



Inspiring a more sustainable San Carlos

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San Carlos Community Restores Native Landscape & Initiates Environmental Educational Program

*Mayor Brad Lewis Presides Over Ribbon Cutting
at Native Landscape Restoration*

San Carlos, CA - June 14, 2008 – Today San Carlos Mayor, Brad Lewis, presided over a ribbon cutting at Vista Park, a unique native landscape restored by local citizens. On a hilltop overlooking the San Francisco Bay, Vista Park serves as an educational model, where community volunteers employ sustainable methods to cultivate plants native to the local area.

The native landscape restoration of Vista Park is an initiative of San Carlos Green, a volunteer community task force whose mission is to inspire a more environmentally conscious and sustainable community. The goals of Vista Park are to

- reduce water use
- eliminate chemical use
- act as a pollinator garden for bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds
- serve as an educational resource to schools and residents interested in native gardening
- act as a model for native parks

“Vista Park is not only a model for a native landscape, it also serves as a model for citizen action,” said Mayor Brad Lewis. “San Carlos Green has demonstrated what enlightened citizens working together can achieve.”

As a volunteer coalition, San Carlos Green operates with little funding. To plan and develop the park restoration, San Carlos Green has built relationships with both public and private organizations including the San Carlos Park & Recreation Department, Gachina Landscape Management, and Acterra of Palo Alto that have donated professional advice on native plants, volunteer time, and valuable materials.

“Vista Park reflects our vision to Create Community through People, Parks and Programs as well as our mission to Protect Environmental Resources. We value the efforts of San Carlos Green in bringing together the community as well as outside organizations to restore Vista Park to a native landscape,” said Barry Weiss, Director of San Carlos Parks and Recreation Department. “Working



together, we're making San Carlos—the *City of Good Living*—an even healthier and more environmentally friendly community.”

San Carlos Parks and Recreation initiated Vista Park as a chemical free and native vegetation only site in 2002 as part of their ongoing mission. Volunteers were instrumental in this effort. In recent years volunteer support dwindled until the emergence of San Carlos Green.

Ann Iverson, spokesperson for San Carlos Green, stated: “Our vision for Vista Park is to create a vital and self-sustaining native landscape. The park will serve as an educational resource for our schools and the local community as well as an environmental model of citizen action and park design for communities throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.”

The organization developed interpretive signage, paid for by the City, to educate visitors on the benefits of native landscapes and on the individual plant species appropriate for home gardens.

The project also includes efforts to restore a large meadow below the landscaped area, eradicating existing invasive weeds and grasses and replacing them with native grasses and wild flowers. To do that, two test areas have been installed – several hundred square feet each – with different methods. The successful method will be used this fall to restore the several-acre meadow, prior to the rainy season.

To maintain the park, San Carlos Green holds volunteer days for planting, weeding, and maintenance. The organization trains anyone interested in participating and students can earn community service credits. Future events will include educational workshops in native plant gardening, plant propagation and grade-school field trips.

In 2006, Yahoo named San Carlos third greenest city in the nation.

If you would like to get involved, please contact San Carlos Green at www.sancarlosgreen.org.

About San Carlos Green

San Carlos Green is a community task force whose goal is to inspire a more environmentally conscious and sustainable community. Working in collaboration with City government, the group is engaging residents and the business community in environmental initiatives that reduce the city's carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices.

For more information on San Carlos Green go to

www.sancarlosgreen.org

View and download the San Carlos Green Backgrounder at

http://www.sancarlosgreen.org/images/San_Carlos_Green_Backgrounder_6.14.08.pdf