



SUPPORTING NATURE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION,
AND EDUCATION ON THE GAVIOTA COAST

FALL 2018

Oil Out of Gaviota- Finally



After 120 years, the two largest remaining oil facilities are leaving Gaviota. Work has been underway for more than a year to clean-up the Gaviota Terminal property on the south side of Highway 101 at Mariposa Reina. We have just learned that the Gaviota Oil and Gas Plant, across the highway, will now

be shut down and removed, along with the three offshore oil production platforms it was built for. The permits for the removal are expected to take a minimum of two years to process since there are numerous agencies involved. The eventual removal of the plant

increases the options for recreational development on either side of the highway. Coastal Ranches Conservancy continues to advocate for the relocation of the roadside rest areas from the Gaviota Pass location to this area where north and southbound ramps make highway access safer.

Save the Creek and Save the Bears Donations Needed

The bears of Gaviota Creek need our help. Yes, black bears, mountain lions, bobcats, and badgers can still be found on the Gaviota Coast and utilize Gaviota Creek for food and as a corridor to safely move around their territories. The goal of our restoration project is to save this valuable wildlife habitat.

Your donation is critical to allow us to contribute the 15% to 25% matching funds to win the grants to do this work. Please make a donation to Coastal Ranches Conservancy today.



Fish Passage Work Begins

Work has finally begun on the engineering for the lower-most fish passage barriers in Gaviota Creek. Moe Gomez of South Coast Habitat Restoration is directing the work being performed by Water Ways Consultants with funding from Coastal Ranches Conservancy, Proposition One and the Coastal Conservancy, Patagonia, the Bower Foundation, and Santa Barbara County's CREF fund. We intend to pursue new grant money to begin working on the remaining upstream barriers.

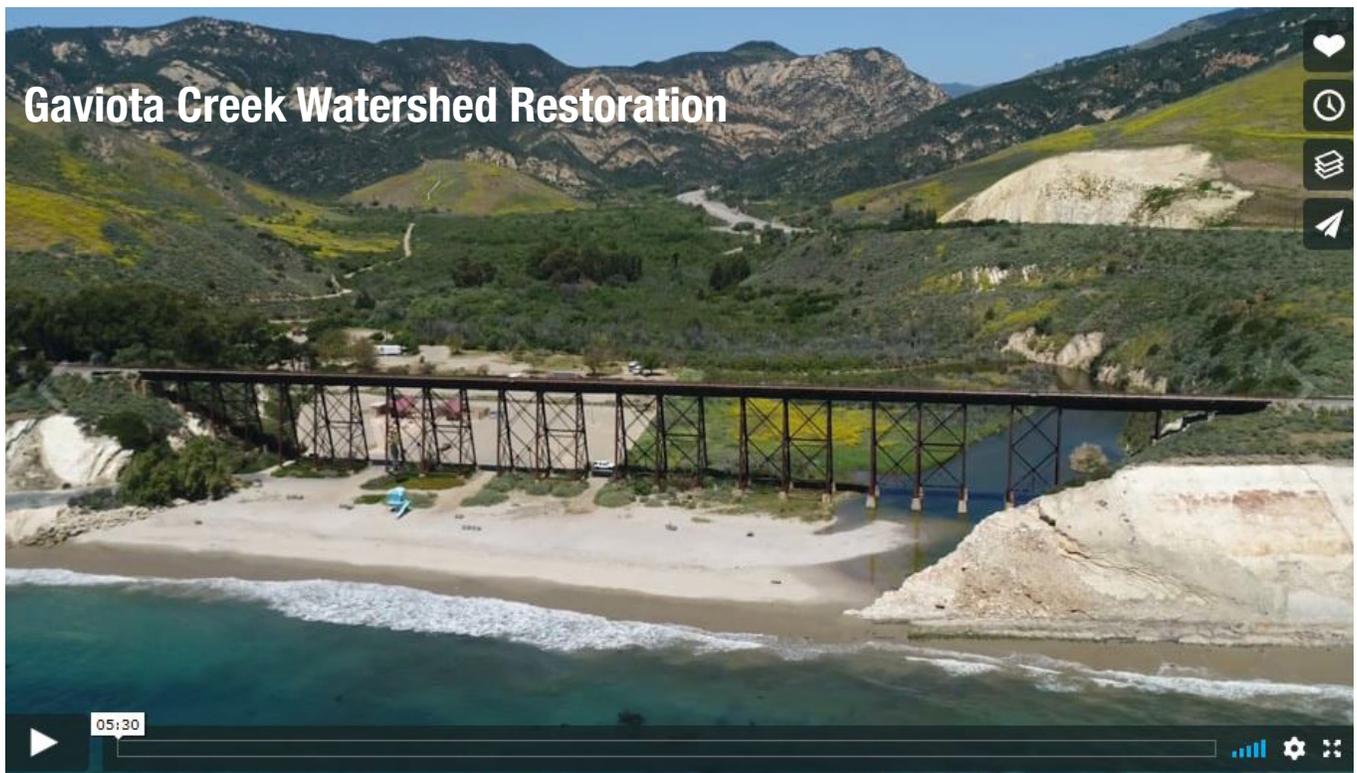
THERE ARE 17 MAN-MADE FISH PASSAGE BARRIERS IN GAVIOTA CREEK, AND YET SOMEHOW, A FEW STEELHEAD STILL SURVIVE.



