



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:  
(COB Stamp)

Items marked with an \* contain macros. Double-click the text to launch the macro.

Select\_List items can only be used once; the text selected will replace the text displayed.

Department Name: P&D  
Department No.: 053  
For Agenda Of: 8/18/08  
Placement: \* Departmental \*  
Estimated Tme: \* 3 hours  
Continued Item: Yes, from 7/14/08 \*  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority \*

TO: Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Department John Baker, Assistant CEO, Director, P&D  
Director \* 568-2243  
Contact Info: Dianne Black, Director of Development Services, P&D  
568-2086  
SUBJECT: \* Gaviota Coast Preservation Workshop

**County Counsel Concurrence** \*

As to form: NA \*

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence** \*

As to form: NA \*

**Other Concurrence:** \* Select\_Other \*

As to form: NA \*

**Recommended Actions:** \*

That the Board of Supervisors receive a briefing on the Gaviota Coast, receive public testimony, and provide direction, as appropriate.

**Background:**

At the hearing earlier this year on the use of Coastal Impact Assistance Funds, your Board expressed interest in conducting a workshop to discuss the current status and prospects for preservation of the Gaviota Coast.

**Discussion:**

The information provided in this report is intended to inform the Board of Supervisors and property owners, conservation entities and other interested members of the public regarding issues pertinent to land conservation and development that may inform decision making regarding conservation efforts for the Gaviota Coast. The report focuses on the portion of the Gaviota Coast between the Gaviota Tunnel and Hollister Ranch east to the Goleta Community Plan boundary and City of Goleta. However, several previous reports and studies included in this report also included areas west of the Gaviota Tunnel including Hollister and Bixby Ranches.

A. **Regulatory Framework:**

**County Jurisdiction:** Land use on the Gaviota Coast is regulated by the County’s zoning ordinances (Land Use and Development Code in the inland area, Article II in the coastal zone), Comprehensive Plan (inland), and Coastal Land Use Plan (coastal zone). Lands are zoned and designated, specifying allowable land uses. Land uses consist of agriculture, State and private recreational facilities and accommodations, oil and gas processing facilities, and the County landfill. The following table shows a breakdown of property by land use category:

<b>Zoning Type</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agricultural	49,823	91 %
Recreation	2,216	4 %
Mountainous Area	2,039	4 %
Industrial	372	1 %
Transportation Corridor	193	< 1 %
Rural Residential	113	< 1 %
Commercial	14	< 1 %

Both the Comprehensive Plan and Coastal Land Use Plan include policies which guide development in light of physical features and policy objectives of the County. (See Attachment A, relevant excerpts from the County’s Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the County’s Coastal Land Use Plan.) The majority of the Gaviota Coast east of the Gaviota tunnel is located in the inland area, with land use controlled exclusively by the County. Land located west of the Gaviota tunnel is primarily located in the Coastal Zone, subject to Coastal Commission jurisdiction as described in the following paragraph.

**California Coastal Commission Jurisdiction:** The County of Santa Barbara has a certified Local Coastal Program (LCP), which provides the County with permit authority for development. The Coastal Commission’s jurisdiction is limited to certain geographic areas of retained jurisdiction, appeals in certain areas (“appeals jurisdiction”, which includes areas from the mean high tide line to the first public road and areas adjacent to coastal bluffs and environmentally sensitive habitat areas), and review and approval of amendments to the certified LCP. Any changes in policy or land uses in the Coastal Zone would be subject to certification by the Coastal Commission.

**California Department of Conservation:** The California Land Conservation Act establishes the authority for Williamson Act contracts which are designed to preserve qualifying agricultural land for a rolling ten year period. The Department of Conservation oversees the act, while the County of Santa Barbara establishes individual contracts and ensures properties are used consistent with the contract.

**State and Federal Ownership:** The California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Forest Service own property on the Gaviota Coast. The state and federal agencies have exclusive jurisdiction over land use on properties they hold, except in the Coastal Zone, where they are subject to coastal zone permitting at the local and state level.

**B. Maps of Ownership, Development Proposals and Assessors Secured Value:**

Uses on the Gaviota Coast are predominantly agriculture, with some oil and gas development and recreational areas. Attached to this report are three maps which convey information about the area. The Coastal Zone boundary is depicted on the first three maps.

