



Natural Reserve System

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

YOUNGER LAGOON RESERVE



Habitat Restoration and Reserve Stewardship

UC Natural Reserves Mission

The UC Natural Reserve System is a network of protected natural areas throughout California. Its 39 sites include more than 756,000 acres, making it the largest university-administered reserve system in the world. Most major state ecosystems are represented, from coastal tide pools to inland deserts, and lush wetlands to Sierra Nevada forests. The reserves also serve as a gateway to more than a million acres of public lands. Founded in 1965 to provide undisturbed environments for research, education, and public service, the Natural Reserve System contributes to the understanding and wise stewardship of the earth.

About the Reserve

One of the few relatively undisturbed wetlands remaining on the California Central Coast, the 72-acre Younger Lagoon Reserve encompasses a remnant Y-shaped lagoon on the open coast just north of Monterey Bay. The lagoon system provides protected habitat for 100 resident and migratory bird species. Reserve habitats include salt and freshwater marsh, coastal strand, backdune pickleweed flat, steep bluffs with dense coastal scrub, pocket beach, grassland, and dense willow thickets.

Reserve Programs

The Coastal Long Range Development Plan for UCSC's Marine Science Campus requires that the entire reserve be protected and that the reserve terrace lands (former ag land) be restored. Fulfilling the University's mission to support research and teaching, the reserve incorporates research and teaching into all aspects of restoration, monitoring, research and stewardship at the reserve. The access to restoration and monitoring projects provide expanded opportunities for undergraduate experiential learning opportunities via class exercises, research opportunities, and internships. This year, the reserve sponsored more than 20 interns each quarter.

PSI Role and Project:

The PSI works on a sustainability project at Younger Lagoon Reserve for a year. The PSI focuses on: 1) restoration and stewardship, 2) educational outreach and engagement, and 3) research. This year, the PSI cohosted work parties, managed the reserve Facebook page, created plant info cards, conducted research on seed germination rates, maintained the reserve tool and seed inventory, collected groundwater well data, aided in biological monitoring, and collected GIS data on restoration and research sites.



On-site restoration work on the lagoon and the coastal bluff of the Younger Lagoon Reserve.



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