

1-408-A Site Summary - Usal Creek**1-408-A****County:** Mendocino **ACP Division/Segment:** MN - A - S02 MN - A - S03**NOAA Chart:** 18620**Map Book:** CA Road Atlas**Decimal Degrees:** 39.83047 -123.85073**Site Description:**

This site is a small remote tidal inlet and estuary within the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. Trustees recommend no response within the State Park. Beach consists of coarse grained sand and pebbles. The creek mouth will frequently close from the ocean during seasons of low rainfall. The creek terminates on a high energy sandy beach with rocky cliff beaches to the north and south of this area. Oiling of estuary is primary concern (01-12).

Seabirds, shorebirds, raptors, Pacific harbor seals common throughout area. Anadromous salmonids: coho salmon (FE/SE) and chinook salmon (FT), steelhead trout (FT): all life stages, estuary use year round. Tidewater goby (FE, SSC)(01-12) in estuary, foothill yellow-legged and northern red-legged frogs (both SSC) further upstream in riparian. Night smelt and surf smelt spawn on the beach near entrance to Usal Creek south to Shoreline Rock (04-08), surfperch spawn in area, Mendocino Coast paintbrush (CNPS 1B.2).

Resources at Risk:*ESI and Habitat:* 4 Coarse-grained sand beaches

5 Mixed sand and gravel beaches

List of Resources at Risk:

	Resource Name	Status	Presence	Sensitivity
Amphibians	Northern red-legged frog	SSC	Year-round	
Birds	marbled murrelet	FT, SE	Year-round	
Birds	peregrine falcon	FP, SP	Year-round	
Fish	coho salmon - south of Punta Gorda	FE, SE	Year-round	
Fish	steelhead - Central/Northern California	FT	Year-round	
Mammals	pinnipeds	FP	Year-round	
Plants	Mendocino coast paintbrush		Year-round	

FT-Federally Threatened, FE-Federally Endangered, FP-Federally Protected, SE-State Endangered, ST-State Threatened, SP -State Protected, SR-State Rare, SSC-Species of Special Concern, BGEPA-Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, SSSP-State Special Status Species

List of Key Contacts:

Type	Name/Title	Organization	Phone
C	/Coordinator	Native American Heritage Commission	(916) 373-3710
C	/Coordinator	Northwest Information Center	(707) 588-8455
O	/24hr	CalFire Howard Forest Emergency Command	(707) 459-5336
O	/	Mendocino County Sheriff's Department	(707) 463-4086
O	/Supervisor Ranger (24hr)	NORCOM State Parks Dispatch	(916) 358-1300
O	/	Sinkyone Intertribal Wilderness Council	(707) 468-9500
T	/	California Dept of Fish and Wildlife, Fort Bragg	(707) 964-9078
T	/	California State Parks North Coast District	(707) 445-6547
T	/	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service-Arcata	(707) 822-7201
T	/	US Fish and Wildlife Service-Arcata Field Office	(707) 822-7201

C – Cultural, Historic, Archaeological; E – Entry/Owner/Access; O – Other; S – Safety; T – Trustee; X – Exclusion or Security

Additional Site Summary Comments:

For further information about coastal access in this area, please refer to the California Coastal Commission's California Coastal Access Guide. For photos of the coastline in this area, please refer to the California Coastal Records Project (www.californiacoastline.org).

Cultural, Historical, and Archeological sites are known to exist in the area, however, the exact locations of these sites must be ascertained by contacting the Native American Heritage Commission at (916) 373-3710, the State Office of Historical Preservation (916) 445-7000, and/or the Northwest Information Center (707) 588-8455.

Concerns and Advice to Responders:

Oiling of estuary is the primary concern throughout the year. The rugged coastline will prevent onshore response over most of this area. Off-site measures including dispersants should be considered when a spill threatens to impact this area. Overflights should be careful to maintain flight path and altitude clearance distances that are large enough to prevent the flushing of birds and marine mammals from their nests, roosts, and haulouts on the offshore rocks in this area.

Hazard and Restrictions:

Extreme currents, high energy shoreline, access road narrow and steep, very remote location with limited amenities.

Site Strategies:**Site Validation Level: II**

Strategy: 1-408.1 Objective: Assess on-site conditions before responding to this remote location.

Strategy: Perform an overflight or send in a Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Team (SCAT team) to assess Usal Road access, the prevailing site conditions, and if equipment deployment or precleaning activities would be effective. This site is best protected by preventing the oil from arriving here, when possible. Off-site response options including dispersants should be considered.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
helicopter				1		
Staff				2		

Logistics:

Directions: Take Hwy 101 to Hwy 1 at Leggett, go south on Hwy 1 for 14.6 miles to M.P. 90.91. Take Usal Road (4WD may be required at times) north 9.5 miles to Usal Beach Campground. This is also the location of the southern Sinkyone trailhead.

Land Access: Medium truck & 4WD access on dirt roads.

On-Water Limitations: No launch facilities are available at this site. Closest launch in Shelter Cove or Noyo Harbor.

Facilities, Staging Areas, Command Posts, Available Equipment: This site is suitable for staging local response equipment only. Consider helicopter lifts for response equipment. An unimproved campground and pit toilets are the only facilities in this remote location.

Communications Problems: Remote, limited communications

Additional Operational Comments: Usal Rd is poorly marked at Hwy 1.

