MARCH 2026



HOLLISTER RANCH COASTAL ACCESS PROGRAM

ACCESS PROGRAM OPTIONS

PREPARED FOR:

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

Coastal Conservancy
STATE of CALIFORNIA

California Department of Parks and Recreation

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

March 2026

HOLLISTER RANCH COASTAL ACCESS PROGRAM

ACCESS PROGRAM OPTIONS

Prepared for:

California Coastal Commission
State Coastal Conservancy
State Lands Commission
California Department of Parks and Recreation

Prepared by:

Ascent Environmental, Inc.
455 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section Page

1 COASTAL ACCESS PROGRAM OPTIONS 1-1
1.1 Program Overview 1-1
1.2 Public Engagement Process 1-7
1.3 Existing Conditions 1-7
1.4 Access Program Options 1-33

2 REFERENCES 2-56

Appendices

Appendix A Access Program Options Diagrams

Figures

Figure 1 Coastal Access Program Development Process 1-3
Figure 2 Regional Location 1-4
Figure 3 Hollister Ranch 1-5
Figure 4 Agua Caliente Beach Photographs 1-12
Figure 5 Agua Caliente Beach Existing Conditions 1-14
Figure 6 Alegria Beach Photographs 1-15
Figure 7 Alegria Beach Existing Conditions 1-16
Figure 8 Sacate Beach Photographs 1-18
Figure 9 Sacate Beach Existing Conditions 1-19
Figure 10 Drakes Beach Photographs 1-22
Figure 11 Drakes Beach Existing Condition 1-23
Figure 12 Bulito Beach Photographs 1-26
Figure 13 Bulito Beach Existing Condition 1-27
Figure 14 San Augustine Beach Photograph 1-30
Figure 15 San Augustine Beach Existing Conditions 1-31

Tables

Table 1 Approximate Travel Distance from US Highway 101 1-9
Table 2 Approximate Distance to Nearest Hollister Ranch Beach (Agua Caliente) 1-10
Table 3 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 1 1-41
Table 4 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 2 1-44
Table 5 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 3 1-46
Table 6 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 4 1-49
Table 7 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 5 1-51
Table 8 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 6 1-53

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CC&R	Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EER	Environmental Evaluation Report
EIR	environmental impact report
HRCAP or proposed program	Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Program
HROA	Hollister Ranch Owners' Association
options	Access Program Options
people/100 LF	persons at one time per 100 linear feet
TAL	Te Amo Livestock
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad

1 COASTAL ACCESS PROGRAM OPTIONS

1.1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Program (HRCAP) is a state-led program to provide land-based, public recreational access to the coastline within Hollister Ranch, as required by the California Coastal Act and Assembly Bill 1680 of 2019 (PRC Section 30610.81). Hollister Ranch is a private gated community that includes approximately 8.5 miles of public coastline below the mean high tide line. As required by AB 1680, four state agencies are working collaboratively to develop the HRCAP: the California Coastal Commission, California State Lands Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, and California State Parks (the State Agency Team).

The collaborative planning effort required by AB 1680 began in 2019 and included site analysis and public engagement to identify potential access opportunities and constraints. This effort resulted in the 2021 Draft HRCAP, which laid out a range of potential access methods and key considerations for public access to the six beaches within Hollister Ranch. Building on the 2021 Draft HRCAP, the State Agency Team is now in the process of refining and evaluating access options to balance providing public access, with protection of environmental and cultural resources, respect for neighboring private property, and public safety, while also accounting for the feasibility of providing and managing public access.

Development of the access program involves preparing and evaluating a series of Access Program Options, selecting a proposed access program, then conducting environmental review as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as shown in Figure 1. The State Agency Team released preliminary Access Program Options for public review in November 2025. After consideration of public input, the Access Program Options have been refined and are presented in this report. Next, these options will undergo detailed analysis and evaluation in an upcoming Environmental Evaluation Report (EER) prior to initiating CEQA review. The EER will identify the relative environmental effects and benefits of each Access Program Option. That analysis will identify additional program refinements, environmental protection measures, and management approaches necessary to achieve the program objectives. Based on the analysis in the EER, the State Agency Team will then select a proposed HRCAP and conduct CEQA environmental review of the proposed HRCAP in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

This document describes six Access Program Options that will be evaluated in the EER. The Access Program Options present a range of possible approaches to provide public access consistent with AB 1680 and the program objectives. Each Access Program Option includes different combinations of access methods, public access locations, and visitation levels. This document provides background on the existing conditions within the program area; summarizes management approaches that would apply to any Access Program Option; and describes the access methods, visitation levels, necessary physical improvements or facilities, and relative feasibility of each Access Program Option.

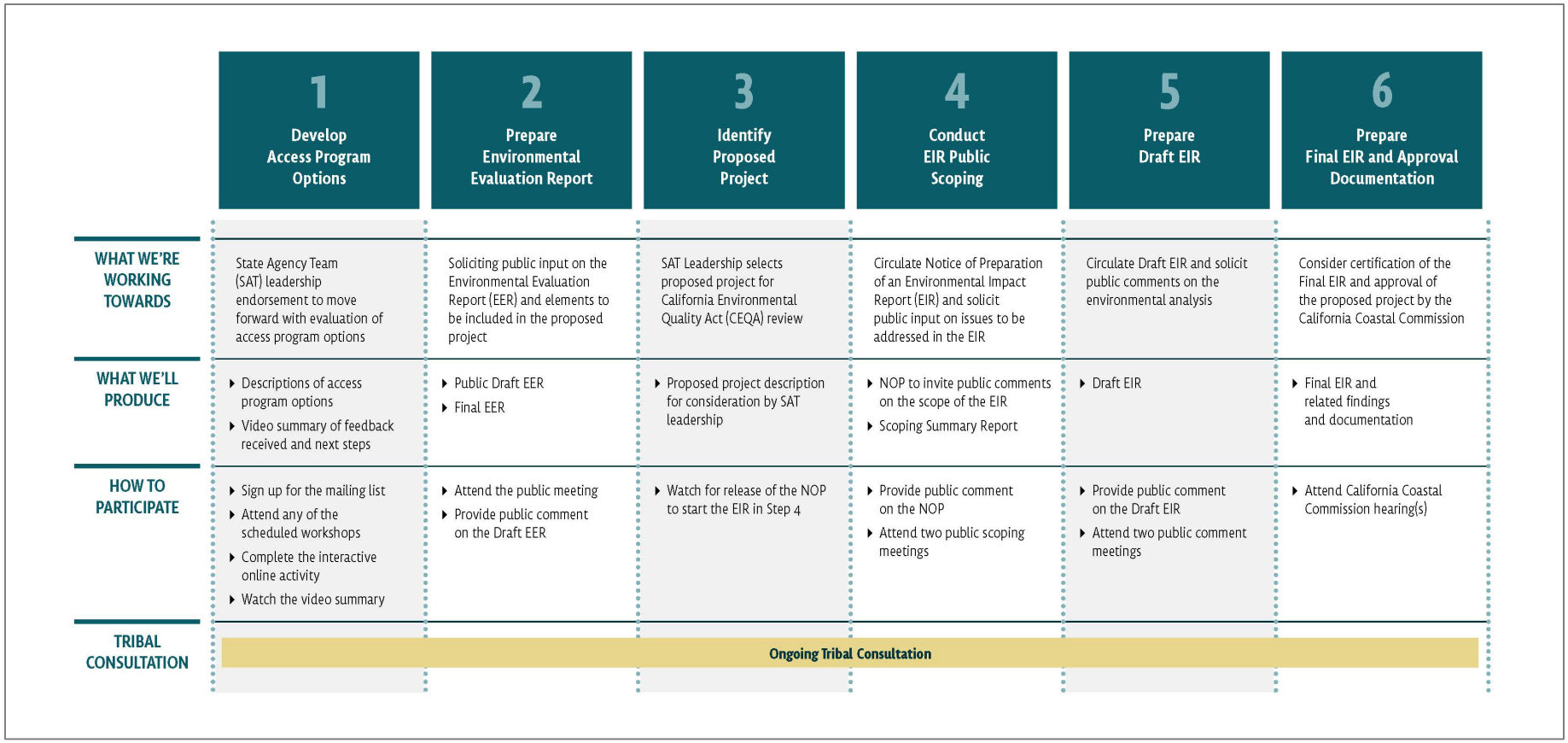
1.1.1 Proposed Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the proposed access program are to:

- Provide safe, equitable, and inclusive public access;
- Provide options for experiences that meet the interests of a broad range of Californians;
- Provide increased public access within one year of approval of the proposed program by Coastal Commission;
- Minimize impacts of public access to protect coastal resources, including natural habitats, cultural resources, and agricultural operations;
- Respect private property rights;
- Implement applicable laws and policies including the California Coastal Act and Assembly Bill Assembly Bill 1680 of 2019;
- Define a process for assessing long-term effectiveness of the HRCAP in achieving program objectives and responding with adaptive management; and
- Assess implementation challenges of proposed program components and identify strategies for potential solutions.

1.1.2 Program Area

The program area consists of 8.5 miles of coastline, including six sandy beaches, along the Gaviota Coast in Santa Barbara County (see Figures 2 and 3). The program area includes the 8.5 miles of coastline within Hollister Ranch along with access routes necessary to provide land-based access to the coast. The program area generally consists of the intertidal zone, beaches, bluffs, existing railroad, and access road within the 8.5 miles section of the coastline of Hollister Ranch. The Hollister Ranch shoreline and beach seaward of the mean high tide line belongs to the public, while beach inland of the mean high tide line, bluff, and upland areas are privately owned. The program area is accessible via an existing private road extending approximately 10 miles west from US Highway 101. Gaviota State Park abuts the program area to the east, with the nearest park facilities located approximately 0.7 miles from the program area. To the west is another private ranch and then the Nature Conservancy's Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve. Point Conception is located approximately four miles west and El Refugio State Beach is located approximately 9.6 miles east of the program area. The City of Lompoc is located approximately 22 miles by road northwest of the program area, and the City of Buellton is located approximately 11 miles by road northeast of the program area.



