

Attachment B

CREF Criteria Evaluations for Gaviota Coast Plan and Arroyo Burro Beach Restroom

PROJECT # 1 GAVIOTA COAST PLAN

*3rd District
Santa Barbara County Office of Long Range Planning
Requests \$273,000
Total Project Costs: \$1,547,633*

Summary of Proposal: The applicant proposes to prepare a Gaviota Coast Plan. The applicant states the Gaviota Coast Plan would provide policies addressing agriculture viability and stewardship, recreation, visual resources and significant coastal resources by evaluating and updating existing policies and regulations in the County's Coastal Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Grading Ordinance, and Land Use and Development Code. The applicant plans to evaluate and update existing policies and regulations in the County's Coastal Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Grading Ordinance, and Land Use and Development Code and determine the policies' effectiveness in protecting Gaviota Coast coastal resources. Where needed, the applicant plans to develop new resource-protection policies and design standards appropriate for the rural character of the Gaviota Coast. The design standards would address size, bulk, scale, and visual impact of new development along the Coast. The applicant states that it will identify areas for restoration and develop policies that would streamline the permitting process for restoration projects. The applicant states that it would plan for additional coastal access, a coastal trail, and connector trails into Los Padres National Forest.

During preparation and development of the proposed plan, the applicant plans to collaborate with Gaviota Coast stakeholders (e.g., landowners, community groups, and local, state and federal agencies).

The applicant's boundaries for the Gaviota Coast Plan encompass approximately 100,000 acres along 38 miles of Santa Barbara County's coast: (1) East boundary is the western urban limit line of unincorporated lands around the City of Goleta; (2) West boundary is Vandenberg Air Force Base; (3) North boundary is the ridgeline of the Santa Ynez Mountain; and (4) South boundary is the Pacific Ocean.

Applicant's Priority Ranking: The applicant ranks this proposal first of three submitted.

Background: There has been much planning activity on the Gaviota Coast in the past. The Board of Supervisors has awarded eight CREF grants towards various agencies and non-profit groups for a total of \$176,452 to help plan for the Gaviota Coast. Below is a summary of those grants.

(1) 1992 Cycle, \$30,000 CREF Grant - Coastal Access Implementation Plan ~ The Planning & Development Department prepared a Coastal Access Implementation Plan, which provides a database of existing recorded offers to dedicate public access.

(2) 1994 Cycle, \$14,452 CREF grant - Phase IV, Cooperative Permanent Coastal Preservation ~ The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County contacted 62 landowners along the Gaviota Coast and held a number of workshops to inform the landowners about conservation easements, transfer of development rights, governmental deductions, agricultural preserve status, and charitable trusts to

help preserve the Gaviota Coast in its rural state. Since then, three landowners have entered into either a conservation easement or an outright land purchase with the Land Trust.

(3) 1997 Cycle, \$20,000 CREF grant; and (4) 2000 Cycle, \$27,000 CREF grant - Perspective on the Gaviota Coast Resources ~ In July of 2003, the Planning & Development Department, Comprehensive Planning Division compiled an inventory and digital mapping of natural resources along the Gaviota Coast.

(5) 1999 Cycle, \$10,000 grant; and (6) 2002 Cycle, \$15,000 grant - Gaviota Coast Suitability/Feasibility Study ~ The National Park Service evaluated resource values and methods to preserve the Gaviota Coast. The National Park Service released the study in April of 2003 (see below for description of the report).

(7) No Cycle, \$15,000 CREF grant; and (8) 2003 Cycle, \$45,000 CREF grant - Gaviota Coast Common Ground Facilitation ~ As the National Park Service was conducting its Gaviota Coast Suitability/Feasibility Study (see above), various stakeholders expressed concern that they had not been adequately represented. A steering committee formed to create a Common Ground process, which would develop a locally generated vision for the Gaviota Coast. The two awards paid for a professional facilitator to facilitate a total of 44 meetings during the Gaviota Coast Common Ground process in 2002 through 2004.

There are three documents that have been generated from various planning activities on the coast:

(1) 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.

(2) 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.

(3) *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:

- Keeping Agriculture on the Land
- Stewarding the Land and Resources
- Developing Land Use Policy with Equity and Ecology
- Creating Public Access on the Coast
- 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 the placement of 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.

