



## Press Release November 24, 2020

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### SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RECOGNIZED WITH THREE AWARDS FROM THE CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (CSAC)

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** –The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) recently announced the recipients of its 2020 Challenge Awards spotlighting the most innovative programs developed and implemented by California counties.

“It’s often said that adversity is the mother of innovation, and the [2020 CSAC Challenge Awards](#) celebrate the overwhelming spirit of innovation that abounds in California’s 58 counties,” said Graham Knaus, CSAC Executive Director. “From wildfires and the pandemic to public safety and health services, these ‘best-in-class’ programs reflect the breadth of programs and services provided to our communities by California counties.”

An independent panel of judges with expertise in county programs and best practices selected 49 program award recipients from 25 counties out of a record 363 entries, including three Santa Barbara County programs below.

- [Public Works Resource Recovery & Waste Management Division Baron Ranch Restoration Project](#) received a Challenge Award in the category of Agriculture, Environmental and Natural Resources. Public Works purchased more than 1,000 acres known as Baron Ranch along the Gaviota Coast to secure a buffer zone adjacent to the County’s Tajiguas Landfill, and to prevent sub-division of the ranch into rural home sites, provide potential recreational opportunities, and further preserve open space in an area adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest.
- [Human Resources Employee Matching Program](#) received a Challenge Award in the category of Disaster and Emergency Response - Management. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the County established an Employee Job Matching program to temporarily reassign County and local, mutual-aid employees to specialized positions.
- **The [District Attorney’s Arson Task Force](#)** is recognized with a Merit Award in the category of Administration of Justice and Public Safety. The goal of the task force is to successfully educate, prevent, investigate and when appropriate, prosecute arson cases. To the D.A.’s knowledge, there is no other similar program in California.

To learn about all the award-winning programs, go to [www.counties.org/post/2020-challenge-award-recipients](http://www.counties.org/post/2020-challenge-award-recipients).