

# Coastline

GAVIOTA COAST CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023



Reeve Wolpert, Clover

## Yeah, It's Always Better When We're Together...

BY DOUG KERN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**W**hat's better than one person striving for a goal? Having a whole community working together to achieve it.

That's precisely what we need to do to ensure the protection of the Gaviota Coast. Let's come together and make this happen!

The Gaviota Coast is under threat. If we don't act together, we'll lose it. But, if we unite as a community, nothing can stop us from permanently protecting this beautiful place. So, what's our common goal? It's simple - to preserve the Gaviota Coast for ourselves and future generations. Let me know what you think.

**Protect Environmental Integrity:** GCC is dedicated to keeping the Gaviota Coast wild, a place where wildlife can roam freely, including bear, mountain lion and other threatened animals. "Wild" is a relative term. What we really mean is "unspoiled." That's a tall order because some of us hold different views when it comes to visiting the outdoors. Unspoiled means that all of us, as a community, take part in caring for the natural resources of a place.

**Preserve Cultural Resources and Provide Access by Indigenous Peoples:** The Gaviota Coast was the ancestral home to indigenous Chumash peoples and their

villages. They are the original guardians and stewards of these lands. We seek to provide protection for cultural sites, as well as provide access to the Coast for ceremonial and spiritual connections for our Chumash neighbors.

**Conserve Rural Character:** For more than 25 years, we have worked with our supporters to safeguard the Coast from harmful development. And even in areas where development exists, it's predominantly for agricultural purposes. We're supporting our coastal farmers and ranchers in their regenerative agriculture projects so they can keep their land thriving. It's important that we support them in this vision.

**Provide Public Access:** Let's team up to ensure we have managed and respectful public access to the coast, without damaging the resources we aim to protect. Together, we'll establish a fair system of access that safeguards these precious coastal resources for generations to come. We can achieve this so much better when we work together.

Get in touch with me to find out more and get involved in this major conservation effort. Let's unite and make a real difference.



**Photo Credit:** Jack Johnson with GCC members at the Santa Barbara Bowl. From Left: Heidi and Guner Tautrim, Jack Johnson and Mike Brown.

Jack Johnson has been a supporter of the Gaviota Coast Conservancy for many years and recently shared this message:

**"I'm so grateful to the Gaviota Coast Conservancy and their 25 years of work to protect and steward a beautiful and wild stretch of coastline. It's the perfect time to come together and support their vision."**

**- Jack Johnson**

[johnsonohana.org](http://johnsonohana.org)



## Matching Grant Opportunity for GCC and Supporters

The Gaviota Coast Conservancy has just received a Matching Grant for \$100,000.00! We are excited to reach out to our valued Supporters to take advantage of this opportunity. The Matching Grant means that every dollar you donate to the Gaviota Coast Conservancy, between June 1st and July 31st, 2023, will be matched up to \$100,000.00. This effectively doubles the impact of your contribution.

Your support of our mission to protect the Gaviota Coast is more critical now than ever. Your donation, together with this matching grant, gives us the opportunity to move faster to permanently preserve key parcels on this precious coastal region. We appreciate your commitment to the Gaviota Coast Conservancy, and thank you for considering this Matching Grant opportunity. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions, or would like to learn more about how your donation will be used to protect the Gaviota Coast. Thank you for your support.



David Austin. Protecting our coast for them.



## Coastal Ranches Conservancy Celebrates Its First 20 Years

BY COASTAL RANCHES CONSERVANCY

Coastal Ranches Conservancy has been supporting nature conservation, restoration, and education on the Gaviota Coast for 20 years now. Here are a couple of our projects that we are especially proud of:

- We helped build cattle fencing on the west slope of the Arroyo Hondo Preserve. When the Alisal Fire came roaring through two years ago, the fuel reduction from cattle grazing there helped keep the barns and old adobe in the canyon safe.
- Our support of nature education has helped expose thousands of school-age kids to the wonders of the Gaviota Coast.

- Our advocacy for the restoration of Gaviota Creek helped convince Caltrans to take on the removal of 16 barriers to fish passage there; a \$30-40 million project.
  - Our report on roadkill and our camera trapping studies in the Gaviota Pass area demonstrated to Caltrans that there was an urgent need for wildlife crossing improvements there, resulting in funding for a study of the problem.
- We thank all of the many donors who have helped us over the past years and hope we can continue to receive your support. **Read more about CRC and consider making a donation on our website. [coastalranchesconservancy.org](https://coastalranchesconservancy.org)**

## Gaviota Creek Floods, Again

Gaviota Creek breached its banks on January 9, 2023 and flooded Gaviota State Park, once again. The large amount of sediment deposited in the creek's floodplain has raised the creek bed's elevation, making over-topping of the bank more frequent. Upstream, in the narrows of the Gaviota Pass, high flows tore out boulder-sized rip rap and sack-crete walls that supported Highway 101. The force of the floodwater was so great, it even blew out one of the Caltrans fish passage barriers slated for removal. Caltrans is currently evaluating what steps to take to repair the flood damage as it may threaten the structural integrity of the highway.



Coastal Ranches Conservancy. Gaviota Creek breached its banks on January 9, 2023.

## Better Together on the Gaviota Coast

During a recent conversation, Doug Kern, Executive Director, Gaviota Coast Conservancy and Meredith Hendricks, Executive Director, Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, discussed the ways in which GCC and the Land Trust support each other's current and future conservation work.



Shaw Leonard. Arroyo Hondo waterfalls.

pending a favorable outcome on some grant applications. We need support to finish out this campaign and be ready to work on the next deal. Land is expensive in Santa Barbara County, so we work to build up a fund for future conservation opportunities.

