

### CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS UNIVERSITY PARK

2016 VISION PLAN CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS

## UNIVERSITY OF CHANNEL ISLANDS TEAM

Caroline Doll, Director John H. Gormley, AIA, Campus Architect/Senior Director

# RELM

Scott Baker, RLA, ASLA, Principal Michelle Frier, Associate Amber Hawkes, Associate Principal Kaleen Juarez, Landscape Designer Alexander Jung, Urban Designer

### **STEERING GROUP**

Erik Blaine David Carlson Caroline Doll John Gormley Ed Lebioda

### EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Wes Cooper, CSUCI Facilities Amanda Fagan, US Navy

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK



### CONSULTANT TEAM

LAND IQ

Margot Griswold, Ph.D., Senior Ecologist Melissa Riedel-Lehrke, Associate Ecologist



Clark Stevens, Architect, Principal Michal Sotona, Project Team

### SPECIAL THANKS TO ADVISORY BODIES

### **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

John Reid Donald Rodriguez Dan Wakelee

Ruben Alarcon Jeanne Grier Sean Anderson Bill Kupfer Raudel Banuelos Michael Morris Grant Smith Karen Carey Michael Gravagne Terry Tarr

Melanie Beck, National Park Service John Broome Jr., Ventura County Resident Bob Cerasuolo, Pleasant Valley Park District Colleen Delaney, CSUCI Faculty Steve Doll, Ventura County Resident

Matt James, Coastal Restoration Consultants Darren Kettle, VCTC David Magney, DMEC Mary Otten, Pleasant Valley Park District Linda Parks, Ventura County Supervisor Ray Porras, CSUCI Conference & Events Cory Rubright, Ventura County Fire

Jeff Shea, Ventura County Sherriff Rorie Skei, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Tony Stafford, Camrosa Water District Robert Wagner, Channel Islands Condors Matt Winegar, Sites Pacific Planning & Consulting Damon Wing, Ventura County Celina Zacharias, CSUCI Governmental Relations

## 01 02 INTRODUCTION

A close look at what natural and human influences have shaped University Park today



### THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK

## 02 14 UNIVERSITY PARK TODAY

A presentation of the opportunities and challenges

## 03 26 UNIVERSITY PARK TOMORROW

Our vision for University Park based on its history as well as our existing conditions analysis

## 0452 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

University Park can serve as an educational space for a wide range of users interested in the area's unique habitats, ecologies, and history.

## 05 64 NEXT STEPS

Conversations that need to be discussed in order to move the University Park vision forward.



## PROJECT **OVERVIEW**

The University Park Vision Plan was developed strategically managed, then the habitat and for California State University Channel Islands to natural ecologies within the park can be reenvision the future utilization of University Park. established, offering the greatest opportunities The Plan proposes strategies for park design for education and research of natural systems. and programming, ecological restoration, and adaptive reuse—all of which are conceptualized As the result of an interactive process consisting within the framework of providing educational opportunities, enhanced accessibility, and passive recreational use. The Vision Plan team conducted an extensive review of the park, which included a study of existing plans and programs, ecological and building conditions, and a robust public outreach process.

to the existing conditions and opportunities of systems and offering appropriate restoration the park. Currently, the 367 acres are defined by approaches. The final strategy addresses park recovering and developing habitat, unformalized pathways, underutilized and aging infrastructure, functional water storage facilities, a model recommendations for the structures currently airplane runway, and some surface parking. The located on site. Following this discussion, the following pages present an overarching set of Plan concludes with a brief consideration of next guidelines and principles that helps to formalize steps for the park. While only the first step in the the park's use. The Vision Plan is based on the process, the Vision Plan provides the framework premise that if access and use is carefully and for future phases.

of detailed field investigation and stakeholder engagement, the Plan addresses three key strategies for the park. The first focuses on accessibility and mobility through the identification of entries, public and servicevehicle parking, and a park-wide trail hierarchy that addresses pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation. The second strategy addresses the Much of what the Plan proposes is in response site's ecology by identifying existing habitat programming, focusing on use and user group distribution, necessary support facilities, and

### PRE-VISION PLAN



### VISION PLAN AND BEYOND

outreach and vision building within University and

### FUTURE

University secures funding for fulfillment of phased Vision Plan projects

## TIMELINE

The CSU Channel Islands campus and park region was occupied by the Chumash people for over 9,000 years. In the following 100 years, CSUCI University Park was used for agricultural production and a dairy. Once operating as a California state mental hospital, the dairy complex provided food for its staff and patients. In the 1980's, a federal prison was planned for the park; the remnants of which are currently seen on site. This proposal was widely opposed by the public, resulting in the federal government rejecting the project. The land was then transferred to Ventura County which planned to develop large scale projects on the site including an 18-hole golf course and amphitheater. While none of these proposals were ultimately developed, a model plane airstrip was built in Meadow 1 (see page 18). CI acquired the property from the County in 2009 with the requirement that the park site be used for public park and recreation purposes in perpetuity. Various ecological analyses, impact reports, and a needs assessment were published from 2004-2013—many of which are presented in the following pages. In 2015, CI engaged RELM and their consultant team to begin the Vision Planning process.



**DAIRY** Designed by the Works Projects Administration (WPA), the Dairy Complex was built during a period of historic significance in America—it is a reminder of a time when sustainability was presumed rather than a preference. As evidenced in the quality of the architectural drawings, this mid-1930's project reflects the level of importance given to design and construction during the Depression era. The dairy was conceived as an integrated and purpose-built operation, and yet, the dairy has the flexibility to serve a wide-range of uses including education, research, and conferences.

