



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
**Trails Council**



2013

# California Coastal Trail

Gaviota Coastal Access at the Crossroads

# California Coastal Trail Along the Bluff

## Civic Groups in Support of Proper Alignment of the California Coastal Trail

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Back Country  
Horsemen

County  
Riding and Hiking  
Trails Advisory  
Committee

Coastwalk

Gaviota Coast  
Conservancy

Los Padres  
Trail Riders

Montecito Trails  
Foundation

Naples  
Coalition

Orcutt Trails  
Commission

Santa Barbara County  
Action Network

Santa Barbara  
Mountain Bike  
Trail Volunteers

Santa Barbara  
County Trails Council

Sierra Club

Surfrider  
Foundation

Stretching for over 30 miles of Santa Barbara County's South Coast, the Gaviota Coast is one of the most pristine segments of coastline in Southern California. The Gaviota Coast supports three State Park Beach Campgrounds: El Capitan, Refugio and Gaviota, thousands of acres of state park wilderness and over 15,000 acres of Los Padres National Forest. Tens of thousands of acres of privately owned land zoned for agricultural use surround and separate these state and federal lands. Because of its natural beauty and variety of coastal recreational opportunities, Santa Barbara County's **Local Coastal Plan** (LCP) identifies the Gaviota Coast as a recreational resource of statewide importance. A key proposal contained in this local coastal plan is the completion of the California Coastal Trail (CCT) along 36 miles of shoreline.

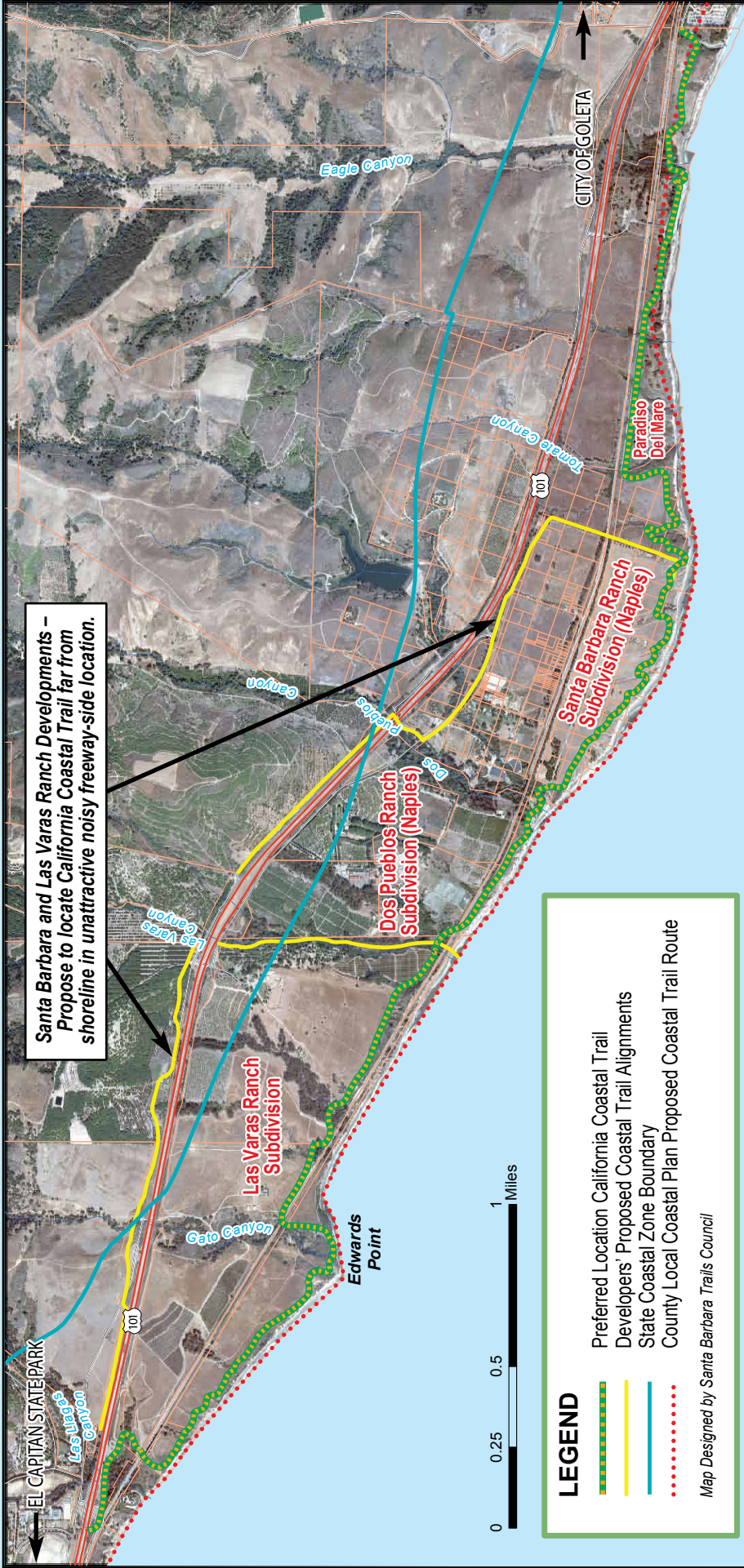
The public's right to access to and along the Gaviota Coast is at a crossroads in 2013. Pending private development projects which could either block or enhance public coastal access between Goleta and El Capitan State Park will face key County decisions this year. In addition, the County's long awaited Gaviota Coast Plan is inching forward with proposals that could adversely impact the public's right to access to and along the coast as guaranteed under the State Coastal Act, including completion of the California Coastal Trail (CCT). The draft plan's policies and trails proposals fail to recognize existing public use patterns and could severely limit public access over the long-term. The County has the opportunity to either protect and improve public access at this key juncture or allow development interest to wall off the coast. The major risk is that County actions could forever foreclose improving or even maintaining existing levels of public access along the Gaviota Coast. Important pending public and private developments include:

