

FISCALINI RANCH PRESERVE

CAMBRIA, CALIFORNIA

2020 CONSERVATION EASEMENT MONITORING REPORT



SUBMITTED BY:

FRIENDS OF THE FISCALINI RANCH PRESERVE
POST OFFICE BOX 1664 | CAMBRIA, CALIFORNIA 93428
www.fiscaliniranchpreserve.org



BLANK PAGE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Property Description & Organization Contacts | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Summary of Findings | 6 |
| Survey Photographs & Documentation | 8 |
| Monarch Butterfly Viewing Areas | 24 |
| Ranch Trails Map | 25 |
| Ranch Trail Entrances | 26 |
| Marine Terrace Multi-Use Path | 30 |
| Mid-State Drainage Area | 31 |
| Survey Marker Location Map | 32 |
| Topographic Map | 33 |



PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & ORGANIZATION CONTACTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Property Name | Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (formerly the East West Ranch) |
| Property Owner | Cambria Community Services District |
| Contact Person | Carlos Mendoza, Ranch Manager |
| Phone Number | (805) 927-6220 |
| Mailing Address: | P.O. Box 65, Cambria, CA 93428 |
| Conservation Easement Holder | Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve |
| Contact Persons | John Nixon, Chairperson, Board of Directors Kitty Connolly, Executive Director |
| Phone Number | (805) 927-2856 |
| Mailing Address: | P.O. Box 1664, Cambria, CA 93428 |
| Easement Date | July 15, 2003 |
| Recorded Document No. | 2003076713 |
| Assessor's Parcel No's. | 012.121.025, 023.221.042, 023.221.061 |
| Legal Description | See Exhibit A of the Conservation Easement |
| Acreage | 437 Acres (approximately) |
| Location | Cambria, California |



INTRODUCTION

The Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (FFRP) board has developed a monitoring protocol and reporting format in support of the conservation easement of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (herein referred to as the “Ranch”). FFRP provides ongoing monitoring of the property for environmental issues and any violations of “prohibited uses and activities” as specified in the Ranch Conservation Easement and Management Plan. This plan provides for monitoring and inspection to determine and document compliance with the terms of the conservation easement, as well as for comprehensive annual physical resource surveys of the Ranch. Reports from these annual surveys are to be used for comparison with prior surveys (including the initial Baseline Survey of 2003) to help assess any significant changes to the environmental / physical status of the Ranch.

In April and May of 2020, FFRP conducted the annual monitoring of the established survey sites and added some sites of importance to monitor. Some sites were consolidated as well. Each site was photographed, and any significant changes or conditions noted. A Ranch boundary survey was shared with CCSD after its recordation with the County of San Luis Obispo.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall conditions in the Ranch remain good, with the notable exception of certain areas of the West Ranch forest (especially the South East section). The amount of dead wood on the forest floor has been reduced by removing and chipping downed material. Extensive removal of invasive plant was done for fire risk mitigation. Ad hoc trails are a continuing problem, particularly in the grassland areas but barriers and restoration signs have helped. The Seacliff Gully erosion control project is no longer monitored for grant reporting purposes but continues to be recorded in this report as sites 11-18.

Management activities and general observations:

- Radish, mustard, and thistle eradication efforts by FFRP volunteers along the Bluff Trail, the Marine Terrace Trail and near the erosion control project have reduced the number of these invasive plants, with natives replacing them in some areas. Mowing by the CCSD Ranch Manager in broad areas of Italian thistle has also helped.
- Pampas grass has been removed from the Ranch except a few new plants.
- Repeated French broom removal efforts with Cal Fire were successful. Broom was removed primarily on the East Ranch and along the Ranch boundary adjacent to the Cal Trans right of way.
- Plantings of Monterey Pine (at sites 36a and 36b) are doing well. This will expand the existing area of forest. As the trees at 36a grow, the need for thinning becomes more apparent because they were originally planted too close together. Trees at 42a were thinned in 2017. Our 2015 planting allowed for more space between trees, as did our 2016 planting. No planting was done in 2017 or 2018.
- Trails are well maintained. The Ranch manager and staff remove fallen trees from trails soon after they fall to keep the trails open. CCSD staff has installed trail closure posts in case of heavy rains which didn't materialize this year. Volunteers have also maintained the trails.
- Ongoing inventorying and monitoring of exotic invasive vegetation (largely French broom and jubata (pampas) grass, mustard, radish, and bull, milk and Italian thistles) throughout the Ranch continues, along with removal. FFRP volunteers continue to remove ice plant, mostly near the Bluff Trail and where it encroaches on native species.

