

# Arana Gulch

## PARK MASTER PLAN

The goals of the Arana Gulch Master Plan serve to enhance resource protection and public access. Though, as any local, state, or national park agency can attest, this can be a challenging task and there is often community debate. Although people may not all agree on the types and level of public use, community debate does reflect how passionately people care about open space. The City of Santa Cruz has devoted much time and expense working closely with botanists and other technical specialists to prepare a Master Plan which will ensure protection of sensitive habitat and provide a prudent level of public use. The Master Plan before you today has significantly less public use than was originally proposed in the earliest concepts for Arana Gulch. This project is a balance between public access and resource protection of an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA).

Over 90% of the property will be protected as sensitive habitat with no public access at all

Currently, this greenbelt open space that is situated in the middle of an urban environment is off limits to many people. The New trail system will protect sensitive habitat.

Current trail conditions continue to erode and are too steep

# B A L A N C E



Santa Cruz Tarplant is most visible during the summer months with its vibrant yellow blume



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## Protecting Sensitive Habitat

### Prudent level of public use

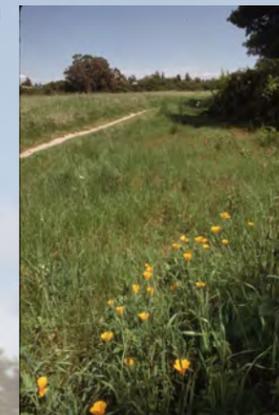
Public access will focus on scenic overlooks and interpretive displays. The 34-acre Coastal Prairie/Tarplant Management Area will feature new multi-use trails and a pedestrian loop trail, which presently exists. Interpretive displays will educate the public about the tarplant and management actions. Ranch roads, cattle trails, and volunteer pathways have long existed between and through the tarplant population areas. Providing a clearly marked trail system will enable the City to permanently close the existing undesignated trails. The City has worked closely with botanists to ensure the proposed trail system will protect the viability of the Santa Cruz tarplant habitat.

### MULTI-USE TRAILS

The all weather surface trails would also discourage visitors from trampling vegetation and widening dirt pathways to avoid muddy conditions during the rainy season. The proposed trail system will enable a broader range of visitors to experience Arana Gulch and learn about the unique resources. Multi-use trails will provide access for people who are disabled, the elderly, and those with limited mobility or injuries who have difficulty walking on uneven and muddy surfaces. Multi-use trails would also provide access for parents with small children who are not comfortable riding bicycles or pushing strollers on dirt trails. Without multi-use trails, Arana Gulch would remain a place that many people cannot experience.

### PUBLIC ACCESS

The new west entrance and Hagemann Gulch Bridge will also expand public access by providing a convenient new connection for residents of Santa Cruz. Most residents of the City live to the west of Arana Gulch, which presently has no access along the entire western boundary. Through experience, park managers have learned that expanding legitimate public access is a deterrent to illegal activities that can occur in open space within urbanized areas. More eyes on the trails make open space safer for everyone. The new multi-use trails will greatly improve access from neighborhoods to the coast in conjunction with the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail and California Coastal Trail systems.



Open space preserved for sensitive habitat protection

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul."  
*John Muir*