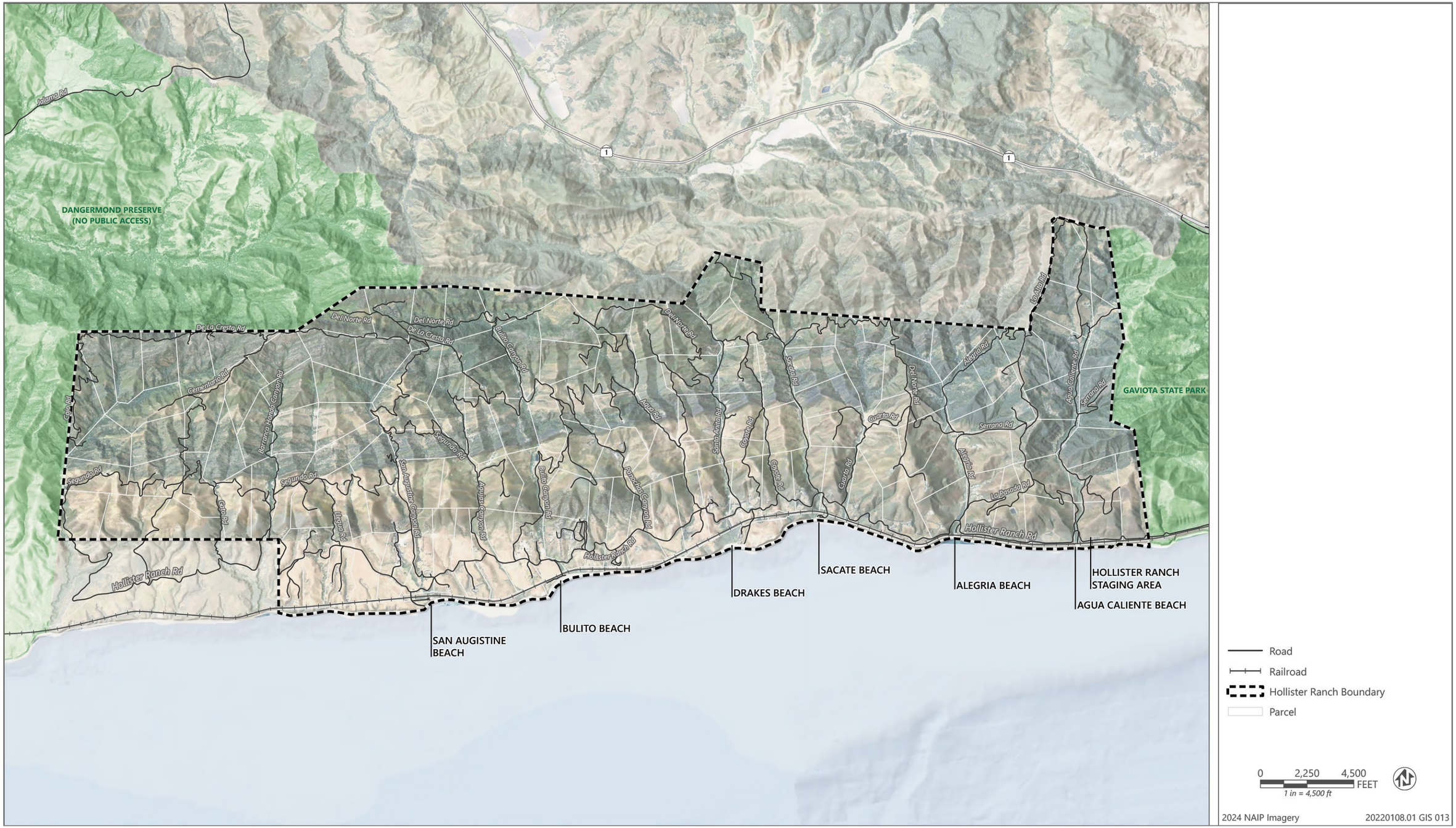
Source: adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 1 Coastal Access Program Development Process



Source: adapted by Ascent in 2026.

Figure 2 Regional Location



Source: adapted by Ascent in 2026.

Figure 3 Hollister Ranch

1.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Assembly Bill 1680 (2019) required State Agency Team to collaboratively develop an updated coastal access program for the Hollister Ranch shoreline, a process that began with extensive public engagement. This previous public engagement process that was carried out between 2019 and 2021 informed development of the 2021 Draft HRCAP and was designed to gather the interests and concerns of a broad cross-section of Californians. Outreach began with in-person meetings and one workshop but transitioned entirely to a virtual format in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of the engagement process, agencies and partners conducted initial several stakeholder interviews, administered four public surveys, hosted a public workshop in Goleta, convened with a HRCAP Working Group five times, developed an interactive Story Map for public comment, held eight focused listening sessions, facilitated a virtual public workshop, and engaged in Tribal consultation, ensuring that diverse perspectives informed the plan's development.

1.2.1 Public Involvement (2025 - 2026)

Additional public engagement for the HRCAP occurred in 2025 to 2026 to further define the potential 2021 HRCAP options for accessing the program area (see Figure 1). Engagement focused on six Access Program Options (options) for the HRCAP. Engagement activities included the following:

- In-person workshop (Buellton): Held on November 12, 2025, at Oak Valley Elementary School from 5:00–8:00 PM, with approximately 60 participants.
- In-person workshop (Goleta): Held on November 13, 2025, at the Goleta Community Center from 5:00–8:00 PM, with approximately 80 participants.
- Virtual workshop: Held on November 17, 2025, via Zoom from 6:00–8:00 PM, with approximately 100 participants, and covering the same content as the in-person workshops.
- Online public survey: Open from November 14, 2025, through December 19, 2025, for individuals unable to attend a workshop or who wished to provide additional input; the survey received 215 responses.

All input collected through these engagement activities was reviewed and used to further define the Access Program Options presented in this document. Across in-person workshops, virtual workshops, and survey responses, several themes emerged that shaped how participants evaluated public access at Hollister Ranch. These themes reflect shared considerations related to protection, safety, feasibility, and implementation, regardless of the specific Access Program Option.

1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

1.3.1 Land Ownership and Management

The approximately 14,400-acre Hollister Ranch consists of 136 privately owned parcels, each approximately 100 acres. Each parcel is owned by private individuals or by the Hollister Ranch

Owners' Association (HROA). The HROA is the property owner association that is responsible for the operations of the common area facilities (e.g., private Hollister Ranch Road and associated private spur roads leading to each beach, parking areas, picnic tables, cabanas), security, and oversight of property development. The HROA maintains a declaration of Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) that apply to the individual owners (HROA 2013). The purpose of the CC&Rs is to perpetuate the variety of coastal and pastoral environments for the benefit of all who own property at the ranch. Consistent with the CC&Rs, guest access to Hollister Ranch is limited to a certain number of people. The maximum number of guests per parcel is 12 guests per day, which can be increased if filed for and approved by the HROA.

PUBLIC TRUST LANDS AND USES

The intertidal zone of the beach and submerged lands seaward of the mean high tide line are owned by the State of California in public trust for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the public. Public trust land is managed by the State Lands Commission pursuant to the Public Trust Doctrine, which allows and prioritizes uses for public recreation, water-dependent activities, commerce, navigation, fisheries, and environmental preservation. These public trust lands must remain open for public access by the California Coastal Act (Article 2, Section 30210) and the California Constitution (Section 4, Article X).

PRIVATE RANCH PROPERTY AND CATTLE OPERATIONS

Land inland of the mean high tide line in Hollister Ranch is private property. Most land south of the railroad is owned by the HROA, while land north of the railroad is private property largely held by individual owners.

Hollister Ranch is a Williamson Act agricultural preserve. To qualify for the Williamson Act, an agricultural preserve must be no less than 100 acres. All parcels at Hollister Ranch are operated together as one commercial cattle operation by the Hollister Ranch Cooperative across parcel boundaries with supporting infrastructure throughout Hollister Ranch. Commercial use of Hollister Ranch includes cattle grazing with a herd of approximately 2,000 cattle managed by Te Amo Livestock (TAL) that graze the ranch and produce an annual calf crop (Hollister Ranch Realty 2025). TAL was established in 2010 and is one of the largest beef producers in Santa Barbara County (TAL 2023). As of 2023 TAL is comprised of two Hollister Ranch owners and a cowhand with over 13 years of experience at Hollister Ranch.

Hollister Ranch includes five primary pastures, three minor pastures, and 10 holding pastures. TAL practices strategic grazing with pasture rotation to allow for grass recovery during the growing season and weed control and fire-risk reduction during the dry season. The five largest pastures are grazed at least twice per year, once during the wet season and once during the dry season, resulting in regular cattle presence throughout the Ranch. Grazing pastures are not fenced off from Hollister Ranch Road, and cattle are present along the road at times. Breeding bulls are pulled from the herd after the breeding season and placed in holding pastures, which are adjacent to beach access at Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine beaches. Bulls may be present in

general grazing areas at certain times. Approximately 400 cattle remain in Hollister Ranch year-round for the cow-calf operation.

RAILROAD

An active railroad line follows the coastline through the program area (see Figure 3). Within Hollister Ranch, the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) owns the railroad right-of-way, which varies from 50 to 200 feet wide. Both freight and Amtrak passenger trains use the UPRR tracks through Hollister Ranch. Amtrak passenger trains pass through the ranch four times daily, two times in each direction (Caltrans 2018). The earliest Amtrak train on weekdays and weekends passes through the ranch between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m., and the last train passes through between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. The current at-grade railroad crossings to access Sacate, Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine beaches in Hollister Ranch are considered private rail crossings, defined as level intersections of railroads, including light rail transit, and roadways/pathways that are either not open to public travel or not maintained by public authorities, and are intended for use only by the property owner, owner's licensees, and invitees (CPUC 2023). The railroad crossings are uncontrolled and do not have gates or signals to warn vehicles and pedestrians of approaching trains.

1.3.2 Existing Public Access

OVERLAND ACCESS

Overland vehicle access to the program area is only possible via the private Hollister Ranch Road, also known as Rancho Real Road, which diverges from the public Gaviota Beach Road shortly before the Gaviota State Park entry kiosk. Within Hollister Ranch, Hollister Ranch Road crosses HROA-owned property, as well as individually owned private property via an easement held by the HROA. Ranch owners and registered guests enter Hollister Ranch through a private, staffed entry gate that controls entry for authorized visitors into the ranch.

Overland coastal access to the program area is available for ranch owners and guests on spur roads from Hollister Ranch Road to the six beach access points (Figure 3). These one-lane spur roads range from 0.1 to 0.3 miles in length. The spur roads are paved with asphalt, but several transition to gravel near the beach access points. Table 1 shows the one-way distance to each beach that is part of the program area from US Highway 101.

Table 1 Approximate Travel Distance from US Highway 101

Beach	Miles
Agua Caliente	2
Alegria	3.2
Sacate	5.1
Drakes	6.1
Bulito	8.5
San Augustine	10.1

Source: CCC 2021.

Rocky outcroppings on either side of Agua Caliente Beach restrict walk-in access along the beach from Gaviota State Park to the program area during most tidal conditions. The distance from the Gaviota State Park pier to Agua Caliente Beach is approximately 1.4 miles, which at an average walking speed of 2 miles per hour it would take about 42 minutes to walk to the easternmost beach in Hollister Ranch. However, visitors cannot walk the coastline to access beaches in the program area during typical low tides. These areas are only walkable during very low or negative tides, and when high surf conditions are absent. Walk-in access along the coastline is limited to a small number of visitors because it requires timing tide levels to allow access and egress during very low tide, as well as hiking several miles over rocky outcroppings to access larger beaches.

ACCESS ROUTE CONDITIONS

Road access to Hollister Ranch is from a turnoff on US Highway 101 onto Gaviota Beach Road, which crosses through the Gaviota Creek floodplain and then crosses Gaviota Creek on a short bridge at a similar grade to the floodplain. The road forks after the creek with Gaviota State Park to the south and Hollister Ranch Road to the west. Gaviota Beach Road floods regularly when elevated flows in Gaviota Creek overtop the channel during heavy rainfall events. Hollister Ranch Road has a speed limit of 25 miles per hour and several grade changes and sharp turns that require lower speeds. The width of the road varies from one lane to two lanes, although Hollister Ranch Road is generally wide enough for two lanes. Along the road there are cattle guards, private driveways, road turnoffs, and a narrow bridge. There are no signs within Hollister Ranch that warn drivers of road conditions.

The spur roads to Sacate, Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine beaches cross the UPRR tracks at unsignalized at-grade crossings. At Sacate, Drakes, and Bulito beaches, the shortest sight line in one direction is less than 0.125 mile. At San Augustine the shortest sight line is approximately 0.25 mile (CCC 2021).

BOAT-IN ACCESS

Boat-in access to the program area is possible using hand launch from Gaviota State Park, Refugio State Beach, Goleta County Park, or trailered launch at Santa Barbara Harbor. Approximately 500 boats per year were launched from the beach at Gaviota State Park (CCC 2021). The boat launch at Gaviota State Park, i.e., a boat hoist on the pier, has been closed due to damage since 2014. The nearest official boat-in access to Hollister Ranch is more than 20 miles east of the program area at Goleta Beach County Park. Safe boat-in access is highly dependent on variable ocean and weather conditions and requires a high level of open-water boating skills and equipment. Table 2 includes the distance from the nearest Hollister Ranch beach to nearby boat launches.