At its March 17, 2009 hearing, the County Board of Supervisors identified preparation of the proposed Gaviota Coast Plan as a high priority project for funding in the 2009-2010 Annual Work Program for Long Range Planning.

Satisfaction of CREF Criteria:

[(+) means the proposal satisfies the criterion; (-) means doesn't satisfy; (+/-) means partially satisfies]

- (+) ***Criterion #1: Enhancement projects must be located in the coastal area or have a coastal relationship, and must be consistent with the County's Local Coastal Program and Comprehensive Plan and with the other local jurisdictions' applicable coastal programs. Enhancement projects should be located within geographical proximity to oil and gas onshore/offshore development activities while still providing for the broadest public benefit.*** The proposed Gaviota Coast Plan has a coastal relationship in that the Gaviota Coast encompasses acreage along 38 miles of Santa Barbara County's coast. Portions of this coast have been impacted by oil and gas development. The Point Arguello and Las Flores Canyon projects and their associated pipelines are located on the Gaviota Coast. Seven oil and gas platforms can be seen approximately 2-10 miles offshore the Gaviota Coast.
- (+/-) ***Criterion #2: Projects should compensate for coastal impacts due to oil and gas development, specifically for sensitive environmental resources, aesthetics, tourism, and negative effects on coastal recreation in the County.*** The Gaviota Coast possesses coastal resources:

Coastal Aesthetics. The Gaviota Coast is known to many for its scenic rural and coastline beauty. The applicant states that the visual and scenic resources along the Gaviota Coast are vulnerable to degradation through improper location and scale of development, impairment of coastal views, and alteration of natural landforms.

Environmentally Sensitive Coastal Resources. The Gaviota Coast is extremely rich in biological diversity of both terrestrial and marine plant and animal species. The area is home to many endangered and threatened species.

Coastal Recreation Coastal Tourism. The Gaviota Coast includes a wide variety of recreational activities for Santa Barbara County residents and tourists. El Capitan, Refugio, and Gaviota State Parks and Jalama County Park provide coastal access and recreational opportunities, including boating, surfing, swimming, fishing, camping, bicycling, etc. Hiking trails are found in privately owned areas, such as the Arroyo Hondo Preserve and El Capitan Canyon Campground.

The applicant envisions the proposed Gaviota Coast Plan enhancing coastal resources – aesthetics, environmentally sensitive species, recreation, and tourism – through revision and development of new policies and design standards or guidelines. However, in past efforts, Gaviota Coast stakeholders have not always agreed on resource-protection policies or standards that limit development. The outcome of the process in terms of revisions or development of new policies and new design standards that would go beyond enhancing existing policy protection of coastal resources is uncertain.

- (+/-) ***Criterion #3: Projects should provide a level of broad public benefit.*** The proposed Gaviota Coast Plan is intended to provide a broad public benefit, through new resource-protection policies and design standards that would preserve the rural character of the Gaviota Coast. However, Gaviota Coast stakeholders have not always agreed on resource-protection policies or standards that limit development. The ultimate extent of the public benefit would be more clearly understood when the Board of Supervisor deliberates on a final product.
- (-) ***Criterion #4: The intent of the CREF program is to fund coastal acquisition and capital improvement projects; therefore, projects which offer coastal acquisition and capital improvement will receive higher priority than those projects which do not.*** The proposal is not a coastal acquisition or a capital improvement project; therefore, it does not satisfy the higher priorities of CREF.
- (-) ***Criteria #5 and #7: Projects should utilize matching funds and/or in-kind services to the maximum extent possible, and projects to be funded should lack other viable funding mechanisms to complete the project.***

The Gaviota Coast Plan project total is estimated to be \$1,521,209. The costs through FY 12/13 have been estimated to be \$1,176,633. This has and will be funded by:

- \$251,739 (General Fund) in FY 09/10;
- \$254,500 (the bulk of the 2010 CREF grant) and \$32,914 (General Fund) in FY10/11;
- \$26,210 (the remainder of the 2010 grant) and \$245,262 (2011 CREF grant) in FY 11/12; and
- \$15,318 (the remainder of the 2011 grant), \$296,497 (2012 CREF grant) and \$54,193 (General Fund) in the FY 12/13 budget.

