

FALL 2025



## SAVING OPEN-SPACE AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

*SOAR's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala*



On a beautiful sunset evening in October, SOAR founders, volunteers and donors gathered with elected leaders and representatives of local and national conservancies to celebrate the grassroots movement that created SOAR.

In addition to reflecting on the history of SOAR, guests were introduced to next generation SOAR Board members--Oxnard Mayor Pro-Tem Gabe Teran, Thousand Oaks Planning Commission Chair Mic Farris, Coastal Ranches Conservancy Executive Director Candice Meneghin, and Policy and Campaign Advisor Robert O'Riley. Cheers to 30 years and many more, giving voters a say on urban sprawl! ☆

## A GIFT TO YOU FOR MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

GET YOUR  
**FREE GIFT INSIDE**  
THIS NEWSLETTER!

The Western Monarch Butterfly is on the brink of extinction, having declined over 95% since the 1980s when there were over one million between the Rocky Mountains and the California coast. Insecticides, loss of habitat and climate change have decimated their population and now only 9,000 of these butterflies exist. The good news is that there is something we can do! Monarch caterpillars only eat milkweed and so, says USFWS Dr. Catherine Darst, "Ventura County is really important for the recovery of Western Monarchs. The planting of pesticide-free native milkweed in our area is vital to their recovery."

**Thanks to a partnership with the Santa Monica Mountains Fund (SAMO Fund), SOAR is able to give milkweed seeds to thousands of our newsletter subscribers!**

We hope you will plant them or give them to someone who can, and each of us can sow seeds for Monarch recovery.

The SAMO Fund is a leader in environmental stewardship of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area through their support of California State Parks and the National Park Service. From assisting with mountain lion studies to growing over 100,000 native milkweed plants, SAMO takes meaningful action to protect some of our most iconic and threatened wildlife. ☆



Art by  
Heidi Bradbury

# HOW MAPS UNFOLD THE STORY OF SOAR

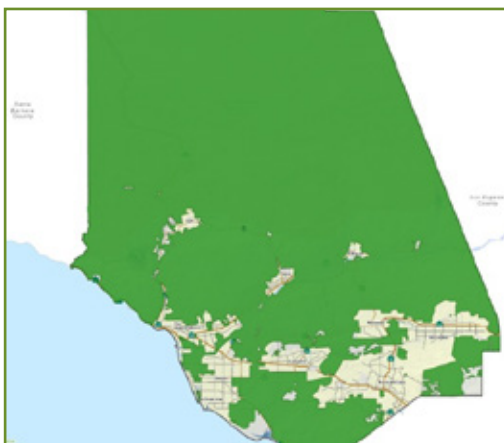
*There is no better way of showing what SOAR does than to see it!*

While we can see open space and farmland on our trips through Ventura County, we can best find which of these lands are protected by SOAR, and which are not, by looking at maps. SOAR laws apply to city and county General Plans and their associated Land Use maps. These maps can be found on local government websites along with mapping tools that we've used here to show what SOAR does. ☆

## COUNTY SOAR *The Breadth of SOAR Laws*

SOAR protects lands in the unincorporated county that are designated in the County General Plan as Open Space, Agricultural, or Rural.\*

This map, which shows SOAR lands in green, gives an eye-popping view of just how much land SOAR protects by vote of the people!

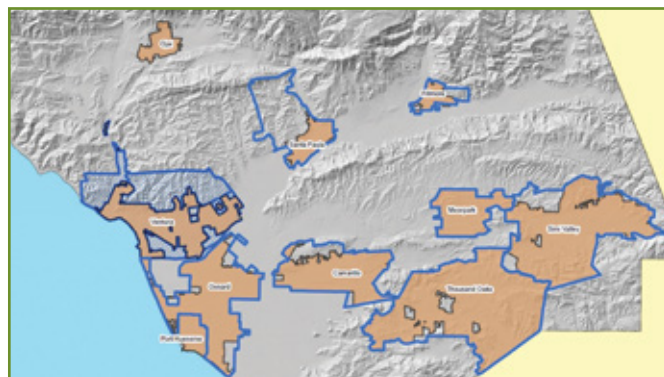


The large area of SOAR-protected land in the northern portion of the county is the Los Padres National Forest which comprises almost half the land mass of Ventura County. A vote of the people would be required if these public lands were sold off for sprawl development.