Table 2 Approximate Distance to Nearest Hollister Ranch Beach (Agua Caliente)

Boat Launch Location	Miles
Gaviota State Park1	1.3
Refugio State Beach2	10.2
Goleta Beach County Park	24.3
Santa Barbara Harbor (trailered launch)	32.2

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

[1] The boat hoist on the pier at Gaviota State Parks has been closed since 2014.

[2] Boat in access at Refugio State Beach is limited to a sand beach that allows pushing a boat into the water, not an official boat launch facility.

HROA ACCESS PROGRAMS

The HROA has operated a limited set of sanctioned, owner-managed access programs that allowed controlled public entry to portions of the Hollister Ranch coastline. Public access has been granted to groups and individuals participating in tide pool tours, flora and fauna tours, bird watching, ranch tours, cattle operations field days, surf days for people with disabilities, marine mammal rescue and release, and scientific research. According to 2017–2018 data presented in Appendix D of the 2021 HRCAP, these programs generated approximately 40–50 trips per year, with group sizes ranging from as few as 2 participants to as many as 50, depending on the program and the needs of the visitors. While most scheduled outings were completed, a small number were canceled due to weather, tides, or logistical constraints.

1.3.3 Description of Beaches

AGUA CALIENTE

Overview and Size

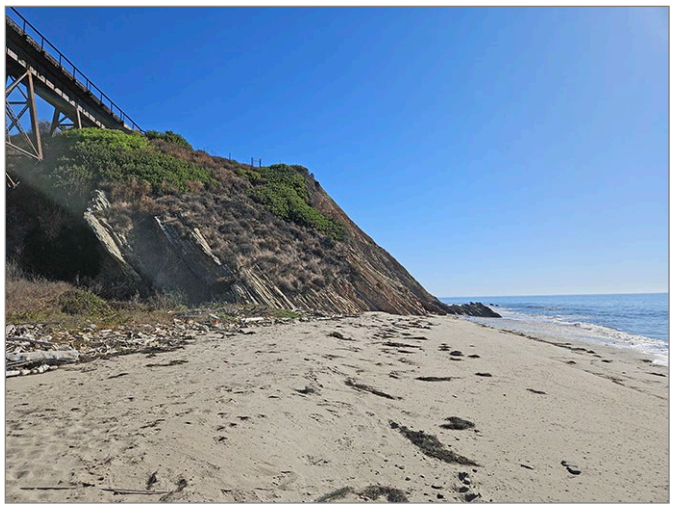
Agua Caliente is the first beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline and is located approximately 2 miles from US Highway 101 and 0.3 miles west of the HROA entrance gate. Agua Caliente is a small beach, approximately 0.3 acres in size, and lies within the narrow canyon of Cañada de Agua Caliente, where steep and unstable cliffs flank the canyon mouth and a railroad trestle spans the coastal bluff (Figure 4). The toe of the bluff is armored with rock riprap and a degraded seawall, reflecting ongoing coastal erosion pressures. The intertidal zone at Agua Caliente is the narrowest of all Hollister Ranch beaches, limiting available beach area during higher tides. The canyon and bluff slopes support coastal sage scrub above dense arroyo willow thickets along the stream corridor. A small coastal lagoon forms when sand accumulation blocks the creek mouth. Rockweed is present in the mid-intertidal zone and is vulnerable to trampling from visitor tidepool exploration. Sensitive species documented at this beach include California red-legged frog, northern tidewater goby, western pond turtle, and red sand verbena.

Recreational Opportunities

Recreational opportunities at Agua Caliente Beach are limited by the narrow beach width, and include birdwatching, wildlife viewing, and shoreline fishing. The small beach area and steep surrounding bluffs limit the extent of general beach use, while the rocky intertidal zone provides opportunities for tidepool exploration.



Source: © 2002-2026 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, CA Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 4 Agua Caliente Beach Photographs

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at Agua Caliente are low relative to other beaches in the program area. The beach is accessible via a steep, sharp turn off Hollister Ranch Road onto a narrow asphalt road that terminates in a small parking area. Beach access requires walking under the 100-year-old railroad trestle, down a gentle but uneven slope over grass, rocks, and driftwood. The armored bluff toe and narrow intertidal zone further limit circulation and safe access.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at Agua Caliente is minimal and concentrated at the small parking area north of the railroad trestle, which contains approximately nine parking spaces (Figure 5). Facilities include interpretive signage, a portable toilet, a picnic table, and improved surfaces consisting of asphalt and wood chips.

ALEGRIA

Overview and Size

Alegria is the second beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline and is located approximately 3 miles west of US Highway 101 and 1.5 miles west of the HROA entrance gate. Alegria is the smallest beach, approximately 0.2 acres in size, and sits within a narrow coastal canyon framed by steep and unstable bluffs, which are spanned by a railroad trestle (Figure 6). The relatively small size of the beach limits the range of recreational activities that can occur. Vegetation in the surrounding canyon is similar to that at Agua Caliente, with relatively undisturbed coastal sage scrub growing above arroyo willow thickets along the stream corridor. A seasonal coastal lagoon forms at this beach, and the intertidal zone contains rocky habitat that supports tidepool organisms. Rockweed is abundant in the mid-intertidal zone and is susceptible to disturbance from visitor tidepool exploration. Sensitive species documented at Alegria include northern tidewater goby, western pond turtle, and red sand verbena.

Recreational Opportunities

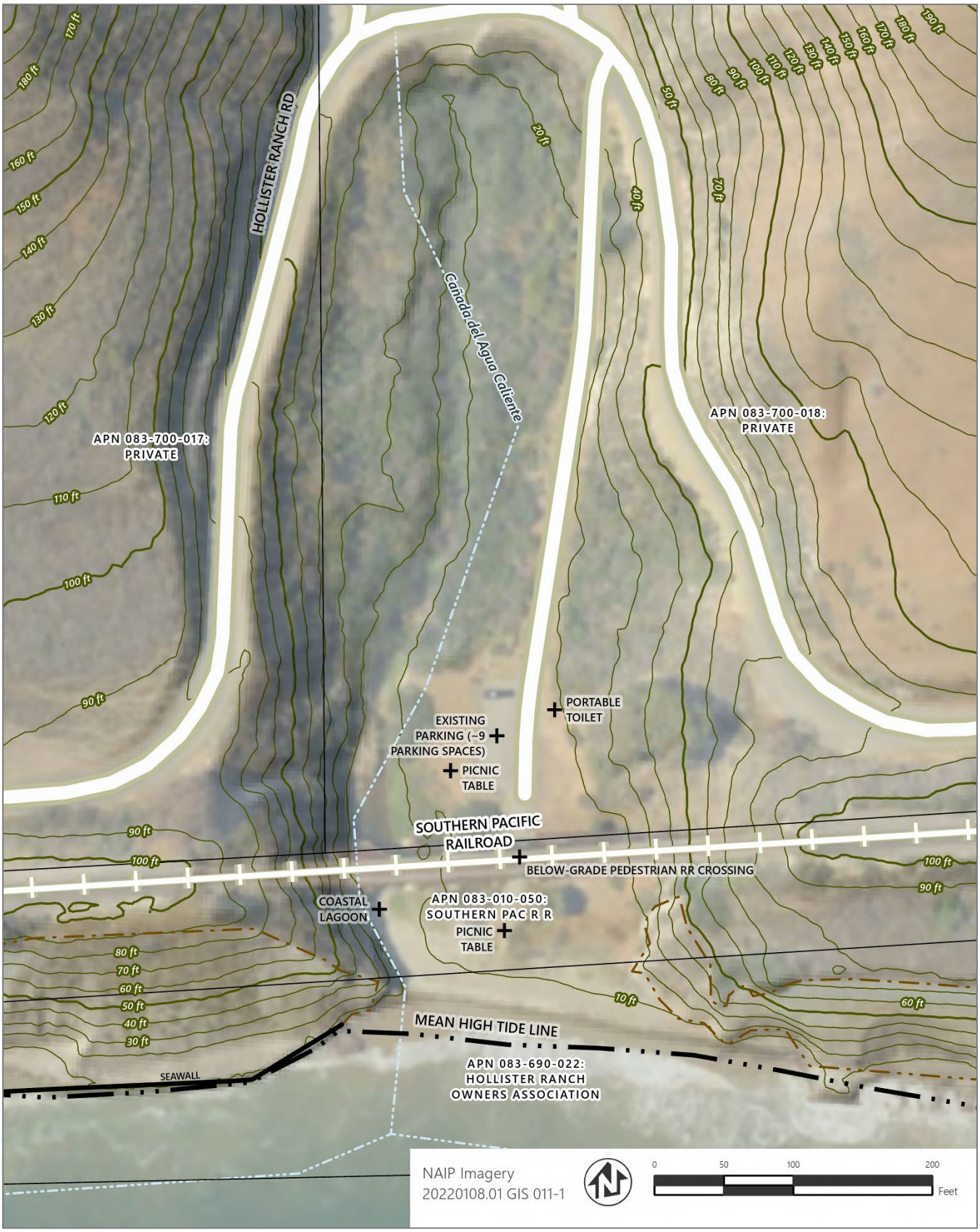
Recreational opportunities at Alegria Beach include surfing, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, and outdoor education trips. The small beach area and steep surrounding bluffs limit the extent of general beach use, while the rocky intertidal zone provides opportunities for tidepool exploration. Alegria is also a focal point for educational and scientific programs. UC Santa Barbara operates a wetlands and reefs program that conducts tidepool studies at the site, and the HROA has run a tide pooling program since the 1990s, bringing school groups to explore the intertidal environment.

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at Alegria are low. The beach is accessed via a steep, sharp turn off Hollister Ranch Road onto a narrow asphalt road that terminates in a small parking area. Beach access requires walking under the railroad trestle on sloped, soft, and uneven ground, which can be difficult to navigate. The toe of the bluff is armored with rock riprap and a degraded seawall.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at Alegria is minimal and concentrated at the small parking area north of the railroad trestle, which contains approximately six formal parking spaces, and includes interpretive signage, a portable toilet, a picnic table, and improved surfaces consisting of asphalt and wood chips (Figure 7). The paved parking area accommodates approximately six vehicles, with informal unpaved areas providing space for approximately 10 additional vehicles.