### AGRICULTURE In 1836,

Ysabel Yorba became sole owner of the 30,000 acre Rancho Guadalasca through a Mexican land grant in reparation for her husband's death while serving in congress in Mexico. Records indicate that Ysabel owned 925 head of cattle and about 70 horses, suggesting that the land, like most of the Santa Barbara and Ventura coast at the time, was heavily grazed.

From 1934 until 1997, the State of California operated a psychiatric hospital on the site. The hospital developed extensive agriculture operations in the late 1930's. Providing food for hospital staff and patients, the dairy and farm produced over 560 head of Holsteins, 304 acres of alfalfa, 227 acres of vegetables, and 178 acres of grain crops, some of which were grown within the park area. These row crops can be seen in historic aerial imagery from 1932 through 1977 and were the point of origin for the Meadow 1 conceptual design. Agricultural operations ceased in the early 1980's.



06 | Introduction



### **FLOODING** Channelized in the 1920's, Calleguas Creek flood control management has been protecting the site for over 80 years. In the winter of 1938, a catastrophic flood event occurred on site; the levees along both sides of Calleguas Creek overtopped in several locations, resulting in the flooding of the southern valley (Meadow 1). A large El Niño year from 1982 to 1983 continued to erode the levees that we currently see today. The park is one of the few areas along Calleguas Creek where levee removal and large scale floodplain restoration is feasible.

**FIRE** The Springs Fire in 2013 burned large portions of Cl. Ignited by a passing vehicle and extreme weather conditions, the fire burned 24,238 acres in a day and a half. While minimal damage was done to the surrounding communities, the park ridges and most of the meadows were burned. Burn recovery habitats are developing and provide educational opportunities for students in the University.



## **RELEVANT STUDIES**

COASTAL CONSERVANCY The Restoration Plan for CSU Channel Islands University Park published in June of 2013 by Coastal Restoration Consultants outlines restoration of 85 acres of wetland, riparian and upland habitat focused in the Southern valley of University Park.

The primary ecological goal of the project was to restore natural physical and biological processes that have been altered by creek channelization, historic filling of the floodplain and invasion by non-native species. The project was also designed to help advance the teaching mission of California State University, Channel Islands and to provide extensive passive recreation opportunities for the public. Finally, the project was proposed as an Army Corp In-Lieu Fee Mitigation site so we sought to maximize the available mitigation credits.

According to the plan, the park has long been recognized as one of the best opportunities for floodplain restoration on Calleguas Creek. Coastal Restoration Consultants present a feasible restoration project for University Park that can be implemented within the California State Coastal Conservancy's Army Corp In-Lieu Fee Program for Calleguas Creek. The plan has been prepared to serve as a basis for the environmental review (CEQA and NEPA) and permitting process. Engineering studies were carried out to assure the project would not increase flooding risk on adjacent parcels.

RELM used the Restoration Plan as the basis for the vision of the southern valley (Meadow 1) portion of the site. Plans developed by ESA-PWA for Coastal Restoration Consultants were the base layer for the ecological components on site.



Proposed habitat restoration, Coastal Restoration Consultants

goals for the project:

- Calleguas Creek

- infrastructure

The restoration plan outlines the following nine

1. *Restore more natural hydrologic* functioning of the project area by removing the eastern levee along 2. *Improve hydrologic functioning by* recreating more natural topography 3. *Restore native floristic biodiversity and* structure function 4. Improve watershed health through levee removal and floodplain restoration 5. Identify and mitigate impact of levee removal and floodplain restoration on the remaining levee and adjacent 6. Accommodate phasing of restoration to meet current and potential future funding availability 7. Support the teaching and research missions of CSUCI 8. Enhance opportunities for public access and interpretive elements that are compatible with restoration goals 9. Enhance, restore, and establish wetlands and active floodplain habitat appropriate

to Army Corp In-Lieu mitigation funding

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Hired in 2004 by the California State Coastal Conservancy, David Magney Environmental Consultants (DMEC) developed conceptual wetlands restoration plans for the CSU Channel Islands University Park site (formerly Camarillo Regional Park site). The functional assessment used the Hydrogeomorphic Rapid Assessment Method (HGM) to "objectively demonstrate how various proposed projects are expected to change wetland functions on-site." The assessment analyzed benefits to wetland function under four different scenarios:

- Building an 18-hole golf course
- Building an 18-hole golf course and enhancing remaining/existing wetlands
- Enhancing existing wetlands on-site
- Maximizing/expanding wetlands on-site

DMEC concluded that CI University Park contains substantial acreage (approximately 73.2 acres) of significant and important wetlands within and adjacent to Calleguas Creek. Developing a golf course on approximately 117 acres of the 327 acre park property would result in direct and indirect significant impacts to wetlands and wetland functions.

DMEC's extensive cataloging of biological resources served as the framework for LandIQ and their ecological analysis.

**RINCON** Retained by the University in 2012, Rincon Associates' objective was to provide pre-planning and community engagement prior to the development of the Vision Plan in the form of a Needs Assessment. The scope of work included: refining the park's purpose and mission, clarifying park functions, confirming use preferences that meet both University goals and accommodate the public, and exploring alternative land management models.

