frequently observed on the property. The ranch’s current agricultural uses include approximately 91 acres of avocado orchard and 55 acres of vineyard.

The proposed conservation easement will permanently protect these scenic, environmental, and agricultural conservation values by restricting development to one potential future single residence within a defined building envelope. Additional restrictions will prohibit future subdivision, intensive non-agricultural land uses, activities that lead to soil erosion, unnecessary removal of native vegetation, and other perpetual land use restrictions. These restrictions will ensure the conservation values of the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch are protected in perpetuity.

Support for City Goals

Protecting the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch will address multiple City policy goals. The City’s 2025-2027 Financial Plan identifies pursuit of land conservation opportunities to improve the Greenbelt as an ongoing priority to achieve their Open Space, Climate Action, and Resilience goal of sustaining and advancing open space and natural resources. Additionally, the Conservation and Open Space Element of the City’s General Plan states that open space and productive agricultural land within the Greenbelt should be protected and maintained to preserve the City’s charm and character. The Righetti Fiscalini





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Ranch conservation easement will directly support these goals by protecting 199 acres of highly scenic and productive agricultural land from development within the City's Greenbelt.

The permanent protection of the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch also aligns with the sustainability and healthy community policies identified in the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan in two important ways. First, the conservation easement will support the City's efforts to maintain and expand natural areas surrounding the city to foster carbon sequestration. The natural and agricultural land cover on the property will continue to absorb and store atmospheric carbon for generations to come. Second, the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch provides significant contributions to the City's goal of supporting local food systems, including produce grown on the ranch, which are a local favorite at farmers' markets and co-ops.

Finally, the City's participation in the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch conservation easement acquisition would add to the long history of successful conservation partnerships between the City and The Land Conservancy. Multiple Greenbelt, open space, wildlife habitat, and riparian protection projects have been completed through this partnership including Bowden Ranch, Stenner Springs, Maino Open Space, Guidetti Ranch, and Dixon Ranch among many other conservation and ecosystem restoration projects in the greater City region.

Funding, Timeline, and Long-Term Stewardship

City funding toward this conservation easement will be heavily leveraged by the California Department of Conservation's Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (\$2,125,000) and the John S. Kiewit Memorial Foundation Grant (\$200,000). These two match funding sources amount to 97% of the appraised conservation easement value of \$2,390,000. This easement would be fully funded and able to close in fall 2026 should the City choose to grant the final \$65,000 gap.

Once acquired, the conservation easement will be held and stewarded by The Land Conservancy. The permanent conservation of the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch will be realized through a perpetual commitment to annual monitoring of the easement and, if required, enforcement of easement terms. Funding for this perpetual stewardship commitment will be donated by the landowner at the time of close and will be held in The Land Conservancy's dedicated Easement Stewardship and Defense account.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request to protect a key property within the City Greenbelt. Maps and photos of the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch have been included below. Please contact Kyle Walsh, Conservation Director at 805-544-9096 or kylew@lcslo.org with any questions or for additional information.

