



Gaviota Creek Estuary Restoration Project – Public Workshop

California State Parks – Channel Coast District
December 30, 2025

California State Parks

Presentation Overview

- 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>



California State Parks Mission

*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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COAST DISTRICT

An aerial photograph of a coastal area. In the foreground, there is a large, mostly empty parking lot with several cars and a small building with a red roof. To the left, a river or stream flows through a valley. The background features rolling hills and mountains, with a road and some infrastructure visible. The ocean is on the right side of the frame.

Background

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

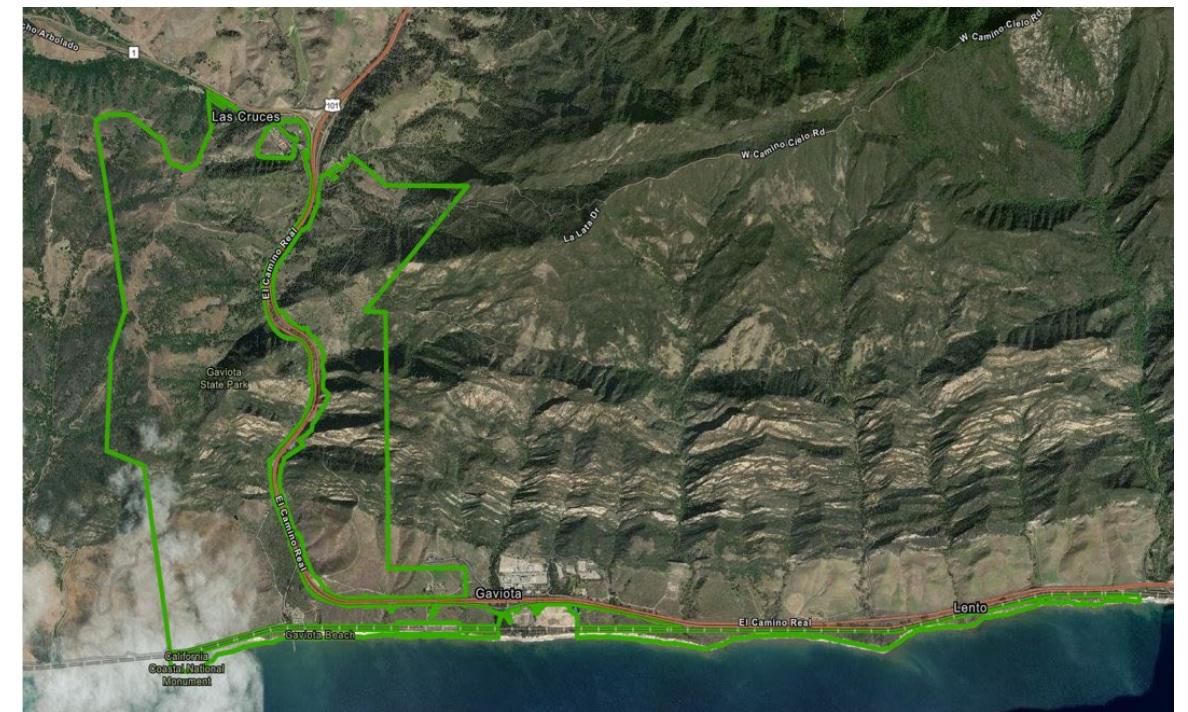


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Gaviota State Park

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.



CA State Parks – Channel Coast District

The background image is a wide-angle aerial photograph of a coastal area. A large, dark, arched bridge with a steel truss structure spans a sandy beach and a body of water. The water is a deep blue with white-capped waves. In the distance, a small pier extends into the water, and a few small boats are visible. The sky is filled with heavy, grey clouds.

Project Overview

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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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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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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A wide-angle photograph of a coastal scene. The upper half of the image is dominated by a dark, heavy sky filled with thick, greyish-white clouds. Below, the ocean is a dark, textured expanse with small whitecaps. A long, dark pier or bridge extends from a rocky, green-covered shoreline on the right towards the center of the frame. The horizon line is visible in the distance, where the dark sky meets the dark water.

Public Comments

Submitting Comments



- Public Comments:
 - All comments must be submitted in writing to Charles Davidson (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



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An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. On the left, a long wooden trestle bridge extends from a parking lot across a river and a wetland area towards the ocean. The river flows from the wetland through a grassy, slightly hilly area. The ocean is visible on the left, and a winding road or path leads up the hillside on the right. The overall scene is a mix of natural and developed land.

Thank You

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