**Paradiso del Mare:** The site of the Naples surf break access trail is currently proposed

for development that would close one of the most heavily used informal accessways along the Gaviota Coast. While the developer is praised for including a bluff top alignment of the CCT south of the railroad, the County and developer's resistance to identifying a viable replacement coastal access point is an imminent blow to public recreation. The Trails Council will urge the County to mandate provisions of replacement access on property owned by the same developer next door. This same potential access point has been acknowledge by the developer in previous development schemes and was accepted by the Board of Supervisors as part of the Arco Dos Pueblos Golf Course and its inclusion in any approval of this pending development is essential.

**Santa Barbara Ranch** (aka Naples): The saga of this long running development proposal and its unfavorable coastal access proposals will reach a key juncture this year as the County, the bank (current owner) and possible future developers wrestle with how to resolve existing litigation. Sadly, the County approved development project provides no coastal access and generally locates the CCT next to busy US Hwy 101 far removed from the coast. As part of any County approval of revised development plans or resolution of existing litigation, the Trails Council will advocate for inclusion of a near shoreline bluff top location for the CCT and provision of coastal access.

**Las Varas Ranch Development:** This proposed subdivision would permit development of new residential estate mansions that would begin to displace historic agricultural uses. Although a coastal access trail and parking lot would be provided one mile from the beach at the Ranch's east end, the proposed CCT would be located adjacent to the noise and fumes of Hwy 101 over ½ mile from the coast. Under the leadership of 3rd District (*continued on next page*)



**Santa Barbara and Las Varas Ranch Developments –  
Propose to locate California Coastal Trail far from  
shoreline in unattractive noisy freeway-side location.**

**LEGEND**

- - - Preferred Location California Coastal Trail
- Developers' Proposed Coastal Trail Alignments
- State Coastal Zone Boundary
- - - County Local Coastal Plan Proposed Coastal Trail Route

Map Designed by Santa Barbara Trails Council

# Coastal Trail Alignment

# *Trails Council Leads Community Efforts to Ensure High Quality Trails*

Supervisor Doreen Farr, the County sent the developer back to the drawing board for several issues including orders to more closely review the CCT location and design in a near shore location. However, overcoming resistance from the developer to a well-planned CCT location near the coast will require support of the County Planning & Development Department and active community input in the coming months.

**Gaviota Coast Plan:** The County's recently released draft of the Gaviota Coast Plan provides a detailed blueprint for trails and recreation on the coast for the next 30 years. While providing some useful trail proposals, the draft plan unfortunately completely ignores the vast network of locally used informal roadside parking areas and web of informal coastal access trails and their critical importance to local residents and recommends ill considered proposals to locate key elements of the CCT far from the coast. Under the guise of protecting agricultural and the environment, the draft plan would wall off key sections of the coast by creating private residential estates that limit or preclude public access to and along the coast. The Trails Council and a consortium of 12 community organizations will work to ensure that the draft plan is revised to provide a near shore coastal location for CCT, appropriate coastal access points and an improved foothill trail system.

**Trails Council Gaviota Coastal Trail Plan:** In response private development proposals and the draft Gaviota Coast Plan, the Trails Council in conjunction with other community organizations is preparing a detailed study for the alignment of the CCT and identification of coastal access points. The Trails Council has raised substantial grant funds and private donations to prepare a detailed plan for the alignment of the CCT along the Gaviota Coast as well as options for improved and sensitively designed beach access.

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