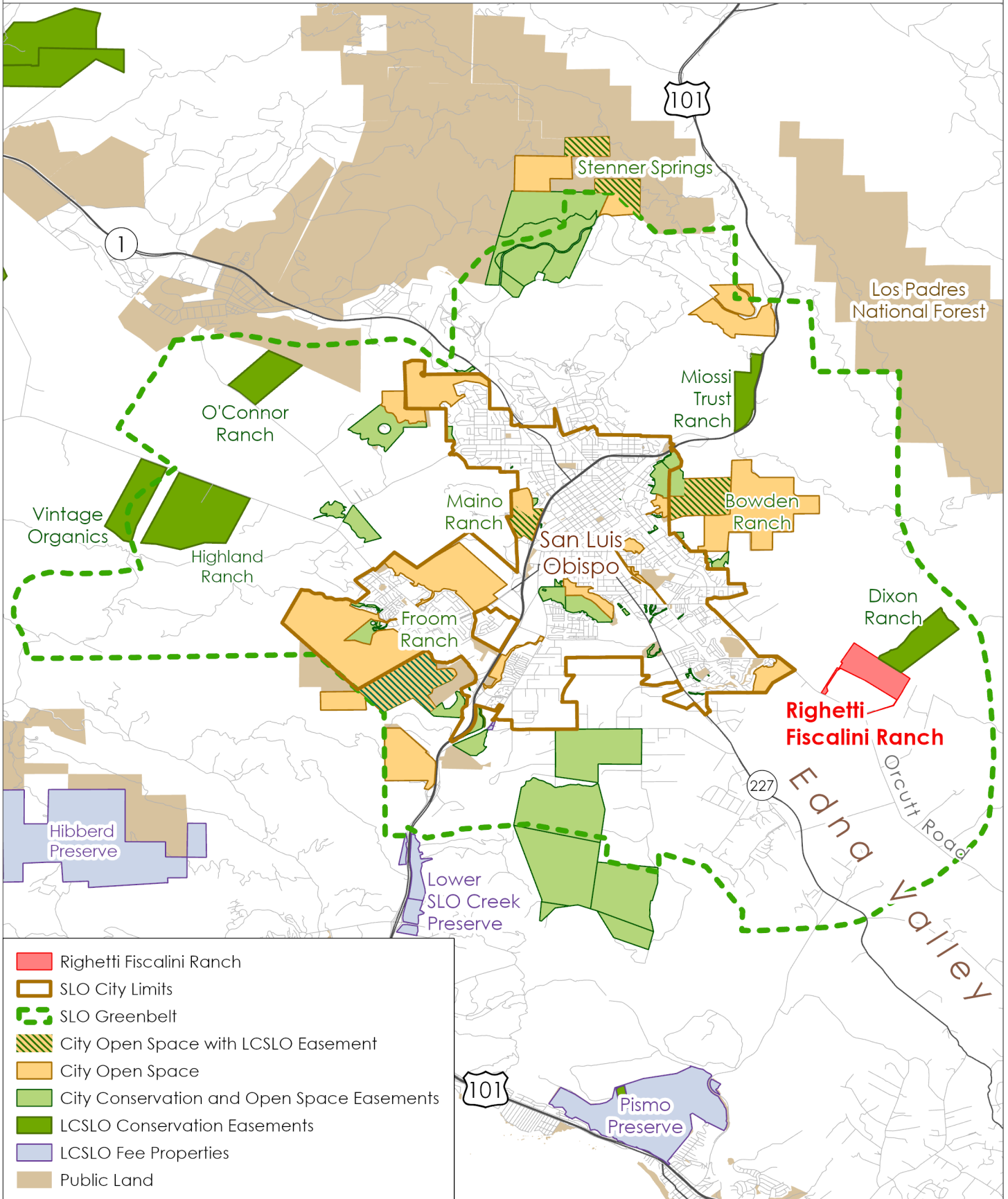
Sincerely,

Kyle Walsh

Conservation Director



Righetti Fiscalini Ranch Conservation Easement
 City of SLO Funding Request
 Vicinity Map



- Righetti Fiscalini Ranch
- SLO City Limits
- SLO Greenbelt
- City Open Space with LCSLO Easement
- City Open Space
- City Conservation and Open Space Easements
- LCSLO Conservation Easements
- LCSLO Fee Properties
- Public Land

Righetti Fiscalini Ranch Conservation Easement
City of SLO Funding Request
Aerial Map

1/4 mile



 Righetti Fiscalini Ranch

Photos of the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch



Figure 1. Coyote seen roaming through the grassland at the Righetti Fiscalini Ranch.



Figure 2. Stream channel which connects to San Luis Obispo Creek, shown adjacent to serpentine rock outcrop.



Figure 2. Avocado orchard with Cerro San Luis and Bishop Peak City Open Spaces in the background.



Figure 1. One of several owl boxes located throughout the property. Avocado orchard shown in the background.