



30

YEARS

CELEBRATING
OUR **HISTORY**
& **FUTURE**

“ *The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.* ”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson





A message from our Executive Director & President

Dear Friends of Rivers & Lands Conservancy,

Benefiting the community has always been at the heart of Rivers & Lands Conservancy's mission. Founded in 1989 as Riverside Land Conservancy, we began as an all-volunteer organization whose primary focus was the conservation of open space in Riverside's Greenbelt. In the 30 years since our founding, the organization has grown to a fully-staffed, professional land trust. Our Board of Directors includes visionary members from the earliest days of the organization, members who have served for years, and many new members, all with strong commitments to open space conservation and deep connections to the community.

The dedication of our current and past members, supporters, Board of Directors, and staff have positioned Rivers & Lands Conservancy to continue our long-standing mission of open space conservation and stewardship. This is the foundation of our mission as a land trust. Outreach and engagement programs build on that foundation by helping our community members experience, appreciate, and benefit from local and regional open space.

As our region continues to be developed, the need for conservation and opportunities to enjoy open spaces also continues to increase. Dedicated to addressing this need, Rivers & Lands Conservancy is poised for growth. We are excited about our expanding outreach and engagement programs as well as with the community's enthusiasm for our programs.

In addition to the many people whose dedication has made Rivers & Lands Conservancy grow from a dream to a reality, we also depend on support to fund our expanding programs and our perpetual stewardship of more than 2,600 acres of open space. We recently launched our first-ever formal development program to ensure that our supporters like you are kept informed of opportunities for engagement and options to assist in open space conservation. Further growth of our land holdings and programs will be exponential with an investment from the community. We hope that you will follow our work, share it with friends and family, join us outdoors and consider being a part of this open space investment.

Open space conservation cannot happen without community champions, like you. Thank you for your continuing support.

Gratefully,

Michele McKinney
Board President

Jack Easton
Executive Director



Rivers & Lands Conservancy

Caretakers of Southern California's natural, wild, and open spaces.

Rivers & Lands Conservancy believes that open space is a cornerstone to a healthy and vital community.

For 30 years, Rivers & Lands Conservancy has been instrumental in conserving over 13,400 acres of open space in perpetuity in Inland Southern California. Much of that work has been with partner organizations who now hold and protect 11,000 acres we helped to conserve. Today, Rivers & Lands Conservancy holds and manages over 2,600 acres of open space for values that include the protection of sensitive species and habitats, agricultural preservation, and recreation.

- 13,400 acres preserved
- 2,600 acres currently held and stewarded
- 55 properties held and stewarded

■ OPEN SPACE PRESERVES

1. Cienega Canyon
2. Clark
3. Mt. Rubidoux Peak
4. Pachappa Hill
5. Empire Homes
6. Alessandro Arroyo Big Bend

● MITIGATION PROPERTIES

● CONSERVATION TRANSFER PROPERTIES



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

RLC'S HISTORY & FUTURE

Rivers & Lands Conservancy (originally Riverside Land Conservancy) was formed in 1989, when few nonprofit organizations existed that were authorized and equipped to hold and manage lands set aside for permanent conservation. The conservation and stewardship of open space remains at the core of our mission today.

Since our inception, Rivers & Lands Conservancy has sought out opportunities for local land acquisition projects that provide open space benefits to nearby neighborhoods and communities. Whether as the organization facilitating the acquisition and transfer to conservation partners or holding and stewarding the lands ourselves, we ensure that these open spaces are permanently conserved.

As one of the few local organizations authorized by California Department of Fish & Wildlife to hold conservation easements or fee title lands for mitigation purposes, Rivers & Lands Conservancy plays an important role in the conservation of our rapidly developing region. Of the **2,600 ACRES** that Rivers & Lands Conservancy currently holds and manages, **1,464 ACRES** of these are from **29 MITIGATION PROPERTIES** in Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange and Imperial counties.

