****

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Leilani Clark, LandPaths’ Communications Lead

leilani@landpaths.org | 707-544-7284 X 119

**LandPaths Purchases Ocean Song in Western Sonoma County**

***The conservation and community-focused Sonoma County-based nonprofit will expand on the iconic 421-acre property’s rural, wild, and agricultural heritage, and legacy of environmental education.***

SANTA ROSA, CA.—October 30, 2019—Today, LandPaths announced the acquisition of Ocean Song, a 421-acre property, of which 240 acres is protected by a “forever wild” conservation easement. Situated in the coastal hills of western Sonoma County, Ocean Song teems with coastal grasslands, pristine creeks and ponds, canyons, oak woodlands, redwoods, and acres of garden and farmland. Set atop a ridge, the land inspires awe with sweeping views up and down the Pacific Coast. Abundant plant and animal life call this place home

LandPaths, a nonprofit dedicated to fostering a love of the land, will honor and expand on Ocean Song’s legacy of environmental education while preserving the property’s rural, wild, and agricultural heritage.

“The purchase of Ocean Song allows for connectivity—for both nature and people—that is mind-blowing,” said Craig Anderson, Executive Director of LandPaths. “We are making the journey to Ocean Song not to change the landscape, but to allow it to change us. It’s clearly going to be a larger effort than any of our other acquisitions, to date. But what’s worth doing that doesn’t require courage, sweat, and love for our community and this place?

"The preservation of Ocean Song by our partners at LandPaths is the culmination of years long efforts to bring this special property, with its expansive coastal views available for public access and continuation of the decades of environmental education opportunities provided by this place,” said District 5 Supervisor Lynda Hopkins. “Efforts continue to acquire to adjoining parcel, which will complete their mission to connect the coast at Shell Beach to the hilltops on Coleman Valley Road. Our community will benefit from the efforts of LandPaths and private owners to protect and preserve this gem in perpetuity."

**History of Ocean Song**

The property that became Ocean Song, a former cattle ranch, was purchased by Pieter and Marya Myers in 1975 after they befriended Bill Wheeler, owner of the infamous Wheeler Ranch on the neighboring parcel, where hundreds of people lived and camped at the height of 1970s hippie counterculture. Along with a community of friends, the Myers took over the cattle barns and other infrastructure, creating from scratch an organic farm and one of the first local community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.

In 1995, the Myers moved to the adjacent parcel and made a bargain sale of the property, creating Ocean Song Farm and Wilderness Center. In 1999, Ocean Song officially became a nonprofit, managing environmental education programs and public access.

They operated a farm and Coyote Camp, a nature day camp beloved by West County families, while providing a place for retreats and school programming.

**A Shared Vision**

The current Ocean Song Farm and Wilderness Board of Directors said in a statement: “We are very pleased by the purchase of the Ocean Song property by LandPaths. Ocean Song Farm and Wilderness Center has a legacy of fostering environmental education, particularly children’s nature education, community events and the stewardship of the plant and animal communities that live there. Our focus has been on a connection to and love of the land. LandPaths is well-positioned to continue and expand upon this tradition and provide the stewardship, program management, and volunteers needed for the land to reach its full potential as a public resource and model of ecological health and diversity. We look forward to the unfolding of our shared future vision.”

Pieter and Marya, Ocean Song’s founders and current neighbors, credit Anderson’s persistence throughout the two-year process to get the acquisition across the finish line. “It took Craig and other people a lot of work, time, and negotiations to see this through,” said Pieter.

He continued: “LandPaths is about connecting people to natural, open space areas for the experience, education, and inspiration. It was just a match. We don’t have to tell LandPaths what to do; they’ve got it figured out really well. Craig is completely committed to getting kids on the land—that’s the main event.”

**Future Plans**

LandPaths purchased the property from Andrew Beath of Malibu, California, for just over $3.1 million. Two local families donated anonymously to make the acquisition possible. LandPaths is in the midst of a fundraising campaign for the project’s next phase: to buy Pieter and Marya Myers adjoining property—with their full support. The end goal is to create a united 700-acre protected area to be enjoyed and stewarded for generations to come. The purchase will also create an uninterrupted linkage between Ocean Song and the Sonoma Coast.

“This land acquisition is a big win for the public,” says Congressman Jared Huffman. “I can’t imagine another place in my congressional district where Point Reyes and the Farallon Islands, wild coastal forest, and high coastal grasslands are captured in one view. This property conveys the tremendous natural beauty and resources along the north coast, and is arguably some of the most beautiful scenery on earth. Thanks to the vision, energy and commitment of LandPaths, children now and in future generations will be able to walk from the Kortum Trail above the Sonoma Coast Beach eight miles by trail to Ocean Song. We are very lucky indeed.”

***For additional information or to set up a tour of Ocean Song, contact Leilani Clark at*** [***leilani@landpaths.org***](mailto:leilani@landpaths.org) ***or 707.544.7284 ext. 119.***

**About** [**LandPaths**](http://www.landpaths.org.)

Established in 1996, LandPaths’ mission is to foster a love of the land in Sonoma County. Diverse by design, Landpaths achieves our mission through three initiatives: rooting youth in nature, branching out conservation for everyone, and growing community with nature. We inspire people to experience the beauty of Sonoma County, understand the value of local open spaces, and participate in stewarding the land.[***www.landpaths.org***](http://www.landpaths.org)***.***

***###***