- Continued monitoring and strategic mowing of fuel load (i.e. grasses) adjacent to neighboring homes is done by CCSD staff or contractors to reduce the potential for fire spreading to or from the Ranch.
- The large area of Monterey pine forest on the southeast section of the Ranch represented a fire danger on the Ranch. This issue was given high priority and was addressed by Cal Fire in 2016. Cal Fire cut approximately 90 dead or dying trees and trees that were hazardous to homes or trail users. The goal was a reduction of fire hazard to the community and the rare Monterey Pine forest. Most of the piled debris has been dispersed, with the smaller material chipped, and large logs in contact with the ground. Some forest thinning and debris removal has taken place each year.

Significant issues affecting conditions of the Ranch include:

- At site 3, there is an old foundation overgrown with thistles that can't be mowed by tractor. It may be advisable to periodically remove or spray the thistles with herbicide to help reduce the spread of thistle seed to adjacent mowed areas.
- Broom continues to reseed but in smaller amounts each year and is easier to remove but persists.
- Ad hoc short cut trails continue to be a problem but the Trails Committee works at closing them for restoration.
- Thistle infestation, especially bull and Italian thistle, continues to be a problem.
- Overcrowding in sections of the forest around the Forest Loop Trail is causing unhealthy tall and thin trees but some thinning has taken place to the benefit of the forest.
- Homeless encampments with trash and fires are a recurring although diminishing problem. Evidence of fire rings, propane tanks, and fire-starting material has been found. The Ranch Manager along with the Sheriff have been responsible for moving them on, however they leave behind a lot of trash, parts of their encampments, and destruction of understory in many places.

Submitted by
Kitty Connolly and Walt Andrus
for Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve
2020



SURVEY PHOTOGRAPHS & DOCUMENTATION

1

Santa Rosa Creek Restoration/ Eucalyptus Removal Project

Marker/GIS Location:
29' from NW corner of foundation.
35° 33.639' N
121° 5.763' W

2020 Comments: Eucalyptus saplings were removed. Invasive species have a foothold among the natives.



2

Brick and Rock Foundation: Joseph Fiscalini Home

34' W x 24' L

Marker/GIS Location:
29' from NW corner of foundation.
35° 33.639' N
121° 5.760' W

2020 Comments: Limbs have been cleared and the homeless encampment removed. This site was later graffitied.



3

Large Stone Foundation

28' W x 22' L, (corner bolts, rusted metal farm equipment parts; marshy area, possibly seasonal spring).

Marker/GIS Location:
14' from NE corner of foundation.
35° 33.677' N
121° 5.800' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



4

Small Cement Foundation

10' W x 17' L, (with stones uphill to SW corner, within erosion / slippage area, covered with berry brambles).

Marker/GIS Location:
16' from NE corner of foundation.
35° 33.643' N
121° 5.814' W

2020 Comments (2019 image): Dramatic clearing of the site.



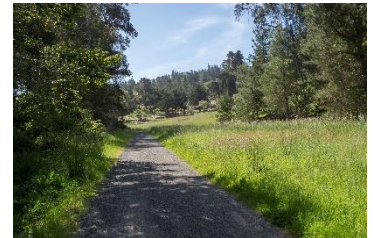
4a

Santa Rosa Creek Restoration Project

Creek bank reinforcement & native plantings.

Marker/GIS Location:
from beginning photo
35° 33.708' N
121° 5.853' W

2020 Comments: Pines, oaks, willows, and understory plants continue to grow, as do invasive plants. There is a lot of Italian thistle – the creek is now mostly obscured. Interpretive signs are beginning to fade. Fence is broken. An ad hoc trail to the creek is well established.



4b

Eucalyptus Removal Project

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.662' N
121° 5.799' W

2020 Comments: Eucalyptus saplings were removed.



5

Water Storage Cistern

Downhill from natural spring.

Marker/GIS Location:
28' @ 220° from the most uphill point, N of old Monterey Cypress.
35° 33.626' N
121° 5.815' W

2020 Comments: Dramatic clearing of the site. All building remaining building removed by the homeless for re-use in encampments.