With the commitment of stewarding open space for future generations comes a responsibility to our community. Rivers & Lands Conservancy's growing outreach and education programs offer adults, youth, and families quality hands-on experiences discovering the open spaces that surround us. We believe the future of conservation depends on our community and their connection to the land.

RLC TIMELINE

1989

Riverside Land
Conservancy founded

1990

First Property Accepted,
Arlington Mountain

COLTON DUNES/DELHI SANDS FLOWER-LOVING FLY CONSERVATION PROGRAM LAUNCH

Rivers & Lands Conservancy holds 200 acres of the Delhi Sands dunes formation, a stretch of fine sand sparsely covered by native herbs and shrubs. Less than 3% of this rare habitat, which is unique to the Inland Empire, remains. An integral component of this ecosystem is the federally endangered Delhi Sands flower-loving fly, a fascinating insect that can be found nowhere else in the world.



1990

2000

2003

Purchase of Cienega Canyon Preserve

CIENEGA CANYON

The 358-acre Cienega Canyon Preserve is located in an area of diverse habitats including riparian woodland along a perennial creek, coastal sage scrub and chaparral on the steep rugged hillsides, oak woodland nestled the valleys and a seasonally-flooded Cienega. Rivers & Lands Conservancy engages the public and other partners in habitat restoration programs, outdoor recreation, and education activities on the Preserve.



2005

Colton Dunes & Delhi Sands
Flower-Loving Fly Conservation
Program Launched

2006

First Mitigation Property
Acquired, Hills of Provence



Spotlight: Jane Block

on Rivers & Lands Conservancy's Beginnings

CELEBRATING
30 YEARS



Jane Block, one of the founders of Rivers & Lands Conservancy and a current board member has been an advocate for protecting Inland Southern California open space since the early-1980's. Her ability to look at problems and see

potential solutions has been a driving force in many conservation efforts and in the creation of Rivers & Lands Conservancy.

“ One of the problems we environmentalists encountered before the establishment of Rivers & Lands Conservancy was that if the state, county, or city required a developer to preserve important open space, they could refuse if no agency would accept the property and agree to preserve it as open space. One of the important functions of Rivers & Lands Conservancy is that we accept and preserve environmentally important open space as one of our prime goals. Once Rivers & Lands Conservancy was established, it made a huge difference.”

In her dedication to Rivers & Lands Conservancy, Jane ensured the organization had a place to call home, purchasing an office complex where she could offer affordable rents to nonprofits and donate space to Rivers & Lands Conservancy.

“ Rivers & Lands Conservancy bounced from donated office to donated office. It became apparent to me that if they didn't have a homeplace it would be difficult for the organization to grow and thrive. Purchasing the office complex has been extremely positive. The land conservancy has preserved over 13,400 acres of land. It's the best investment I have ever made. I consider it a gift to the future.



When I drive by open space that I have assisted in preserving, the view is my reimbursement for the effort expended. When I drive up the road to my home in Box Springs Canyon, I am rewarded. I encourage all the others who have worked to preserve open space to collect their reimbursement (All conservation efforts are community based. There are no solo acts in land conservation). When you acknowledge your successes, you're encouraged to do more and a lot more needs to be done.”

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 1989, Rivers & Lands Conservancy has grown from an all-volunteer organization to a staff of eight!

2014
First Annual Gala

2013
Purchase of Mt. Rubidoux Peak

2011
Creation of Santa Ana River Trust

PURCHASE OF MT. RUBIDOUX PEAK

In partnership with Friends of Mt. Rubidoux and The Mission Inn Foundation & Museum, Rivers & Lands Conservancy and our dedicated community helped raise nearly \$260,000 to purchase the peak and create a non-wasting endowment to permanently protect it and its historical and scenic landmarks.



2010

2020

RIVERS & LANDS CONSERVANCY RECEIVES ACCREDITATION

In 2015 Rivers & Lands Conservancy was awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Accredited land trusts voluntarily complete a rigorous review process demonstrating fiscal accountability, strong organizational leadership, sound transactions and lasting stewardship of the lands they conserve.