Rincon Associates conducted a series of stakeholder and community meetings which included stakeholder interviews held on campus as well as two separate focus group sessions consisting of university members and community members. The groups found that the top opportunities and priorities for the future of the park were as follows:

- Access to trails and linkages for connection to trails and open space areas in the Santa Monica Mountains
- Restoring and maintaining wildlife habitat corridors, wetlands, and native species
- Developing community outreach, educational, and interpretive programs about nature and open space resources for all age groups
- Among other questions, participants were asked: "As you think about the park, CI campus and the surrounding community as a whole; what is your vision for the Park?" The items listed below include popular responses/comments.
- Develop a comprehensive wetlands and native habitat enhancement program
- Develop community outreach, education, and interpretive programs about nature and open space resource pace areas in the Santa Monica Mountains
- Develop trailhead amenities and visitor serving facilities, such as picnic areas and restrooms, in five years
- Provide a cultural and educational space near the entry that discusses the history, topography, nature of the site
- Have the park serve as a gateway to the coast, Santa Monica Mountains, and the city
- Partner with other non-profit and public agencies
- Have the park serve as an outdoor laboratory for natural science students
- Ensure that the park is an asset for the University and community

The Rincon Consultants Needs Assessment served as the starting point upon which RELM began to build community outreach strategies as well as form initial goals for the Vision Plan.

### DAVID MAGNEY



Introduction | 11 |



## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

### STEERING & TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES In the fall of 2015,

CSU Channel Islands formulated two specific stakeholder groups to participate in meetings with the Vision Plan team. The technical advisory committee (TAC) consisted of professors from the University, facilities operators, campus police, students, and campus officials. A survey was developed and distributed to the TAC and stakeholder group prior to our first meeting; the responses overwhelmingly focused on the ideas that the vision plan should include the following:

Focus on conservation and restoration first
Ensure that all aspects of the park have educational function/support
Contribute to a clear "park identity"
Formalize a trail system that clarifies use allowances and restrictions
Clarify and improve the entry sequence

Engagement with the larger community took place on February 18, 2016 at Cls' John Spoor Broome Library. Over 30 people attended while a few people streamed live on the internet. Following introductions, the project team gave an overview presentation and divided the participants up into smaller groups. Most of the participants were very familiar with the project site and were experts in their respective fields. The group activity prompted thoughtful discussion and gave the team insight on how the project should move forward. The overall reception was positive and participants were generally supportive of the project.

### Meadow

## 02

## UNIVERSITY PARK TODAY

Offering a unique historic and natural framework, the 367 acre site is bounded by active agriculture production, a regional water connection, and one of the most visited natural areas in California— the Santa Monica Mountains. As an extension of the academic campus, the purpose of the park is to provide educational opportunities accessible to all through habitat restoration activities, maintenance of open spaces, and development of ecological, cultural, and recreational facilities and programs. The project team embarked on a number of site visits during different seasons to assess the conditions of the site. General site conditions were documented including existing vehicular and pedestrian conditions, signage, trail accessibility, adjacent land ownership, and accessibility and safety. The team also observed the complex social, historical, and infrastructural elements on site. RELM hiked the existing trails created by runners, hikers, and equestrian users, offering a unique perspective on the proposed trail network discussed in Part 03. New Land West documented the existing conditions of the Dairy complex including all structures and structural slabs. LandlQ documented the current ecological conditions on the site as well as potential opportunities for restoration. Using these visits and general research as the catalyst, the team proceeded with conceptualizing a comprehensive vision for the park and its potential recreational and educational opportunities.









| 16 | University Park Today

state due insufficient maintenance and upkeep. Conservation and adaptive reuse is a sustainable option to preserve the history of the site as well as reduce impact from development. For example, the water pipe structure located near the ridge trail, as pictured to the right, could be converted into a pathway to cross Calleguas Creek, improving connectivity and





## SITE ANALYSIS

the park's future phases.

CSU Channel Islands currently uses the park for research, teaching, and outdoor athletics. CSU's undergraduate Environmental Science & Resource Management program currently monitors the riparian habitat, studies the biodiversity of plants and insects, and monitors vegetation. The potential for a diverse set of disciplines to use the site will be discussed in Part 04. The safety concerns surround the park are due to sheer amount of land

Over the past 20 years, significant development has occurred in the area surrounding the park. East of the park is a 2,300-acre planned community consisting of 1,500 homes and to the south, a University-generated residential community of 658 housing units. These developments, as well as the cities of Camarillo and the adjacent Thousand Oaks, have introduced a new population to the park and have the potential to be key activators in

The topography of the park is representative of the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. Located along the east bank of Calleguas Creek a tributary of Conejo Creek, the park is bound by flood control levees to protect adjacent agriculture land from flooding. The agriculture land is accessible via the levee and Creek Road, its future potential uses will be discussed in the further pages. Camrosa Water District operates the four detention ponds adjacent to the creek, one of which falls within park boundaries. Most of the treated wastewater discharged into Conejo Creek is captured by the Camrosa Water District and held in these retention ponds and sold for irrigation before it reaches Calleguas Creek.

included in the park boundary and the current condition of the dairy complex. While the park does not currently benefit from a sizable set of users, a few groups of people were observed during site visits. Birders are attracted to the site's diverse flora and fauna, trail runners and the University Endurance Team use the site as a training facility, equestrians use the site as an informal training facility, and hobbyists, including a model airplane group and a model boat group, use the site for practice, as seen by the large airstrip in Meadow 1.



