

STEELHEAD RESCUE ON GAVIOTA CREEK

In September, four good-sized steelhead had to be rescued from a pool on Gaviota Creek and relocated downstream to a safer place. The pool they were in was drying up rapidly and they would have been dead within days but for the prompt action of a team from CDFW and Caltrans. The conditions in this pool had been monitored since June, when the fish were first discovered by us. Prior to their release, CDFW personnel took small samples of their tail fins for DNA analysis.



This analysis could help answer whether these fish are resident or sea-run and other aspects of their life history. Our local news channel covered the story: <https://www.keyt.com/news/environment/stealhead-trout-trapping-underway-to-help-the-endangered-species/1121826820>

The four fish were trapped below a concrete box culvert that, because of its design, is a complete migration barrier that prevents them from moving upstream to a spring-fed pool where they could safely await the winter rains. This culvert was built in 1995 and the Southern Steelhead was declared an endangered species in 1997. It is unfortunate

that Caltrans made no allowance for fish passage when the culvert was built as steelhead

“...steelhead have probably died each summer in this pool for at least the past 24 years...”

are well-known inhabitants of Gaviota Creek since the 1940s at least. Even though the fish was not listed as endangered at the time the culvert was designed, there are several State laws which prohibit the blockage of fish passage for salmon and steelhead that appear to have been ignored at the time. As a result, we believe that steelhead have probably died each summer in this pool for at least the past 24 years,

Coastal Ranches Conservancy is working hard to remedy this problem, alongside our partners Caltrans and South Coast Habitat Restoration.



LEGAL RESEARCH REVEALS ENFORCEMENT SHORTCOMINGS

Coastal Ranches Conservancy recently retained noted UC Davis legal scholar Karrigan Bork to examine an under-enforced section of the California Fish and Game Code, Section 5948, which protects fish passage. The work was supported with grants from Caltrout and Trout Unlimited.



“Eighty percent of California’s native freshwater fish are likely to go extinct in the next 100 years.”

Karrigan writes: *“From the very beginning of statehood, the California legislature has attempted to protect fish populations through increasingly precise and stringent laws. These legislative efforts, if enforced and funded, would make great strides toward ensuring a sustainable future for California fish, but the state’s halfhearted administration of these laws has frustrated their purpose.”*

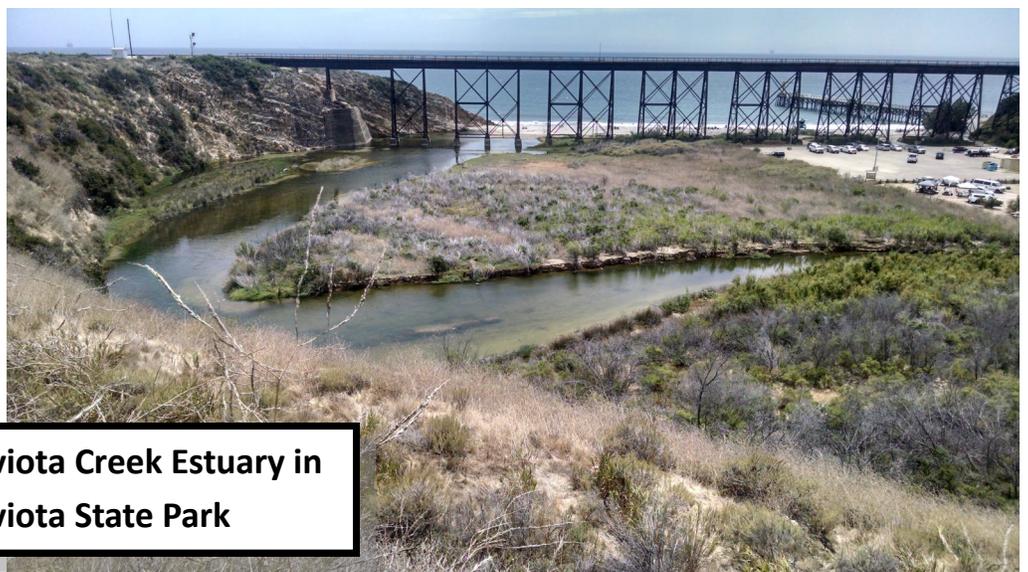
You can read his paper at <http://coastalranchesconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/private-enforcement-of-the-public-trust.pdf>