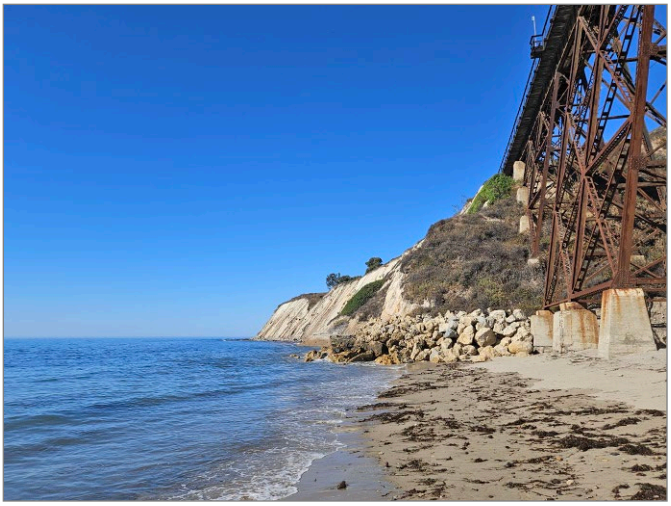


Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

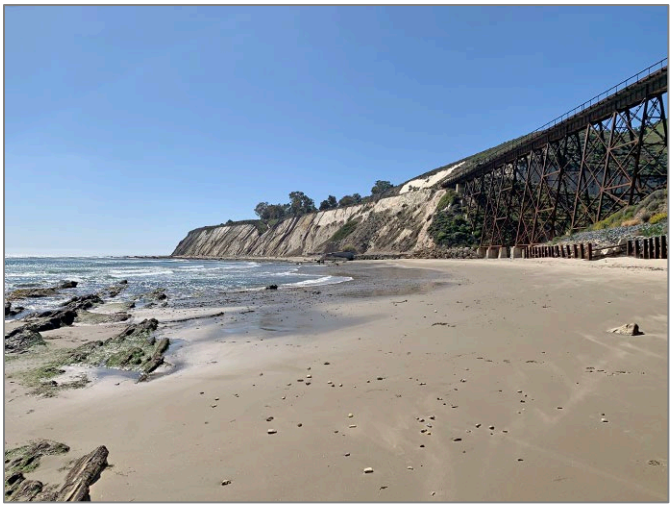
Figure 5 Agua Caliente Beach Existing Conditions



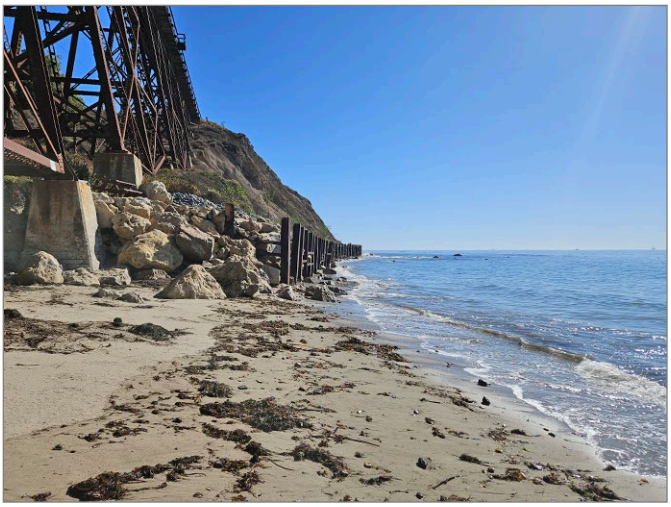
Source: © 2002-2026 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, CA Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 6 Alegria Beach Photographs



Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

Figure 7 Alegria Beach Existing Conditions

SACATE

Overview and Size

Sacate is the third beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline and is located approximately 5 miles west of US Highway 101 and 3.2 miles west of the HROA entrance gate. The approximately 9-acre beach is accessible after crossing the railroad tracks and there is a flat blufftop framed by rolling grasslands and coastal sage scrub, offering broad coastal views (Figure 8). Blufftops south of the railroad tracks support relatively undisturbed coastal sage scrub and needlegrass grasslands, while the eastern portion of the beach contains noteworthy dune habitat. A creek outlet/wildlife crossing constructed recently as part of railroad improvements is located east of the beach. The intertidal zone at Sacate is wider than at beaches to the east. Sensitive species documented in the area include California red-legged frog and red sand verbena.

Recreational Opportunities

Sacate Beach supports a wide range of coastal recreation due to its relatively wide intertidal zone and scenic blufftop setting. Recreational opportunities at Sacate Beach include beach walking, jogging, general shoreline relaxation, surfing, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, and outdoor education trips.

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at Sacate are moderate. The beach is accessed via a narrow asphalt road through a developed private parcel off Hollister Ranch Road. After crossing the railroad tracks at grade, the road descends to a flat blufftop where vehicles currently park informally around a turnaround loop. Beach access is provided by a short, steep, and eroded dirt road descending the 10- to 20-foot-high bluffs.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at Sacate is minimal (Figure 9). The blufftop contains interpretive signage, picnic tables, and a portable toilet maintained by the HROA. Parking occurs informally around the turnaround loop, and a large flat area vegetated with non-native grasses has the capacity to accommodate additional amenities if needed.



Source: © 2002-2026 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, CA Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 8 Sacate Beach Photographs



Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

Figure 9 Sacate Beach Existing Conditions

DRAKES

Overview and Size

Drakes is the fourth beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline and is located approximately 6 miles west of US Highway 101 and 4.2 miles west of the HROA entrance gate. The approximately 6-acre beach area is characterized by rolling hills, open grasslands, and small forested areas that frame expansive coastal views (Figure 10). Santa Anita Creek runs between the two parking areas discussed below. The intertidal zone at Drakes is wider than at the three beaches located to the east. West of the main access point, a coastal lagoon forms at the mouth of Cañada de Santa Anita. This lagoon is the largest of any surveyed along the Hollister Ranch coastline and may support numerous rare taxa due to its extensive backshore area (land above high tide but below the bluffs). Drakes Beach also serves as a seasonal haul-out and pupping area for seals. Sensitive species documented in the area include California red-legged frog, western snowy plover, two-striped garter snake, and red sand verbena.

Recreational Opportunities

Drakes Beach supports a diverse range of coastal recreation due to the wide intertidal zone, scenic blufftop setting, and presence of a coastal lagoon. Recreational opportunities at Drakes Beach include beach walking, jogging, general shoreline relaxation, surfing, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, and outdoor education trips.

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at Drakes are moderately high due to sensitive resources and wetland areas near the beach. The beach is accessed via a narrow asphalt road off Hollister Ranch Road. South of an at-grade railroad crossing, the road forks. The right fork leads to a knoll with a cabana and parking area, from which beach access is provided by a steep, unmaintained trail. The left fork runs along a bull-holding pasture that is east of the beach and terminates at a turnaround and parking area near the beach. A short, gently sloped, and eroded dirt path provides access to the sand. Areas adjacent to this path are flat and vegetated with non-native grasses.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at Drakes is concentrated at the cabana, located on the knoll above the beach. The cabana provides shade and includes picnic tables, seating, a fire pit, running water, showers and restrooms (Figure 11). The cabana is occasionally used for events such as weddings or memorial services, which require prior approval from the HROA. According to the HROA, water is supplied by borrowed water from nearby parcels and operates on septic. There is also a paved parking area for approximately 23 vehicles. The left fork of the access road ends at a secondary unpaved parking area accommodating approximately 17 vehicles, with a short dirt path leading to the shoreline.

A four-panel collage consisting of four representative photos of Drakes Beach, showing the sandy shoreline and adjacent coastal bluffs, an inland open area, a coastal lagoon and surrounding vegetation, and the beach where the lagoon outlet meets the ocean.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 10 Drakes Beach Photographs



Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

Figure 11 Drakes Beach Existing Condition

BULITO

Overview and Size

Bulito is the fifth beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline and is located approximately 8 miles from US Highway 101 and 6.6 miles from the HROA entrance gate. It includes an approximately 9-acre beach area and a narrow blufftop that widens toward the west, bordered by open grasslands and coastal bluff vegetation that provide expansive coastal views (Figure 12). The surrounding bluffs support coastal sage scrub, annual and perennial grasslands, and eucalyptus woodlands. East of the cabana, described below, an approximately 0.25-acre restoration area has been established to support native purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*). The intertidal zone at Bulito is wider than at any of the beaches located to the east, and sensitive species documented in the area include California red-legged frog, western snowy plover, woolly seablite, purple needlegrass, and red sand verbena.

Recreational Opportunities

Bulito supports a variety of recreational uses due to its sandy shoreline, extensive intertidal zone, and scenic blufftop setting. Recreational opportunities at Bulito Beach include beach walking, jogging, general shoreline relaxation, surfing, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, and outdoor education trips.

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at Bulito are moderately high due to sensitive resources. The beach is accessed via a narrow asphalt road off Hollister Ranch Road, which crosses the railroad tracks at grade before descending to the blufftop. Bulito is the only beach on Hollister Ranch that is not accessed through individual private lots; access from Hollister Ranch Road to the beach occurs entirely over HROA–owned land. Railroad-tie steps provide the primary route down the 10- to 20-foot bluffs to the sand. A steep and eroded dirt road also descends the east side of the bluff.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at Bulito is concentrated at the HROA cabana (Figure 13). The cabana provides shade, running water, restrooms, showers, picnic tables, a stage, and two horseshoe pits, along with a parking area on compacted dirt, gravel, and non-native grass, that accommodates approximately 32 vehicles. Railroad-tie steps connect the cabana area to the beach below. A bull holding pasture west of the cabana is currently inactive but planned for future use.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 12 Bulito Beach Photographs



Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

Figure 13 Bulito Beach Existing Condition

SAN AUGUSTINE

Overview and Size

San Augustine is the sixth and final beach access point along the Hollister Ranch coastline, located approximately 10 miles from US Highway 101 and 8.2 miles from the HROA entrance gate. The approximately 19-acre beach access point encompasses a broad blufftop landscape characterized by forested areas, eucalyptus woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and open grasslands that offer a range of high-quality coastal views (Figure 14). The blufftops above the beach support coastal sage scrub, annual and perennial grasslands, and patches of eucalyptus woodland, with relatively intact native vegetation capable of supporting sensitive plant and wildlife species. A holding pasture for bulls is located adjacent to the beach. San Augustine also contains the widest intertidal zone of all the Hollister Ranch beaches. Sensitive species documented in the area include woolly seablite, California red-legged frog, and western snowy plover.

Recreational Opportunities

San Augustine supports a variety of recreational uses due to its broad sandy shoreline, intertidal zone, and scenic blufftop setting. Recreational opportunities at San Augustine Beach include beach walking, jogging, general shoreline relaxation, surfing, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, and outdoor education trips.

Access Constraints

Beach access constraints at San Augustine are high. Access along Hollister Ranch Road in this area is narrower than other segments, including a one-lane cattle guard, which further contributes to access limitations. The beach is accessed off Hollister Ranch Road at a turnoff near a cattle corral, followed by an at-grade railroad crossing where the road splits. The right fork leads to a 14-stall asphalt parking lot used by visitors to the HROA cabana before descending steeply to the shoreline. The left fork extends approximately 0.125 miles to a small gravel and dirt parking area with a picnic table, from which a dirt footpath runs briefly along level ground before dropping steeply to the sand.

Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure at San Augustine is limited to a small number of visitor amenities (Figure 15). Facilities include a cabana, running water, restrooms, showers, picnic tables, and a shower rinse station. A 14-stall asphalt parking lot serves the HROA cabana located near the blufftop, and a separate gravel-and-dirt parking area contains a single picnic table.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.



Source: Ascent in 2024.

Figure 14 San Augustine Beach Photograph



Sources: Data downloaded from SLC, Santa Barbara County, and CPAD in 2024.

Figure 15 San Augustine Beach Existing Conditions

1.4 ACCESS PROGRAM OPTIONS

The State Agency Team developed six Access Program Options that offer possible ways to meet the program objectives including providing safe equitable and inclusive public access to the program area, providing options for experiences that meet the interests of a broad range of Californians, providing increased public access within one year of approval of the program, minimizing impacts of public access to coastal resources including natural habitats, cultural resources, and agricultural operations, and respecting private property. These six options include different combinations of access methods, access locations, and visitor numbers that constitute six distinct approaches for public access intended to meet the objectives of the HRCAP.

The Access Program Options build on the analysis presented in the 2021 Draft HRCAP and have been revised based on public input on a preliminary set of options. The engagement was designed to gather perspectives on public access, feasibility, safety, environmental and cultural resource protection, and implementation considerations associated with potential access approaches as described in more detail in Section 1.2, "Public Outreach (2025 – 2026)." The results of the public engagement process were used to further define and revise the Access Program Options into the six combinations described below.

