

UC Santa Barbara Newsletters

Title

NCOS News - February 2019

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0281f7t4>

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Publication Date

2019-02-01

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UC SANTA BARBARA

North Campus Open Space Restoration Project

NCOS NEWS

February 2019



Whittier pond emptying into the slough during the heavy rain on February 2nd.

UPDATES & EVENTS

Public Survey

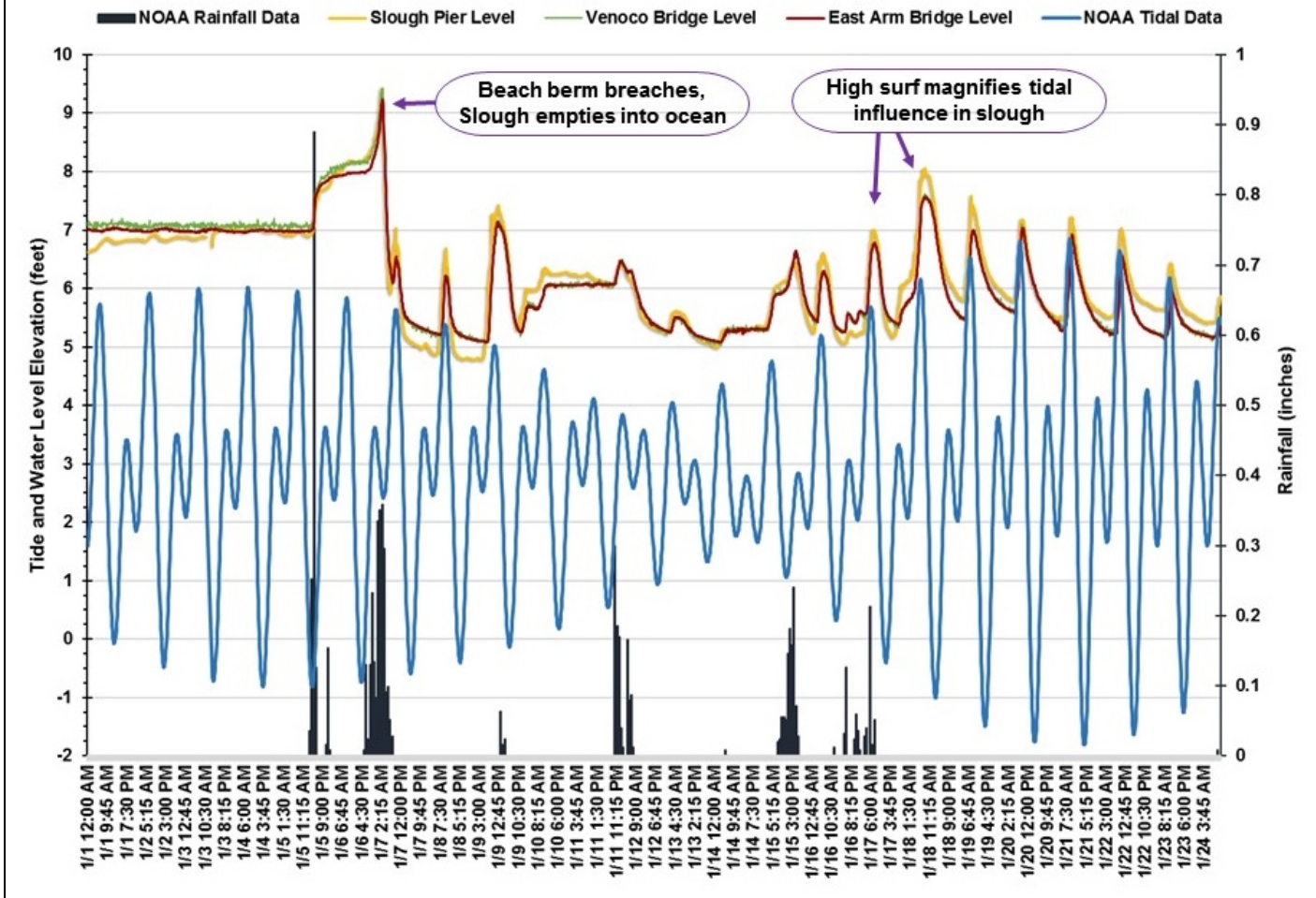
CCBER wants to learn from the users of the North Campus Open Space. We are conducting a brief, anonymous survey to help us understand how the restoration site is working for the public. Your participation will help us continue to improve the project. Thank you, and please feel free to share this link with your friends and neighbors.