Service road to dairy complex



## KEY MOMENTS

Part 03.

The project team documented the key moments nature, history, and infrastructure. Although at the park, which include the impressive natural systems comprise the entire expanse of collection of historic relics, natural conditions, the park, areas such as the burn recovery habitat, alkali meadow, wetland habitat, and the ponds infrastructure, and nearby surroundings. These key moments were derived from site walks, are of interest. University faculty indicated observations made by the team, and a map during a Technical Advisory Committee meeting provided by the Technical Advisory Committee. that Environmental Science and Management students are participating in experimental Seen as moments to pause and learn, these research along the park's ridges and in the native compelling areas in the park offer the user the wetland habitat. In addition the Environmental opportunity to experience the natural, historical, Science students, Archeology students and built environment of the site through periodically investigate the Meadow 2 location. observations or hands-on participation. After The hobbyist club, the Condors, have used the documenting these key moments, entry hubs airfield located in Meadow 1 for weekend events for the various user groups became clear and and flying clubs. The Pond Rats have also used are indicated by the green circle on the map. Pond 1 to participate in remote-controlled boat These hubs serve as the center of activity for the racing. Although not currently documented as a University and the community users, and have native Chumash site, the region is known for its design potential which is discussed later in the rich Native American history. The location of this site and its proximity to fresh water would have been an ideal location for settlement. The water These key moments were also used to frame how infrastructure on-site is prominent and currently the Vision Plan team began to understand the is only accessible to Camrosa Water District. organization of the site. The team observed that These elements are a few examples of the diverse each moment fits into the idea of three themes— moments that people can experience.



- Alkali Meadow
- Annual Grassland
- Coyote Brush Scrub Burn Recovery
- Developed
- 22 University Park Today

- Emergent
- Ornamental Trees
- Pond
- Riparian Forest/Giant Reed
- **Riparian Scrub**
- 🗌 Road
- Ruderal

- Saltbush Scrub
- Saltcedar/Riparian Scrub
- Scrub Burn Recovery
- Unconsolidated River Bottom
- Weed Dominated
- **Wetland Resources**

## ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

The University Park site is located on the scrub is adapted to fire which might naturally southeast edge of the Oxnard plain, within the burn (over an average period between fires of rare, southern California black walnut trees are Calleguas Creek subwatershed, and is defined 60-80 years), and the slopes are currently reobserved growing at the site. Prior to the fire, by Calleguas Creek and former floodplain to establishing naturally at the site. Fire recovery the site supported coastal cactus wrens that nest the west, and low upland slopes to the north, at this point in time shows different coastal only in cactus. south, and east. The site has the potential for sage scrub species across portions of the site, high biodiversity given the adjacency of lowland depending on the soils and aspect of the slopes The University Park site slopes grade into creek and wetland habitats to the upland slopes the former floodplain of Calleguas Creek. For example, the south –facing, sandy loam habitats. This association of two or more habitat slopes of the University Park site are dominated Vegetation adapted to and requiring more by a mix of cactus and sage scrub shrub species types allows greater biodiversity across the site, moisture to grow exists in the northeast portion including potentially rare or endangered species while the northwest and north facing slopes, of the site, where there is relatively more native of plants and wildlife. with more loamy to clay loam soils have few wetland vegetation, and along Calleguas Creek cactus and more shrubs and perennial grasses in the western lowland area from the creek up The site's slopes are vegetated with a low Coastal sage scrub vegetation is adapted not to the slopes, where there is a mix of native shrubland plant community defined as coastal only to fire, but it is also adapted to our normally and exotic wetland and riparian vegetation. sage scrub. Coastal sage scrub vegetation only wet winter and seasonal dry summer conditions, Native plant species tend to dominate the area exists in the California coastal eco-region south being able to live during dry periods of summer, closer to the creek with more exotic species into northwestern coastal Baja California. This and even prolonged years of drought through further from the creek in the lowland areas unique vegetation is generally found on the various root, stem and leaf morphological and of the site. Invasive exotic species currently lower slopes of coastal southern California, and, physiological adaptations. The slope areas of prevent the development of native wetland this habitat type has been lost through time to the site currently support at least two sensitive species that likely existed at the site prior to the channelization of the creek and the introduction human development in the area. Therefore, species, Blochman's dudleya and Verity's dudleya. These species are succulents that grow the University Park site is important for the of agriculture at the site. on rock outcrops in the slopes of the University preservation of this unique habitat. Although the University Park site burned in 2013, coastal sage Park site. At the ecotone where the slopes grade

into the lowland, the native, and increasingly

The hay barn was constructed with a unique form, custom steel truss system, and dramatic lift panel main door design. It attributes make it not only historically significant, but also useful for a range of assembly functions, potentially seating up to 400 people. Its structural components should be assessed for serviceability and adaptive reuse.













## BUILDING CONDITIONS

The historic dairy complex contains approximately 20 acres of landscape with varying degrees of historic grading, construction remains, soil alteration by dairy use, and native habitat conditions. Within this 20 acre area of historic Dairy use, approximately 115,460 SF of concrete slabs and buildings remains are found on site in varying conditions.

