



ECRG General Plan Update

Stakeholder Meeting Series Summary

In April 2025, the ECRG Update team held virtual meetings with three stakeholder groups as part of the ECRG Plan Update process. These stakeholder groups included Local Agencies and Municipalities, Equity and Environmental Groups, and Recreation, Public Access and Business Groups.

The objectives of the meetings were to:

- Share results of existing conditions research and engagement to date
- Share high-level overviews of State Parks' identified opportunities and constraints
- Listen to stakeholder input on opportunities and constraints for use in developing a draft concept plan

Organizations involved in past park efforts or with active partnerships with State Parks were invited to participate as stakeholders and were grouped by interest. Between ten and 15 organizations were invited to each meeting. Groups that were unable to send a representative were invited to submit written responses to the discussion questions shared in the virtual meetings.

Each meeting began with a presentation that provided an overview of each park, an explanation of the General Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) process, and progress on this work to date. Each meeting included a Q&A session and a facilitated discussion during which stakeholders identified opportunities and constraints, asked questions of one another, and expressed their visions for the future of the three park units.

This summary lists the organizations that attended each meeting and key feedback received from stakeholders.

The ECRG Update Team also met with Regulatory Agencies in October 2024. The meeting was followed up with a site visit in March 2025. Regulatory Agency input, which focused on relevant ongoing projects, concerns, and opportunities, is not captured in this summary.

Tribal consultation related to the General Plan update is underway and ongoing.

Regulatory Agencies Stakeholder Meeting

October 29, 2024 (1:00-2:00pm, virtual) and March 20, 2025 (9:00am-12:00pm, site visit)

Attendees included representatives from the following agencies:

- California Coastal Commission
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California State Coastal Conservancy
- County of Santa Barbara



- State Lands Commission
- State Water Resources Control Board
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Local Agencies and Municipalities Stakeholder Meeting

April 1, 2025 (1:00-2:30pm)

Attendees included representatives from the following organizations:

- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- Office of Gregg Hart, Assemblymember, 37th District
- Office of Monique Limon, State Senate District 21
- County of Santa Barbara
- Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
- Santa Barbara County Fire Department
- Santa Barbara Fire Safe Council
- Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

Interest Group: Equity and Environmental Groups

April 2, 2025 (6-7:30pm)

Attendees included representatives from the following organizations:

- Coastal Ranches Conservancy
- Environmental Defense Center
- Land Trust for Santa Barbara County
- Nature Track Foundation
- Santa Barbara Audubon Society
- South Coast Habitat Restoration

Interest Group: Recreation, Public Access, and Business

April 3, 2025 (6:00-7:30pm)

Attendees included representatives from the following organizations:

- Naturalists at Large
- Sage Trail Alliance
- RV 101
- County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee
- Hollister Ranch Owners' Association
- Santa Barbara Trails Council
- El Capitan Canyon Resort



Key Insights

Stakeholders shared insights on many topics during the discussion portion of each meeting. These insights are summarized by topic area here.

Parks' Existing Value

Stakeholders shared that the organizations they represent value the parks for:

- Providing **public access to nature**, especially the ocean and beaches
- Managing **natural resources**, including biodiversity and natural features
- Offering **educational programming**, including inclusive programming that is accessible to participants of all abilities.

Opportunities

Stakeholders shared a variety of ideas for future opportunities, focused on the following themes:

- **Regional connectivity** – completing the gap in the California Coastal Trail, connectivity with regional trails, and interaction with the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (Gaviota)
- **Educational and interpretive offerings** – enhancing and increasing offerings, including discussion of topics such as climate change impacts, historic Anza expedition path
- **Improved accessibility** – including public transportation options, ADA compliant trails and beach access
- **Natural resource protection and habitat enhancement** – potential for estuary restoration and improved fish passage at Gaviota
- **Repair and upgrade facilities** – repair facilities, such as the Gaviota pier that have been damaged, relocate amenities as appropriate, upgrade camping facilities to align with modern camping equipment, such as larger recreational vehicles.

Constraints

Stakeholders recognized that constraints present challenges at these parks, including:

- **Climate change impacts** – fire risks, erosion, and sea level rise all impact amenities and operations at the parks
- **Human impacts on natural resources** – recreation and maintenance are challenged by increased recreational demand, risks of nearby fossil fuel infrastructure/pipelines on natural environments and park operations
- **Operational challenges** – understaffing, camping reservation system capacity, waste and disposal management
- **Infrastructure challenges** – Gaviota entrance road is subject to flooding and closure, limited pedestrian, bike and vehicle access to all parks from Highway 101; Highway 101 rest stops near Gaviota, utility capacity and aging infrastructure, permitting for facility updates



Park Vision and Partnership

Stakeholders expressed a vision for the future that includes:

- **A well-integrated General Plan** – aligns with existing planning documents (e.g., Gaviota Coast Plan) and supports future projects and planning in the parks
- **Collaboration with external agencies, non-profit organizations, and schools** – creation and strengthening of relationships, cooperation, and collaboration between agencies, non-profit organizations, and schools operating throughout the county
- **Pursuit of grant funding** – with support from other organizations, including nonprofit organizations with experience in securing grant funding for mutually beneficial projects. Proposition 4 could be a source of future grant funding
- **Protection of parks’ natural resources** – provide passive recreation opportunities that are balanced with protection of natural resources in the parks
- **Establishment of a contiguous California Coastal Trail** – plans to complete gaps in the trail and pursue state-level active transportation funding
- **Updated infrastructure** – to support recreational use of the parks in a sustainable manner
- **Easements across park lands** – concerns related to easements granted to commercial operators