The Access Program Options presented below will first be evaluated in an environmental evaluation report, which will compare the relative environmental effects and benefits of each option. That report will identify any public access refinements and environmental protection measures needed to achieve the objectives of the HRCAP. Following completion of the environmental evaluation report, a proposed public access program will be selected for evaluation in an environmental impact report prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The California Coastal Commission would consider approval if a proposed public access program following completion and certification of the CEQA environmental impact report.

Before the HRCAP can provide overland public access to the public beach and shoreline on Hollister Ranch, the State will need to approve a public access program, a managing entity will need to be determined, and property rights or agreements to use private roads and other privately owned property or easements inland of the mean high tide line must be obtained by the State or the managing entity.

Any public access program for Hollister Ranch would likely include phased implementation. Access methods and access to beaches that require less infrastructure improvement or visitor management operations could occur in an initial phase to provide overland public access as soon as possible. Access methods or access to beaches that require substantial infrastructure upgrades or more intensive visitor management may need to occur as a later phase. Access to the program area would be managed under an adaptive management framework that allows for monitoring of environmental consequences and visitation with adjustments over time in response to observed conditions in the program area.

1.4.1 Access Methods

The Access Program Options include six potential methods for land-based public access to the beaches at Hollister Ranch, as described in more detail below. All access methods would require an advance reservation with the managing entity.

GUIDED TRIP ACCESS

Guided trip access would include visitors accessing the program area as part of an educational or cultural guided trip organized by the managing entity or another partner organization operating under an agreement with the managing entity. Guided trip access would be highly managed, would involve a small group of up to 20 participants, and would have a specific purpose such as an educational or cultural program or event, rather than general recreational access. A trained docent would accompany and supervise a group, provide educational information, and encourage appropriate and safe uses. Docents would complete a training program that would address natural and cultural resource protection, safe access considerations, visitor rules, first aid and emergency response protocols, as well as specialized training in educational topics that would be shared with visitors. Docents would be authorized to lead guided trips only after successfully completing the training. This training would be provided for docents who commit to lead trips on a regular basis. Guided trips would be scheduled at regular intervals, and any member of the public could reserve an open space to attend a guided trip. Access would generally be via a shuttle or van to provide transportation for groups while minimizing vehicle traffic and parking needs. Examples of guided trip access could include a regular tidepool educational tour led by the managing entity, or a cultural tour led by a Native American tribe operating under an agreement with the managing entity. This approach would require minimal infrastructure improvements, but would involve ongoing management costs to administer the docent tour program. This access method is included in all Access Program Options.

MANAGED GROUP RECREATIONAL ACCESS

Managed group recreational access includes groups of visitors organized by a third party organization accessing the program area with a dedicated group leader who is responsible for compliance with a group reservation and permit. Managed group recreational access would be organized by third party organizations such as non-governmental organizations, community groups, private guide services, or schools or other educational organizations. This access method could accommodate groups of up to 20 or 40 individuals depending on the beach and access program option. Managed group recreational access could provide general recreational access and would not require a specific educational or cultural purpose. The permit would be issued to a group leader after they complete an orientation program that would include information about appropriate and safe uses, emergency response and preparedness, and visitor rules. The group leader would be responsible for compliance with all applicable rules. The permit would provide authorization for a group to access a specific beach or beaches on a specific date(s) and would limit the number of vehicles the group can use to access the beach(es). Managed group recreational access differs from guided trip access in that groups would not need to be

supervised by a docent affiliated with a partner organization or the managing entity, and the purpose of the trip could include general recreational access. Examples of managed group recreational access could include a private recreational guide service providing group surfing classes, or a community group organizing a group outing. This approach would require limited infrastructure but would require operational costs to administer the permit and orientation system. This access method is included in Access Program Options 2 through 6.

INDEPENDENT SHUTTLE ACCESS

As part of independent shuttle access visitors would board a shuttle at one or more designated locations surrounding Hollister Ranch and ride it to and from the beaches in the program area. The shuttle would be open to any member of the public and would require an advance reservation. The shuttle would run at prescheduled times and the shuttle driver or managing entity staff would ensure all passengers who accessed beaches via the shuttle return by the final shuttle trip each day. The shuttle is anticipated to have a capacity for up to 30 riders and a vehicle length of up to 26 feet.

Visitors would park and load onto the shuttle at a shuttle staging area near the program area entrance. Shuttle staging areas would require parking spaces, restrooms, visitor information, and signage. Potential shuttle staging locations could include the Vista del Mar Union School District parking lot located approximately 3.5 miles north of Hollister Ranch at the intersection of SR 1 and US Highway 101, state or county land near the existing Santa Barbara County Fire Station 38 approximately 2.25 miles east of the Hollister Ranch access gate, or another location within proximate distance to the Hollister Ranch access gate. In addition to the staging areas, independent shuttle access would require minor infrastructure upgrades within the program area and ongoing management costs to operate the shuttle system. This access method is included in Access Program Options 3 through 6.

PRIVATE VEHICLE ACCESS

Private vehicle access would involve visitors driving to specific beaches in the program area in their personal vehicles. Visitors would only be allowed to access the beaches after securing reservation in advance for a specific beach and day to ensure parking is available and to manage the total number and timing of visitors. It would require infrastructure improvements including roadway improvements, and parking areas, as well as substantial ongoing visitor management. This access method is included in Access Program Options 4 through 6.

PEDESTRIAN TRAIL ACCESS

Pedestrian trail access would include hikers, walkers, and trail runners accessing the program area via an access-controlled pedestrian trail. The pedestrian trail would begin at the entry point to the program area and would parallel the roadway alignment in Hollister Ranch with spurs trails to individual beaches. The trail could potentially connect to future trails outside of the program area, although trails outside of the program area are not included as part of the HRCAP. The pedestrian

trail would include a 4-foot-wide tread of crushed aggregate or compacted native soil (Appendix 1 Figures A1-25 and A1-26). Visitors accessing the beaches via the pedestrian trail would be required to secure an advance reservation to access a specific beach or beaches on a specific date. The pedestrian trail would involve construction costs that would depend on the trail length and final design. This access method is included in Access Program Options 2, 3, and 4.

MULTI-USE TRAIL ACCESS

Multi-use trail access would include pedestrians, bicyclists, and personal mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, accessing beaches in the program area via a dedicated access-controlled multi-use path. The multi-use trail would parallel the roadway alignment in Hollister Ranch from the entry point to the program area with trail access to individual beaches provided along the existing beach access roads. The multi-use trail may require retaining walls, railings/guardrails, or other safety structures, depending on the final alignment. The main multi-use trail would be an approximate 6- to 8-foot-wide path adjacent to Hollister Ranch Road (Appendix 1 Figures A1-27 through A1-30). Visitors accessing the beaches via the multi-use trail would be required to secure an advance reservation to access a specific beach or beaches on a specific date. The multi-use trail would involve considerable construction costs which would depend on the proposed trail length and final design. This access method is included in Access Program Option 6.

1.4.2 Visitor Management

Under all Access Program Options, visitation would be managed to enhance the visitor experience, protect sensitive resources, foster public safety, and minimize disturbance to nearby private property. Visitor management would include adhering to established visitor capacity limits, implementation of public safety and resource protection measures, and an adaptive approach to adjust management as necessary.

MANAGING ENTITY

A managing entity would assume responsibility for managing public access under the access program. The managing entity could be an appropriate public agency, an existing or newly created non-governmental organization with an appropriate mission, or a concessionaire operating under an agreement with a public agency. The managing entity and a funding source to support their operation will be identified prior to implementing the access program. If the managing entity is not a state agency, the managing entity will need to operate under a contractual agreement with the state to ensure the managing entity performs all responsibilities identified in the state-approved public access program. The managing entity will support public safety, resource protection, rule enforcement, operations and maintenance, and administration of the reservation and permit system, as described below.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

For the HRCAP, adaptive management is a strategic approach to achieving the objectives of the HRCAP over the long-term by adjusting visitor access or management over time based on observed conditions. In the context of visitor use in the program area, adaptive management can be viewed as an approach to provide visitation that is managed to achieve desired resource protection, public safety, equitable access, and private property protection goals while sustaining high-quality visitor experiences. Using the adaptive management process, the managing entity for the program would monitor indicators of resource conditions, private property or safety concerns, and visitor use, and then take appropriate actions to reduce or limit negative impacts, if necessary. Specific monitoring indicators and possible response actions will be identified prior to adoption of the proposed access program. Examples of potential monitoring indicators could include observations of visitor access into sensitive areas, evidence of vegetation damage, reports of illegal activities, observed public safety concerns, visitor counts or surveys, or other information on environmental, public safety, private property, or visitor experience issues. Examples of potential adaptive management responses could include modifying visitor numbers and/or frequency of visitation, adjusting patrols or management staff presence, establishing seasonal restrictions, closing specific locations to public access, or refining operations and maintenance programs.

VISITOR CAPACITY

Visitor capacity would be limited through a reservation system that allows for a finite number of individuals to access the program area. Visitor capacity would be managed by establishing maximum daily visitor capacities and identifying the number of days public access can be provided after considering public access closures to protect public safety or resource conditions. Maximum daily visitor capacities are identified for each Access Program Option in Sections 1.4.3 through 1.4.8. Visitor capacity would be managed as part of the adaptive management process, which would allow maximum daily visitor capacities to be decreased, if necessary to meet HRCAP objectives.

For each Access Program Option, maximum daily visitor capacities are presented for access methods that would allow individual visitors to access the program area (i.e., access via a pedestrian or multi-use trail, shuttle, or private vehicles), as well as separate maximum capacities for access methods that provide access for groups (i.e., managed group recreational access and guided trip access). To allow flexibility to respond to demand for different access methods, the managing entity could reallocate visitor capacity among access methods as long as the total daily capacity identified for an individual beach is not exceeded. Visitor capacity would only be reallocated among access methods if the monitoring of adaptive management indicators demonstrates that the reallocation would not result in adverse effects on the environment, public safety, or private property.

Advance Reservation and Permit System

All public access in the program area would be managed through a reservation and permit system. The reservation and permit system would allow the managing entity to adaptively manage visitation levels, administer seasonal or weather-related public access closures, and ensure all visitors are aware of applicable rules. The reservation and permit system would also

allow the managing entity to coordinate public access with ongoing operations at Hollister Ranch, including routine activities such as cattle drives. Prior to accessing the program area, visitors would secure an advance reservation and permit to access a specific beach or beaches on a specific date. The permit system would require visitors to accept the applicable rules and provide basic contact information. The reservation and permit system would be enforced by the managing entity through beach patrols and/or at the entrance gate.

Individual Visitor Capacity

Individual visitation includes all visitors accessing the program area that are not part of a guided trip or managed group recreation access. This includes visitors accessing the area via a pedestrian or multi-use trail, shuttle, or private vehicle. In practice, the visitor capacity of individual public access in the program area would vary depending on numerous site- and visitor-specific factors including individual visitor behaviors, the mix of recreation activities, weather conditions, group sizes, and resource sensitivities of the visited beach. However, visitor capacity limits can be informed by guidelines and studies that suggest capacity limits for other coastal access sites. Guidelines from other coastal sites seek to identify the maximum number of visitors at one time that can be supported along a specific length of coastline, while achieving goals for environmental protection, visitor experience, or safety. These capacities can be expressed as the number of persons at one time per 100 linear feet (people/100 LF) of coastline. For example, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has established coastal visitor carrying capacity guidelines of 0.4 to 1 people/100 LF of coastline for surfing and 1 to 5 people/100 LF for shoreline fishing (Florida Department of Environmental Protection 2024). Social carrying capacity recommendations designed to prevent crowding and maintain desired visitor experiences range from 0.83 to 1.14 people/100 LF (Brownlee et al 2019 and Needham et al 2008). Carrying capacities to protect public safety for swimmers in Washington State recommend 3.33 people/100 LF (Washington State Department of Health 2025). These published studies and guidelines provide a reasonable range of 0.4 to 5 people/100 LF of coastline that can be used to inform capacities for individual access in the program area.

