

# SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 12/8/04  
**Department Name:** Planning and Development  
**Department No.:** 053  
**Agenda Date:** 12/14/04  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 5 minutes  
**Continued Item:** YES  
**If Yes, date from:** 12/7/04

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Valentin Alexeeff, Director  
Planning and Development

**STAFF CONTACT:** Doug Anthony, Energy Specialist  
Energy Division, 568-2046

**SUBJECT:** State of California, Coastal Resource Grant Program

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**Recommendation(s):** That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to execute the attached Resolution, changing the project description for Coastal Resource Grant No. 39-A-01 so that the County may use this grant of \$350,000 to assist the Trust for Public Lands in acquiring Ellwood-Mesa properties in fee. This grant was originally designated to the County to assist the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County in acquiring conservation easements on ranches along the Gaviota Coast.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:** This recommendation primarily aligns with Goal No. 5 – Maintain and Enhance the Quality of Life for All Residents.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:** During its regularly scheduled hearing of December 7, 2004, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to return the following week in order to transfer a \$350,000 grant awarded to the County in April of 2002 by the California Resources Agency. This grant is due to expire on June 30, 2004, and would be forfeited if the County does not use it prior to the date of expiration.

The County originally intended to use this grant to assist the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County in acquiring agricultural and natural resource conservation easements on ranch properties along the Gaviota Coast. It was the fourth grant awarded to the County from the State's Coastal Resource Grant Program (enacted in 1996) for acquiring easements. The Land Trust successfully used the previous three grants to obtain conservation easements on the Freeman Ranch and La Paloma Ranch. The Land Trust is currently in negotiations with Brinkman Estate for potential purchase of a conservation easement on Gaviota Ranch. However, there is no guarantee that a deal would be reached, particularly prior to the time this grant would expire.

Fortunately, another acquisition of coastal properties, known as Ellwood-Mesa, by the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) is imminent. The California Resources Agency is agreeable to using this grant to assist TPL with this acquisition, which is approximately \$860,000 shy of the \$2 million plus required to close escrow. Shifting

this grant to the efforts to acquire the Ellwood-Mesa properties provides needed financial assistance to TPL during this final phase of fundraising, while also ensuring that the \$350,000 is used here in Santa Barbara County for its general purpose – protecting natural resources through conservation of unique coastal properties.

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County also is agreeable to transferring this grant, largely because it recognizes the benefits of the Ellwood-Mesa acquisition and the risk of forfeiting the grant if not used by the end of the current fiscal year.

**Mandates and Service Levels:** The California Resources Agency requires each grantee to acquire approval from its decisionmakers prior to applying for or substantially amending grants awarded via the Coastal Resource Grant Program. The County will assure, via a contract for services with TPL, that the grant deed is appropriately restricted to comply with the terms of the grant with the California Resources Agency and to stated use of the properties for protection of natural resources and provision of public access.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:** There are no fiscal or facilities impacts associated with this grant. TPL plans to donate these properties to the City of Goleta for long-term holding and the city has agreed to assume all costs associated with managing these coastal properties. Staff costs associated with administering this grant are assumed with costs for administering CREF grants that the Board has awarded to TPL to help acquire the Ellwood-Mesa properties. CREF administrative costs are funded from interest earned on CREF principle. CREF interest revenue appears on page D-300 of the County's approved budget for fiscal year 2004-2005, under the line item "Offshore Oil & Gas Mitigation" and CREF administrative costs appear on the same page, under the line item "Mitigation Programs."

**Special Instructions:** Clerk of the Board will forward a certified copy of the executed resolution to Doug Anthony of the Energy Division

**Concurrence:** County Counsel

Attachment: Board of Supervisors Resolution proposed for execution.