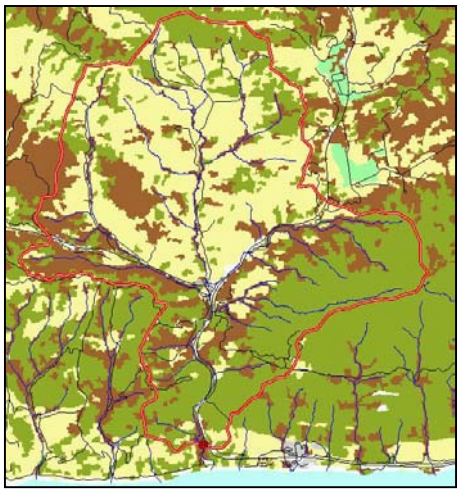
# FIGURE 8: COMPARISON OF LOW GRADIENT STUDY REACHES GAV-1 VS. AB-1 AND M-1



Gaviota Creek (GAV-1)

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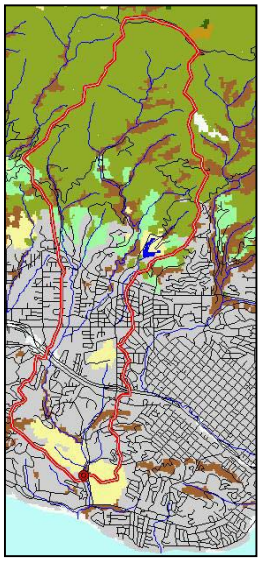
Due to high coastal development intensity, there are few examples of fairly intact coastal lowland streams on the South Coast. Lower Gaviota Creek is one of the best remaining examples, despite some upstream impacts from roads (U.S. 101) and cattle grazing (i.e., note herbaceous lands in watershed map, top left). Lower Gaviota Creek meanders through a natural alluvial flood plain and has a fairly intact, mostly native riparian corridor (see top right photo). The stream bed alternates between riffles (mostly fast and shallow) and small to medium-sized pools. Substrate is composed mostly of small boulders, cobble, and gravel (see photograph to the right). The aquatic community at GAV-1 is relatively diverse, including many sensitive species such as southwestern pond turtle and several families of caddisflies and mayflies.



In contrast, Arroyo Burro (AB-1) (lower left) and Mission Creek (M-1) (lower right) are examples of highly disturbed coastal lowland streams. The lower watersheds of these streams are heavily urbanized (see AB-1 watershed map to the left), and the streams have been partially channelized. Other impacts include altered hydrology, increased inputs of fine sediments, water pollution, and elevated water temperatures. The aquatic habitat in these streams is highly degraded, resulting in low species diversity and a general absence of sensitive species.

Arroyo Burro (AB-1)

Mission Creek (M-1)