



Gaviota Coast Plan

**Planning Commission Draft Final
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**Planning and Development Department
County of Santa Barbara**

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Gaviota Coast Plan



Photo Credit: Reeve Woolpert

**County of Santa Barbara
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Gaviota Coast Community Vision

The Plan is intended to preserve the rural character of Gaviota by protecting and enhancing its varied and unique natural and cultural resources, agricultural productivity, and by enhancing public recreation and access consistent with the capacity of its resources.

The Gaviota Coast has a storied history beginning with its creation by tectonic forces that resulted in its being the terminus of the transverse ranges of California providing a unique orientation toward the warm southern sun and buffered from the prevailing northwest winds, continuing with its providing ample resources to sustain an indigenous culture of native Americans who thrived for millennia on the bounty of the sea and land, and evolving into a European system of large ranchos and ultimately into the varied landscape of today descended from those ranchos. Throughout this evolution, the Gaviota Coast remains the overlap of the Southern and Central California Ecological Provinces and as such contains a highly diverse population of flora and fauna and utterly unique communities of species derived from both provinces.



Photo Credit: Mark Bright

Due to the urbanization of the Southern California Coast and regions inland, the Gaviota region remains a bastion of species that are greatly diminished in the Southern California Bight, and as such represents a strategic repository of those species and their respective communities. We as stewards of this great legacy have a deep responsibility to preserve the bountiful and exquisite resources of this area while respecting the property rights of those landowners who have contributed so greatly to the exceptional condition those resources now enjoy.

To this end, a diverse number of residents, property owners and other stakeholders formed the Gaviota Study Group in 2002 to come together to develop a plan for the long term preservation of Gaviota while providing reasonable equity to the private property rights of its stewards. The key recommendation of the Study Group Report was that Santa Barbara County convene a process by which a community plan tailored to the particular conditions and needs of Gaviota would be developed to insure the long term protection of the resources of Gaviota.

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