ESTUARY AND FLOOD PLAIN RESTORATION STALLED

Lack of an overall plan for future improvements at Gaviota State Park appear to have stalled efforts to move forward with a new Park access road and the floodplain and estuary restorations. Park District Superintendent Greg Martin says that one big issue is the impact a future Hollister Ranch access plan might have on the Park. Several other issues are pending and could impact other elements of a make-over of Gaviota State Park. These include:

- Will the County or State develop additional camping or day use sites in the area?
- What will become of the Freeport Processing Plant and Gaviota Terminal property, both at Mariposa Reina, once they are fully de-commissioned?
- Can the Highway 101 roadside rest areas be relocated?

We believe there should be some sort of public process initiated by State Parks and the County to come up with a plan to resolve all of these issues. We look forward to participating in such an effort.

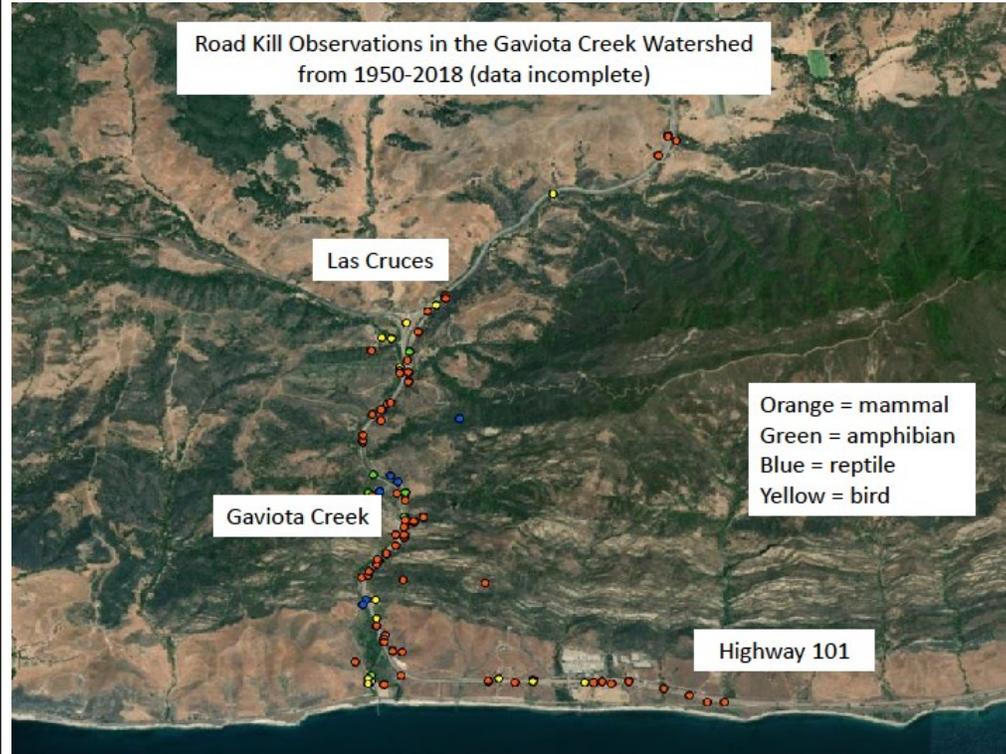


Gaviota Creek Estuary in Gaviota State Park

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS ESSENTIAL FOR LARGE MAMMALS

Black bears and mountain lions have big territories and need to be able to move around to access food sources, find mates, and to allow their young to establish their own territories. Divided by major roads only at San Marcos Pass and the Gaviota pass, our coastal mountains provide the room these critters need. But, as traffic volumes increase, these roadways can become wildlife killers.