Maximum daily visitor capacities for individual access (i.e., access via a pedestrian or multi-use trail, shuttle, or private vehicles) under each access program option are presented in Sections 1.4.3 through 1.4.8, below. These maximum capacities are based visitor numbers that could range from 1.5 to 3 people/100 LF of accessible coastline for different Access Program Options. For purposes of these estimates, the length of accessible coastline at each beach was measured from remote sensing data. For larger beaches, the amount of accessible coastline was limited to a 0.25-mile walking distance from the likely beach access point.

Group Visitor Capacity

Group visitation includes visitors accessing the program area as part of an organized group using either the guided trip or managed group recreational access methods. The resource effects, safety considerations, and visitor expectations for group access are different than individual access. In the case of group access, a trained docent or designated group leader would be responsible for ensuring the group complies with safety and environmental protection requirements. Visitors engaging in group access would not have the same expectations for solitude that individual visitors

may expect. Therefore, a visitor capacity based on persons at one time along a specific length of coastline is less applicable to group access. As described in Section 1.3.2, the HROA currently administers group access programs including a tidepool school program, recreational access for individuals with disabilities, and flora and fauna tours. These programs include group sizes ranging from as few as 2 participants for scientific research to as many as 50 participants in one case. The majority of these existing group programs include 20 to 40 participants. Group visitation at this level has not resulted in known resource degradation in the program area. To maintain consistency with existing group access programs, the daily visitor capacity for group trips and managed group recreational access are each proposed at levels between 20 to 40 people per day at each beach where guided trip or managed group recreational access is proposed.

Sections 1.4.3 through 1.4.8 provide proposed daily visitor capacities for individual access, managed group access, and guided trips for each access program option. These visitor capacities reflect the maximum daily visitation and these maximum levels of visitation would not be expected to occur every day. Public access would not be available every day due to seasonal or other public access closures, as discussed in more detail below.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

All Access Program Options would include measures to protect public safety, preserve sensitive natural and cultural resources, and minimize disturbance to private property. At a minimum, the access program would include the following features.

Rules

The public access program would include a clear and enforceable set of rules for visitors. The rules would cite or address topics in applicable local, state or federal laws related to public safety, trespassing, liability, and resource protection. At a minimum, the rules would forbid trespassing outside of designated public areas; prohibit fires, fireworks, and other dangerous materials; and limit access to specific hours.

Patrols

For any access program option that includes individual access, trained staff or docents would patrol publicly accessible beaches to manage visitor use. They would ensure visitors comply with the reservation and permit system and all applicable rules. Staff or docents would also educate visitors on safe and appropriate uses and could share interpretive information on Hollister Ranch's resource values. Patrollers would assist in coordinating emergency response. They would have radios or other communication equipment capable of contacting first responders.

Public Access Closures

All Access Program Options would include an entrance control gate or kiosk to control public access. The proposed program would designate specific areas for public access and prohibit access outside of designated areas. The access program options would also include temporary public access closures at some or all beaches as necessary to protect resources or public safety. Seasonal closures would be in place to protect sensitive biological periods, and other targeted closures would also be in effect during periods of hazardous weather or tidal conditions, or when

ranch operations or other conditions present a hazard for public access. The managing entity would administer and enforce public access closures in coordination with Hollister Ranch, the HROA, and a state agency.

Signage and Fencing

All Access Program Options would include signage clearly posting rules and identifying publicly accessible and closed areas. Signs could also display other pertinent visitor information and interpret significant resource values. Fencing could be required in strategic locations at some beaches to exclude visitors from sensitive resource sites or other closed areas, such as bull pastures. All signage and fencing would be designed to be compatible with the natural setting and scenic character of the program area and minimize disturbance.

Restrooms and Trash

Each beach that is available for public access would include a public restroom and trash/recycling receptacles. Restrooms could be portable or prefabricated permanent structures with an above-ground vault. All facilities would meet ADA accessibility requirements and could include small pads and walkways. No running water would be provided. Facilities would be sited and designed to match the aesthetic character of the beach, minimize disturbance, and any subsurface excavation would depend on the specific conditions at each beach location.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The managing entity would be responsible for ongoing operations and maintenance of public facilities. Operation and maintenance activities would include regular trash removal and litter pickup, and restroom cleaning and maintenance. The managing entity would also be responsible for maintaining any signs fences, public walkways, stairs, or other public access features. Operations and maintenance activities would be coordinated with HROA, and maintenance responsibilities would be identified in the easement or documentation establishing public overland access rights.

1.4.3 Access Program Option 1: Provide Guided Trip Access

Access Program Option 1, Provide Guided Trip Access, would provide managed access via guided trips to all beaches in the program area. It would allow visitors to access beaches with a trained guide. The guide would share information on appropriate uses, resource protection, and public safety to promote responsible access. The full range of recreational activities could be provided through guided access. Tours would allow the total number of visitors to be limited and the timing of visitation to be controlled. The managing entity could make adaptive management adjustments over time.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 1 would include guided trips to all six beaches in the program area (see Appendix 1 Figure A1-1). This option would allow up to 240 visitors to access the program area as

part of guided trips during a single day. Guided trip access could include one large trip per day or multiple smaller trips that provide total access for up to 40 people at each beach per day. Table 3 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this option. The maximum daily visitor capacity would not be met every day because seasonal or targeted closures could reduce the number of days where access is allowed and the maximum group size would likely not be met every day.

Table 3 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 1

Beach	Individual Visitors (none)	Managed Group Visitors (none)	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	0	0	40	40
Alegria	0	0	40	40
Sacate	0	0	40	40
Drakes	0	0	40	40
Bulito	0	0	40	40
San Augustine	0	0	40	40
Total Visitors	**0**	**0**	**240**	**240**

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 1 would provide access for fewer visitors than all other options. Access Program Option 1 would provide access to all beaches and could accommodate a limited range of beach activities focused on educational or interpretive tours. It would not provide managed group recreational access or individual recreational access, which would limit the types of recreational opportunities.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Access Program Option 1 would require new visitor serving facilities to accommodate the guided trips including roadway improvements and facilities at each beach. See Appendix A Figures A1-7, A1-11, A1-15, A1-19, A1-20, and A1-21.

Roadway Improvements

With this option, roadway access would be limited to vehicles driven by a guide. This could include vans or shuttles up to 26 feet in length, or several smaller vehicles transporting groups of up to 40 visitors to the beaches. Improvements within Hollister Ranch could include targeted road widening or pullout/passing areas anywhere along the approximately 8.1 miles of Hollister Ranch Road from the entrance station to San Augustine Beach.

Agua Caliente Beach

At Agua Caliente Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-7):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two new van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,
- A picnic table and trash/recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

Alegria Beach

At Alegria Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-11):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two new van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,
- A picnic table and trash/recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

Sacate Beach

At Sacate Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-15):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two new van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- Beach access path improvements,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,
- A picnic table and trash/recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

Drakes Beach

At Drakes Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-19):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- Signage/gate to prohibit public access to HROA facilities,
- Relocated HROA parking spaces,
- Potential beach access path improvements,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,
- A trash and recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

Bulito Beach

At Bulito Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-20):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- Signage/gate to prohibit public access to HROA facilities,
- Beach access path improvements,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,

- A trash and recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

San Augustine Beach

At San Augustine Beach, physical improvements are proposed to include (See Appendix A Figure A1-21):

- A van or shuttle and emergency vehicle turnaround,
- Two van or shuttle parking spaces for guided trip vehicles,
- Signage/gate to prohibit public access to HROA facilities,
- Beach access path improvements,
- A single capacity portable or above-ground vault toilet for public use,
- A trash and recycling receptacle, and
- A kiosk or signs.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

Access Program Option 1 would be one of the most feasible options and could be fully implemented more quickly than the other options. Access could be provided to some beaches in an initial phase, followed by access to additional beaches after required infrastructure is provided. Initial investments would include establishing the guided trip program and developing the visitor facilities described above. Because the option would not allow unguided access, operation and maintenance needs would be more limited than other options. Operation and maintenance needs would include managing the guided trip program and maintaining facilities.

1.4.4 Access Program Option 2: Prioritize Feasibility and Early Access

Access Program Option 2, Prioritize Feasibility and Early Access, would prioritize the most cost effective, feasible public access options to provide public access as quickly as possible, while not limiting access to guided trips. It would minimize infrastructure needs and ongoing management requirements and focus on access options that are the easiest to implement and maintain. Phase 1 would provide access to all beaches via guided trips and managed group recreational access. In Phase 2, a pedestrian trail would be added to provide access to eastern beaches.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 2 would include some form of access to all six beaches in the program area. This option would allow up to 335 visitors to access the program area during a single day. Bulito and Drakes beaches would be accessible only by guided trip access. San Augustine, Sacate, Alegria, and Agua Caliente beaches would be accessible by managed group recreational access and guided trips. Alegria and Agua Caliente beaches would also be accessible via a pedestrian

trail that parallels Hollister Ranch Road with spur trails connecting to these two beaches. Appendix A Figure A1-2 shows the access methods and beaches proposed for this option.

Individual visitor access would be limited to Agua Caliente and Alegria beaches via the pedestrian trail. Visitor capacity for pedestrian trail access is proposed at a level that would not exceed 2 people/100 LF of coastline based on half-day reservations. Visitor capacities for guided trip access and managed group recreational access would vary from 20 people per day at smaller beaches to 40 people per day for larger beaches. Table 4 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this option.

Table 4 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 2

Beach	Individual Visitors (pedestrian trail)	Managed Group Visitors	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	9	20	20	49
Alegria	6	20	20	46
Sacate	0	40	40	80
Drakes	0	0	40	40
Bulito	0	0	40	40
San Augustine	0	40	40	80
Total Visitors	15	120	200	335

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 2 would provide access for more visitors than Access Program Options 1, 3 and 5, but fewer visitors than Access Program Options 4 and 6. It would provide access to all beaches and could accommodate a range of educational activities and beach recreation opportunities in a group setting as well as limited individual walk-in access to the two eastern most beaches. It would not provide individual visitor access to other beaches, which would limit opportunities for solitude and dispersed independent recreation.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Visitor serving facilities under Access Program Option 2 would be the same as under Access Program Option 1 with the addition of a pedestrian trail and trailhead and parking for managed group recreational access vehicles. See page 1-35 and Appendix A Figures A1-8, A1-12, A1-16, A1-19, A1-20, and A1-22.

Pedestrian Trail and Trailhead

The pedestrian trail would be a 4-foot-wide walking trail constructed of crushed aggregate or compacted native soil adjacent to Hollister Ranch Road. The trail would run approximately 3.25 miles parallel to the road from the Hollister Ranch property boundary to Alegria Beach. Spur trails would access Agua Caliente and Alegria beaches. Limited shoulder widening and retaining walls may be required in specific locations between the Hollister Ranch entrance and Alegria Beach. Appendix 1 Figures A1-25 and A1-26 include conceptual renderings of the proposed trail design.

Roadway Improvements

Access Program Option 2 would include the same roadway improvements as Access Program Option 1.

