

Santa Clara River Restoration Project Grant

“Removing Zoning Barriers to Acquisition of River Properties
& Educating Landowners”

Outreach Campaign Report

February, 2008

County of Ventura, Planning Division

Developed and Distributed Educational Publications

Two educational publications—a Conservation Subdivision mailer and handout—were fully funded by this project; one publication—a Wetland Project Permitting Guide—was partially funded by this project. These publications are described below.

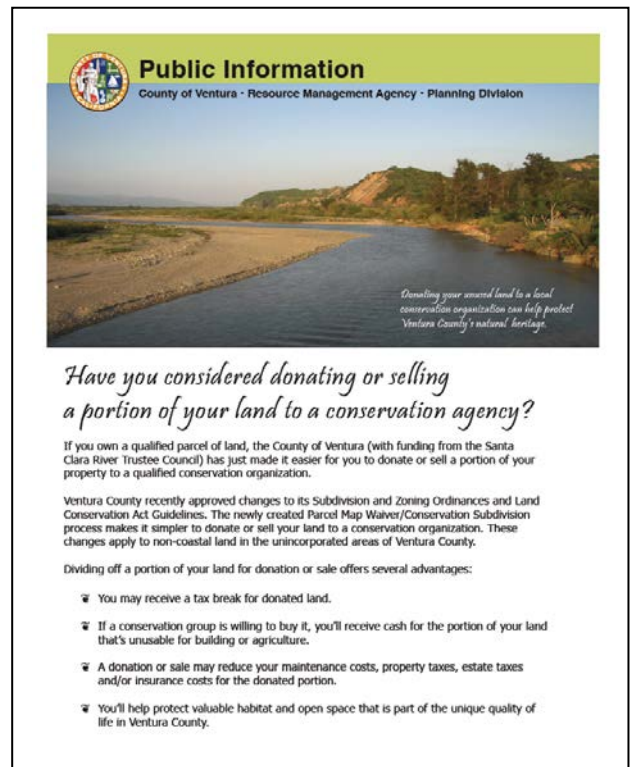
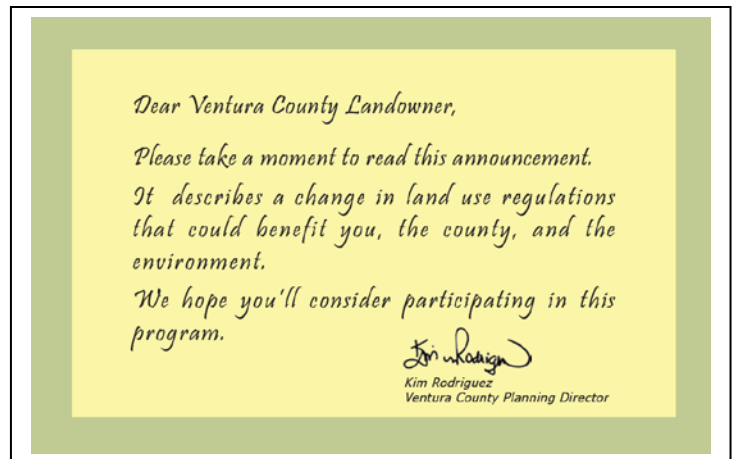
Conservation Subdivision Mailer

The Conservation Subdivision mailer was developed specifically for landowners adjacent to the Santa Clara River. The mailer explains the new Conservation Subdivision process, outlines what land qualifies for the program, identifies the local conservation organizations interested in acquiring land along the river, and informs landowners on how to get started. Staff worked with the local conservation organizations to ensure that their area of interest was accurately represented.

This full-color, 11" x 17" mailer (folded to 8.5" x 5.5") was mailed to 787 addresses along the Santa Clara River in Ventura County.

Conservation Subdivision Handout

The Conservation Subdivision handout was developed as a planning department counter handout. This full-color, 3-panel, 11" x 25.5" piece provides all the information from the mailer, with an expanded list and map of all the conservation organizations interested in acquiring land for preservation throughout the county, and with the addition of a “Frequently Asked Questions” section providing more detailed information on the process of pursuing a Conservation Subdivision and answering questions on the new Open Space/Wildlife Habitat Land Conservation Act option. Staff worked with interested landowners and local conservation organizations to ensure the



content of the educational brochure addressed relevant issues.

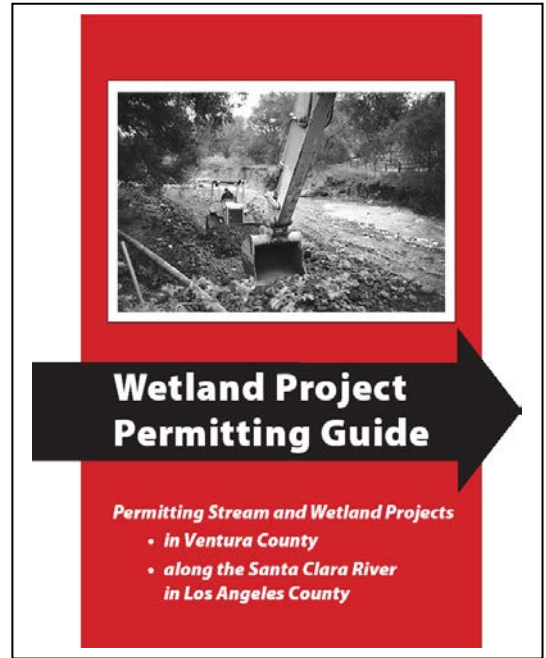
1,000 copies of the handout were printed. Copies were sent to all the conservation organizations listed in the handout and were offered to all ten cities in the County. The handout is made available at the Planning Division's public counter and it is posted on the Division's website. The Hillside Conservancy is planning to use the map and selected text from this handout in its upcoming newsletter.

Wetland Project Permitting Guide

This grant project contributed toward the funding of a comprehensive guide on wetland project permitting. This 60-page booklet has been praised for its ability to convey in an exceptionally understandable format the very complex and convoluted maze of wetland regulations.

The original distribution included local cities, U.S. Army Corps, Regional Water Quality Control Board Coastal Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Resource Conservation District, land trusts and nonprofit organizations, consulting biologists and others. Requests continue to come in, from throughout the state, for copies of the guide.

Recently, the guide was awarded an "Award of Excellence" by the Central Coast Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) and it has now been submitted for state-level APA awards competition. The guide also won a California State Association of Counties award.



Provided Technical Assistance to Property Owners

Since the distribution of the Conservation Subdivision educational publications, Planning Division staff has met with and assisted a number of interested property owners, as well as conservation agency staff, with technical questions about the Conservation Subdivision process. In several cases the conservation subdivision was ultimately not pursued, or has been delayed, due to legal lot status issues, land conservation act issues, disagreements among the property owners themselves (in the case of multiple landowners), outstanding code violations, amongst other issues. Several of these inquiries were from property owners along the Santa Clara River.

Planning Division staff is currently working with two different property owners pursuing a Conservation Subdivision.