6

Cement Foundation: Fiscalini Milking Barn

Stone retaining wall with two cement pads.

Marker/GIS Location:
16.5' @ 240° from SE corner.
35° 33.615' N
121° 5.801' W

2020 Comments: Dramatic clearing of the site: 30' long homeless encampment removed.



6a

Cement Foundation

19' x 9' Collapsed wood structure with shingles, SW of big snag, E of stone paving.

Marker/GIS Location:
16.5' @ 240° from SE corner.
35° 33.615' N
121° 5.801' W

2020 Comments: Dramatic clearing of the site: homeless encampment removed.



7

Well

10' Diameter, 12' deep, cement and stone, uncovered, south of road from ridge.

Marker/GIS Location:
5' from W edge @ 270° from SE corner.
35° 33.608' N
121° 5.773' W

2020 Comments: Grassy with some trash.



8

Spring

Uphill from #2, small running creek flowing down, NE, past possible pump house, creating marshy area near #3 hillside to N.

Marker/GIS Location:
10' uphill from edge of mud @ 270°
35° 33.612' N
121° 5.833' W

2020 Comments: Dramatic clearing, site now accessible, significant regeneration of eucalyptus seedlings along border, nonnatives taking over understory.



11-15

Seaclift Gully

Sections 12, 14 and 15 have been combined in this section with starting location at:

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.397' N
121° 6.113' W

And ending location at:

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.396' N
121° 5.887' W

2020 Comments: Willow, wax myrtle, and Monterey pines are doing well. Bull thistle is growing in the lower portion of the gully. Mid-draw has grown in well.



16

Seaclift Gully 6

High spot / top of west gully, bottom of east gully near troughs (one cement, one steel).

Marker/GIS Location:
Approx. halfway between gullies to north out of wet area, 220' N of trough.
35° 33.402' N
121° 5.883' W

2020 Comments: The Dolphin Trail was widened to allow for social distancing. It was still wet in April with standing water in some places. It needs an elevated path to protect the crossing.



18

Seaclift Gully 8

East of #17, uphill from marshy area.

Marker/GIS Location:
Approx. 20' from center
35° 33.404' N
121° 5.816' W

2020 Comments: The trail running parallel to the gully is almost gone. New pines and small coast live oaks are filling in here. The gully head is disappearing.



20

Spring Area 1

South of #17, metal and plastic pipe remnants. Two apparent water sources from shrub area uphill. Wood remnants (possible water troughs).

Marker/GIS Location:
Approx. 20' from center
35° 33.349' N
121° 5.874' W

2020 Comments: Quite wet with water at surface and saturated soi.



22

Spring with Cement Trough

Hose and plastic pipes. Spring may originate at bramble area above.

Marker/GIS Location:
210° from NE side
35° 33.310' N
121° 5.890' W

2020 Comments: Poison hemlock and thistles continue to fill in.



23

Gully at Spring

Spring / seep starts below pine tree at top in clump of brambles, extends approx. 250'. Small pines are on both sides of gully on upper section. Dampness crosses from #22 to #23 with clumps of wetland grasses.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.304' N
121° 5.896' W

2020 Comments: Well vegetated with poison oak, California blackberry, rush, wild rye, monkey flower, and various invasive thistles.



26

South Bluff Gully - 1

Gully erosion adjacent to bluff edge, approx. 8' wide.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 32.881' N
121° 5.866' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



27

South Bluff Gully - 2

Gully erosion starting just E of bridge, continues toward bluff edge.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 32.929' N
121° 5.920' W

2020 Comments: More California blackberry around bridge. Stepped swale is slowing erosion.



27a

Bluff Erosion Adjacent to Trail

Bluff erosion at bluff edge near Morrow / Freytag bench. Site added 2009.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 32.998' N
121° 6.075' W

2020 Comments: More erosion than last year. The edge is 7'10" from toe to trail at the closest point (8'6" in 2019).



28

South Bluff Gully - 3

Gully erosion starting just W of boardwalk, continues toward bluff edge.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.047' N
121° 6.094' W

2020 Comments: Erosion starts at 3'9" from trail (4'10" in 2019, 6'6" in 2017).



29

Mid Bluff Gully

Gully erosion starting just W of third boardwalk, continues toward bluff edge.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.085' N
121° 6.115' W

2020 Comments: Little change.





29a

Erosion Concern

Gully erosion starting just W of third boardwalk, continues toward bluff edge. New point 2011.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.120' N
121° 6.195' W

2020 Comments: Trail is less than 14' from bluff edge. Rare and endangered compact cobwebby thistle near trail.



29b

Ice Plant Encroachment

New point 2011.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.153' N
121° 6.206' W

2020 Comments: Successful removal of ice plant. Native returning.



30

North Bluff Gully at Bridge

Gully erosion starting just W of third boardwalk, continues toward bluff edge.