Agua Caliente Beach

Access Program Option 2 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 plus the following (See Appendix A Figure A1-8):

- Four additional parking spaces for managed group vehicles, and
- A spur pedestrian trail from Hollister Ranch Road to the beach.

Alegria Beach

Access Program Option 2 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 in addition to the following(See Appendix A Figure A1-12):

- Four additional parking spaces for public groups, and
- A spur pedestrian trail from Hollister Ranch Road to the beach.

Sacate Beach

Access Program Option 2 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 plus the following (See Appendix A Figure A1-16):

- Eight additional vehicle parking spaces for managed groups, and
- Railroad crossing safety improvements.

Drakes and Bulito Beaches

Access Program Option 2 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 for Drakes and Bulito beaches (See Appendix A Figures A1-19 and A1-20).

San Augustine Beach

Access Program Option 2 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 in addition to the following(See Appendix A Figure A1-22):

- Railroad crossing safety improvements, and
- Designated public managed group parking within an existing parking area.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

Access Program Option 2 would be one of the most feasible options and an initial phase could be implemented on a similar timeline as Access Program Option 1. Managed group recreational access and guided trips could occur in an initial phase or phases, followed by development of the pedestrian trail in a later phase. Initial investments would include establishing the guided trip and managed group recreational access programs and developing the visitor facilities described above. Operation and maintenance needs would be more limited than all other options except Access Program Option 1 and would include managing the guided trip and managed group recreational access programs, patrolling two beaches with individual pedestrian trail access, and maintaining facilities.

1.4.5 Access Program Option 3: Emphasize Natural and Cultural Resource Protection

Access Program Option 3, Emphasize Natural and Cultural Resource Protection, would seek to minimize effects on sensitive natural or cultural resources while providing compatible public access. It would provide a range of different access methods based on the resources present at each beach. Compared to Access Program Options 1 and 2, this Access Program Option would generally provide more access to San Augustine and Sacate beaches, similar access to Alegria and Agua Caliente beaches, and no public access to Bulito and Drakes beaches.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 3 would allow up to 326 visitors to access the program area during a single day. Individual visitor access would be in the form of shuttle access to Sacate and San Augustine beaches, as well as via a pedestrian trail to Agua Caliente Beach. Group access would be in the form of guided trip access and managed group recreational access to all beaches except Drakes and Bulito, which would have no public access. Figure A1-3 shows the access methods and beaches proposed for this Access Program Option.

Individual visitor capacity would be greater than under Access Program Options 1 or 2, because individual access would be provided to more and larger beaches. However, the visitor capacity for individual access is proposed at a lower visitor density under Access Program Option 3 than under all other options. Individual visitation would be at a level that would not exceed 1.5 people/100 LF of coastline based on half-day reservations. Visitor capacities for guided trip access and managed group recreational access would each allow up to 20 people at each of the three beaches that would be open for group access. Table 5 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this Access Program Option.

Table 5 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 3

Beach	Individual Visitors (pedestrian trail and shuttle)	Managed Group Visitors	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	7	20	20	47
Alegria	0	20	20	40
Sacate	79	20	20	119
Drakes	0	0	0	0
Bulito	0	0	0	0
San Augustine	80	20	20	120
Total Visitors	**166**	**80**	**80**	**326**

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 3 would provide access for more visitors than Access Program Options 1 and 5, but fewer visitors than Access Program Options 2, 4, and 6. It would provide access to four of the six beaches and could accommodate a range of beach recreation opportunities with approximately half of the visitation occurring in group settings and half occurring as unguided access. As such, it would provide a balance of opportunities for dispersed independent recreation,

group recreation, and educational trips. This Access Program Option includes the lowest density of unguided visitor access, which would provide greater opportunities for solitude than other options.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Visitor serving facilities under Access Program Option 3, would be similar to Access Program Options 1 and 2, except that Access Program Option 3 would not include visitor facilities at Drakes and Bulito beaches, would include additional shuttle infrastructure at Sacate and San Augustine beaches, and would include a shorter pedestrian trail than Access Program Option 2, as described below. See Appendix A Figures A1-8, A1-12, A1-16, and A1-22.

Pedestrian Trail and Trailhead

As with Access Program Option 2, the pedestrian trail would be a 4-foot wide walking trail constructed of crushed aggregate or compacted native soil adjacent to Hollister Ranch Road. Under Access Program Option 3 the trail would run approximately 0.75 miles parallel to the road from the Hollister Ranch property boundary to Agua Caliente Beach. Appendix 1 Figures A1-25 and A1-26 include conceptual renderings of the proposed trail design.

Roadway Improvements

With Access Program Option 3, roadway access would be limited to group access vehicles and a shuttle. This could include a dedicated beach shuttle, vans, or groups of vehicles transporting groups of up to 20 visitors to the beaches. Shuttle staging areas and associated parking and facilities would be developed at one or two sites outside of Hollister Ranch as described in Section 1.4.1, "Access Methods". Improvements along Hollister Ranch Road would include minor targeted safety improvements or widening. It is anticipated that slightly more roadway improvements would occur under Access Program Option 3 than Access Program Options 1 or 2 to accommodate shuttle access.

Agua Caliente, Alegria, Sacate, and San Augustine Beaches

Access Program Option 3 is proposed to include the same beach facilities proposed at Agua Caliente, Alegria, Sacate, and San Augustine beaches under Access Program Option 2 except for the following differences (See Appendix A Figures A1-8, A1-12, A1-16, and A1-22):

- Addition of shuttle drop-off/pick-up locations at Sacate and San Augustine beaches,
- Additional picnic tables, trash/recycling receptacles, and restrooms at Sacate and San Augustine beaches, and
- No pedestrian trail to Alegria Beach.

Drakes and Bulito Beaches

No visitor facilities or public access to Drakes or Bulito beaches would occur under Access Program Option 3.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

Access Program Option 3 would be moderately feasible. This option could be implemented in multiple phases, with guided trip access and managed group recreational access provided in an initial phase, followed by shuttle access and the pedestrian trail provided in later phases. An initial phase could be implemented on a similar timeline as Access Program Options 1 and 2, but this option would likely take longer to fully implement than Access Program Options 1 and 2. Initial investments would include establishing the guided trip, managed group recreational, and shuttle access programs and developing the visitor facilities described above. Ongoing operation and maintenance needs would be more intensive than Access Program Options 1 and 2 due to the need to manage the shuttle program, but these costs would be less than Access Program Options 4 through 6.

1.4.6 Access Program Option 4: Prioritize Access to Largest Beaches

Access Program Option 4, Prioritize Access to Largest Beaches, would provide a variety of access methods to the four largest beaches (Sacate, Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine), in order to prioritize the quality of the beach and recreation experience, rather than the quantity of beaches accessed. Access to Sacate and San Augustine would be through a combination of access options; and access to Drakes and Bulito would be provided through guided trips only. This Access Program Option would provide no public access to Agua Caliente and Alegria beaches, and the same access to Drakes and Bulito beaches as proposed under Access Program Options 1 and 2. This option would provide more access to Sacate and San Augustine beaches than Access Program Options 1 through 3.

This Access Program Option would include guided trip access, managed group recreational access, independent shuttle access, and private vehicle access. Bulito and Drakes beaches would be limited to guided trip access only. San Augustine and Sacate beaches would be accessible by guided trip access, managed group recreational access, independent shuttle access, and private vehicle access (see Appendix A, Figure A1-4).

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 4 would allow up to 372 visitors to access the program area during a single day. Individual visitor access would be in the form of private vehicle access and independent shuttle access to Sacate and San Augustine beaches. Group access would be in the form of guided trips and managed group recreational access to Sacate and San Augustine beaches and guided trips to Drakes and Bulito beaches.

The visitor capacity for individual visitor access is proposed at a level that would not exceed 2 people/100 LF of coastline based on half-day reservations. Visitor capacities for guided trip and managed group recreational access would vary from 20 to 40 people at each of the four beaches that would be open for group access. Table 6 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this option.

Table 6 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 4

Beach	Individual Visitors (private vehicle and shuttle)	Managed Group Visitors	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	0	0	0	0
Alegria	0	0	0	0
Sacate	106	20	20	146
Drakes	0	0	40	40
Bulito	0	0	40	40
San Augustine	106	20	20	146
Total Visitors	212	40	120	372

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 4 would provide access for more visitors than all options except Access Program Option 6. It would provide access to four of the six beaches and could accommodate a range of beach recreation opportunities, although opportunities for tidepooling would be more limited than the other options because this option would not provide access to Agua Caliente or Alegria beaches. However, this option would allow for private vehicle access, which would provide convenience and a greater ability for visitors to bring surf boards, fishing equipment, or other recreation equipment. It would allow more visitation in the form of individual access than group access. As such, it would provide more opportunities for dispersed independent recreation than all options except Access Program Option 6.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Visitor serving facilities would be provided at four beaches under Access Program Option 4. There would be no facilities or public access at Agua Caliente and Alegria beaches. Facilities at Drakes and Bulito beaches would be the same as under Access Program Options 1 and 2, while additional facilities would be proposed to provide private vehicle access to Sacate and San Augustine beaches. See Appendix A Figures A1-17, A1-19, A1-20, and A1-23.

Roadway Improvements

With Access Program Option 4, roadway improvements would be necessary to safely accommodate individual private vehicles, a shuttle, vans, or vehicles transporting groups to the beaches. Shuttle staging areas and associated parking and facilities would be developed at up to two sites outside of Hollister Ranch as described in Section 1.4.1, "Access Methods". Improvements along Hollister Ranch would include more safety improvements and widening than in Access Program Options 1 through 4 to accommodate individual private vehicle access.

Agua Caliente and Alegria Beaches

No visitor facilities or public access to Agua Caliente or Alegria beaches would occur under Access Program Option 4.

Sacate Beach

Access Program Option 4 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 plus the following facilities (See Appendix A Figure A1-17):

- Up to 33 additional public vehicle parking spaces, and
- Railroad crossing safety improvements.

Drakes and Bulito Beaches

Visitor facilities at Drakes and Bulito beaches are proposed to be the same as described for Access Program Option 1 (See Appendix A Figure A1-19 and A1-20).

San Augustine Beach

Access Program Option 4 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 for San Augustine Beach, in addition to the following (See Appendix A Figure A1-23):

- A shuttle drop-off/pick-up location,
- Railroad crossing safety improvements,
- Up to 41 new parking spaces for public vehicles, and
- A potential new HROA-only parking area.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

The feasibility of Access Program Option 4 would be moderate to low compared to other Access Program Options. This Access Program Option could be implemented in multiple phases, with guided trip and managed group recreational access provided in an initial phase, followed by shuttle and private vehicle access provided in later phases. An initial phase could be implemented on a similar timeline as Access Program Options 1 and 2, but this Access Program Option would likely take longer to fully implement than Access Program Options 1, 2, or 3 due to infrastructure and management needs to accommodate both a shuttle and private vehicle access. Initial investments would include establishing the guided trip, managed group recreational access, and shuttle programs and developing the visitor facilities described above. Ongoing operation and maintenance needs would be more intensive than Access Program Options 1, 2, and 3 due to the need to operate the shuttle program and manage private vehicle access. The ongoing management needs would be similar to Access Program Option 5 and lower than Access Program Option 6.

