

Connecting with Nature on Fiscalini Ranch Preserve: Research Project Underway on the Bluff Trail



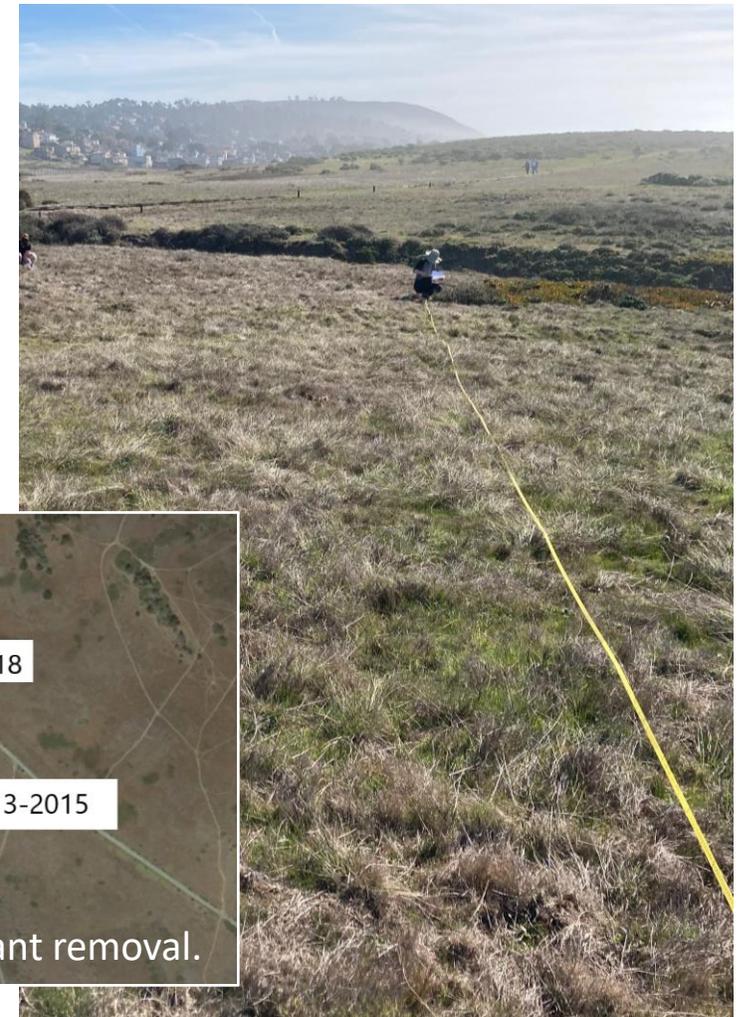
By KITTY CONNOLLY, Executive Director, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (fiscaliniranchpreserve.org)

You may have noticed some little yellow flags that along the Bluff Trail. These mark the field sites for Claire Savage, a biology graduate student from California State University Bakersfield.

Under the direction of Dr. Kane Keller, Claire is investigating the soil impacts of non-native ice plant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) on the reestablishment of native sand aster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*). Her research has three parts:

1. A field experiment investigating germination and growth of sand aster at five sites: a site that has not been invaded by ice plant, a site that is still invaded, and three sites that differ in time since ice plant removal (see inset photo for field site locations).
2. Plant and insect surveys at those five sites using line transects and pitfall traps to track the longer-term affects of ice plant removal.
3. Greenhouse studies at CSUB of both plants using soil samples collected from the Ranch.

Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve and Cambria Community Services District are happy to encourage



CSUB graduate student field work along the Bluff Trail.

Greater understanding of the Ranch through approved research, and I think Claire is happy to have such a lovely study site.