Marker/GIS Location:
15' from post
35° 33.200' N
121° 6.163' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



30a

Seaclift / North Bluff Erosion

Significant bluff erosion just W of trail, toward bluff edge.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.304' N
121° 6.215' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



| | |
|--|---|
| <p>30b</p> <p>Seacliff / North Bluff Erosion</p> <p>Significant bluff erosion just W of trail, toward bluff edge.</p> <p>Marker/GIS Location: 35° 33.346' N 121° 6.170' W</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Excellent wildflower recover in this area.</p>  |
| <p>31</p> <p>Sewer Easement Erosion</p> <p>Gully erosion between 2 sewer manholes, adjacent to South end of multi-use trail. GPS reading taken standing on little bridge.</p> <p>Marker/GIS Location: 35° 33.360' N 121° 6.113' W</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Many non-native plants in this area.</p>  |
| <p>33</p> <p>Erosion Control Project 1</p> <p>Gully erosion between 2 sewer manholes, adjacent to South end of multi-use trail. Trail was slightly realigned so coordinates have changed.</p> <p>Marker/GIS Location: 35° 33.142' N 121° 6.083' W</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Little change.</p>  |
| <p>34</p> <p>Marlborough Erosion</p> <p>Erosion starting at forested area upslope, continues W past gate, adjacent to houses.</p> <p>Marker/GIS Location: 35° 32.926' N 121° 5.744' W</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Drainage and erosion unchanged. Forest retreating in this area. Construction activity had encroached on Ranch several times. CCSD contacted owner for remedy and house completed in January 2020.</p>  |

36

Meadow

Clearing uphill from Victoria Lane entrance.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.012' N
121° 5.585' W

2020 Comments: Area of extensive Western gall rush infestation and mortality. Infected limbs removed in 2019. Hazardous trees removed.



36a

Tree Planting

New Monterey pine planting area adjacent to Meadow (North and East).

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.051' N
121° 5.636' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



36b

New Planting

New Monterey pine planting area west of the forest loop trail, 2016.

Marker/GIS Location:

35° 33.170' N
121° 5.761' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



38

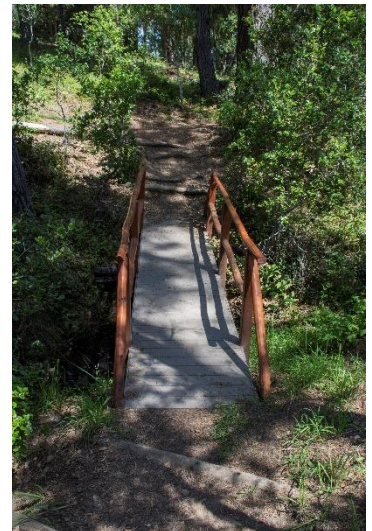
Forest Gully / Bridge & Creek Erosion Area

Bridge over gully, approx. 12' across. Gully continues upstream toward Warren Rd., quite large & serious in places (15' – 18' across). Some mitigation (slash placed in gully years ago) may help to slow erosion.

Marker/GIS Location:

35° 33.146' N
121° 5.352' W

2020 Comments: Little change. Trail widened for social distancing.



40

Midden

Top of Midden

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.183' N
121° 5.370' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



40a

Trail Relocation

Oak Tree and Bench

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.154' N
121° 5.393' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



41

Ridge, Forest Loop Trail

Confluence of Ridge and Forest Loop Trails. Small pool on forest edge to South near middle of Forest Loop trail.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.325' N
121° 5.669' W

2020 Comments: Little change. Trail widened for social distancing.



42a

Forest Expansion Project

The GIS location is adjacent to the planted area.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.388' N
121° 5.684' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



42b

Forest Expansion Project – new planting

The GIS location is from the Ridge Trail.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.514' N
121° 5.861' W

2020 Comments: This area was planted in November of 2015. Little change.



43

Old Ranch Road Trail - 1

Drainage from uphill side of trail causing erosion, deep in places.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.575' N
121° 5.735' W

2019 Comments: Trail much improved by red rock that was added in 2019 and 2020 plus drainage outflows added by FFRP volunteers.



