

Acquisition of Trails and Open Space Along The Gaviota Coast

Action Items, Policies, Tools



Who is CRAHTAC?

The County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee was established by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors in an advisory capacity to review programs, policies and procedures affecting county recreational riding and hiking trails and their use.

Art Najera, Chair
Archie Mitchell, Vice-Chair
Barbara Young, Secretary

1st DISTRICT	2nd DISTRICT	3rd DISTRICT	4th DISTRICT	5th DISTRICT
Kalon Kelley	Otis Calef	Allyson Biskner	John McGray	Luis Escobar
Lisa Monaghan	Ray Ford	Curt Cragg	Archie Mitchell	Frank Frietas
Sheila Snow	Dan Gira	Jim Mills	Ruth Schuyler	Barry Stotts
Kevin Snow	Art Najera	Wanda Weir		

STAFF
Claude Garciacelay, Santa Barbara County Parks
Joe Duran, Los Padres Forest

Eastern Gaviota Coast



Key Industries- Tourism and Recreation

- California Outdoor Recreation: \$46 billion to economy, created 408,000 jobs, \$3.1 billion in state taxes; \$28.1 billion annual retail sales
- 2008 SB County Tourism: 8.2 million visitors, 2.1 billion in expenditures, 19,872 jobs, \$50 million in local taxes
- 560,000 annual visitors to 3 Gaviota State Parks
- Key Reasons for Tourists Visiting County
 - Going to the beach (2.05 million visitors)
 - Sightseeing and touring (2.05 million visitors)
 - Other Outdoor/ Water Recreation (459,000 visitors)

Grazing and Trails

- Trails and grazing are compatible activities
- Open Range and fenced trails across grazing land are common throughout State
- Land management agencies/organizations report minimal or no compatibility problems
- Midland School, City of San Luis Obispo, Los Padres National Forest, East Bay Recreation, etc

California Coastal Trail East of the Gaviota Coast



Over three miles of developed and rural blufftop alignment of the California Coastal Trail is open and in use at Bacara Resort and Spa and on the Ellwood Mesa at the eastern edge of the Gaviota Coast Planning Area

County Experience with Trails

- Montecito and Goleta Examples
- Trails and exaction of easements
- Residents from throughout the County and visitors use Goleta and Montecito trails
- Crime, litter, vandalism and trespass are minimal issues on established trail networks
- Trails are major community benefit both property values and outdoor recreation

What is Missing from the Plan?

Key planning measures used by County before:

Goal- A clear goal to expand recreation and trails

Objectives- Commitment to strive for improvements

Action Items- Measurable performance standards

Policies- To promote trails, open space and recreation

Tools- Tested County tools to acquire trails, open space
and recreation

Recommendation

Direct Planning and Development to Add:

1. Improved statement of purpose and intent, goal and objective to draft Plan
2. One action item with 7 improvements to accomplish by 2025
3. Five new policies to promote trails and recreation
4. Tested tools to acquire trails and open space



Clear Statement of Purpose and Intent

- Fundamental to understanding reason for Plan
- Key item for citizens, decision-makers, planners, attorneys to refer to for guidance
- Plan lacks a clear statement on why Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space are an important element of Gaviota Coast Plan

Proposed Statement of Purpose & Intent

Purpose and Intent: The County recognizes that provision of new parks, open space and recreation and trail opportunities are a key element of the Gaviota Coast Plan and that the level of such improvements should reflect this Planning Area's national, state and county importance as a recreational resource. Trails and outdoor recreation are an important recreational activity to residents of our County and the state, foster an appreciation of the natural environment and promote the public health and welfare. While trails must be sensitively designed to respect agriculture and biological resources, they are a Coastal Act priority use and a high priority for the County. As such, provision of these types of improvements is a high priority and must be actively pursued.

Missing Goal and Objectives

- State General Plan Guidelines – Goal is a direction setter, ideal future related to public welfare and expression of community values
- Gaviota Plan lacks a clear parks, recreation, trails and open space goal
- State General Plan Guidelines- Objective is a specific end or condition to obtaining a goal
- Gaviota Plan lacks clear parks, recreation, trails and open space objectives

Proposed Goal and Objective

Goal: Protect existing public access and actively promote expansion of recreation, open space coastal access and trails along the Gaviota Coast as a high priority.

Objective: Substantially increase opportunities for provision of public trails and open space within the Gaviota Planning Area, including completion of the California Coastal Trail, provision of well planned coastal vertical access points and foothill trails located on both public and private lands by 2025.