The former hay barn remains with complete structural truss system, partial lateral bracing system and partial galvanized steel enclosure. While the missing elements of the structural system can be replaced, the interior steel has been exposed to weather for some time, consequently, it is recommended that the steel be analyzed for structural capacity according to today's requirements. The original exterior vertical concrete walls of the dairy headquarters and connected milking sheds remain. While some of the non-structural partition walls built with structural tile have been damaged through vandalism, and the roof framing was lost to fire, the concrete structure itself appears to be in relatively good condition. A sitewide water distribution system with four concrete watering troughs and 8 concrete feed troughs (minus the upper steel apparatus) remain on site. Archive construction drawings are available for the former buildings and infrastructure, with the exception of a small extension at the west wing of the dairy HQ building, these could be used by a structural engineer coupled with site inspections to determine the capacity of the original design as well as the weathered capacity of the remaining structural steel, connections and concrete. Based on overlay of aerial imagery, the buildings and site elements appear to correspond to the archived drawings. Construction is from the same period and architectural team as the Hospital, which is considered to be well constructed by the Campus Architect. The functionality of the site infrastructure systems is unknown and should be evaluated for serviceability in whole or in part. Detailed evaluation of the suitability for adaptive re-use of the existing structures will be required to address feasibility, the design concepts proposed in the Vision Plan include a range of building and habitat restoration to allow for more or less adaptive reuse.

## 03

## UNIVERSITY PARK TOMORROW

The Vision Plan was conceived by using there is also a discussion on redeveloping and community and stakeholder feedback, historical programming spaces such as Meadow 1 and the and ecological analysis, and site observations. Dairy Complex to be responsive to the current This research led to a set of organizing principals and future needs of the University and general for park. The vision seeks to classify an entry public. The Vision Planteam studied and proposed sequence, create a series of unique experiences, different scenarios for future development of the and tell the site story. These organizing barn and the public was involved in choosing the principals are dissected into three distinct proposed alternative. categorizations-nature, culture/people, and infrastructure. Looking at the site through each The proposed trail network is derived from of these three lenses established the idea of existing paths of travel that have been informally a 'whole systems ecology'. The project team made over time. Other proposed trails are the viewed the sites' spatial and natural qualities result of feedback from community members and as an opportunity to tell the stories of the past, stakeholders that know the site intimately. These present, and future of this unique setting using trails provide a unique variety of experiences the concept of a transect. How these transects that consider people of varying skill levels and begin to interact with one another helped to transportation modes. inform the spaces and networks through which visitors will experience the site.

to re-establish physical conditions and native restoration goals. habitats. In terms of the built environment,

CSU Channel Islands' University Park will provide the community and University with passive This chapter also presents plans for ecological recreational uses and serve as an educational hub restoration that are informed by previous studies for the surrounding areas. The following pages and public feedback. There is an emphasis on clarify the vision from its most conceptual phases intentionally altering the restoration process to the adaptive reuse of the Dairy Complex and





university

As the most prominent and resilient of the three transects, nature plays an important role in the utilization of the park. The various types of evolving ecologies are home to several species of wildlife and vegetation that define much of what is celebrated. The intention is to restore native habitats from the results of human intervention, exotic invasive/weedy plant species, and destructive natural events. For the Vision Plan, nature interacts with the other transects by allowing visitors to learn from and engage with the natural setting while protecting these native habitats.

Scattered throughout the park are infrastructures of various scales, conditions, and uses. These key moments and landmarks should be preserved and enhanced to provide educational opportunities, passive recreational uses, and safer connections. The Vision Plan intends to highlight the built environment by focusing on the 'water story' as an educational opportunity for visitors and allowing access to the pond as a teachable moment highlighting the importance of this natural resource in a rapidly changing environment.

### TRANSECT 1 NATURE

### TRANSECT 2 CULTURE/PEOPLE

From the native Chumash people that have inhabited this land for over 9,000 years until now, humans have interacted with the park in many different ways. The Vision Plan acknowledges these diverse uses and celebrates the cultural and historical resources that can be found throughout the site. The intention is to conserve culturally significant resources and allow visitors to learn from and engage with the site's human history. This involves maintaining the park's natural resources and rethinking how humans interact with the existing physical infrastructure.

### TRANSECT 3 INFRASTRUCTURE





site topography naturally slopes toward Calleguas Creek. Riparian scrub and meadows will be restored in the former creek floodplain through natural processes. Riparian woodland habitat will expand from the creek. This array of different habitats will provide habitat for many different kinds of wildlife, including native butterflies, dragonflies, mammals, hawks, songbirds and waterfowl, to mention a few of the most easily observed.

## TRANSECT 2 CULTURE/PEOPLE



**AGRARIAN PAST** 

agriculture and an airfield is abundantly clear upon entering the site as is the impressive barn structure and visible university led ecological monitoring.

### AGRICULTURE

### ····· CAMROSA STORAGE

Infrastructure in and around the park provides a unique addition to the park experience. Views of the expansive water district storage ponds are both breathtaking and intriguing. Highlighting the way that water travels to the site and away from the site to its various users is a rare opportunity to visually see this important resource and begin to understand this complex system.

NATURAL POND

. . . . . . . . . . .

PUMPED TO STORAGE

## TRANSECT 3 INFRASTRUCTURE





A network of formalized trails is planned for the park with experience levels of easy, intermediate, and difficult occurring across the site. Vehicular access will be allowed on a portion of the site, with the remaining vehicular access restricted after the barn and dairy complex, reserved for emergency, Camrosa Water District vehicles, and permitted research vehicles. A class one bike path on the northern levee of Calleguas Creek will provide a regional bike connection with the potential to connect to the Pacific Ocean. Ventura County Parking requirements are met and exceeded at the Meadow 1 site as well as the barn and dairy complex, additional parking is provided adjacent to the alkali meadow for research vehicles, available by permit only. The barn and dairy complex and Meadow 1 are designed to be universally accessible; in addition the wetland boardwalk is ADA compliant.