45

East Ranch - 1

Mid-point in front of Mrs. Phillip's property.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.656' N
121° 5.246' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



45a

East Ranch – 1a

Swale – new grading for phase 1 of the community park. Added 2018.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.624' N
121° 5.349' W

2020 Comments: Mowed three times a year.



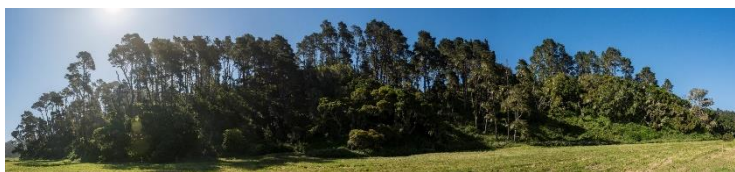
46

East Ranch - 2

Santa Rosa Creek floodplain. Former farmland.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.605' N
121° 5.372' W

2020 Comments: Broom removal in fall 2019. Island full of native stinging nettle, coffee berry, and blue elderberry, as well as invasive French broom and poison hemlock.





47

East Ranch - 5

Near start of trail up to Skye Street (Air force Housing). Near Highway 1 bridge. Wetland area parallels highway, toward Burton Dr.

Marker/GIS Location:

35° 33.630' N
121° 5.499' W

2020 Comments: French broom removal in 2019. Trees pruned.



49

East Ranch - 5

Santa Rosa Creek corridor.
Old wellhead, large cement
block with pipe through
center.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.630' N
121° 5.499' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



50

East Ranch - 6

Building, storage yard, dirt
storage, demolition debris
storage area.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.740' N
121° 5.070' W

2020 Comments: Little change.



51

Creek to Ridge Trail

Approx. at original site for
#9 (marker location lost).
East facing slope below
ridge trail, near Park Hill.

Marker/GIS Location:
Original #9 marker lost (no
GIS taken), replaced in
2004 using #51.

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.622' N
121° 5.887' W

2020 Comments (2019 image): Little change.



53

Gully End / Eroded Swale

West end of Seaclift Gully.
Not documented in
Baseline. Installed marker
#53

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.408' N
121° 6.112' W

2020 Comments: Overgrown.





MONARCH BUTTERFLY VIEWING AREAS

In 2015, Dr. Kingston Leong, Cal Poly SLO retired, conducted a survey and produced a report on overwintering monarch butterflies in the Ranch's Monterey pines. At the time, there was a significant population of monarchs drawing observers into the forested areas. Fencing and signs were recommended as part of the management of the areas. Split rail fencing, interpretive signs, and a wood-chip trail were installed to create two observation areas in 2017.

