



STATE PARKS GENERAL PLAN UPDATE: EL CAPITAN, REFUGIO, AND GAVIOTA



Draft Vision for the Three Park System

California State Parks' Gaviota Coast Units — El Capitán State Beach, Refugio State Beach, and Gaviota State Park — are ecologically rich coastal parks of exceptional natural beauty. They offer diverse recreational and interpretive opportunities that connect visitors to the land and sea. The parks are treasured for their undeveloped coastal character, recreational opportunities, and protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Regional trail connections, campgrounds, scenic viewpoints, and coastal access allow visitors a variety of enriching recreational opportunities to experience the parks' dynamic landscapes and understand their significance and uniqueness along the California coast while recreating responsibly in the parks' natural settings. Visitors enjoy sustainable recreational amenities and landscapes designed and maintained to harmonize with the park system's dynamic environment, minimize ecological impacts, and provide equitable access for individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Interpretation and education opportunities highlight the area's natural diversity, California Native American Tribes' heritage, coastal ecology, climate science and resilience strategies, and cultural history.

The three park units benefit from a well-coordinated and resilient park management system, balancing each park's fluctuating individual capacity, needs and resources to ensure core facilities and recreational amenities can be effectively maintained. Innovative facilities management and infrastructure planning based on healthy ecosystems exemplify how dynamic coastal landscapes can adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change impacts including coastal erosion, flooding, wildfire risk, and sea-level rise while still providing exceptional visitor experiences.

Collaboration with partners, including local California Native American Tribes, recreation and conservation groups, agencies, universities, and other entities, supports long-term protection of the parks' natural and cultural resources while encouraging public appreciation and responsibility for the parks and the greater Gaviota Coast.