

Kandarian Farms Conservation Easement

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County



Morro Bay National Estuary Program
Land Acquisition Funding Request
November 2, 2017

Project Overview

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (The Land Conservancy) is requesting partial funding from the Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) to acquire a conservation easement on Kandarian Farms in San Luis Obispo County's Los Osos Valley. Kandarian Farms is owned and operated by Larry and Esta Kandarian. The 133-acre farm features prime farmland soils along the valley bottom with oak woodlands and shrublands along the hills on the upland portion of the farm. Larry Kandarian plants an array of organic ancient grains, vegetables, and flowers in the high-quality valley soils and leases a small portion of the upland grazing land to a neighboring landowner. Included in this mix are hillsides of coast live oak woodland that support a variety of wildlife species that migrate through the greater Irish Hills ecosystem. The agricultural productivity, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty that this property features will be protected by a conservation easement. The easement directly addresses Land Protection Action Plans 1, 3, and 4 outlined in the MBNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. In addition, Larry Kandarian supports the concept of an education program on this farm that would provide an opportunity for younger students to learn from Larry and the diverse agriculture and native habitat on his farm. This type of program could involve the MBNEP as a partner. In support of this conservation easement, The Land Conservancy is requesting \$140,000 toward the total appraised value of the conservation easement on Kandarian Farms.

The Kandarian Farms conservation easement will work to protect both agricultural and natural habitat values on the property. The farm is currently comprised of two parcels (APNs 067-171-011; -038). The easement will consolidate the farm into a single effective parcel by prohibiting the future subdivision and or separate conveyance of these two parcels. The easement will place minor restrictions on certain agricultural activities. These restrictions include the establishment of a commercial feedlot, construction of greenhouses, and aquaculture operations. Irrigated and non-irrigated farming and livestock grazing are not prohibited or limited under the easement. The easement will effectively preserve approximately half of the farm for agricultural production and half of the farm for habitat conservation. This is achieved by prohibiting the removal of native vegetation except as required for down and diseased vegetation, fire protection, or similar safety concerns. Natural vegetation comprises approximately half of the property, namely on the upland slopes on the southern portion of the farm. Key reserved rights within this easement include the ability to continue current agricultural operations and the ability to build a single residential home on a pre-identified 1-acre building envelope.

Project Budget

A conservation easement appraisal is currently underway for Kandarian Farms. The appraisal is being completed by Todd Murphy of Schenberger, Taylor, McCormick & Jecker, Inc. Mr. Murphy provided a preliminary value range of \$650,000 to \$800,000 for this conservation easement on July 28, 2017. For the purposes of this grant request, we are anticipating the value of this conservation easement to be \$800,000.

Match funding for this conservation easement will be provided via an Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program cooperative agreement between Camp San Luis Obispo and The Land Conservancy. This program will provide the remaining funds required to complete the easement alongside the requested \$140,000 contribution from the MBNEP.

Project Budget

	MBNEP	ACUB	In-Kind	Total
Appraisal	-	-	\$15,000	\$15,000
Conservation Easement	\$140,000	\$660,000	-	\$800,000
Easement Stewardship	-	-	\$34,612	\$34,612
Total	\$140,000	\$660,000	\$49,612	\$849,612

Conservation Easement Monitoring and Enforcement

The Land Conservancy adheres to a Conservation Easement Monitoring Policy and associated Easement Monitoring Procedure to inform the monitoring process for each easement in its portfolio. Measuring the success of a conservation easement over time begins with a Baseline Conditions Report. This report is required as part of every conservation easement The Land Conservancy holds. Baseline Reports are completed at the time the easement recorded. They document the state of a property when the easement went into effect both in general and with an emphasis on aspects of the property or land uses explicitly address by the easement.

Following the recordation of an easement, The Land Conservancy will monitor the easement area annually in order to ensure continued compliance with the easement terms. Annual monitoring is conducted by qualified staff and/or volunteers, and is informed by the Baseline Conditions Report, as well as prior annual monitoring reports. Annual monitoring of the easement will provide a consistent measurement of whether the easement is successfully maintaining the conservation values it is intended to protect. The annual monitoring reports are also useful tools for landowners, as they can view changes in the land over time and use that information to improve or adapt their land management strategies.

Conservation easement monitoring is funded by a stewardship contribution that is calculated based on the anticipated costs of monitoring and relative risk of violation given the property location and easement terms. The stewardship contribution is paid by the landowner when the easement is completed. This contribution is added to The Land Conservancy's Easement Monitoring and Defense Fund, which is set up to provide significant financial resources for the perpetual responsibility of measuring the success of each conservation easement.