2015
Rivers & Lands Conservancy First Awarded Land Trust
Alliance Accreditation

2015
Acorns to Oaks Youth Education
Program Launched

2017
Name changed to Rivers
& Lands Conservancy

2018
Delhi Sands
Flower-Loving Fly
Education Program
Launched

CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY



Santa Ana River Trust Program



The Santa Ana River Trust program (SART) was developed as a program of Rivers & Lands Conservancy to help affirm the Santa Ana River and adjoining Santa Ana River Trail as an inviting and vibrant open space resource. In the last five years, the program has organized 36 community events and engaged over 1,000 volunteers in hands-on stewardship activities, such as litter removal, graffiti eradication, and native plant restoration.

The SART program has been instrumental in developing a free Santa Ana River Trail pocket map in partnership with the City of Riverside and installing way-finding signs to the River throughout the City of Riverside. In addition, SART has also worked with the City of Jurupa Valley to design and install interpretive signage at key River access points with information on interesting environmental and cultural facts. SART also partnered with County of Riverside Parks and Open Space District to organize the 1st and 2nd Annual Santa Ana River Trail Bike Ride & Festivals.

Rivers & Lands Conservancy sits on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Santa Ana River Conservancy (a program of the State Coastal Conservancy). As part of the committee, Rivers & Lands Conservancy has provided input on the development of a Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan, which identifies and prioritizes opportunities for recreation, education, greening, aesthetic improvement, and wildlife habitat along the entire length of the Santa Ana River.



SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE SART PROGRAM



58,000+ pounds of trash removed



100 gallons of paint used to cover graffiti



1,000+ volunteers have participated



600 native plants planted by volunteers



ABOUT THE SANTA ANA RIVER

The Santa Ana River is a truly unique waterway. As the longest river in Southern California, the Santa Ana River travels for 100 miles from the San Bernardino mountains, through Riverside and on to Orange County beaches.

Riverside County contains the longest stretch of natural riverbed of the three counties along the Santa Ana's course. This rare, free-flowing reach of the waterway within an urban setting provides critical riparian habitat for wildlife, a unique natural environment for people to enjoy and is a model for future river conservation.



Volunteer Spotlight

Ms. Jeni Williams and her students from Patriot High School

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Since 2014, Jeni has brought hundreds of her students to volunteer on Rivers & Lands Conservancy projects, including Santa Ana River cleanups, seed spreading in Cienega Canyon, and graffiti removal along the Santa Ana River Trail.

“Rivers & Lands Conservancy community events are so very valuable to me and my students because they provide an organized, structured, and fun opportunity to engage in community activism. Most of my students are enthusiastic about doing something for the environment, but don't know how to get involved. The events organized by Rivers & Lands Conservancy give them a way to begin volunteering. In class, as soon as we finish one event, students often ask when the next one is. Several former students have, because of volunteering with Rivers & Lands Conservancy, sought out volunteer events at their colleges and are excited to be involved wherever they live. These events are creating lasting memories and impacts on both the environment and my students.”



Conservation is a community effort and Rivers & Lands Conservancy works hard to connect with ours. We offer opportunities to volunteer by assisting with stewarding our properties, participating in guided hikes, and exploring the open space in our area throughout the year.

Community Events

COAST LIVE OAK COMMUNITY PLANTINGS



Every year, Rivers & Lands Conservancy invites the community to join us in the fall to collect acorns and then again in the winter to plant the seedlings. This annual community planting is one of our most popular events, encouraging individuals and families to get outside and help the historic coast live oak woodland at the Cienega Canyon Preserve thrive.



PRENDA ARROYO WILDFLOWER WALK



The annual Prenda Arroyo Wildflower Walk invites the community to experience what spring has to offer. The guided hike on Rivers & Lands Conservancy's Empire Homes preserve in Riverside gives attendees an up-close look at the diversity of species that depend on the Prenda Arroyo. The Arroyo is a tributary to the Santa Ana River and an important component of the Santa Ana River Watershed. The variety of wildflowers as well as native fauna such as jackrabbits, red-tailed hawks and roadrunners always make it worth bringing along a camera.