2020 Comments: Little change. Thanksgiving 2020 monarch count was 8.

Little Ravine Viewing Area – Victoria Way

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 32.985' N
121° 05.656' W



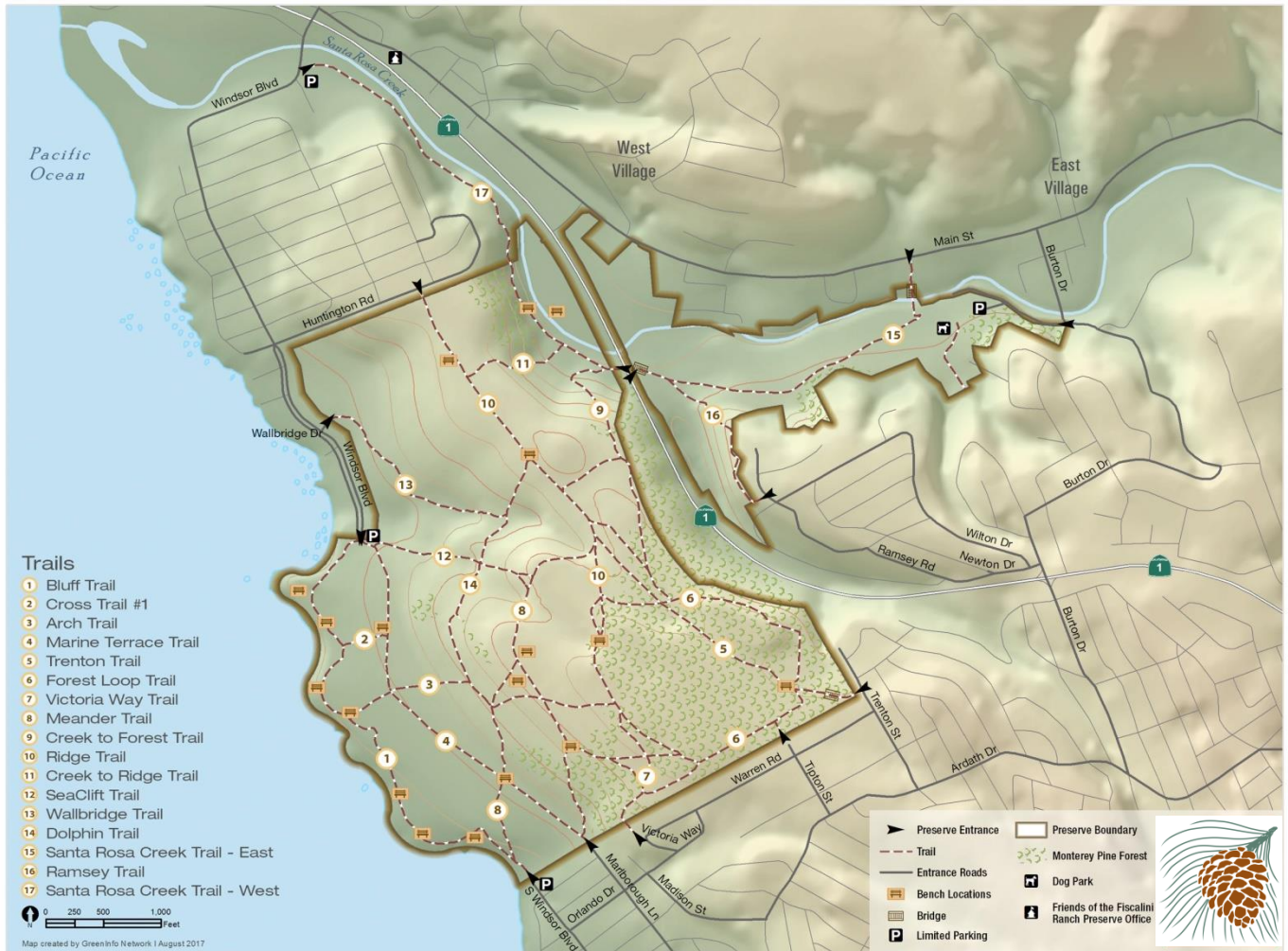
Big Pine Flat Viewing Area – Forest Loop Trail

Marker/GIS Location:
35° 33.075' N
121° 05.622' W





RANCH TRAILS





RANCH TRAIL ENTRANCES

Bluff Trail: North Windsor Entrance

Memorial Rock added 2008

2020 Comments: Temporary signage due to covid-19.



Wallbridge Street Entrance

To Ridge Trail

2020 Comments (2019 image): Little change.



Huntington Street / Park Hill Ridge Trail Entrance

2020 Comments: Pedestrian entrance has been moved to right side and encroachment resolved since photo.



Bluff Trail South / Marine Terrace Entrance












2020 Comments: Fencing replaced. Temporary signage due to covid-19 restrictions.



Marlborough Street Entrance

2019 Comments: Drainage and erosion unchanged. Forest retreating in this area. Construction activity had encroached on Ranch several times. CCSD contacted owner for remedy and house completed in January 2020.



| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Victoria Way Entrance to Forest Loop Trail</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Little change.</p>  |
| <p>Tipton Street Entrance to Forest Loop Trail</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Little change.</p>    |
| <p>Trenton Entrance to Bill Kerr Trail</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Little change.</p>    |
| <p>Highway 1 Entrances</p> | <p>2020 Comments: Significant number of French broom and eucalyptus saplings removed.</p>     |

**Rodeo Grounds Entrance
at East Ranch**

2020 Comments: Little change.





MARINE TERRACE MULTI-USE PATH

**Seacliff Estates /
Marine Terrace
Water Line Path**

2020 Comments: Coyote bush removed.





MID-STATE DRAINAGE AREA

These are pictures from the former 'Mid-State' portion of East West Ranch. This area, donated to the E W Ranch by Mid-State Bank (now Mechanics Bank), has been graded to form a flood catch-basin, and a bridge installed at Highway One as part of a flood control/drainage system. The embankment near the bank parking lot has been landscaped with California native and drought tolerant plants.