Survey Link: https://ucsb.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_88Ja7CG0sg9pZVX

NCOS has gone tidal

A combination of several storms, high surf and tides have maintained a tidal fluctuation at NCOS for a month now. Sea water has infiltrated up as far as the Phelps Creek bridge and the long bridge across the eastern arm of the wetland, depositing food resources for birds and fish in the mudflats and saltmarsh. The graph below shows how the water level in Devereux Slough has been influenced by rainfall (black columns) and the tides (blue line) over the last month.

Devereux Slough & NCOS Hydrograph with Tide and Rainfall Data



Hydrograph of Devereux Slough at three locations, with rainfall and tidal data for January 2019.



A tiny crab that likely rode in on a high tide was found on a hydrology monitoring sensor in the upper eastern arm of the NCOS wetland two weeks ago.

First Year Monitoring Report

We've mentioned it in a couple of previous newsletters, and it is now available: CCBER has completed a report describing all of the monitoring occurring at NCOS, including data from the first year. The **First Year Monitoring Report** can be [accessed here](#). For those interested or curious, the report can provide a greater understanding of the ins and outs of NCOS and how the site is functioning so far.

UC Sustainability News Features NCOS

For a shorter read than the monitoring report - this month's Sustainability at UC newsletter features an [article about NCOS](#) that provides a good summary of the history, design and goals of the project.

FEATURE STORY

[To NCOS, With Love](#)



February is here – the month often recognized by the celebration of love on Valentine’s Day. [Read on \(continued on page 9\)](#) to discover some of the latest “love” stories unfolding at NCOS.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



"Second Saturdays" at NCOS

February 9th, 9:30 - 12:00

Help us restore and create NCOS with plants and more! Meet at 6975 Whittier Drive at 9:30 am. Bring water, sunscreen, and wear a hat, clothes and shoes suitable for garden work.

Please RSVP to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu



Saturday Tree Plantings

February 9, 23

March 9

You can help Your Children's Trees plant oaks and other saplings at NCOS! Please contact [Your Children's Trees](#) for more information and to RSVP.



Thursdays - CCBER Greenhouse Associates

Come help transplant seedlings of native plants with the CCBER team from 9:00 - 12:00. To join, please send an email to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.



Group Volunteer Opportunities

We gladly welcome local business, non-profit, school and other community groups to come out to NCOS to help with planting and other activities. For more information, please send an email to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.

PHOTOS & VIDEO

All of the stormy activity over the last month has provided some great opportunities to observe the restored wetland in action, as in the video below and the title image of this month's newsletter.



Devereux creek and Phelps creek (from the right) flowing into the upper slough during the heavy rainfall on February 2nd, 2019.

Our cameras have also captured some interesting imagery and video (including audio) of Burrowing Owls, including at a new, previously unseen location! This small, elusive and sensitive ground-nesting raptor is one of many reasons why dogs need to be kept on leash and on trail, not loose like one recently seen visiting the home of one of the owls. Thank you!



This individual was seen during the heavy rain last weekend at a new burrow that is easily visible from the Marsh Trail. See if you can spot this owl next time you're on the trail and let us know!



Watch and listen to a Burrowing Owl gesturing and calling at a hibernaculum on the Mesa.
Interested in more Burrowing Owl footage? [Click here](#).



This off-leash dog at the owl's burrow exemplifies the dangers that unleashed pets can pose to sensitive wildlife on site.

Have a plant, wildlife, or other photo of NCOS you'd like to share? We welcome submissions of photos of the project site and/or the adjacent Ellwood-Devereux area to share with NCOS News readers. Please email a photo you would like to share along with a brief description to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.

Received this email from a friend? [Click here](#) to subscribe to our mailing list.



