

Project Management and Community Engagement Goleta Slough Management Committee Facilitation Santa Barbara, CA

Clients:

City of Santa Barbara, Airport Division
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Focus: Coastal Working Group Collaboration;
Coastal Resiliency; Salt Marsh Management

Project Overview:

Goleta Slough is a large coastal wetland located along the central coast of California, a region with high biodiversity. Like many tidal wetlands along the Pacific Coast, the Slough has been greatly reduced in size and function over the past two centuries through a combination of natural processes, land use changes, and other human activities. In 1991, the City of Santa Barbara (Airport) established the Goleta Slough Management Committee (GSMC) to address ecosystem-wide issues and challenges to the Goleta Slough ecosystem. The GSMC is made up of a diverse set of over 130 participants, including regulatory agencies, local government, non-profit organizations, universities, community members, and Tribal representatives.

In 2022, Tidal Influence began managing the GSMC to help advance its mission “to provide a community forum for engagement, education, and discussion to sustain and enhance a healthy and resilient Goleta Slough ecosystem, recognizing a diversity of land uses and communities.” We organize, communicate, and lead the bi-monthly public meetings, including working with stakeholders to develop agendas, prepare meeting minutes, facilitate discussions, and identify and address issues that arise relating to the Goleta Slough.

Tidal Influence also supports the Airport and other stakeholders through providing input on the Airport



Master Plan update, leading sea level rise planning and adaptation efforts, developing funding proposals, and working to coordinate efforts between groups seeking to implement habitat restoration or other projects. We also lead the subcommittees and working groups of the GSMC, including the Policy Working Group, which has been leading the efforts to revise the bylaws and mission of the GSMC.

Tidal Influence also leads the outreach and public communication efforts for the GSMC, including producing a bi-monthly electronic newsletter, developing and releasing announcements, and working with all of the participant groups to send notifications for funding opportunities, solicit public comments on various agency documents and reports, communicate with Tribal representatives, and connect diverse participants on issues of concern or restoration activities.

Our involvement in this project is indicative of Tidal Influence’s ability to lead and manage a diverse group of stakeholders towards a common goal of enhancing a large coastal wetland system.