## **VISION PLAN**

CSU Channel Islands offers a full range of opportunities for various user groups to observe, explore, and learn. The newly envisioned park offers a community center and flexible plaza, viewing decks along Calleguas Creek, a gathering space, a University greenhouse and research storage complex, the restoration of over 85 acres of wetland, riparian, and upland habitat, regional bike and trail connections, and 7 miles of updated in park trails.

The Vision Plan incorporates the Restoration Plan prepared by Coastal Restoration Consultants (June 2013), encompassing restoration of over 85 acres of habitat occurring in the Meadow 1 area. This plan proposes the removal of the levee which will increase the floodplain and allow for wetland, upland, and riparian habitats to occur.



## ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

specified ecosystem.

The University Park site was identified in the Calleguas Creek watershed restoration plan as a prime site for wetland that would use the trees, shrubs and emergent vegetation restoration (Magney Environmental Consulting 2000). A from insects such as dragonflies and butterflies to birds and subsequent restoration plan was developed for the site. The mammals. primary ecological goal of this planned restoration is to reestablish physical and biological processes that have been The upland slopes are currently recovering from fire; however, altered by the channelization of Calleguas Creek, historic filling opportunities exist in this upland habitat for enhancement, of the creek floodplain for human uses, and the subsequent a process that is less dramatic than restoration. Observations replacement of native flora and fauna with exotic species of the site currently indicate that removal of exotic species (Coastal Restoration Consultants 2013). The plan aims to could improve the natural regeneration of the coastal sage re-establish the connection of Calleguas Creek to part of scrub from the recent fire. Other enhancement besides control its floodplain within the University Park site, allowing the of weedy exotic species could include seeding or planting of geomorphic processes to restore ecological function of the species that are regionally rare.

Restoration Meadow Enhancement Riparian Enhancement

Upland Burn Recovery Enhancement

Alkali Meadow Enhancement

The Vision Plan project area includes a previously planned and ecologically sound restoration project for the western area of the site along Calleguas Creek (see Ecological Restoration/ Enhancement Map). Ecological restoration is the process of intentionally altering a site to establish a defined ecosystem, to re-establish physical conditions and native habitats that have been altered or removed. The goal of ecological restoration is to emulate the structure, function, diversity and dynamics of a

aguatic system of the creek, wetland function of areas within lowland depressions of the re-connected floodplain, and riparian woodland enhancement. Currently, the stretch of Calleguas Creek along the University Park site demonstrates poor health based on bioassessments using aquatic invertebrates as indicators. Implementation of the planned wetland/riparian restoration would improve water quality for aquatic organisms within Calleguas Creek as well as restore a variety of natural habitats, including riparian woodland, willow scrub, and seasonal wetlands. These vegetation community changes would in turn provide habitat for a number of species



Cactus plants and coastal sage scrub are currently recovering from fire, while a Scrub Jay sits in a rare southern California black walnut tree found at the site. Images of the vision of Calleguas Creek restoration showing emergent vegetation at the edge of the creek and willow woodland developing into the adjacent floodplain.









California Quail is one of the many birds found in coastal sage scrub habitat. Burned cactus immediately after the fire looks melted. Research on the recovery of the cactus at University Park will show how fast or slowly the cactus will recover in the current drought period.









Transect lines measure cactus growth in research study plots to determine how fast cactus can recover for use by the Coastal Cactus Wren which only nests in cactus of at least one meter in height.



### SHARED PATH | PEDESTRIAN, BIKE, CAR, EMERGENCY AND SERVICE VEHICLES

Serving as the central spine to CI Park, the shared path is an unpaved road that starts at the entrance and follows the preexisting road. In terms of accessibility, it allows for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles for most of the segment until vehicles that are not emergency and service related are prohibited. Sharing the road can help to calm fast-moving traffic and increase safety.

This path is accommodated for pedestrians and bicyclists, but is wide enough to allow for emergency and service vehicles. It follows the same route as the shared path, but also includes a segment that follows the Calleguas Creek, connecting to regional destinations. This Creek Road Bicycle Path is a paved road so as to enhance safety for bicyclists.

The pedestrian path is accessible for pedestrians who are walking, running, or hiking. The exclusion of vehicles and bicyclists enhances the pedestrian experience and has less impact on the surrounding environment. These paths are unpaved, however, the wetland boardwalk and the levee outlooks are built structures meant to complement its surroundings. Some of these paths connect to larger regional paths outside of the proposed University Park.

## TRAIL MAP

### Trail Difficultly



### Trail Type

_	Shared Path*
	Bicycling, Hiking + Running Loops**
	Hiking + Running
* Some portions of the path are	

inaccessible to most vehicles. \*\* Bicycling, hiking, and running can occur on shared paths as well.

### Symbols

K	Downhill
P	Restroom
Ŷ₽	Picnic Area
P	Parking





PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE (EMERCENCY VEHICLE)



PEDESTRIAN PATH

Welcome to CSU Channel Island University Park! There are tremendous opportunities for recreation and alternative transportation and we hope that you explore them all. Refer to the map and legend to understand where the trails are located, their level of difficultly, and what types of transportation are allowed. Most of the paths are unpaved so we ask that you remain safe on your adventure.









