

Restoring Santa Cruz Island: An Introduction

✿ Now that the National Park Service has purchased the east end of Santa Cruz Island, this largest of California's Channel Islands is now entirely in "conservation ownership".

✿ This presents a significant opportunity: The Conservancy (TNC) and Park Service (NPS) can now focus on restoring this extraordinary and threatened island to a lasting and healthy condition. This is a good thing, because there are some very pressing needs on the island.

✿ It is important to restore Santa Cruz Island for two reasons:

✿ There are ten plants and animals currently threatened with extinction on the island, most federally listed as 'endangered' and not found anywhere else on earth. The presence of wild pigs, fennel and the golden eagle are the main causes for the decline of the island fox and other "one of a kind" species.

✿ A partnership between the NPS and TNC provides a long-term opportunity to restore the island to a suite of fully functioning, interconnected natural ecosystems – a phenomenon found nowhere else in California. If we don't restore its natural vitality, we're condemned to "artificial life support" and frantic fixes. With ecosystem restoration, Santa Cruz Island will be returned to a self-sustaining healthy balance.

✿ To address these issues, TNC and the NPS have embarked upon a multi-year program to remove the eagles and eradicate the pigs and fennel from the island. The NPS is producing an Environmental Impact Statement this year that will be available to the public for review and input. Meanwhile, TNC is building scientific, public and monetary support for this five-year effort.

✿ Throughout the process, TNC and NPS will continue to solicit the views of other experts as well as the general public and integrate their suggestions into the planning process. For more information, please contact The Nature Conservancy at (805) 658-5782 or the National Park Service at (805) 658-5784.