

The Last Perfect Place in California

Alumni Demonstrate Their Commitment to Ecologically Vital Coastal Land

Esri founders and digital mapping pioneers **Jack Dangermond** ('68, landscape architecture) and **Laura Dangermond** ('74, social sciences) donated \$165 million to the Nature Conservancy to preserve one of California's most iconic areas. The gift, which is the largest private donation received by the nonprofit organization, was given in December 2017 to purchase and preserve eight miles of the coastline in Santa Barbara County and the 24,000-acre Cojo/Jalama Ranch at Point Conception, close to where the couple honeymooned in the late 1960s.

"This is an incredibly rare, ecologically important place with eight miles of coast and centuries-old coastal oak woodlands," Jack Dangermond said. "Conservation isn't just being nice to animals or plants, it's investing in the continued life support systems of humans and all other species on the planet. We need more people to step up to protect our last great places."

Visible from space as the exact point where the coast turns northward, the area will be named The Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve.

The land, which includes two private working cattle ranches, is noted to be in tremendous ecological condition and features a confluence of ecological, historical, and cultural values across Native American, Spanish and American

histories. The area is also home to at least 39 species of threatened or special status.

The preserve is a rare spot where cold northern Pacific waters mix with warmer waters, creating a richly biodiverse marine environment. The coastline is marked by jagged cliffs and isolated rocky sea shelves where marine mammals swim undisturbed. Adjacent to a marine protected area, the property connects the coast to the mountains and contains crucial wildlife corridors for mountain lions, bobcats, and bears, and habitat for endangered species including the snowy plover, red-legged frog and monarch butterfly.

**TO PROTECT
AND PRESERVE**



Aerial photo of the coast by Peter Montgomery