



San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY
Connecting communities. Protecting nature.

NEWS RELEASE

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Improvements Begin on North County's Harbaugh Seaside Trails

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Breaks Ground on Habitat Enhancement, Trail Amenities

Solana Beach — It may be a small piece of land, but its presence is huge. The three-acre overlook at the gateway of Solana Beach and Cardiff-by-the-Sea has always provided views of the Pacific Ocean. Sunsets are cherished here. Now designated as permanent open space, work begins to enhance this San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy land for nature, and for community.

"Time was of the essence, six years ago, when San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy acquired Harbaugh Seaside Trails with the crucial support of lenders who joined in the cause," said Doug Gibson, Conservancy Executive Director and Principal Scientist. "As a land trust, we reflect on the highly successful community connections made in these endeavors and look forward to generations of public enjoyment."

The improvements are expected to take one year, with an anticipated Grand Opening of Harbaugh Seaside Trails in early 2020. The restoration of native plant habitats and public trails celebrates decades of work to preserve the views, the community connections, and the enduring vision to save undeveloped Southern California coastal views.

Open space improvements include:

- The removal of invasive plant species for native plantings that will attract pollinators and link the habitat to San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve;
- A donor monument, designed by Coastal Rail Trail artist, Betsy Schulz, will be erected at its southern end with commemorative tiles that donors secured to show their support;
- A viewing deck on the north end, and interpretive signs, will be installed;
- A railroad undercrossing—located at Harbaugh Seaside Trails—will provide visitors with safer coastal access into San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, and beyond;
- The San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy team will guide community volunteers in the planting of native species this fall.

For more than 20 years, San Diego's north coastal communities fought to protect Harbaugh Seaside Trails (formerly The Gateway Property). In December 2011, San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy purchased the property for \$3.75 million. More than a dozen champions stepped forward to loan the Conservancy the funds to acquire the property. Support from more than 1,200 supporters donated to the fundraising

campaign—a testament to community resolve and generosity. In January 2015 the land was saved and renamed Harbaugh Seaside Trails. Its name honors The Harbaugh Foundation’s \$1.15 million gift and the late George and Betty Harbaugh. The Harbaughs were longtime San Diego residents with a passion for life. Their generosity and thoughtfulness impacted the lives of many and continues to live on with the philanthropic works of The Harbaugh Foundation.

“Harbaugh Seaside Trails, with its tremendous views of the ocean and San Elijo Lagoon, is a great asset to the public,” said Joe Balla, Director of The Harbaugh Foundation. “Open space preservation is one of the most important priorities of The Harbaugh Foundation, and we are proud to have played a part in preserving this landmark site for all to enjoy.”

SanElijo.org/SeasideTrails

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Image of View from Harbaugh Seaside Trails online: SanElijo.org/NewsReleases

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy exists to drive a passion for nature, for all. We believe that if we help people discover a passion for nature, they will want to protect it and value everything it has to offer.