

TO: James L. App, City Manager

FROM: Meg Williamson, Assistant to the City Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution endorsing the Conservation Framework of the American Land Conservancy and Hearst Corporation

DATE: February 18, 2003

NEEDS: For the City Council to consider endorsement of a conservation framework of the 82,000 acre Hearst Ranch property.

FACTS:

1. The City has received a request from the American Land Conservancy to endorse the conservation framework for the Hearst Ranch.
2. Attached is a copy of the request (letter to Mayor Mecham dated January 3, 2003), along with background information that has been provided.
3. The conservation framework has been agreed to by the Hearst Corporation and the American Land Conservancy, which covers the 82,000-acre ranch along Highway 1 near San Simeon.
4. Municipalities in the County are being asked to endorse the proposal, and similar resolutions of endorsement have recently been adopted by the County Board of Supervisors, along with the Cities of Arroyo Grande and the Cambria Community Services District.

ANALYSIS &

CONCLUSION: Adoption of the attached draft resolution does not result in any future commitment on the party of the City. Representatives for Hearst Ranch indicate that once approvals from local jurisdictions are obtained, the conservation framework will be submitted to State and Federal funding sources for consideration.

POLICY

REFERENCE: No Municipal policy reference.

FISCAL

IMPACT: No fiscal impact to the City of Paso Robles.

OPTIONS:

- a. Adopt Resolution No. 03-XX endorsing the Conservation Framework of the American Land Conservancy and Hearst Corporation.
- b. Amend, modify or reject above option.

Attachment:

1. Resolution endorsing the Conservation Framework of the American Land Conservancy and Hearst Corporation
2. Letter dated January 3, 2003, and background materials

RESOLUTION NO. 03-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES
ENDORING THE CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK OF THE AMERICAN
LAND CONSERVANCY AND HEARST CORPORATION

WHEREAS, Hearst Ranch represents one of the most significant conservation opportunities in the nation—nearly 128 square miles of rugged shorelines, rolling grasslands, craggy peaks and classic California working cattle ranch landscape; and

WHEREAS, Hearst and the American Land Conservancy (ALC) have agreed to a Conservation Framework for the entire 82,000-acre ranch based upon input from meetings with over 1000 individuals—including community residents and representatives from more than 50 state, local and federal agencies and organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Framework is based on the following mutual goals of ALC and Hearst:

- Protect natural and scenic resources;
- Permanently increase public access west of Highway 1;
- Ensure continued agricultural operations;
- Provide fair compensation for restricting development; and

WHEREAS, the elements of the Conservation Framework are:

- Eliminate New Resorts: No golf course or resort development at San Simeon Point, no Visitors-Center hotel, no Equestrian Center hotel at Pico Creek and no new areas for resort development would be created; and
- Limit Old San Simeon Village To Julia Morgan's Vision: Permanently restrict any plans in Old San Simeon Village to new local and visitor-serving uses, including existing buildings and limited, historically consistent infill buildings inspired by Julia Morgan's recently rediscovered vision, with no more than 100 rooms; and
- Provide Permanent Public Access to Coastline: New public access to include 18 miles of new California Coastal Trail running the entire length of the property on the west side of scenic Highway 1 and offering permanent public access to the coastline; and
- East Side Conservation/Agricultural Easement: Preservation of the working landscape of the historical agricultural operations which would ensure long-term viability of the ranch, while protecting the natural resources; and
- Reduce Potential Residential Development: Limitation of new owner homesites to 27 on the interior of the 82,000-acre Ranch. Impose siting and access guidelines to recognize sensitive environmental resource areas and respect existing public views. No new homesites would be located west of Highway 1; and

Whereas, the conservation framework would balance continued agricultural operations, protect natural and scenic resources and increase public access to 18 miles of pristine California coastline.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Paso Robles does hereby find and determine that:

1. The City of Paso Robles endorses the conservation framework and urges ALC and Hearst to complete their good faith negotiations for a detailed conservation transaction consistent with the Conservation Framework.
2. The City of Paso Robles urges funding sources, including the state of California and federal government, to recognize Hearst Ranch as a significant conservation opportunity and provide funding to make it a reality.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Paso Robles this 18th day of February 2003 by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk