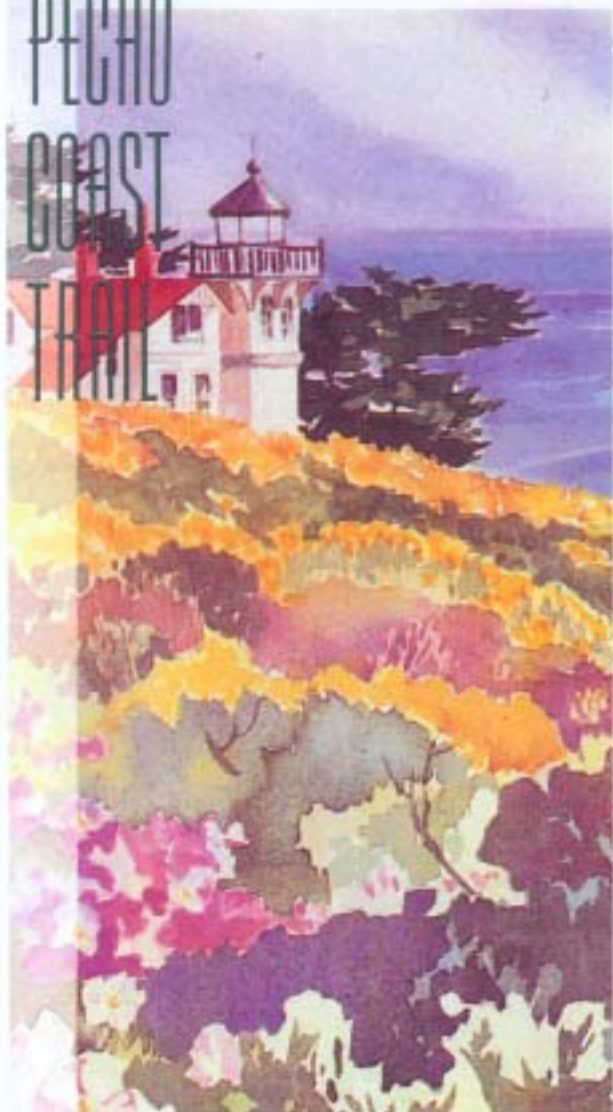


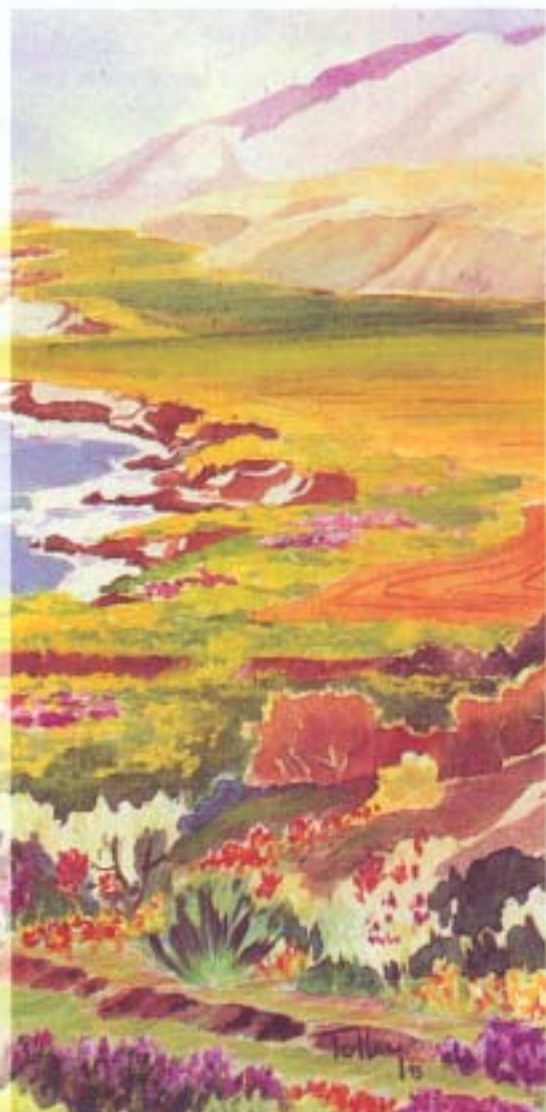
HIKE THE PECHO COAST TRAIL



A seven-mile stretch of the beautiful Pecho Coast, never before open to the public...



...can now be seen on guided hikes.



To join one of these free hikes, call for reservations 805-541-TREK.

The secluded beaches, rugged cliffs and broad coastal terraces of the Pecho Coast have been privately owned and inaccessible to the public since the Spanish Mission period. Now this area, situated north of the Point San Luis Lighthouse and west of the Irish Hills on California's Central Coast, is open to the public for guided hikes.

Living on the Edge

Volcanic flows, earthquake movements and ocean sculpting formed this land. Along this dramatic stretch of coastline, land and climate combine to support a wealth of life. Offshore in the open ocean, migrating whales spout and arch as they move north and south with the seasons. In late summer black masses of sooty shearwaters wing over the water following anchovies up the coast.

The nearshore and intertidal communities, some of the most pristine in the state, are carpeted with a diverse assortment of seaweeds and ocean creatures. Harbor seals and sea otters haul out at low tide to rest and play on offshore rocks. Brown pelicans and cormorants roost nearby, and oyster-catchers and surf birds probe among the seaweed for food.

On land, the fresh fragrance of coastal sage

scrub fills the air along the trail. This plant community covers the lower slopes of the mountains where it absorbs ample supplies of sun, fog and rain. Oak woodlands nestle in more sheltered slopes and shady canyons. A variety of wildlife, from scrub jays and red-shouldered hawks to gray squirrels and bobcats may be seen by hikers moving quietly through these natural communities.

Sandwiched between the shrublands and the seacliffs lie the coastal terrace grasslands, grazed during the ice

Age by an astonishing variety of large mammals, including mammoths, bison, camels and giant ground sloths. Today, cattle on the coastal terrace feed on a variety of native and introduced species that bloom profusely in the spring.

Human History

The wooded canyons, fertile headlands and lush shoreline tide pools have provided dependable human sustenance for at least 9,000 years. When the Spanish began exploring and settling the Central Coast, Chumash Indians inhabited the area. Their rich and varied culture, reflecting the abundance of the land, was displaced as the Spanish introduced land ownership and ranching.



The development of Port San Luis and its important shipping industry coincided with the increasing settlement of the area during the nineteenth century. To maintain a safe

port, the Point San Luis Lighthouse and breakwater were constructed in 1890. These structures, and many other sites of historic interest, are visible along and from the Pecho Coast Trail.

Join us for a Hike!

If you like to hike and want to experience the diversity of landscape and life that characterize this spectacular area, join docents for a seven-mile round-trip hike along the Pecho Coast Trail.

These free hikes, offered on weekdays and weekends throughout the year, take about eight hours. The hiking is moderate most of the way with a few short strenuous stretches. To join a hike, call 805.541.TREK (541.8735).



The Pecho Coast Trail is a joint project of the California Coastal Commission, Pacific Gas & Electric and Port San Luis Harbor District.



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