Kandarian Farms Conservation Easement Aerial Map

1000 feet



1-acre Homesite

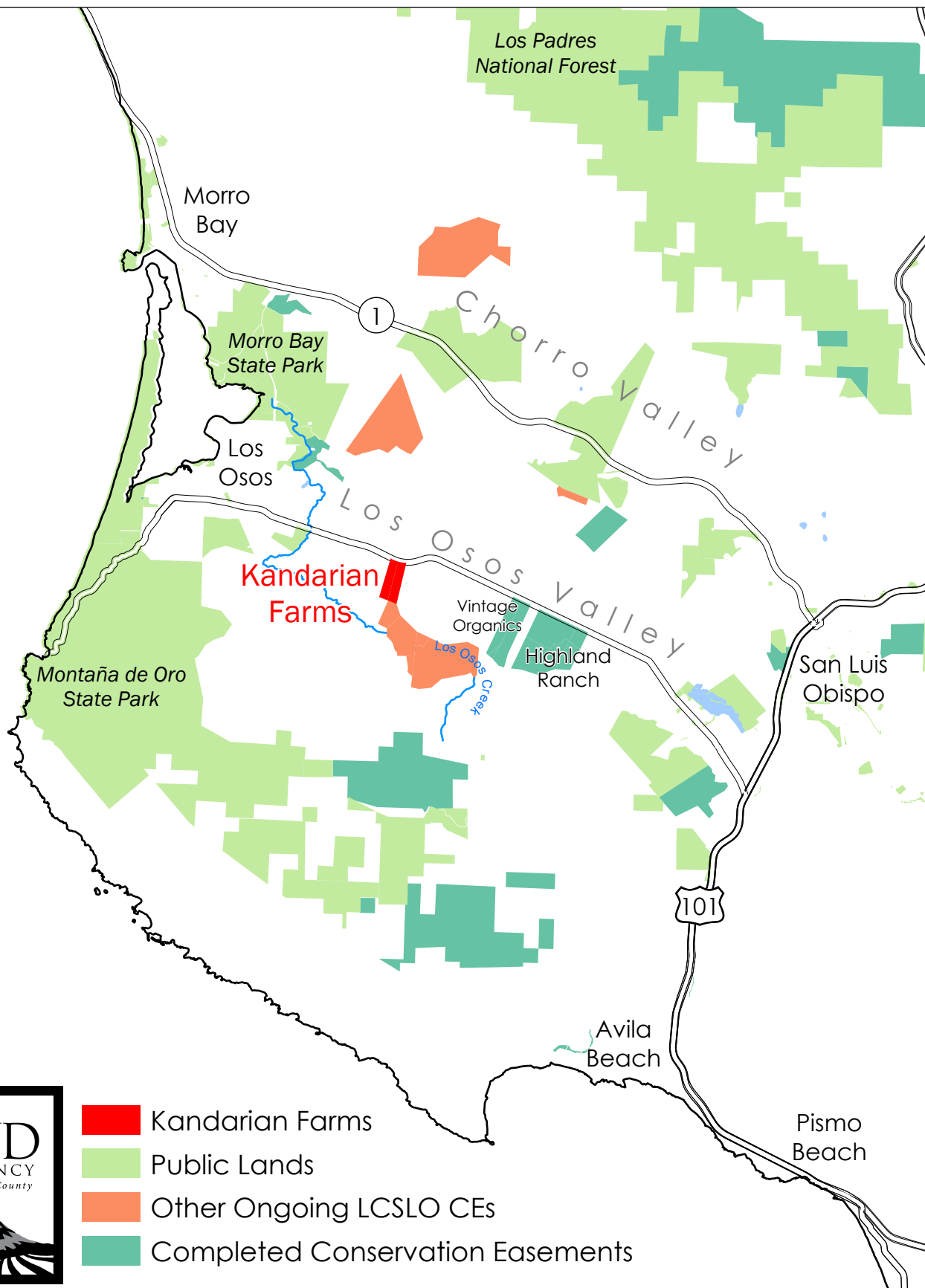
067-171-038
~ 66 acres

067-171-011
~ 67 acres



Kandarian Farms Conservation Easement Vicinity Map

5 miles



Kandarian Farms Conservation Easement Zoning Map

1 mile