**DOUG:** What are the Land Trust's major priorities for the next couple of years?

**MEREDITH:** One of our top priorities is to make sure we are ready to connect projects with possible grant funding. It is all associated with California's efforts to protect 30% of our lands and waters, by 2030. It is called 30x30. Right now, there are significant funding resources coming down from various agencies such as the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, and Sustainable Growth Council for conservation, access and resiliency. The good news is, that while funds are going to be available for conservation transactions over the next few years, it takes a huge amount of work to qualify for and apply them to specific projects. We cannot rely solely on the support of individuals. We need to leverage their giving with public grants to afford to protect our land.

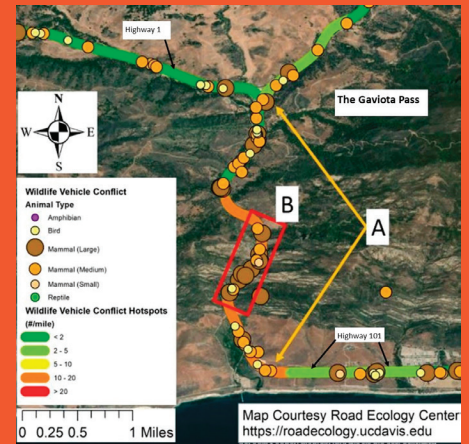
**DOUG:** What are some of the ways that the Land Trust and GCC might work together in the future?

**MEREDITH:** Great question. The kind of work we do, our humble effort to protect the places we love and need for today and future generations, cannot be done alone. We need all kinds of people and organizations, with diverse perspectives, working on the existential issues facing our landscapes. These issues impact our economy, quality of life and overall health. At the Land Trust, we only work with willing sellers on conservation deals, and there is a lot of desire for that right now. GCC has worked to help bring 30x30 funding to the central coast. This allows for both GCC and the Land Trust to keep moving forward on our growing list of potential conservation deals.

**DOUG:** Frequently I'm asked..."How does the GCC's work to permanently conserve properties, co-exist with the Land Trust and their conservation efforts? Are there conflicts, or do the two organizations work cooperatively together?" I consistently answer that our work is complimentary of one another, and whenever possible, we support each other's work. For example, GCC might have a good landowner contact, or vice versa. We strive to communicate well to avoid any type of conflict. GCC and the Land Trust have a mutual desire to see more of the Gaviota Coast conserved.

## New High Priority for Gaviota Pass Wildlife Crossing

California Department of Fish and Wildlife has just released an updated priority list of locations for potential wildlife crossings in the state and the Gaviota Pass has been added to this new list of 62 locations. This should help establish priority for funding of crossing improvements, when the time comes. You can find more information about this project here: [coastalranchesconservancy.org](https://coastalranchesconservancy.org)







**El Capitan Driftwood** Artist: Chris Potter

Local plein air painter, Chris Potter, has graciously allowed us to include his painting of El Capitan Driftwood in our newsletter. To contact Chris Potter, and see more of his art, go to: [www.chrispotterart.com](http://www.chrispotterart.com)

## Remembering Richard Hunt

BY PHIL MCKENNA

Richard Hunt was a kind and gentle man who served as the Treasurer of the Gaviota Coast Conservancy for over 15 years. Richard died January 25 and has left a hole in our organization and our hearts.

Richard was a CPA who brought his professional skills to the financial management of the Conservancy. Personally, he was skeptical of stories too good to be true, but was judicious in his criticism, always striving to achieve good results as opposed to winning arguments. He was analytical by training, but open-minded by inclination. He was detail oriented but understood that the minutia

of an organization, always needed to support its broad objectives. He was gifted with numbers and gracious with people.

He was a naturalist, scuba diver, hiker, kayaker, father and family man. He was honest and generous. He had a keen wit and a gorgeous dry sense of humor.

His spirited actions to protect the Gaviota Coast, and all of nature, has left his mark on Santa Barbara's conservation community. We feel his loss, but are graced by his contributions and goodwill.

**May he be soaring on an eagle's wing or climbing to the peak of a high mountain trail.**



### GCC Staff

Doug Kern, Executive Director  
Janet Koed, Outreach Coordinator  
David Torres, Administrative Assistant

### GCC Board of Directors

Greg Helms, President  
Donna Senauer, Vice President & Treasurer  
Greg Karpain, Secretary

Nancy Black, Chair, Communications  
Mike Brown, Chair, Development  
Steve Forsell, Chair, Outreach  
Phil McKenna, Chair, Land Use  
Kathy Washburn, Chair, Governance  
Nate Kelly  
Michelle Sevilla  
Peter Sterling  
Guner Tautrim

## What's Inside Coastline

Check out the \$100,000 Matching Grant opportunity available right now, see the close partnerships with other environmental organizations we've developed, and understand the details of our vision for the future of the Gaviota Coast. Read how The Land Trust of Santa Barbara has secured a new Gaviota Coast property and how GCC and the Land Trust are working together. Look at the great work by Coastal Ranches Conservancy and their celebration of 20 years of nature conservation, restoration, and education. See what's on the horizon, and how you can connect with GCC.

## Coming Events

### Saturday, May 13

Noon to about 3 PM

Low Tide Beach Hike at Naples

Children over 4 years old are welcome, must be accompanied by an adult.

### Saturday, June 10

9:30 AM

Low Tide Beach Hike somewhere on the Gaviota Coast. Location depends on state park openings and tide conditions

### Dates Coming Soon!

- Tour of White Buffalo Land Trust
- Full Moon Picnic
- Stargazing on the Gaviota Coast

### Contact Us:

805-683-6631

[info@gaviotacoastconservancy.org](mailto:info@gaviotacoastconservancy.org)

[gaviotacoastconservancy.org](http://gaviotacoastconservancy.org)