

“Ellwood Mesa is an important recreational area, keep it natural and undeveloped.”

“[It’s] one of the best things about living in Santa Barbara/Goleta hands down.”

Methodology:

The study was conducted over a period of five days in January 2015. The study was conducted on one weekday (1/12/15); three weekend days (1/17/15, 1/24/15, and 1/25/15); and a holiday weekend day (1/19/15) in four hour increments. Ellwood Mesa was green due to the time of year and reception of rains this season. Weather conditions were mild and sunny with occasional morning fog or clouds and little wind. Two Trails Council technicians set up a table with a Trails Council banner at busy trail locations, including 2 days each at Beach Access Points E & F and 1 day at the main parking lot access trail overlooking Devereux Creek (refer to map).

A one-page recreational user survey with twelve questions regarding personal recreational usage of the mesa was filled out by passing trail users. Trail users who passed directly in front of the table were asked to complete the public access survey by hand and participation in the survey was completely voluntary. Trails Council technicians also prepared a field observation survey each day to record observed uses of the Ellwood Mesa, including users who did not fill out a recreational user survey. Technicians observed and recorded individuals and group trail users passing by and within their range of visibility; observations included trail user activities (e.g., jogging, walking, dog walking) and the number of people/animals per group. To minimize double-counting, tallies were unidirectional (e.g., travel from North to South or East to West).

Key User Opinions:

Over 95% of surveyed trail users identify Ellwood Open Space coastal access and recreational trails as very important. Many people express the value they see in preserving this area for natural open space and passive recreation.

Over 81% of the users of Ellwood Mesa strongly support the acquisition of additional public coastal open space and trails similar to the Ellwood Mesa, with less than 1% not supporting such acquisitions.

Ellwood Mesa Open Space serves as an important natural landmark for all community trail users.

We would like to give a special thank you to the Coastal Fund for their support in contributing to this research study.

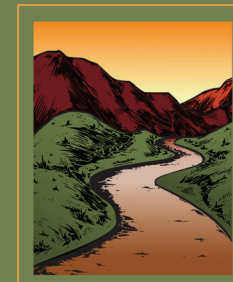


**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
Trails Council**



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SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
Trails Council

HOW DO YOU ELLWOOD?



SBCTC
PO Box 22352
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Ellwood Mesa RECREATIONAL USER SURVEY 2015

The Ellwood Mesa Recreational Trails User Survey was performed during 20 hours of fieldwork over 5 days in January 2015. More than 1,700 visitors enjoying the Ellwood Mesa trail system were observed or interviewed.

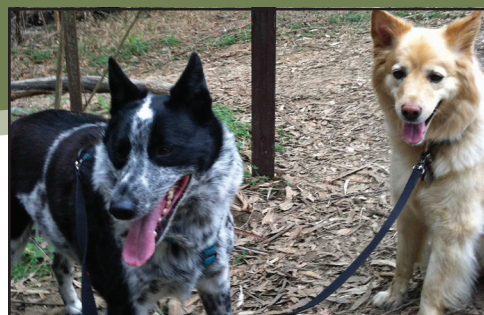
Ellwood Mesa RECREATIONAL USER SURVEY 2015



Purpose: This study was conducted to compile information on the different types and intensities of recreational uses that occur on the Ellwood Mesa. Trails and coastal access are an important recreational activity in Santa Barbara County and coastal open spaces, such as the Ellwood Mesa, West Campus Bluffs, open lands around the Devereux Slough, Douglas Family Preserve, and Carpinteria Bluffs, receive substantial public use. This study is intended to provide public agencies and community organizations with fact-based observations about the type and level of recreational uses of key public coastal open spaces, as well as the public's attitudes toward such open space. This information can help guide management of these open spaces and planning decisions regarding future protection and acquisition of such areas for recreational use.

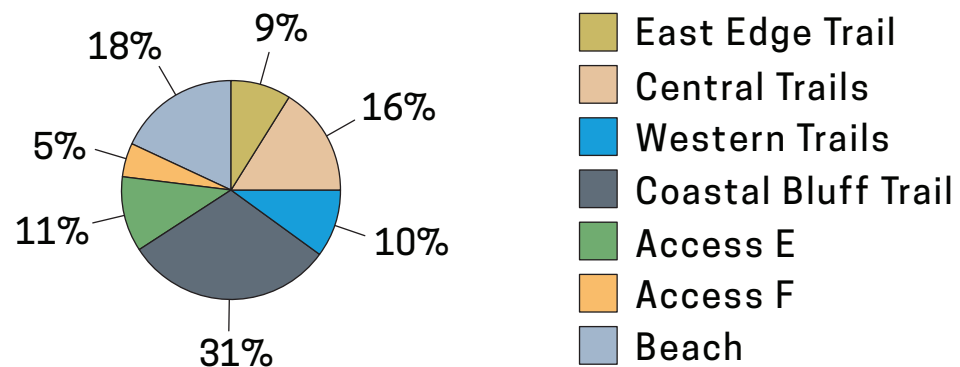
Ellwood Mesa – Sperling Preserve Open Space is a 137-acre coastal blufftop park, roughly bordered by the Coronado Butterfly Preserve and Devereux Creek to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the south, UCSB-owned open space and Devereux Slough to the east, and Sandpiper Golf Course to the west. The existing trail system provides over 6 miles of trails, including 2.1 miles of the California Coastal Trail and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. Coastal access from the Ellwood Mesa includes two designated coastal access points that lead from the top of the coastal mesa down to Ellwood Beach. Trails are unimproved dirt surfaces from one to twenty feet in width. Vegetation is dominated by open native and non-native grassland with vernal pools, coastal bluff scrub, eucalyptus groves and windrows, and riparian areas along Devereux Creek.