View from the upper ridge trail facing north

## RIDGE TRAILS

Upper Ridge Trail is a ¼ mile interpretive trail along the ridge line that divides the park. The easy - to intermediate - level trail highlights the natural, historic, and infrastructural stories in the park and beyond. Views of the Santa Monica and Santa Susana Mountains, Calleguas Creek, proposed restored wetlands, the Dairy Complex, agriculture fields and Camrosa Water District Ponds, allow the user to immerse themselves in the complex diversity of the park. With interpretative signage, iconic pylons, and small seating areas where hikers will have the opportunity to stop and observe. The trail concludes at the Dairyman's Cottage and connects back to the main spine of the park.

15-20 mile strenuous hike.

For the more experienced hiker Lower Ridge Trail connects to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and has the potential to connect to the Backbone Trail an estimated



## SIGNAGE

Wayfinding within the park will consist of three types of signs - trailhead signs, iconic pylons, and interpretive signage. These signs will have cohesive design elements, materials, and forms. *Trailhead signs* will provide the user with all of the traditional information including - rules and regulations, hours of operation, emergency contact information, trail information, and park maps. The Iconic Pylons take a more abstract artful approach. These are placed strategically throughout the park acting as follies to draw the curious user through the park. These signs serve as an icon for the park identity and have the potential to be recognized as a symbol of the park throughout the region. Interpretive markers that highlight vistas, stories, and the orientation for the user are located in the more remote areas of the park. These markers may take the same shape as the lconic Pylon but are simplified versions embedded into trails, boardwalks, and overlooks. The markers have the potential to highlight when the user may want to consider stopping along their journey to take in a view or recognize a significant moment in the park. While entirely up to interpretation and reliant on the user's willingness to research these markers will allow for discovery of the social, historic, and infrastructural moments within the park. The following are examples of what forms these three signs may take.

### TRAILHEAD SIGNS | RULES



### ICONIC PYLONS







### VISTAS, STORIES, & ORIENTATION









Trailhead Signs | Rules lconic Pylons Vistas, Stories & Orientation



the park's main trail.

## MEADOW 1

K-12 education, Meadow 1 can accommodate informal gatherings. The design provides for an educational space and learning garden, a wetland outlook, and a boardwalk connection to

Meadow 1 uses the historic forms as the basis for its design. The model plane taxiway to the west is transformed into a viewing platform and the taxiway to the east is extended across the valley as a boardwalk to allow users controlled access into the wetland. The existing road connection to the airfield and culvert becomes a bridge that increases the hydrologic connection providing increased habitat health. Historical aerial imagery shows agriculture row crops in the valley where the airfield currently exists, these geometries are extrapolated and used as a learning garden where native and historic plants will be used to tell the natural and cultural stories of the site. Using a portion of the fill that will be removed from the valley for the restoration

Bisecting the line between the natural and the project the entire footprint of the Meadow 1 built, Meadow 1 uses the site's history and future site will be elevated as to not disturb restoration. to create a unique entry point for the community. Fill will also be used to create a man-made land As a potential hub for the community and form that will encourage users to get up and view the dynamic habitat that is below them. The educational node would be tucked into the landform and can be used as a small gathering space. A flexible plaza offers an area for classes and groups to meet and congregate and could be used for larger university functions.

> The Vision Plan team went through several iterations of the Meadow 1 design. This process was informed by the technical advisory committee and refined through the public outreach process









## BARN

Workshop feedback suggested the minimum approach to adaptive reuse of the historic barn structure, for informal gathering that supports the park program, including instructional areas and research.

Existing feed and water troughs remain for supporting learning landscape and research activities. Some fill material relocated from the wetland restoration is anticipated for the most altered and least recovered portions of the southern site- areas of ruderal vegetation and/or cut soils outside of naturally recovering native vegetation areas. Although an alternative for more significant fill placement here was also developed if the proposed wetland restoration requires and there is a desire for additional experimental restoration landscape. The former Dairyman's Cottage slab above the main dairy building is proposed as an interpretive overlook.



## EDUCATIONAL **OPPORTUNITIES**

Over the past ten years, the University has done an excellent job of connecting and working with its neighboring communities. With the collaborative efforts of the faculty, students, environmental groups, and other community partners and volunteers, University Park has the potential to be one of the region's most successful living laboratories. University faculty members are well qualified in many disciplines including education, biology, environmental science and resource management, art, anthropology, archeology, etc. and will be able to facilitate various learning programs in the park. With a dedication to hands-on research and outdoor activities, CSUCI has a reputation for incorporating these types of pedagogies into their curricula.

Although teaching and learning can occur almost anywhere in the park, formalized locations for these educational hubs include the Meadow 1 educational center, hay barn, and dairy complex. These spaces offer a dedicated setting for University faculty and students to congregate. These hubs promote hands-on educational approaches to learning about nature, culture, and infrastructure. One conceptual idea for the hay barn and dairy complex uses the historic building footprints as a newly imagined research institute and instructional space

there exists the opportunity to offer instructional The diagram on page 54 highlights some of the space for educational purposes. The Meadow 1 areas, research and support space. many types of educational opportunities that can occur on the site.