Lack of Action Item Objective

- Plan lacks measurable objectives (i.e., action items)
- Plan needs to identify what trails and open space County will strive to acquire-improve
- Lack of measurable performance standards may result in little or no action



Add New Action Item Objective

Recommendation: Add one action item with seven improvements to complete by 2025

- Acquire bluff top easements for Coastal Trail and open trail from Bacara to El Capitan Beach
- Acquire and develop 3+ coastal access points
- Acquire and develop 2+ foothill trails
- Create a Transportation Corridor Plan
- *See accompanying summary for full list*

Plan Lacks Policies that Support

Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails

- **State General Plan Guidelines:** Policy is a clear statement to guide decision-making and indicates a commitment to goals/objectives
- *Gaviota Plan lacks:*
 - Policies which commit County to support acquisition and development of trails
 - Policies which commit the County to protect public access to coast
 - Policies that address affects of US 101 and UPRR on public access to and along the coast

Five Suggested Policy Additions

Recommendation: Add policies to the Draft Gaviota Coast Plan to commit the County to actively support recreation and trails, defend public access, address location of the Coastal Trail, protect existing parking, guide acquisition and management of trails and open space, and govern US 101 and UPRR improvements.

See following slides

Proposed New Policies (1-2)

- **Policy Rec-1:** The County shall actively promote expansion of public trails, coastal access and recreational opportunities within the Gaviota Planning Area, using its regulatory authority, incentives and other tools to acquire and develop trails, coastal access and recreational facilities. For all pending private and public development projects with planned or existing recreational uses, the County shall use the environmental and planning review process to fully explore options for new trails, coastal access and parking, and ways to promote their acquisition and development. ✓
- **Policy REC-2:** The County shall protect and defend the public's right to access to and along the shoreline, including actively pursuing acquisition and development of a near-shore alignment of the California Coastal Trail and planned coastal access points. Consistent with adopted State policy, the California Coastal Trail along the Gaviota Coast shall be located "as close as physically and aesthetically feasible to the shoreline" and "within the sights and sounds of the Pacific Ocean", generally shoreward of both the Union Pacific Railroad and US Hwy 101 wherever physically feasible. ✓

Proposed New Policies (3-5)

- **Policy REC-3:** Existing free roadside parking on county roads and US 101 are key to public use and enjoyment of the Gaviota Coast and shall be protected. Blocking off such areas or posting of no parking signs shall be strictly limited. ✓
- **Policy REC-4:** All improvements to the US 101, UPRR and County roads shall be designed to protect and expand public access to and along the coast. The County shall prepare a Transportation Corridor Plan to govern all future improvements to US 101, the UPRR and County roads along the Gaviota Coast, including new UPRR crossing points (e.g., at grade crossings, bridges and tunnels), long-term relocation of the UPRR to address bluff retreat and avoid the need for new coastal protections structures and improved access off of US Hwy 101. ✓
- **Policy REC-5:** All future purchases of open space on the Gaviota Coast using public funds shall include public trails and access as a priority use; opportunities for public review of and input into the management and recreational use of such open spaces areas shall be provided. ✓

Plan Lacks Trail/Open Space Acquisition Tools

- **General Plan Guidelines:** Implementation measure carries out General Plan/ policies
- *Gaviota Plan lacks:*
 - Measures/tools to acquire open space (e.g., Edwards Point recreation overlay)
 - Measures/tools to acquire coastal trail and other proposed trails
- Recreation overlay/trail corridors are only first step — will not happen without acquisition tools

Add Acquisition Tools

The Gaviota Coast Plan needs to provide a mix of

- **Regulatory Exaction Tools** (*e.g., rezones, home size restrictions, building envelope limitations, specific plans, development standards*) and
- **Incentives** (*increased home size, limited increased density, increased building envelope sizes*) in exchange for dedication of open space or trail easements.
- These changes should be *initiated* by Planning Commission as part of the hearing process to acquire some force of law and be included in EIR.

Specific Plan Overlay

- A specific plan is a tool for the systematic implementation of the general plan
- A specific plan may be developed in response to a single policy issue (e.g., trails/open space)
- All subsequent subdivision and development and zoning regulations must be consistent with the specific plan.
- Specific plans can govern large areas and development across multiple parcels

Specific Plan Overlay

- Successful Examples in Santa Barbara County
- County has long history of using specific plans to acquire trails and open space
 - More Mesa Specific Plan
 - Ellwood Mesa Specific Plan/ UCSB North Campus (formerly West Devereux Specific Plan)
- A Specific Plan to guide future development may be required as part of General Plan update