- i. Gaviota State Park to Goleta Ownership Map – This map shows the current ownership of parcels on the Gaviota Coast from the Gaviota tunnel east to the City of Goleta. See Attachment B.
- ii. Jalama to Gaviota Major Holdings Map – This map shows the current ownership/holdings for parcels from the Gaviota Tunnel to Jalama. See Attachment C.
- iii. Gaviota Coast Projects List and Map – This map shows the status of development applications in the area as of August 2008. The map also graphically shows lands held in private ownership, those held in private ownership with conservation easements, those held privately with agricultural preserve contracts, those held by the state, county or conservancy, and those held by oil and gas companies. See Attachment D.
- iv. Gaviota Land Use and Net Secured Value Map – This map, prepared by the Assessors office, shows properties by land use and net secured value (the current assessed value for property tax purposes of land and improvements). See Attachment E.

**C. Conservations Efforts:**

Beginning in the year 2000, approximately 6,750 acres of land along the Gaviota Coast have been preserved to protect agricultural, natural and cultural resources onsite and to maintain the rural coastline view shed. Approximately half of the 6,750 acres (3,465 acres) have been protected with conservation easements, which protect these resources onsite without allowing public access. On 3,282 acres, managed passive recreation is allowed while also protecting onsite resources and view sheds. The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (TLTSBC) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) have been the purchasing entities in all these transactions. (See Attachment F, Table: Gaviota Coast – Past Conservation Effort).

TLTSBC and TPL have sought monies from various funding sources to help purchase the 782-acre Arroyo Hondo Preserve, the 2,500-acres transferred to the El Capitan State Park, and the five conservation easements along the Gaviota Coast. Government tax credits and grants from all levels have supplied some of the largest contributions to these purchases: NOAA's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, California Farmland Conservancy Program, State Coastal Conservancy, State Coastal Resources Agency's Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program, State Wildlife Conservation Board, and County's Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund. Regional and local non-profit foundations have contributed significant grants towards these purchases, including the Goleta Valley

Land Trust, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, and Santa Barbara Foundation.<sup>1</sup> Individual donations from the local community also play an important role in the fund-raising efforts.

Five conservation efforts are under consideration at this time (see Attachment F, Table: Gaviota Coast – Under Consideration Conservation Efforts). TPL recently signed a contract with the landowner for 43 acres, known as the Gaviota Village. TPL recently received County approval and is currently seeking State approval to purchase this property for passive recreational use. The other four properties listed in this table include protection of natural, cultural, agricultural, and coastal view shed resources for limited development. Each project is at a different stage in the permitting process.

TLTSBC, TPL, California Rangeland Trust, and the County of Santa Barbara are continually developing interest and conservation projects with landowners along the Gaviota Coast. The third table (See Attachment F, Table: Gaviota Coast – Potential Future Candidates) lists three known conservation projects that these entities are pursuing. Due to confidential negotiations, these entities cannot reveal all their conservation efforts at this time.

**D. Planning Documents:**

- a. *A Perspective on Gaviota Coast Resources* – This document was prepared by a consulting firm (EDAW) for the Planning and Development Department as a part of the then-ongoing newsletter series. The document was first published in June of 2002 with the purpose “to serve as an informational document and planning tool for the public, decision-makers, and County staff as they face difficult land use decisions for this unique coastal area, now and in the future.” The document focuses on physical resources, and discusses governance and land use, as well as conservation techniques. See Attachment G for the full document.
- b. *Gaviota Coast Draft Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment* – This document was prepared and released in April of 2003 by the National Park Service as a result of authorization by Congress in 1999 to study the feasibility of including all or a portion of the Gaviota Coast in the national park system. The feasibility study provided a discussion of the resources and their significance and looked at a variety of management options. Management options included local and state management, National Park Service management, National Reserve, National Seashore and National Preserve. Federal management options were determined to be infeasible due to insufficient land available from willing sellers and strong opposition from area landowners. Only local and state management either as currently managed or with enhanced programs, was considered feasible. In response to the study, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on July 1, 2003 and sent a public comment letter concurring with the National Park Service’s conclusions about the importance of the area and feasible management options. See Attachment H for the full document.

