



# Gaviota Creek Estuary Restoration Project – Public Workshop

California State Parks – Channel Coast District  
December 30, 2025



# California State Parks

## Presentation Overview

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- Gaviota State Park's regional coastal setting
- Project Overview
- Questions: If you have any technical or clarifying questions about the project presented today, you will have an opportunity to ask them at the end of the presentation.
- Public Comments: Details on how to submit comments will be provided at the end of the presentation
- This presentation will be available on the project website at: <https://www.parks.ca.gov/gaviotaestuaryproject>



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# California State Parks Mission

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*To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by **helping to preserve** the state's extraordinary biological diversity, **protecting** its most valued natural and cultural resources, and **creating opportunities** for high-quality outdoor recreation.*



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An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, paved parking lot with several cars parked. To the left of the parking lot is a small building with a red roof and solar panels. A river flows through the middle of the image, surrounded by dense green vegetation. In the background, a road with a few vehicles runs horizontally across the frame. To the right, a long railway bridge with multiple tracks extends towards the ocean. The coastline is visible on the far right, with waves breaking on the shore.

# Background

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# Gaviota State Park



## Regional Context & Physical Setting

- Gaviota State Park is located on the Gaviota Coast, west of Santa Barbara
- The park includes coastal terraces, Gaviota Creek, an estuary, and sandy beach
- The site reflects strong interactions between coastal, fluvial, and tidal processes



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# Gaviota State Park

## State Parks Property & Project Area

- California State Parks owns and manages the campground, creek corridor, estuary, and beach
- Key features include the campground & day use, access roads & Gaviota Creek crossing, estuary, and river mouth
- Project area is focused downstream of the creek crossing, adjacent to the campground



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# Gaviota State Park



## Background: Settlement Agreement & Restoration Project

- State Parks is advancing a targeted estuary restoration project under a court-approved settlement
- The project is located downstream of the Gaviota Creek Crossing near the campground
- This workshop fulfills the public scoping requirement in the settlement agreement



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# Agency Collaboration

California State Parks has engaged relevant regulatory agencies, and their technical input has informed the project concept presented today.





# Gaviota State Park



<https://ecrgplanupdate.com/>

## Relationship to the General Plan Update

- A General Plan provides the required policy framework and programmatic CEQA evaluation for guiding future management of these parks.
- An updated General Plan provides State Parks the programmatic foundation needed to define and evaluate projects that balance resources, recreation, access, and facilities.
- This project is deliberately scoped to meet settlement requirements without constraining or conflicting with restoration options under evaluation through the General Plan.



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# Project Overview

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# Gaviota State Park



## Project Setting

- Lower Gaviota Creek supports a dynamic mosaic of remnant and newly forming tidal marsh and riparian habitats.
- Dominated by native halophytic vegetation – Pickleweed, jaumea, alkali heath, saltgrass.
- Estuary remains high-value habitat for sensitive aquatic and riparian species.
- Estuary is constrained by legacy infrastructure and facilities.
- Campground, parking lot, and stream crossing are exposed to both coastal flooding and high stream flow during storm events



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# Gaviota State Park



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# Gaviota State Park



## Primary Stressors Addressed by the Project

- Wetland and riparian areas degraded by non-native plant infestations
- Creek corridor contains concrete and asphalt debris altering hydrology and plant recruitment

*These stressors reduce habitat quality and reduce the estuaries adaptive capacity to sea level rise and high-flow events.*