1.4.7 Access Program Option 5: Provide Access to Eastern Beaches

Access Program Option 5, Provide Access to Eastern Beaches, would focus on providing access to the beaches closest to the Hollister Ranch entrance. It would provide private vehicle access, independent shuttle access, managed group recreational access, guided trip access, and a pedestrian trail to the eastern three beaches (Agua Caliente, Alegria, and Sacate). Access to the western beaches (Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine) would not be provided. This Access Program Option seeks to provide public access compatible with the pre-existing private ranch owners road

use by clustering public use closer to the entrance. By focusing public access closer to the entrance, this Access Program Option is intended to minimize emergency response times and traffic related to private vehicle access.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 5 would allow up to 261 visitors to access the eastern beaches in the program area during a single day. Unguided access would be in the form of private vehicle access, a pedestrian trail, and independent shuttle access, while guided access would be a mix of guided group and managed group recreational access. No public access would be provided to Drakes, Bulito, or San Augustine beaches. Appendix 1 Figure A1-5 shows the access methods and beaches proposed for this Access Program Option.

The visitor capacity for individual access is proposed at a level that would not exceed 2 people/100 LF of coastline based on half-day reservations. Visitor capacities for guided trip and managed group recreational access would each vary from 20 to 40 people at each beach. Table 7 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this Access Program Option.

Table 7 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 5

Beach	Individual Visitors (shuttle, private vehicles, pedestrian trail)	Managed Group Visitors	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	9	20	20	49
Alegria	6	20	20	46
Sacate	106	40	20	166
Drakes	0	0	0	0
Bulito	0	0	0	0
San Augustine	0	0	0	0
Total Visitors	121	80	60	261

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 5 would provide access for fewer visitors than all options except Access Program Option 1. It would provide access to three of the six beaches and could accommodate a range of beach recreation opportunities, although opportunities for recreation on large sandy beaches would be limited to Sacate Beach. This Access Program Option would allow for private vehicle access, which would provide convenience and a greater ability for visitors to bring surfboards, fishing equipment, or other recreation equipment. It would allow slightly more than half of the visitation to occur in group settings, with slightly less than half of the visitor capacity reserved for individual visitors. It would provide a balance of opportunities for dispersed independent recreation and group recreation.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Visitor serving facilities under Access Program Option 5 would include roadway and beach improvements to the eastern beaches. There would be no facilities at Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine beaches. See Appendix A Figures A1-9, A1-13, and A1-17.

Pedestrian Trail and Trailhead

As with Access Program Options 2 and 3, the pedestrian trail would be a 4-foot-wide walking trail constructed of crushed aggregate or compacted native soil adjacent to Hollister Ranch Road. Under Access Program Option 5, the trail would run approximately 5.25 miles parallel to the road from the Hollister Ranch property boundary to Sacate Beach. Spur trails would provide access to Agua Caliente, Alegria, and Sacate beaches. Figures A1-25 and A1-26 include conceptual renderings of the proposed trail design.

Roadway Improvements

With Access Program Option 5, public roadway access would be limited to the eastern approximately 3.2 miles of roadway from the Hollister Ranch entrance to Sacate Beach. Vehicles along this segment of road could include a shuttle, vans, individual private vehicles, or vehicles transporting groups of up to 40 visitors to the beaches. Shuttle staging areas and associated parking and facilities would be developed at up to two sites outside of Hollister Ranch as described in Section 1.4.1, "Access Methods". Improvements along Hollister Ranch Road would be similar in nature to Access Program Option 4, but would only occur along the eastern portion of the road.

Agua Caliente Beach

At Agua Caliente Beach, physical improvements are proposed to be the same as Access Program Option 2 with the addition of a shuttle drop-off/pick-up location (See Appendix A Figure A1-9).

Alegria Beach

At Alegria Beach, physical improvements are proposed to be the same as Access Program Option 2 with the addition of a shuttle drop-off/pick-up location (See Appendix A Figure A1-13).

Sacate Beach

At Sacate Beach, physical improvements are proposed to be the same as Access Program Option 4 (See Appendix A Figure A1-17).

Drakes, Bulito, and San Augustine Beaches

No public access of visitor facilities would be located at Drakes, Bulito, or San Augustine beaches.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

The feasibility of Access Program Option 5 would be moderate to low compared to other options. This Access Program Option could be implemented in multiple phases, with guided trip access and managed group recreational access provided in an initial phase, followed by shuttle, pedestrian trail, and private vehicle access provided in later phases. Phasing could occur similar to Access Program Option 4; however, it is possible that shuttle and private vehicle access could be provided sooner than under Access Program Option 4 due to the more limited amount of roadway improvements needed. Initial investments would include establishing the guided trip, managed group, and shuttle access programs and developing the visitor facilities described above. Ongoing operation and maintenance needs would be more intensive than Access Program Options 1, 2, and 3 due to the need to manage the shuttle program and manage private vehicle access. The ongoing management needs would be lower than Access Program Options 4 and 6.

1.4.8 Access Program Option 6: Maximize Public Access

Access Program Option 6, Maximize Public Access, would emphasize public access and seek to provide visitor access at every beach. This Access Program Option would provide the greatest amount of public access and would require the greatest amount of facility improvements and ongoing management. It would include all access methods except the pedestrian trail; however, pedestrian and bicycle access would be available via a multi-use trail to the three eastern beaches.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Access Program Option 6 would allow up to 579 visitors to access the beaches in the program area during a single day. Individual visitor access would be in the form of private vehicle access, a multi-use trail, and independent shuttle access, while group access would be a mix of guided trips and managed group recreational access. Access to Drakes and Bulito beaches would be limited to guided trips. Appendix A Figure A1-6 shows the access methods and beaches proposed for this Access Program Option.

The visitor capacity for individual visitor access under this Access Program Option is proposed at a higher density than the other Access Program Options to accommodate a greater level of access. Individual visitor access would be allowed at a level that would not exceed 3 people/100 LF of coastline based on half-day reservations. Visitor capacities for guided trip and managed group recreational would each vary from 20 to 40 people at each beach. Table 8 depicts the maximum daily visitor capacity for this option.

Table 8 Maximum Daily Visitor Capacity for Access Program Option 6

Beach	Individual Visitors (shuttle, private vehicles, multi-use trail)	Managed Group Access	Guided Visitors	Total Visitors
Agua Caliente	14	20	20	54
Alegria	8	20	20	48
Sacate	158	20	20	198
Drakes	0	0	40	40
Bulito	0	0	40	40
San Augustine	159	20	20	199
Total Visitors	**339**	**80**	**160**	**579**

Source: Compiled by Ascent in 2026.

Access Program Option 6 would provide access for more visitors than all other options. It would provide access to all six beaches and could accommodate the full range of beach recreation opportunities. This Access Program Option provides the greatest convenience and diversity of public access opportunities. However, it would allow greater individual visitor densities than the other Access Program Options, which would limit opportunities for solitude. It would provide the greatest opportunity for independent access of all Access Program Options, while also accommodating group access.

VISITOR FACILITIES

Visitor serving facilities under Access Program Option 6 would include roadway improvements, and a multi-use trail to the eastern beaches. Facilities at Drakes and Bulito beaches would be the same as under Access Program Options 1 and 2, while additional facilities would be proposed to provide private vehicle access to Agua Caliente, Alegria, Sacate, and San Augustine beaches. See Appendix A Figures A1-10, A1-14, A1-18, A1-19, A1-20, and A1-24.

Multi-Use Trail and Trailhead

Access Program Option 6 would include an approximately 6- to 8-foot-wide multi-use trail that would accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. The trail would be adjacent to Hollister Ranch Road and would run approximately 3.1 miles from the Hollister Ranch property boundary to the intersection with the Sacate Beach access road. Bicyclist and pedestrian access to Agua Caliente, Alegria, and Sacate beaches from Hollister Ranch Road would be along the existing access roads. See Appendix A1 Figures A1-24 and A1-25 for conceptual renderings of the proposed trail.

Roadway Improvements

Roadway improvements under Access Program Option 6 would be the same as described for Access Program Option 4.

Agua Caliente and Alegria Beaches

Physical improvements at Agua Caliente and Alegria beaches would be the same as Access Program Option 5, except that it would include a multi-use trail to each of these beaches instead of a pedestrian trail, as well as bicycle parking (See Appendix A Figures A1-10 and A1-14).

Sacate Beach

Access Program Option 6 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 for Sacate Beach, in addition to the following improvements (See Appendix A Figure A1-18):

- A shuttle drop-off/pick-up location,
- Up to 55 additional public vehicle parking spaces,
- Railroad crossing safety improvements, and
- Bicycle parking.

Drakes and Bulito Beaches

Visitor facilities at Drakes and Bulito beaches are proposed to be the same as under Access Program Option 1 (See Appendix A Figures A1-19 and A1-20).

San Augustine Beach

Access Program Option 6 would include the same facilities as Access Program Option 1 in addition to the following (See Appendix A Figure A1-24):

- A shuttle drop-off/pick-up location,
- Railroad crossing safety improvements,
- Up to 58 new parking spaces for public vehicles,
- A potential new HROA-only parking area, and
- Bicycle parking.

RELATIVE FEASIBILITY

Access Program Option 6 would be the least feasible of all Access Program Options. This Access Program Option could be implemented in multiple phases, with guided trip access and managed group recreational access provided in an initial phase, followed by shuttle access, the multi-use trail, and private vehicle access in later phases. Initial investments would be greater than the other options and include establishing the guided trip, shuttle, and managed group recreational access programs and developing the visitor facilities described above. Ongoing operation and maintenance needs would also be more intensive than the other options due to the need to operate the shuttle program, maintain the multi-use trail, maintain more facilities and manage the largest amount of private vehicle access of all Access Program Options.

2 REFERENCES

Brownlee, Matthew T.J., R. Sharp, M. Blacketer, J. Nettles, and E. Perry. 2019. *Evaluation of the relationship between current conditions, travel patterns, visitor thresholds, and ferry services at Cumberland Island National Seashore*. Clemson University and Kansas State University.

California Coastal Commission. 2021 (September). Draft Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Program.

California Department of Transportation. 2018 (September). *California State Rail Plan*. Available: https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/rail-mass-transportation/documents/rail-plan/2-chapter-2csrpfinal.pdf. Accessed December 9, 2025.

California Public Utilities Commission. Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch. 2023 (August 10). *Memorandum. Private Rail Crossings Guidelines.* Available*: https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/rail-safety-division/rceb/privatecrossingsguidelines-revised-august-10-2023.pdf*. Accessed February 10, 2026.

Caltrans. *See* California Department of Transportation.

CCC. *See* California Coastal Commission.

CPUC. *See* California Public Utilities Commission.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Visitor Carrying Capacity Guidelines. Last updated August 20, 2024. Available: https://floridadep.gov/parks/parks-office-park-planning/documents/carrying-capacity-guidelines. Accessed January 5, 2025.

Hollister Ranch Owners' Association. 2013 (December). Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions.

HROA. *See* Hollister Ranch Owners' Association.

Needham, Mark D. J.F. Tynon, R.L. Ceurvorst, R.L. Collins, W.M. Connor, and M.J.W. Culnane. 2008. Recreation Carrying Capacity and Management at Kailua Beach Park on Oahu, Hawaii. Final project report for Hawaii Coral Reef Initiative – Research Program. Corvallis: Oregon State University, Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society. Available: https://nature.forestry.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/2007-2b%20HCRI%20-%20Kailua%20Beach%20Park%20-%20Final%20Project%20Report%20-%20Needham%20-%20Final.pdf. Accessed January 12, 2026.

TAL. *See* Te Amo Livestock LLC.

Te Amo Livestock LLC. 2023. Te Amo Livestock Graving Management Plan [for] Hollister Ranch.

Washington State Department of Health. 2025 (November). Designated Swim Area Guidelines. Available: https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/water-recreation/regulated-facilities/laws-and-rules. Accessed January 12, 2025.