Surveying must be completed before the rains come. This barrier is next to the Roadside Rest Area.

New Video Provides Great Overview of Watershed Project

At 13,000 acres, the Gaviota Creek watershed is too big to see from ground level. So we asked our friend Jesse Natale of J North Productions to film it with his drone and he created this awesome video for us. It's just over 5 minutes long and shows what our Gaviota Creek watershed restoration project is all about. Visit <https://vimeo.com/274188886> to view this informative video.



Funding Received for Conservation Easements



Prime wildlife habitat on some of the private ranch lands of upper Gaviota Creek

Even though more than 70% of the Gaviota Creek watershed is protected from development, with the strong support of the neighboring property owners, it might be possible to protect the whole watershed. This will allow them to continue farming and ranching as their families have for, in some cases, the last 100 years. Our partner, the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, recently learned it will be recommended for a \$1.5 million grant from the Coastal Conservancy to be used for conservation easements in this watershed. The California Range-

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land Trust is also working with several property owners in the area. Additional grant money

as well as private donations will be needed before these easements can be purchased.

Wildlife Slaughter on Highway 101

Highway 101 through the Gaviota Pass is a killer. Not only does it have the highest rate of vehicle accidents of anywhere between Buellton and Goleta, but every week wildlife trying to cross the road here are run over and killed. To the animals of Gaviota Creek, those four lanes with the wall in the median are a huge barrier and trap the smaller animals within the fast lane of the highway, preventing them from crossing. Some, like the fox shown below, have figured out how to use the drainage culverts that pass under the highway at various points. Others, like this mountain lion, have not. We know from personal experience and anecdotal



reports that multiple mountain lions are killed each year crossing the highway through the Gaviota Pass in addition to many fox, coyote, and even badgers. This has to stop and we are calling on our California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Caltrans to address this urgent issue.



New Faces at Coastal Ranches Conservancy



Candice Meneghin is consulting for us on our Gaviota Creek watershed projects. Candice recently spent 5 years working for CalTrout and serves on the board of the Friends of the Santa Clara River. She has worked on several of the Southern California watershed restoration projects from the Santa Ynez to the San Gabriel. She is also on the board of the Fillmore and Piru Basins Groundwater Sustainability Agency representing the environmental stakeholders on the Santa Clara River. Candice will be conducting our stakeholder meetings, among many other responsibilities.



Meighan Diethofer has joined the Coastal Ranches Conservancy Board of Directors. She is a biologist who has worked in private environmental consulting and county government for over 20 years. She holds a degree in biology and attended the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at UCSB, obtaining a Master's Degree in Water Resources Management. Meighan was born and raised in the Santa Ynez Valley and is familiar with conservation issues throughout the Santa Barbara area.



Lisa Stratton has also just joined our Board of Directors. She has been the Director of Ecosystem Management for UCSB's Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER) since 2005. As the manager of the campus lagoon and other open space areas on campus, she has been active in pursuing opportunities to improve water quality and provide habitat through bioswales and treatment wetlands. She has been the director of the North Campus Open Space project, one of the largest estuary restoration projects in Southern California. Lisa's experience on this project is invaluable as we move forward on our Gaviota Creek watershed restoration.



The California Newt

The California Newt is an interesting animal found in quiet pools in Gaviota Creek during the springtime. Once the winter rains begin, the adults migrate from the surrounding hills where they live most of the year, to pools in the creek to find a mate and lay its eggs underwater on branches. The eggs then incubate for 4-6 weeks

before hatching and the larvae will mature into the terrestrial form over a several month period. If water dries up

**WE DON'T ADVISE
PICKING THEM UP**

too soon the larvae will not survive. The skin of these salamanders is highly toxic so we don't advise picking them up!

The Common Gartersnake has evolved an immunity to newt toxins and is the only animal known to prey on the adults.

Coastal Ranches Conservancy

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