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# Gaviota State Park



## Project Design Principles

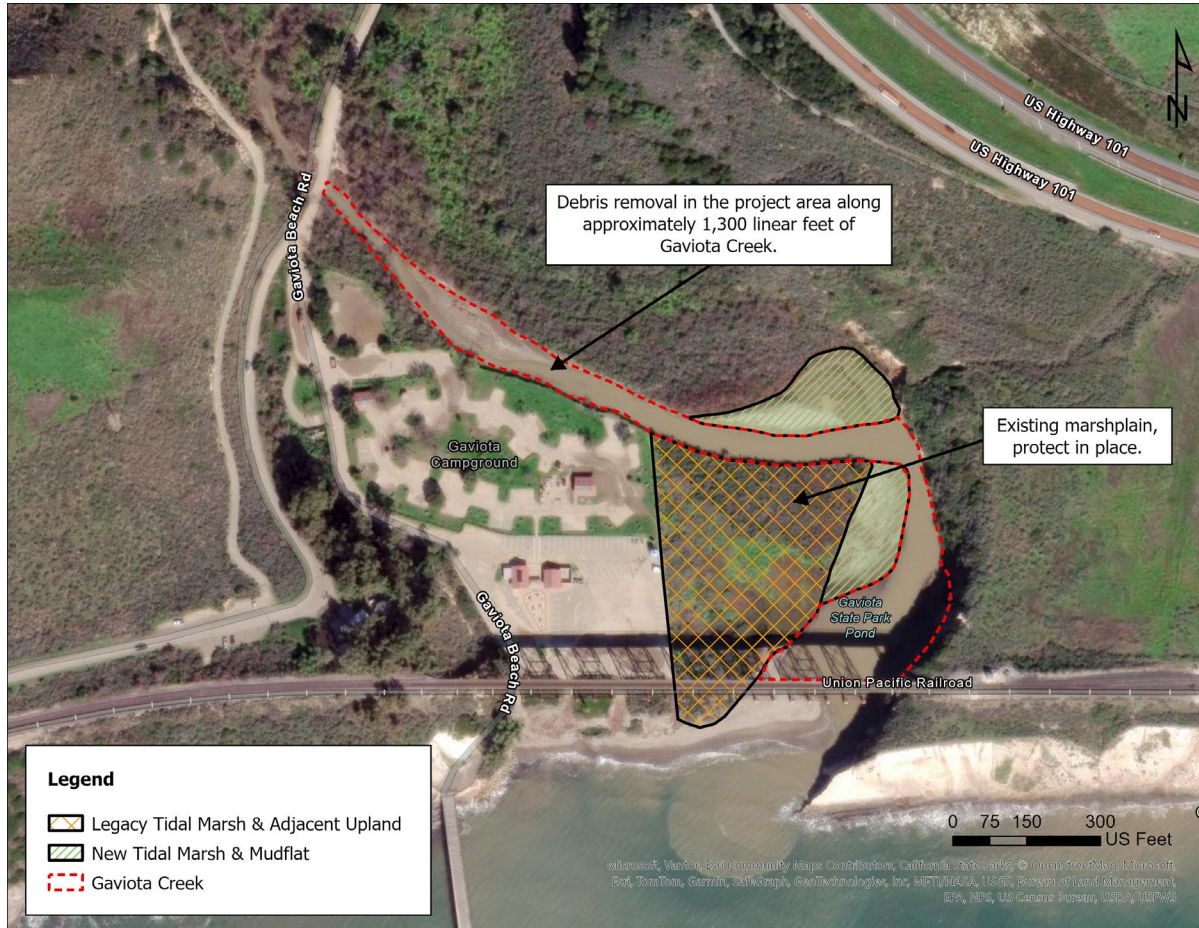
- Best Available Science: Based on current understanding of estuarine hydrology, sediment dynamics, vegetation response, coupled with Agency review & feedback.
- Near-Term Ecological Benefit: Focuses on near-term habitat improvements through invasive species removal and native marsh and riparian enhancement.
- Protective of Long-term Planning: Scoped to avoid foreclosing comprehensive, long-term restoration opportunities to be evaluated through the General Plan.



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# PROJECT GOALS



## Project Goals:

- 1. Restoration of 3.0 acres of coastal salt marsh,** resulting in enhanced tidal habitat, improved ecological integrity, while supporting resilience to sea level rise.
- 2. Restoration of 1.0 acres of riparian habitat,** enhancing streamside riparian vegetation and ecological integrity, and supporting natural hydrologic and geomorphic processes.
- 3. Remove concrete, asphalt, and irrigation debris,** improving habitat quality and geomorphic function.



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# Gaviota State Park



## Goal 1: Proposed Restoration Treatment *3.8 Acres of Legacy Coastal Wetland*

- Remove non-native vegetation using species-specific best management practices.
- Replant with native species
  - Monitor utilizing Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) protocols



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# Gaviota State Park

## Goal 2: Proposed Restoration Treatment *2.0 Acres of Riparian Habitat*

- Remove non-native vegetation using species-specific best management practices.
- Replant with native species
  - Monitor utilizing Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) protocols



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## Goal 3:

### Proposed Restoration Treatment(s)

*Removal of concrete, asphalt, and irrigation debris along 1300 linear feet of creek corridor*

- Manual removal of trash and debris from creek bed while avoiding major ground disturbance.



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# Project Next Steps



- CA State Parks will be receiving all public comments regarding this project in writing
  - A summary of today's workshop will be posted to the website within 10 business days
- Project planning will continue with finalization of project scope, tribal consultation, and agency permitting
- The Gaviota Creek Estuary Restoration Project website will be updated throughout the project to reflect current activity

<https://www.parks.ca.gov/gaviotaestuaryproject>



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# Public Comments

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# Submitting Comments



- Public Comments:
  - All comments must be submitted in writing to Charles Davidson ([Charles.Davidson@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Charles.Davidson@parks.ca.gov)) within 7 calendar days of this meeting (no later than EOD January 6, 2026)
  - Reminder: all comments must be submitted in writing
- Questions:
  - If you have any technical or clarifying questions about the presentation, we will be opening up for questions now
  - Please raise your hand and we will unmute you individually
  - Reminder: We are receiving technical or clarifying questions to assist in submitting your written comments







# Thank You

<https://www.parks.ca.gov/gaviotaestuaryproject>