

MORE MESA PRESERVATION COALITION



MMPC e-Update

Summer 2016

You Can Help

Often people ask me why I care so much about More Mesa. I reply, "You have never been on More Mesa, have you?" I ask because I know that if they had ever been on More Mesa, they would never ask me why I care so much.

With that said, here's how you can help. Take a walk out on More Mesa ... and take someone with you who has never been there. Show them what a wonderful place it is, why you care about it and why they should care about it too.

It works every time!
Thanks so much!

Valerie Olson
President, MMPC



***It is the mission of the
More Mesa Preservation
Coalition. to preserve***

What's Happening With Potential Development?

As reported in our last update, all appears to be on hold.

Ask the President

Q: How is the drought affecting wildlife on More Mesa and its surrounding area?

A: While the drought is extremely distressing for human populations, it is a matter of life or death for wildlife. With little water and dwindling food supplies, animals are emboldened to enter urban spaces in search of food. Because this appears to be happening in our area, we urge you to protect and shelter your pets, especially at night. We also urge you to NEVER feed wild creatures; either directly, or by inadvertently leaving pet food where they can access it. Providing food to wildlife acclimates animals to humans and will eventually result in their demise.

This Month on More Mesa

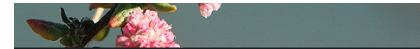
A Tiny Bright Light

In a world dominated by talk of drought, we offer a tiny bright spot ... about a lovely native plant, Seacliff Buckwheat. While almost all of our More Mesa native wildflowers bloom in spring, this cliff and dune dwelling plant flowers in the middle of summer, providing nectar to many butterflies and insects. We are happy to report that it has bloomed again this summer, the fifth year of our worst-ever drought and thereby proving that it is



More Mesa, in its entirety, for all times. We've been at it since 2000.

thereby proving that it is truly a "drought resistant" species.



*Seacliff Buckwheat
Photo by Lynn Watson*

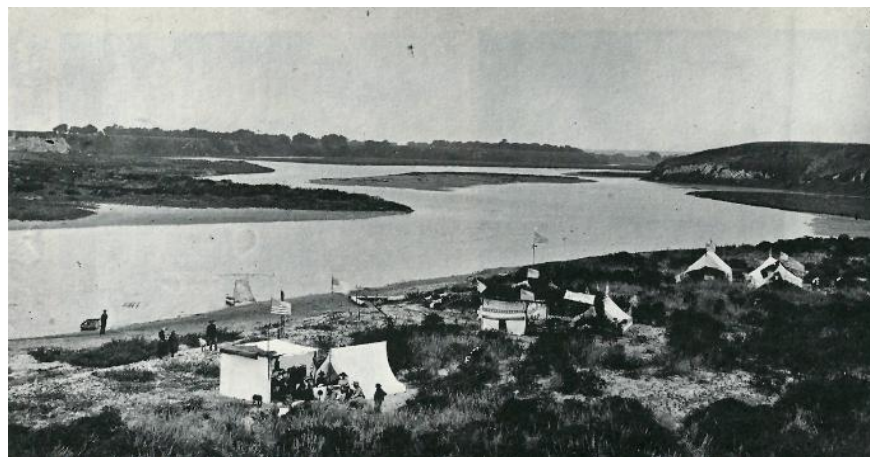
The Past - All of the Ranch and Mescalitan Too!

From historical records, it is clear that the Goleta Slough was an extensive body of water up to the late 1800s. We also know from these same records that the largest concentration of native Chumash in our area lived on, or around, Mescalitan Island, the center piece of a harbor that was known as *Goleta Bay*. After the Chumash were relocated, the trees on the island were cut down and the island remained desolate and deserted until crops were planted by the original owner of La Goleta Rancho, Daniel Hill.

In the rain year of 1861, torrential rains throughout California caused extreme erosion. The resulting sediment, racing down our many local creeks, emptied into the Goleta Bay, and within a few years, most of the bay that surrounded Mescalitan Island became a silt-filled salt marsh ... the area we now call the *Goleta Slough*. This same rain event wrecked havoc with Daniel Hill's livestock and his finances. As a result, he was soon forced to sell 1000 acres of his rancho to his son-in law, T. Wallace More, in order to even save his homestead. Fourteen years later, T. Wallace was brutally murdered and his older brother, John Finley More, took over management of the ranch. John eventually bought the ranch from T. Wallace's widow in 1879.

That purchase included a region from the edge of Mescalitan Island to Hope Ranch. And because John More was always obsessed with land acquisition, he very quickly bought another 500 acres including Mescalitan Island and environs. His holdings in this part of the Goleta Valley now totaled nearly 2000 acres.

More used Mescalitan Island as a bean field and also built a two story frame house on it for his sister, Mrs. Martha Rowe. And though he enforced rigid restrictions against digging on the island for Chumash artifacts, a few families were allowed to maintain vacation camps on the shores of the Estuary known as Camp Lupine ... where they spent summers boating, clamming and fishing.



*Camp Lupine and Mescalitan Island
Photo by Francis Franklin*

We are indebted to Tom Modugno and the [Goleta History Site](#), "Goleta, the Good Land" and "Looking Back" for much of the information on this fascinating topic.

More Mesa Preservation Coalition | | mmpc@moremesa.org |

More Mesa Preservation Coalition, P.O. Box 22557, Santa Barbara, CA 93121

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