

Appendix C - California Coastal Trail

Overview: Over 50 percent of the proposed 1,200-mile California Coastal Trail have been completed along the California coastline. Below are images of several of the completed segments of the Coastal Trail in Santa Barbara County and across California.



Carpinteria – The Coastal Trail crosses the Carpinteria Bluffs, providing coastal access and miles of trails for joggers, walkers, and dogs. A trail from the Carpinteria Bluffs to Rincon is planned for completion in 2014.
Photo: David Podrell, Edhat



Carpinteria – The Carpinteria Bluffs offer a wide coastal blufftop across varied habitats.
Photo: Ray Ford



The popular Santa Barbara waterfront segment is a paved Class 1 multi-use path for approximately 3 miles from Shoreline Park to the Andree Clark Bird Refuge.
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The Coastal Trail is important for tourism in the City of Santa Barbara, providing scenic public access between shorefront businesses and major tourism destinations along the coast, such as Stearns Wharf and the Santa Barbara Harbor.
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More Mesa, a 283-acre coastal open space, is an important public access point in the Goleta Valley as well as an important nesting and hunting ground for the white-tailed kite. Trails have occurred across More Mesa for many years and kite populations remain healthy, with many nesting pairs returning year after year (More Mesa Preservation Coalition 2009).



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A Class I segment of the Coastal Trail provides an important commuting route between the City of Goleta and UC Santa Barbara.



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UC Santa Barbara contains approximately XX miles of Coastal Trail that is heavily utilized by UC Santa Barbara students, as well as members of the public, for jogging, walking, and coastal access. The Coastal Trail runs in proximity to sensitive habitats, including areas of restored coastal sage scrub habitat and vernal pools and provides interpretive displays.



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Formal stairways have replaced dirt and asphalt paths that lead to a wide dirt trail through coastal sage scrub, adjacent to the UCSB Lagoon and shoreline on UC Santa Barbara. Improvements to the trail can reduce environmental impacts over the long-term, with decrease erosion of soils and direct disturbance to adjacent habitats.



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UC Santa Barbara's Coal Oil Point segment of the Coastal Trail offers access to several surf breaks and spectacular sunsets.



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An extensive network of trails on the Elwood bluffs includes trails through the Elwood Butterfly eucalyptus grove where monarch butterflies flock every winter. Simple bollard fence is adequate to permit public access and protect environmentally sensitive habitats.



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In El Capitan State Beach the Coastal trails run along El Capitan Creek under 60-foot sycamore trees and adjacent to environmentally sensitive riparian habitats. Park trails, including the California Coastal Trail, accommodate high numbers of visitors, particularly during summer months.



Ellwood Mesa in the City of Goleta are designated coastal open space and contain a network of trails. Improvements to the Trail system, including improved coastal access, are proposed for completion in 2014. These changes are intended to formalize primary public use trails to reduce side trails that can degrade more sensitive habitat areas, including native grasslands, wetlands, and vernal pools.



The Gaviota Coastal Trail is a 4.5-mile paved segment through El Capitan State Beach to Refugio State Beach. The Trail is highly used by bikers and walkers in the vicinity of the campgrounds, providing access along the scenic shoreline and to quieter beaches. A 450-foot eroded segment discourages bike access between the two campgrounds. Budgetary constraints have delayed repairs but should be prioritized for completion.



The Bacara Resort trail runs adjacent to the coast and the hotel, providing access to the public and patrons.



This “Improved Natural Surface” segment of the Coastal Trail immediately adjacent to Highway 1 and a public access parking lot in San Luis Obispo County includes road base, trail tread, fencing to restrict bluff access and a rock border to further guide control access.



The 3.2 mile-long segment of the Coastal Trail through the Sea Ranch rural development project consist primarily of unimproved surfaces. This segment of the Coastal Trail is similar to what could occur on Naples, if developed.



Boardwalks are often used for limited segments of the Coastal Trail, which cross sensitive habitats such as wetlands or sand dunes. This boardwalk at Cambria’s Fiscalini Ranch open space extends for approximately 300 yards across a wetland near one of this open space area’s major gateways.



This segment of the old Fiscalini Ranch Marine Terrace Trail (i.e., Coastal Trail) has an unimproved earthen surface of approximately 4 feet in width and supports moderate to high levels of multiple use.



This as yet unimproved segment of the Coastal Trail near Piedras Blancas Light House receives low to moderate use and has a narrow earthen tread. Such rustic trails could be considered for less developed bluff segments of the Coastal Trail in Gaviota.