



Ventura Land Trust

# OUTLOOK

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## Into the wild

OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
HELP CHILDREN THRIVE

### ALSO INSIDE

- Mountain Lions Roam at Harmon Canyon Preserve
- Docents Make a Difference at VLT Preserves



*"The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now." — Chinese proverb*

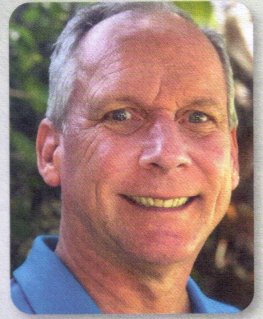
Everyone seems to agree that 2020 was an incredibly challenging year. Civil unrest, divisive politics, and a global pandemic affected us physically, emotionally, and economically and these challenges will continue to impact us in 2021 and beyond. While acknowledging our shared struggles over the past year, we are pleased to report that 2020 was a truly transformational year for Ventura Land Trust.

After years of organizing, planning, and strategizing, Ventura Land Trust closed escrow on nearly 4,000 acres of property this past year. The seeds of these property acquisitions were planted many years ago. Today with Harmon Canyon Preserve open to the public, we are able to enjoy an incredible property for much-needed (socially distanced!) outdoor recreation.

There is still much more work to be done. In order to steward the land in perpetuity, we will continue raising funds, building trails, improving access, and pro-

tecting our investment. We are committed to pursuing future acquisitions and upholding the promise of protecting open lands for all to enjoy as scenic, recreational, and environmental community assets.

Reflecting on the above quote, I am thankful that almost 20 years ago a group of citizens came together to form what is now Ventura Land Trust. Thank you to all our donors, volunteers, sustaining members, Board and committee members, and our staff for your dedication to the mission and purpose of Ventura Land Trust.



**Mark Watkins**  
*President, Board of Trustees*

## Photographer's Eye Trained on Ventura Land Trust Preserves

Photographer Chris Ryan has joined Ventura Land Trust as our Conservation Photographer. In this new role, Chris is dedicated to capturing the beauty of Ventura Land Trust preserves in the lower Ventura River watershed and the hills of Harmon Canyon.

Chris began his journey in photography as an avid outdoor enthusiast who often explored mountain and wilderness areas throughout California. He discovered a passion for photography during his first-ever road trip across the Great West – a trip he refers to as his "awakening." Chris drove over 5,000 miles across seven states, capturing images from sunrise to sunset. Chris set out to get lost in the great outdoors, but never expected to find himself.

"Photographing nature is the best possible way to preserve the experience," said Ryan. "The most enjoyable and lasting photographs come out of pure exploration – when I discover a composition rather than plan for it. Outdoor photography can be a spiritual experience for me. Extended periods of solitude allow me to get some quality time with our creator and nation. I believe we all need to step outside the bubble of everyday life, disconnect from distractions, and really absorb the beauty all around us."



CHRIS RYAN PHOTO

BEAUTIFUL PANORAMIC VISTAS REWARD HARMON CANYON PRESERVE HIKERS WHO REACH THE GOLDBERG OVERLOOK.

Chris believes that photography can be both fine art and a powerful tool to achieve conservation goals. His artwork can be seen at both Rincon Brewery and Cask Alehouse in Ventura and soon he will add new artwork featuring Ventura Land Trust. In the meantime, you can see more of his Ventura Land Trust conservation photographs on his website and social media channels. [www.chrisryanpix.com](http://www.chrisryanpix.com)  
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