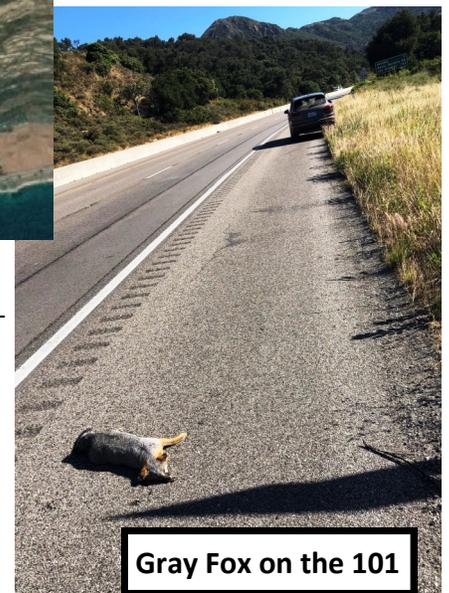
Coastal Ranches Conservancy has decided to take on improving safety for wildlife crossing Highway 101 in the Gaviota Pass region. We have hired consultants Pathways for Wildlife to survey the situation over the next year and make recommendations. Regular surveys of roadkill were started in July and a permit to install wildlife cameras to find out where animals are crossing now is pending with Caltrans.



We have had help from Ember Bradbury and Ryan Clark of UCSB's CCBER to conduct a review of the various wildlife rescue and museum databases to see what they can tell us. This map (left) displays some of that preliminary data.

We have had help from Ember Bradbury and Ryan Clark of UCSB's CCBER to conduct a review of the various wildlife rescue and museum databases to see what they can tell us. This map (left) displays some of that preliminary data.

The records reviewed so far show 91 large mammals found DOR (dead-on-road) in this short stretch of highway. Black tail mule deer are the number one species killed with 60 individuals known, followed by coyote, gray fox, mountain lion, bobcat, and black bear. Already since June of this year we have recorded two gray fox and two bobcats killed in this stretch along with numerous skunks, possums, and smaller mammals. We expect that analysis of the data and wildlife camera photos will allow us to develop a plan to reduce these deaths.



Please Donate....

Coastal Ranches Conservancy is in its 16th year of supporting nature conservation, restoration, and education along the Gaviota Coast. We depend on your financial support to continue our work. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and please donate on our [website](#) with PayPal or send a check to:

68 Hollister Ranch Rd., Gaviota, CA 93117 – Phone (805) 567-5957

A California Non-Profit 501(c)(3) Organization Federal Tax ID 68-0554135

Don't miss the Oak Group art show benefiting our Gaviota Creek Restoration Project at the Faulkner Gallery in Santa Barbara Nov. 1 - 30. Opening night reception falls on first Thursday Nov 7th from 5:30 - 7:30 with 45% of all sales going to the Coastal Ranches Conservancy.

A short presentation about the restoration of Gaviota Creek and UCSB's North Campus Open Space will be made on Nov 13 at 1:30 pm by Doug Campbell and Lisa Stratton of the Coastal Ranches Conservancy. For more information about this event

please visit:

CoastalRanchesConservancy.org
and **OakGroup.org**

(gallery hours: Mon - Thurs 10 - 7,
Fri - Sat 10 - 5:30, Sun 1 - 5
closed for Thanksgiving)



John Wullbrandt, "Gaviota Creek Meets the Blue Pacific"

THE OAK GROUP

presents STATE OF HARMONY

...a show benefiting Coastal Ranches Conservancy for
the Gaviota Creek Restoration Project

Faulkner Gallery (Santa Barbara Central Library), 40 E Anapamu St. Santa Barbara

COASTAL RANCHES CONSERVANCY

68 HOLLISTER RANCH RD.

GAVIOTA, CA 93117

Visit us at

www.coastalranchesconservancy.org

and on Facebook

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