Outside of these more formalized locations, the various types of natural habitat, such as in the These spaces can also serve as an educational riparian zone surrounding Calleguas Creek to and recreational benefit to the surrounding upland slope areas on the mountain side, present community. With the 48 schools in the cities of to help curate and program for these flexible a unique opportunity to study plant and animal Camarillo and Thousand Oaks, K-12 educators spaces. species including a variety of sensitive species. and students would be able to utilize this



educational center can also serve as a space for the general public to learn about the cultural history of the site, such as the long inhabitation of the Chumash people in the region. The University can work with local schools and cultural centers

## ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The University Park site offers a unique opportunity to engage many levels of community in the ecology of the site. The potential of implementing the wetland restoration plan will not only improve the ecological function of the site, but also it will provide an excellent opportunity for participation of students, staff and community in the final planning, implementation, and monitoring the progress of the habitat restoration.

There are number of educational opportunities for various community members, from the CSU Channel Islands science students and staff to community naturalists and outdoor education for elementary through high school. Every aspect of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics or STEM learning can be accommodated through an outdoor laboratory existing site wide.

At the community and K-12 level students and citizens can engage in interpretive programs from geology, soils, hydrology, and biology with questions such as, why do some plants only grow at the edge of the creek? Are there more birds in the trees or on the ground? Or, are there more cactus plants on certain slopes?

Citizen scientists can be engaged through current social media platforms to help in documenting wildlife and plants at the site that will develop community interest and use.

There is an opportunity to develop a suite of curricula at the site for elementary, middle, and high school that can be tied to the next generation of science standards. Outdoor learning can be inspirational to not only students but teachers as well. The University Park site offers almost unlimited topics that can be accessed throughout each season. The CI community already has started several research programs on site.











**Environmental Studies** 

Art + Painting

Anthropology

Biology



## POTENTIAL WETLAND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Time is an important factor for native habitat restoration. Research shows that it takes approximately 5 years for wetland and riparian habitat to establish. The University Park site will provide a living laboratory to document the development of not only the native habitat with the proposed wetland restoration, but also the development of soils, hydrology and the periodicity of flooding that contribute to vegetation development, as well as what wildlife shows up first in the developing wetland and riparian habitats. The restoration of the creek and wetlands may lead to improved water quality in the creek and can be documented using bioassay techniques of key freshwater organisms. Long term study sites are an excellent teaching tool where students as well as citizen scientists can observe and document changes at the site over 5, 10, 20 years and beyond.











### POTENTIAL UPLAND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Coastal Cactus Wren habitat in southern California is the subject of scientific inquiry throughout coastal southern California. Researchers have established that cactus needs to be approximately 1-meter in height before the wrens will utilize the cactus as a nesting substrate. Cactus grows relatively slowly. Therefore, the rate of recovery of cactus from fire to reach this height of is important to the conservation of this species regionally. The recent Springs Fire at University Park will supply important information on how long it will take for cactus to recovery during the current historic drought along a project 20-year timeline.

## DAIRY COMPLEX

Adding adaptive re-use of the facilities east of the primary access road allows for a more expansive and alternative programming than the hay barn complex alone. Existing spaces of the main dairy building include rooms in the 300 to 600 SF range, and are in support of programs housed at or sharing these facilities. These spaces are sufficient in number to accommodate the gatherings in the hay barn for instructional efforts. Depending on CSUCI's academic and research intentions, the land surrounding the dairy complex could be restored in an experimental fashion, with either a habitat restoration focus, an agriculture or permaculture focus, or some combination of these parameters.

Environmental Science and Anthropology/Archeology faculty indicated interest in conducting research and teaching functions at the site, and we understand that Engineering would also like to operate field studies here.





## NEXT STEPS

The next phases of the University Park development will manage access which will allow the natural landscape to flourish this then provides the opportunity for people to access the park for education and recreation. The following is a first pass at a sequence of efforts immediately available while recognizing that many are a more significant undertaking.



UNDING Implementation of the Vision Plan requires capital and can be gained in the following ways creating a "Friends of University Park" group, donation based strategies, Army Corps In Lieu funding, grants, and further consideration of other sources.



ACCESS Implement access, circulation, and signage concepts. These improvements to the site will be a part of a soft construction consisting of clearing of non-native vegetation and grading of existing conditions to create safe passage for pedestrians, bicyclists, and hikers. Regional connections in the form of a class 1 bike path and hiking trail will need further coordination with the City of Camarillo, adjacent land owners, and the National Parks Service. Signage and wayfinding will require further design development and is necessary to the first phase of development.



### HABITAT RESTORATION The Restoration Plan for CSU,

Channel Islands University Park prepared by Coastal Restoration Consultants will require a submittal of plans for the implementation of the restoration plan. This includes the removal of a breached levee, non-native vegetation removal, earthwork in and around Meadow 1 and the introduction of new vegetation. This undertaking can be coupled with a non-native and invasive plant removal along the ridges and in Meadow 2.



HAY BARN Introduce adaptive reuse projects at the dairy complex site as a valuable community, campus, and education asset. The further coordination with Campus Architect and New Land West will provide guidelines and plans for a structural and environmental analysis of the buildings/concepts that the University would like to pursue and how.

MEADOW Upon Consultants Restoration Plan the Meadow 1 site and Educational Center setting the Meadow 1 site as an identifiable amenity for the community and local educators.

Develop a definitive position of the use of park land for Water District storage ponds. If additional storage ponds are to be placed on

Completion of the Coastal Restoration site an ongoing conversation with the water district in regards to the accessibility, design, implementation, and possible mitigation credits can be developed using fill from on-site projects shall occur. If an additional storage facility is needed it will be complimentary and supportive of the goals outlined in the Vision Plan.