Planning & Development estimates remaining cost:

- \$309,476 in FY13/14 to complete the EIR and conduct most of the local adoption hearings (proposed \$273,000 2013 CREF grant and \$36,476 in general fund; and
- \$35,100 in FY 14/15 to finish up the local adoption hearings and certify the plan with the Coastal Commission.

(+/-) **Criterion #6: Projects should be self-supporting or should require minimum on-going County operations/maintenance costs once the project is completed and implemented.** There are no known operating costs at this time; however, such costs could result as part of a final product (e.g., Transfer of Development Rights program).

(+/-) **Criterion #8: The feasibility of implementing and completing the project shall be considered. Projects with a high probability of success should be given preference.** The applicant hopes to develop new resource-protection policies and design standards appropriate for the rural character of the Gaviota Coast. If funded, staff is confident that the applicant can produce a product(s) that will provide the required nexus for CREF mitigation fees. However, planning along the Gaviota Coast has always been an extremely controversial topic. In past efforts, Gaviota Coast stakeholders have not always agreed on resource-protection policies. It is uncertain if the applicant can revise or develop new policies and new design standards that would go beyond enhancing existing policy protection of coastal resources.

The outcome of the process in terms of revisions or development of new policies and new design standards that would go beyond enhancing existing policy protection of coastal resources is uncertain.

Other Considerations: Preservation of the Gaviota Coast has been helped substantially with CREF funding. 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. However, with the high cost of land acquisition, policies that protect significant coastal resources along the Gaviota Coast may be a cost-effective tool in preserving the Gaviota Coast.

PROJECT # 2
ARROYO BURRO BEACH RESTROOM

2nd District
Community Services Department
Requests \$402,500
Total Project Costs: \$706,000

Summary of Proposal: The applicant proposes to construct a restroom building at Arroyo Burro Beach County Park. The building would replace the existing restrooms, which would be converted to storage and concessionaire lease space.

Background: Arroyo Burro Beach County Park has been a recipient of a five CREF awards in the past; awards have been received to expand the parking lot, improve and install coastal overlooks, and restore the Arroyo Burro estuary.

Satisfaction of CREF Criteria:

[(+) means the proposal satisfies the criterion; (-) means doesn't satisfy; (+/-) means partially satisfies]

- (+) ***Criterion #1: Enhancement projects must be located in the coastal area or have a coastal relationship, and must be consistent with the County's Local Coastal Program and Comprehensive Plan and with the other local jurisdictions' applicable coastal programs. Enhancement projects should be located within geographical proximity to oil and gas onshore/offshore development activities while still providing for the broadest public benefit.*** The proposal site is located in the coastal zone and is consistent with the Local Coastal Program. The proposal would help offset cumulative recreational impacts from oil and gas developments.
- (+) ***Criterion #2: Projects should compensate for coastal impacts due to oil and gas development, specifically for sensitive environmental resources, aesthetics, tourism, and negative effects on coastal recreation in the County.*** The project will enhance coastal recreation at a beach, and to a lesser extent, tourism by constructing a new restroom.
- (+) ***Criterion #3: Projects should provide a level of broad public benefit.*** Arroyo Burro beach is a very popular beach with over 700,000 people visiting it annually. The restroom would benefit the beach goers.
- (+) ***Criterion #4: The intent of the CREF program is to fund coastal acquisition and capital improvement projects; therefore, projects which offer coastal acquisition and capital improvement will receive higher priority than those projects which do not.*** As a proposed capital improvement, this proposal satisfies the higher priority of CREF.
- (+) ***Criteria #5 and #7: Projects should utilize matching funds and/or in-kind services to the maximum extent possible, and projects to be funded should lack other viable funding mechanisms to complete the project.*** The applicant has proposed \$303,500 in AB1600 funds.

- (+) ***Criterion #6: Projects should be self-supporting or should require minimum on-going County operations/maintenance costs once the project is completed and implemented.*** The Park Department already maintains the restroom at Arroyo Burro Beach and states that this proposal would not increase the maintenance.

- (+) ***Criterion #8: The feasibility of implementing and completing the project shall be considered. Projects with a high probability of success should be given preference.*** The applicant has successfully completed the past CREF projects at Arroyo Burro Beach, giving us the confidence that the department can do the same with this proposal.