

## Why the Coastal Commission Was Wrong Protecting An Illegal Parking Lot vs. Protecting A Wetland

**The Problem:** The Del Mar Fairgrounds admitted to 40 years of ignoring the Coastal Act and of illegally filling and grading a wetland to provide “overflow” parking. The South and East overflow lots are seen below as the light tan (dirt) areas below and to the right of the major (grey) parking lot. Commission staff urged **protecting** the lower 1/3rd of the illegal East parking area to allow wetland recovery. The Commission rejected this modest request.



**The NON-Solution:** To appreciate the very modest staff recommendation, just look at the Del Mar Fairgrounds from a higher view. Note that almost the **ENTIRE** Fairgrounds site was created (“pre-Coastal Act”) by filling a huge natural wetland. Now compare the small portion(1/3rd) of the illegal (“post” Coastal Act) “East” parking lot (above), that Commission staff had asked to protect to allow its wetland recovery over a 10 year period. Instead, the Commission voted (7-3), to permit the illegal lot for 10 more years. They did approve a parking study, but blocked any plan for any future action.