“Please do all we can to preserve and expand this natural treasure.”

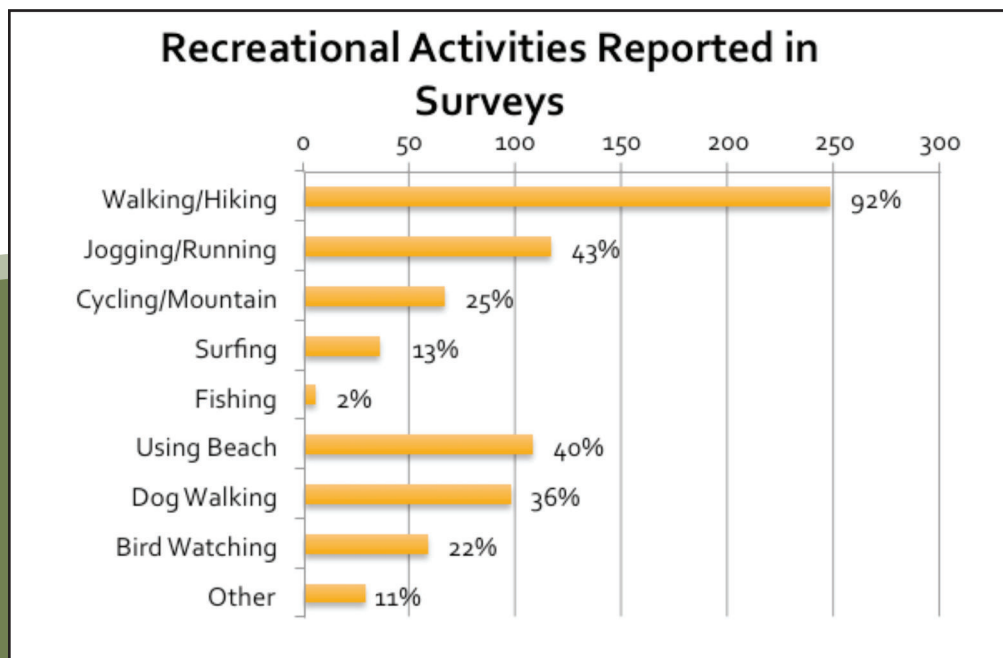


1,704 people were observed from three survey locations on the mesa. Almost all people used multiple trails, which reveals the importance of the interconnectedness of the trail system on the mesa. The majority of people on trails were observed walking or jogging. Many visitors were also observed beach going. The majority of beach users accessed the beach via mesa trails and access points.

Observed Trail Use:



In total, 269 surveys were collected and analyzed. The majority of those surveyed indicated partaking in more than one recreational activity on a regular basis. Participants expressed that their preferred recreational activities are walking and running. Of the 36% who identified as dog walkers, about half stated that they walk their dogs on-leash.



“This space has been part of my life for many years.”

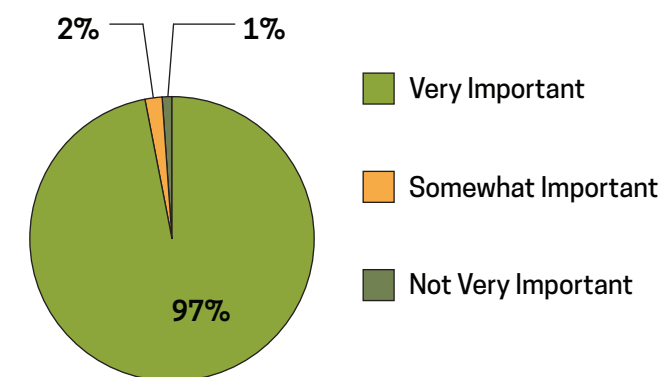


“It’s a wonderful space important for mental and physical health.”

Visitors of Ellwood Mesa trails were observed doing diverse activities: walking, running, dog walking, mountain biking, observing butterflies, bird watching, and horseback riding. Individuals, pairs, families, and groups were observed using the trails; the major groups include youth programs and bird/butterfly-watching tours. People conveyed a wide range of experience with the mesa, ranging from first time visitors to neighbors and frequent users.

Trail users agree that many natural features of the Ellwood Mesa Open Space have value, including: beach access, wildlife, blufftop coastal trails, and undeveloped open space. The majority of people believe that all features of the Mesa have high value, particularly undeveloped open space.

How important are Ellwood Mesa coastal trails and beach access?



Trail users vary from first-time visitors to frequenting locals who have developed a history with the area.

Do you support acquisition of additional public coastal open spaces and trails similar to Ellwood?