SHAPING OUR FUTURE



Acorns to Oaks

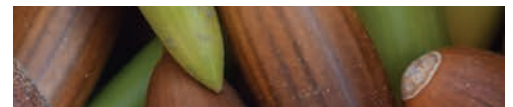
Rivers & Lands Conservancy launched its first official environmental education program, Acorns to Oaks, in 2015.

With the time youth spend in front of a screen at an all-time high, Rivers & Lands Conservancy recognizes the growing need to connect youth to nature through meaningful outdoor experiences. Since its launch, the program has continued to evolve and expand under the guidance of staff.

Acorns to Oaks introduces underserved high school biology students to oak ecology and stewardship through the hands-on experience of restoring native oak woodland at our Cienega Canyon Preserve. The program consists of an in-class presentation and two unique field trips, provided at zero cost to participating students and the minimal cost of substitute teachers to school districts.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children are spending 50% less time outdoors than twenty years ago.



While students explore the beauty of the Preserve, the program enhances classroom learning with real-world experience through activities involving oak woodland ecology, biodiversity, meeting native animals and environmental stewardship ethics. During the program students learn how to collect and germinate acorns, then help grow and plant oak seedlings using science-based restoration techniques.



**350 oak seedlings
planted**



**3,000 community
members reached
annually**



Youth participating in the program experience open space in a way that demonstrates how they can personally have an impact on conservation. Through their participation in the program, youth gain firsthand experience caring for the natural environment which cultivates the inspiration to be more aware of nature in their community and to become better stewards of the natural environment.

SUPPORTING OUR FUTURE

Rivers & Lands Conservancy depends on the support of the community to offer and grow our outdoor education programs, volunteer opportunities and other experiences in our local open spaces. These activities increase awareness of the need for open space conservation in our community, as well as all the meaningful ways we can enjoy the outdoor resources available. **There are many ways to get involved!**



BECOME A MEMBER

Joining Rivers & Lands Conservancy as a new or renewing member at any level is a wonderful way to stay connected to the successes, challenges, and possibilities of open space conservation and education in our community. As our membership program grows, we are rolling out new events and benefits for members. Now is a great time to join!



MAKE A DONATION

Whether you are supporting a specific project or our overall work, your donation in any amount matters! Together, we can ensure that open spaces exist, are stewarded in perpetuity, and remain for our enjoyment today and for future generations.



ATTEND THE RIVERS & LANDS CONSERVANCY ANNUAL GALA

Rivers & Lands Conservancy held its inaugural Annual Gala in 2014 at Crestmore Manor. The gala has grown every year since, bringing together the community to celebrate the conservation successes and support the outreach and educational programs provided by Rivers & Lands Conservancy. From meeting native wild animals during the reception, to the gourmet dinner and lively program, it's a must-attend event.

Visit our website riversandlands.org to learn more about the many ways to get involved!

CELEBRATING
30 YEARS



Habitat Types Conserved



- Sage and alluvial fan scrub: 42%
- Agricultural conservation: 22%
- Riparian: 11%
- Chaparral: 9%
- Delhi Sands dunes formation: 7%
- Wetlands: 5%
- Oak woodland: 4%

SOME SPECIES PROTECTED:

- * **Burrowing Owl**
(*Athene cunicularia*)
- * **California Gnatcatcher**
(*Poliophtila californica*)
- * **Delhi Sands Flower-Loving Fly** (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*)
- * **Engelmann Oak**
(*Quercus engelmannii*)
- * **Least Bell's Vireo**
(*Vireo bellii pusillus*)

RESOURCES CONSERVED:

- » Open Space
- » Scenic Vistas
- » Hillscapes
- » Arroyos
- » Waters
- » Wetlands
- » Sensitive Habitat
- » Agriculture

RLC Donors FY 2017-2018

Rivers & Lands Conservancy is grateful to all our supporters. Thank you for your generosity in support of our mission. This list reflects all support received between April 1, 2017 and March 31, 2018.