M1

Mid-State Area

Flat at end of driveway from Mid-State parking lot.

Marker/GIS Location:

35° 33.790' N

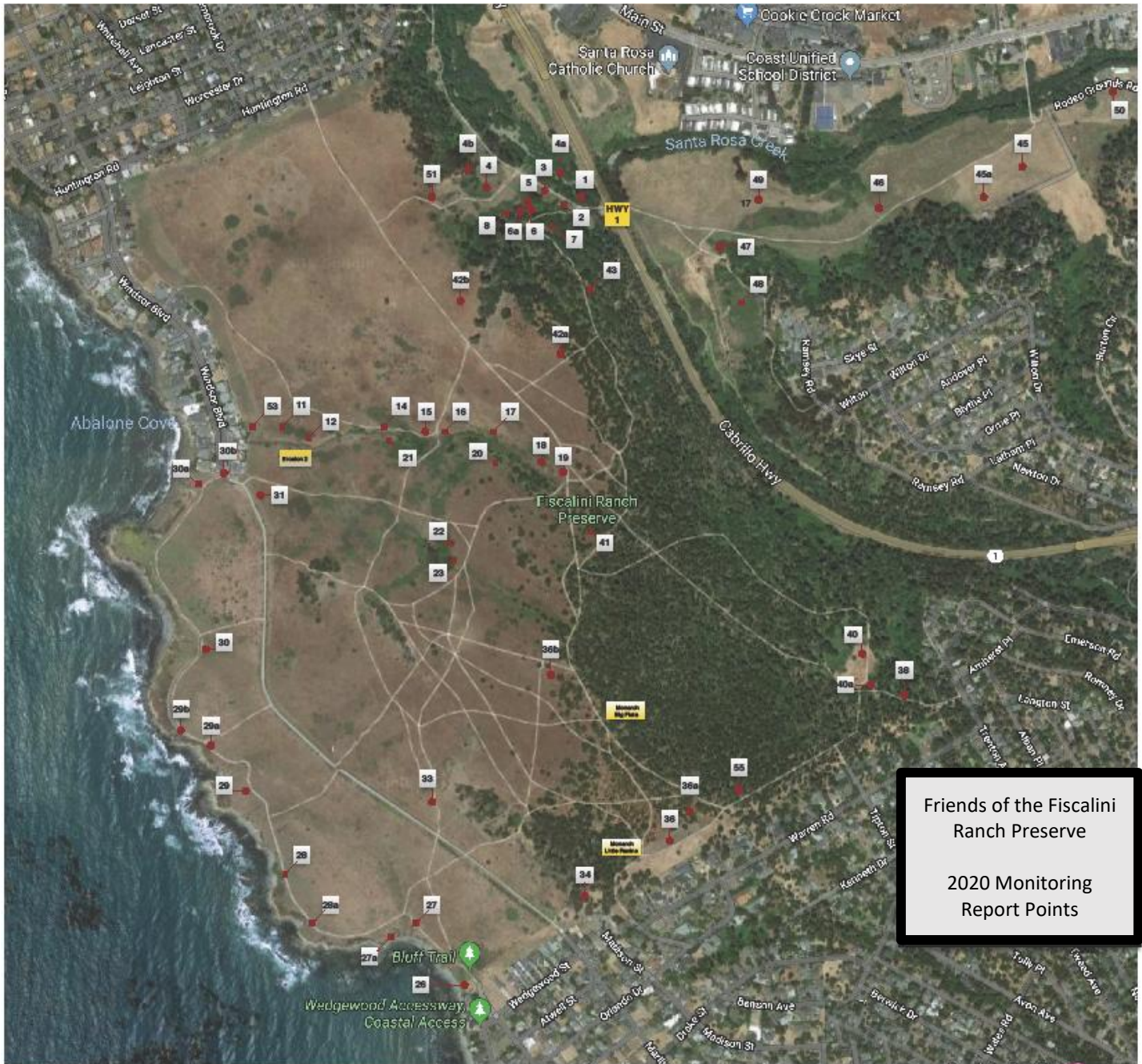
121° 5.499' W

2020 Comments: Little change.





SURVEY MARKER LOCATIONS





TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