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<sup>1</sup> Other non-profit foundations include: John S. Kiewit Memorial Foundation, The Looker Foundation, Terri Chernick Charitable Fund, Koffler Family Foundation, Arthur N. Rupe Foundation, Crawford Idema Family Foundation, Audubon Society SB Chapter, Teton-Landis Family Foundation, and Surfrider Foundation.  
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c. *Respecting Our Heritage, Determining Our Future: Gaviota Coast Study Group Report and Recommendations* – This document was the result of a collaborative effort between Gaviota ranch, farm and landowner interests, local environmental and conservation interests, staff observers from local, state and elected officials, and occasional public or private advisors. The self-stated purpose of the group “is to discuss and develop a land planning process and strategies that can preserve the character and values inherent in public and private land on the Gaviota Coast in a manner that is acceptable to both property owners and the community as a whole.” The report includes a number of recommendations, including:

- i. Keeping Agriculture on the Land
- ii. Stewarding the Land and Resources
- iii. Developing Land Use Policy with Equity and Ecology
- iv. Creating Public Access on the Coast
- v. Providing Effective Local Governance and Finance

Imbedded in these recommendations are a number of actions, including an update to the General Plan and Local Coastal Plan for the Gaviota Coast and placing a voter referendum on the ballot for a countywide vote to establish a rural planning area for the Gaviota Coast. The referendum would limit land use and zoning to rural uses for a period of 30 years. See Attachment I for the full document.

E. **Miscellaneous Data** –

a. **Socio/Economic Data:**

- i. Median Household Income – Median Income (from census data collected in 1999 for the 2000 census) in the area ranges from \$79,307 (from the census tract closest to the City of Goleta and Isla Vista), to \$40,682 (for the bulk of the Gaviota Coast from the Gaviota tunnel to west of the City of Goleta), to \$45,938 (for the Hollister and Bixby Ranches area)
- ii. Ethic Data – Ethnicity data collected in 1999 for the 2000 census indicates that the population of the Gaviota coast is predominantly reported as white (80% of the census tract closest to the City of Goleta and Isla Vista, 63% for the bulk of the Gaviota Coast from the Gaviota tunnel to west of the City of Goleta, and 88% for the Hollister and Bixby Ranches area)
- iii. Oil and Gas Landed – In calendar year 2007, total oil landed on the Gaviota Coast (between Arguello and Exxon) was 16,916,000 barrels. Total gas production for the same time frame was 11,043 million standard cubic feet.
- iv. Agriculture - Agriculture in this area is a mixture of cattle grazing, avocados, citrus and small acreages of a number of specialty crops, such as litchi, longan, organic vegetables, etc. In 2007, the gross product from agriculture in the County of Santa Barbara was \$1,103,322,033. With the multiplier effect, the local economic impact from agriculture was estimated to be in excess of \$2.2 billion for

2007. No specific breakdown on gross product for agriculture for the Gaviota Coast is available.

- v. Tourism/Recreation – There are a number of State owned and operated campgrounds and parks on the Gaviota Coast, including Gaviota, Refugio and El Capitan State Beaches. In addition, there is one private campground (El Capitan) and other accommodations (Circle Bar B, and the Bacara Resort) which generate income to the county in terms of sales and transient occupancy tax (in addition to property tax revenue).
- b. Traffic Volume/Accident Data:
- i. Average Daily Trips on Highway 101, south of State Route 1: 29,800 (2006)
  - ii. Average Daily Trips on Highway 101 at State Route 1: 31,000, with 3,658 trucks (2005)
  - iii. Truck Volume at Tajiguas Landfill/Baron Ranch: 90 truck trips per day
  - iv. Train Traffic for 2007: 12 passenger trains/day, 15 freight trains/day
  - v. Accident Data for 2006: Total Collisions – 65, 1 fatal, 22 injuries, 42 property damage only.
- c. Fire Station Responses at Gaviota FY 2007-2008
- i. Station 11 (Storke Road): 53 calls
  - ii. Station 14 (Los Carneros): 9 calls
  - iii. Station 18 (Gaviota): 153 calls
  - iv. Station 31 (Buellton): 6 calls
- 218 Total Calls: 49 responding to vehicle, vegetation or structural fires; 169 responding to requests for medical aid, traffic accidents or other assistance.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: \***

Ongoing work for this item is not currently budgeted.

**Special Instructions:**

NA\*

**Attachments: \***

- A. Excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Element and Coastal Land Use Plan
- B. Gaviota State Park to Goleta Ownership Map
- C. Jalama to Gaviota Major Holdings
- D. Gaviota Coast Projects List and Map (August 2008)
- E. Gaviota Land Use and Net Secured Value Map
- F. Gaviota Conservation Map and Table

- G. A Perspective on Gaviota Coast Resources (June 2002) (Attached to BOS copies only; available on the County website)
- H. Gaviota Coast Draft Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment (April 2003) (Attached to BOS copies only; available on the County website)
- I. Gaviota Coast Study Group Report and Recommendations: Respecting Our Heritage; Determining Our Future (September 2005) (Attached to BOS copies only; available on the County website)

**Authored by:**

Dianne Black, Director, Development Services, P&D