Raul Aballi	Charles & Virginia Field	Chris MacArthur	Riverside Unified School District
Drs. Michael & Edith Allen	Richard Frickman	Macher & Clark	<i>Karen & Christopher Roholt</i>
James & Rosalie Anderson	<i>Councilman Michael & Joyce Gardner</i>	Douglas MacLaughlin	Laura Roughton
Genevieve Arnold	Irene Gonzales	<i>Beverly Maloof</i>	Bob Ryan
<i>Greg Ballmer</i>	Jerry & Susan Gordon	<i>Joyce McCall</i>	San Gorgonio Crossing
<i>Bank of America</i>	<i>Gresham Savage Nolan & Tilden</i>	Kathleen McKevitt	<i>Santa Ana Watershed Association</i>
<i>Alan Beals</i>	<i>Ellen Hamilton</i>	<i>Michele & Emmons McKinney</i>	Constance Scott
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Celeste Cantu	George Key	<i>Patagonia</i>	<i>J. Giles Waines</i>
County of Riverside, Second District Supervisor	Sharon L. Harris	Albert Paulek	Tina Welch
Canyon Crest Winery	<i>Land Veritas Corp.</i>	Karena Pavon	Gail Wesson
Susanne Cesari	Law's Cider Mill	Tom & Cathy Perring	<i>Western Municipal Water District</i>
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John Ferguson			

Donors who have given consecutively over the last three years are in *teal italics*. Donors who have given consecutively over ten or more years are in **green bold**.

2017-2018 Fiscal Year Financial Report

(April 1, 2017-March 31, 2018)

CELEBRATING
30 YEARS



Beginning Net Assets \$19,664,138

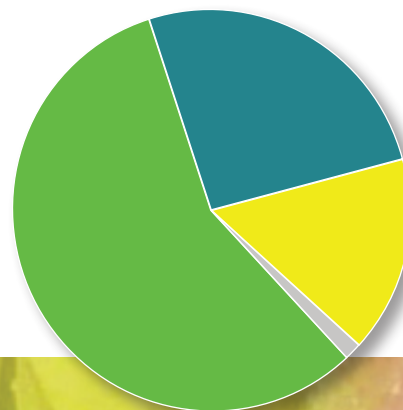
Operating Income

Contributions & Grants	\$298,821
Investment Income	\$182,272
Other Income	\$15,911
Released Restricted Funds	\$652,459
TOTAL	\$1,149,463

● Released restricted funds
● Contributions and grants

● Investment income
● Other income

2017-2018
Operating Income



Programs & Operating Expenses

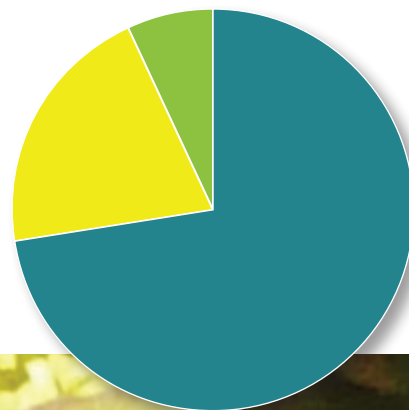
Land Acquisition	\$592,474
Administration	\$235,499
Land Stewardship	\$198,652
Fundraising	\$77,911
Outreach & Education	\$42,756
TOTAL	\$1,147,292

● Land programs

● Administration

● Fundraising

2017-2018
Operating Expenses



Ending Net Assets \$20,667,676



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Sarah Mundy, *Vice President*
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RIVERS & LANDS
CONSERVANCY

RIVERS & LANDS
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organization

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Nicole Padron, *Stewardship Director*
Rebecca K. O'Connor, *Development Director*
Maria Lum, *Mitigation Coordinator*
Rachael Hamilton, *Outreach Coordinator*
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