Ellwood Mesa/ North Campus Open Space Protection

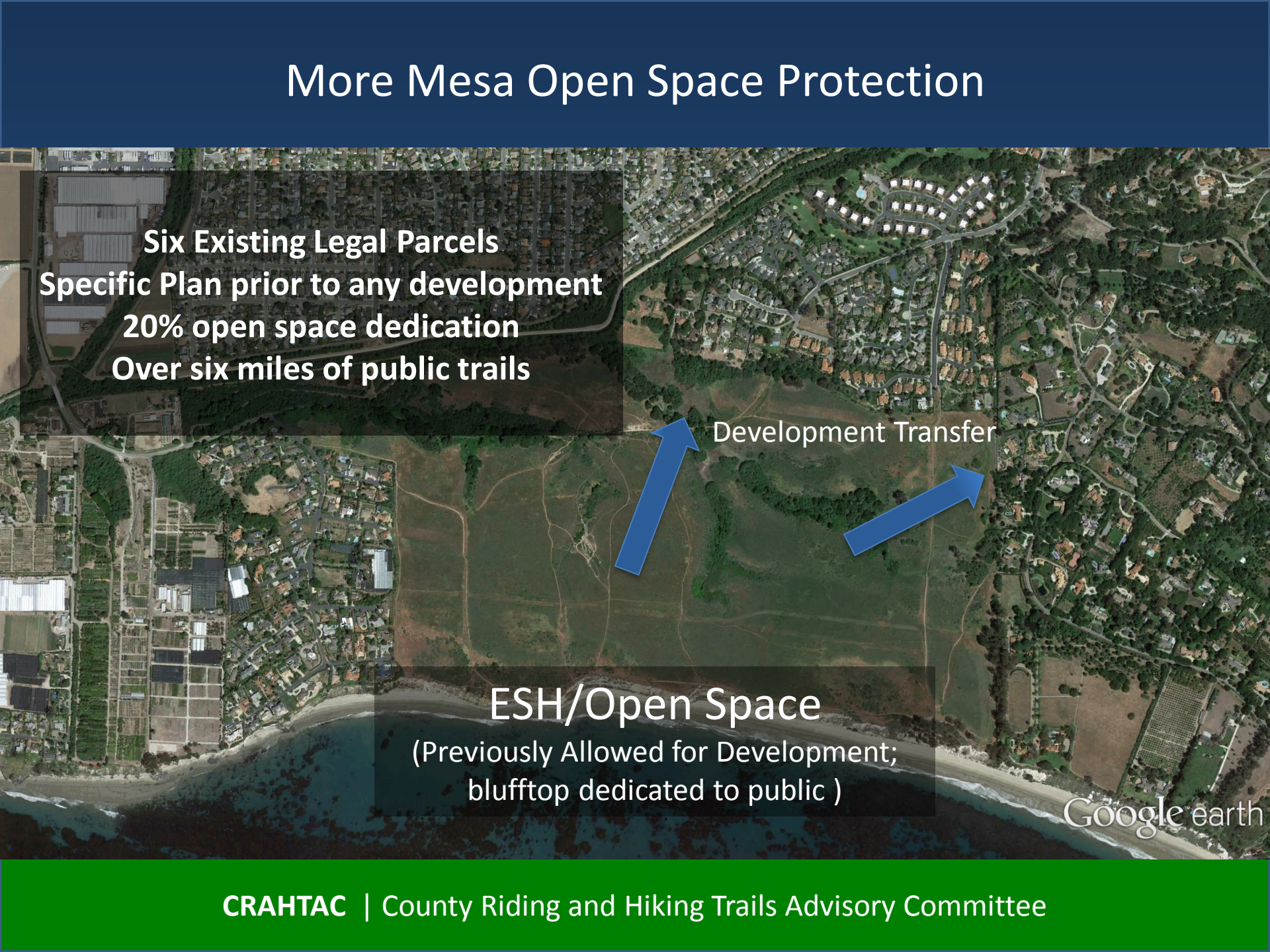


Ellwood Beach Specific Plan
UCSB LRDP – North Campus
Master Plan

Public Open Space
(All Proposed Development Transferred
off of bluffs/ coastal areas)

Google earth

More Mesa Open Space Protection

An aerial photograph of a coastal area, likely Mesa, showing a mix of residential development, open fields, and a coastline with waves. Two blue arrows point from a central area towards the top-left and top-right. The top-left area is labeled with text about legal parcels and trails. The central area is labeled 'Development Transfer'. The bottom area is labeled 'ESH/Open Space'.

Six Existing Legal Parcels
Specific Plan prior to any development
20% open space dedication
Over six miles of public trails

Development Transfer

ESH/Open Space
(Previously Allowed for Development;
blufftop dedicated to public)

Google earth

Las Varas Specific Plan Development Transfer



Development Transfer
(+4 Units)

Open Space
Preservation

Blufftop: 2 potentially
developable parcels

- Implement Gaviota Coast Plan Recreation Overlay
- Acquire Coastal Trail and Access
- Protect Sensitive Resources (ESH, Cultural, Visual)

Questions?

