

SAN DIEGO, Sept. 18, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- [Cox Communications](#) and [The Trust for Public Land](#) announced that Barbara Palan has been selected as San Diego's 2013 Cox Conserves Hero. An event celebrating the finalists and announcing the winner was held at the Living Coast Discovery Center in Chula Vista, a previous grant recipient of the Cox Conserves Heroes program.

Sponsored locally by the University of San Diego, Cox Conserves Heroes honors volunteers who are creating, preserving or enhancing outdoor spaces. The finalists were chosen by a judging panel of local environmental leaders, and the winner was selected through online public voting.

First Place Winner:As Barbara Palan's nonprofit of choice, [San Diego River Park Foundation](#) will receive \$5,000, promotion through on-air public service announcements and 20 volunteer hours donated by Cox employees. As a member of the River Rescue team and San Diego River Park Foundation volunteer corps, Palan has worn a broad range of hats, from answering phones and serving as a native plant docent to leading hikes and planting trees.

Second Place Winner:Javier Hernandez's nonprofit of choice, [I Love A Clean San Diego](#), will receive \$2,500. For the past five years, Hernandez has organized cleanups in Logan Heights, a community

often associated with gangs and violence. Originally focused on cleaning up one empty lot used for illegal dumping, Hernandez's efforts to ensure that trash is removed immediately have inspired the neighborhood to clean additional sites in the area.

Third Place Winner: Arne Johanson's nonprofit of choice, [California Native Plant Society](#), will receive

\$1,000

. Johanson is restoring the abandoned Bernardo Lakes

area, bringing back wildlife and creating an outdoor space where kids are safe to play. He leads a team of volunteers to restore more than 2,000 acres by reducing infestation, removing weeds to make room for native vegetation, and cleaning slopes and trails.

San Diego's previous Cox Conserves Heroes and their nonprofits of choice include: Sonya Vargas

– Aquatics Adventures Science Education Foundation;

John Willet

– Wildcoast;

Mark Jorgensen

– Anza Borrego Foundation;

Dakota Flowers

– Living Coast Discovery Center (formerly Chula Vista Nature Center);

Denise Stillinger

– San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy;

Isabel Herrera

– Ocean Discovery Institute; and

Sally Nelson

– Lakeside's River Park Conservancy.

The Cox Conserves Heroes program was created in 2008 through a partnership between [The Trust for Public Land](#)

and

[Cox Enterprises](#)

, the parent company of Cox Communications, to honor everyday volunteers. The program also runs in

Arizona

,

Atlanta, Louisiana

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,
Orange County
(Calif.),
San Francisco

,
Santa Barbara
and
Virginia

. More than
\$300,000

has been donated to local nonprofits and more than 100 volunteers have been honored through the Cox Conserves Heroes program.

For more information, visit CoxConservesHeroes.com or find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CoxConservesHeroes) .

Social Media: #CoxConservesHeroes and #CoxConservesHero

About Cox Conserves Launched in 2007 by Chairman [Jim Kennedy](#) , Cox Conserves is Cox Enterprises' national sustainability program. Cox Conserves focuses on reducing waste and energy consumption, as well as conserving water. The program engages each of the company's major subsidiaries (Cox Communications, Manheim, Cox Media Group and AutoTrader.com) and encourages Cox Enterprises' 50,000 employees and their families to engage in eco-friendly practices.

About Cox Communications Cox Communications is a broadband communications and entertainment company, providing advanced digital video, Internet and telephone services over its own nationwide IP network. The third-largest U.S. cable TV company, Cox serves approximately 6 million residences and businesses. Cox Business is a facilities-based provider of voice, video and data solutions for commercial customers, and Cox Media is a full-service provider of national and local cable spot and new media advertising.

Cox is known for its pioneering efforts in cable telephone and commercial services, industry-leading customer care and its outstanding workplaces. For seven years, Cox has been recognized as the top operator for women by Women in Cable Telecommunications; Cox has ranked among DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity eight times, including the last seven years. More information about Cox Communications, a wholly owned subsidiary of Cox

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Enterprises, is available at www.cox.com and www.coxmedia.com.

About The Trust for Public Land Founded in 1972, The Trust for Public Land is the leading nonprofit working to conserve land for people. Operating from more than 30 offices nationwide, The Trust for Public Land has protected more than three million acres from the inner city to the wilderness and helped generate more than \$34 billion in public funds for conservation. Nearly ten million people live within a ten-minute walk of a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year.

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