For more information on the
North Campus Open Space Restoration Project, [Click here](#), or email ncos@cber.ucsb.edu

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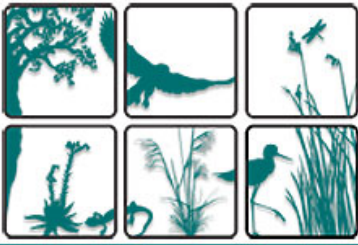
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To NCOS, WITH LOVE

February is here – the month often recognized by the celebration of love on Valentine’s Day. This inspired us to feature some of the latest “love” stories unfolding at NCOS in this month’s newsletter. While it may be the time of year that the birds, bees and other wildlife are thinking about finding and impressing mates, the focus of this story is another type of love: the joy, excitement and appreciation of the restored open space that people of all ages are experiencing at the site. Retirees taking midday strolls and watching birds, UCSB students and other volunteers spending their Saturday mornings planting, and preschoolers exploring and learning about nature are a few examples of how NCOS is being loved by the local community.



Community members walk the mash trail and enjoy birding opportunities at NCOS.

Recently, CCBER has been fortunate to chat with some of the users of the site and hear their perspectives on the restoration project. We’ve received many expressions of love and appreciation, as well as some constructive and important feedback that we’re really taking to heart. There was overwhelming support for the project, and many expressed gratitude for the daily weeding and planting conducted by restoration staff, students and volunteers. Many visitors are amazed at the amount of water that is now present on site, and the myriad of new habitats has been an obvious sign of progress. Birding opportunities have also been a subject of much acclaim, with large and recognizable herons and egrets receiving great attention, as well as the secretive and intriguing Burrowing Owl. Overall, the presence of a natural area that is protected from development has been a welcome change for many in the community.



Every second Saturday of the month, community members and UCSB students volunteer their time and energy to help plant NCOS with native species.

Another way in which people are actively showing their love for the open space is during our second Saturday volunteer days, where community members and UCSB students spend the morning planting native species. These groups always bring with them a vigorous level of energy and refreshing curiosity, usually far exceeding our expectations for the day. Recently, they have been making impressive progress planting native Saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) along the edges of the Marsh Trail. If you're interested in showing some love for NCOS by volunteering, our next planting day is scheduled for Saturday February 9th.

In addition to the recreation and volunteer opportunities, people are gaining affection for NCOS through experience and training in research. For her 8th grade school science project, Margherita has taken on a topic that involves monitoring groundwater levels and salinity through a series of index wells around the site. She has been collecting data on a weekly basis since last summer and is exploring how the groundwater level and salinity change through the seasons. Margherita thoroughly enjoys the opportunity to conduct field research close to home and she plans to continue monitoring the wells in the future.



Local 8th grader, Margherita conducts

regular monitoring of groundwater at NCOS as part of her school science project.

Starting this Winter, a new, exciting partnership has bloomed between CCBER and the Orfaea Family Children's Center (OFCC), a nearby early childhood care center serving the university and local community. With support from the Coastal Fund, CCBER staff and interns have been leading OFCC classrooms on "nature adventures" at the North Campus Open Space, where students explore and learn about the Devereux Slough ecosystem in hopes to foster an understanding and appreciation of the site. This past week, the Turquoise and Red Door classrooms trekked from their campus to the slough, marveling at brightly colored Bush Sunflowers and pleasant California Sagebrush aromas along the way.



Students from the Orfalea Family Children's Center gather around CCBER intern Jackie Bushée as they prepare to plant an Alkali Heath.

Once there, excitement could hardly be contained as the group was allowed to venture to the water's edge, tracking raccoons and shorebirds through the clay soils. After having a blast in the mud, the groups then investigated the native plants of the salt marsh community and helped to create habitat by planting a plant of their own. With our plants successfully in the ground and watered, we all celebrated with a song - "My Roots Go Down." Hopefully, it wasn't just the plants that put roots down that day at the slough, but each and every one of our young adventurers too.



CCBER staff member Ian Jackson shows OFCC students how to find Pickleweed seeds in the lower salt marsh.

The success of the North Campus Open Space restoration depends on many factors, especially the support, care, and respect of its visitors and community members. Thank you to everyone for showing your love and helping us grow and take care of this special place. Much love to you.

Date:
Wednesday, February 6, 2019 - 10:00

[Contact Us](#)

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