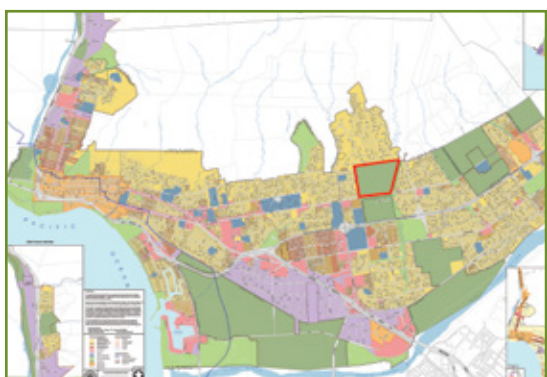
\*SOAR exempts certain farmworker and affordable housing projects to meet state housing requirements. ☆

## CITY SOAR LAWS *Preventing Urban Sprawl*

The SOAR laws also add **City Urban Restriction Boundaries (CURBs)** around seven cities in Ventura County: Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks. Urban development that would sprawl beyond these CURBs must first receive approval of city voters. This preserves the open space buffers between cities, keeping each city distinct with its own unique identity. The CURB map also shows how effective SOAR is at stopping urban sprawl because cities in Ventura County still have open space around them unlike other cities in Southern California. ☆



## CITY OF VENTURA SOAR

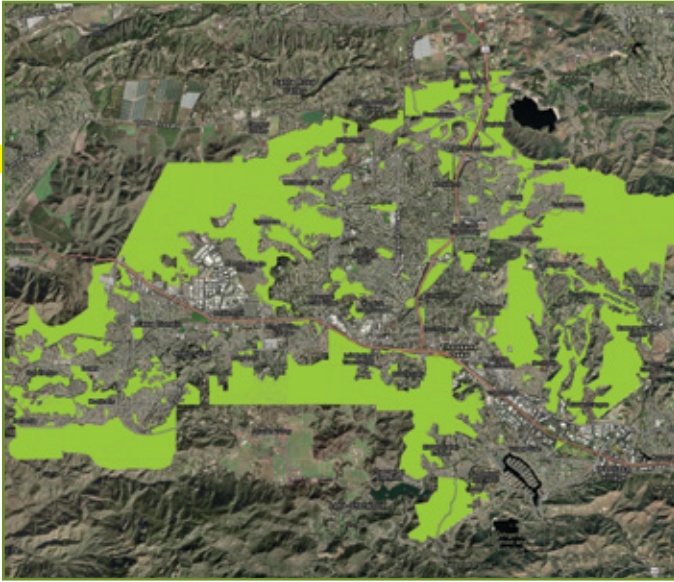


The first SOAR law was approved by voters in the city of Ventura in 1995 and requires voter approval to develop lands designated "Agriculture" on the City's General Plan map. The Hillside Voter Participation Measure was added in 2016 so SOAR protects the city's hillsides too.

The 220-acre Limco Del Mar agricultural property outlined in red on the map, along with the 130-acre agricultural property immediately to its south, are being proposed for a residential community. Because this farmland is protected by SOAR, its development will require approval of city voters. ☆

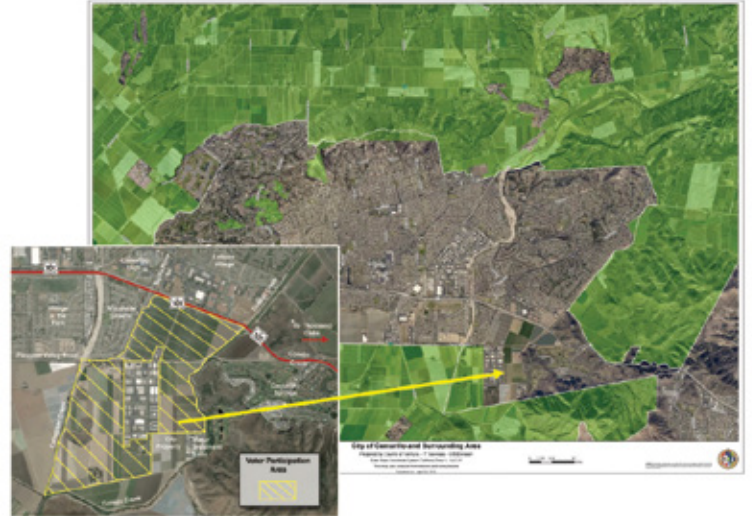
## CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS

In addition to a city CURB in Thousand Oaks, SOAR also protects lands set aside in the city's General Plan for open space and parks, as shown below. The City refers to this as the "Ring of Green."



## CITY OF CAMARILLO

Camarillo voters also have a say on developments proposed on specific agricultural lands in the city. The SOAR "Voter Protection Area" shown below, comprises iconic farmland at the foot of the Conejo Grade where a massive development proposal galvanized residents to save farmland in their city.



### How To Generate Your Own Maps Showing SOAR-Protected Land

-  Go to [maps.ventura.org/countyview/](https://maps.ventura.org/countyview/) and click **Agree** to the Disclaimer
- Click the **"I want to..."** drop down menu and select **Change visible map layers**
- Check boxes for both **Cities** and **Land Use**
- Click the **plus sign** next to **Land Use** and in that drop down menu check the **SOAR** box and **uncheck** **Parcels** and **Zoning**.

You can also go to [soarvc.org/communities](https://soarvc.org/communities) to see SOAR-protected lands in your community.

## Monarch Migration, Milkweed, and You!

Migrating monarch butterflies begin arriving to roost in tree groves along the California coast in the fall. In December and January, they form dense clusters that protect them from winds and storms. In February and March, they mate and females begin searching for emerging milkweed to start the next generation of Monarchs. That's where you come in! By getting your milkweed seeds planted with the early winter rains, you may be the beneficiary of a very hungry caterpillar that will turn into a beautiful Monarch butterfly! Imagine if everyone receiving this newsletter planted seeds that brought forth one butterfly, we'd have thousands more butterflies fluttering by!

For more information on how to properly plant your narrow leaf milkweed seeds, visit [samofund.org/milkweed](https://samofund.org/milkweed)



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**FREE GIFT INSIDE**

To change your subscription please go to [soarvc.org/newsletters](http://soarvc.org/newsletters)

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# SOAR SCORECARD

SOAR gives voters a say on urban sprawl proposals. Of the eleven development projects on SOAR-protected land that went to a vote of the people, six were approved and five were rejected.

## BALLOT MEASURES TO ADJUST SOAR BOUNDARIES

Year	City	Measure	Acres/Units	Voters' Decision
1999	Ventura	First Assembly Church of God church and athletic fields	25.6 acres	Approved
2000	Ojai	St. Joseph's Retirement Home facility expansion	15 acres	Approved
2000	Ventura	Community park	93.6 acres	Approved
2002	Ventura	Ventura Hillside*s	3800 acres / 1390 units	Rejected
2002	Santa Paula	Adams Canyon	5413 acres / 2250 Units	Rejected
2002	Simi Valley	Alamos Canyon (boundary tightening)	4900 acres	Rejected
2003	Santa Paula	Boundary Expansion at Peck and Foothill	32.5 acres 82 units	Approved
2006	Santa Paula	Adams Canyon	6500 acres / 495 units	Rejected
2006	Moorpark	North Park Village	3544 acres / 1680 units	Rejected
2006	Santa Paula	Adams Canyon	6500 acres / 495 units	Approved
2008	Santa Paula	Limoneira East Area 1	1500 acres / 1500 units	Approved

\*The Ventura Hillside\*s vote was triggered by a follow-up citizen's initiative aligned with SOAR principles, rather than by the 1995 City of Ventura SOAR initiative.

Focusing development to urban areas where there are services and schools, infrastructure and transportation, is not only smart, it also reinvigorates downtowns and invests in communities!