

County: **Marin**  
 USGS Quad: **7.5" Quad: Tomales, CA**

Thomas Guide Location  
 Marin County  
 NOAA Chart: **Bodega and Tomales Bays 18643**

Latitude N  
 38 13  
 Longitude W  
 122 56

Last Page Update : 7/1/2005

#### SITE DESCRIPTION:

Site includes the Walker Creek delta wetlands and tidal flats between Preston Point on the north and the unnamed point on the south and the creek upstream to the limit of tidal influence. Site lies within the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. Walker creek has a seasonal fresh flow which can be considerable during rainy seasons, but during much of the year, the tidal flow is dominant or exclusive. There is an extensive saltmarsh at the Walker Creek mouth and saltmarsh along the shores of the estuary. There are several channels leading into the estuary. There is a small pocket marsh on the south shore which is fed by a separate drainage. Shallow mudflats and oyster leases front the marsh. These waters are barely navigable but only by the knowledgeable oystermen and other locals.

#### SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN

The Walker Creek delta is an "A" priority all year because of wetlands. Seasonal concerns include endangered coho salmon and steelhead trout spawn in the winter and smolt out-migration follows in spring-early summer. American white pelican frequent here June-March. The marsh is heavily used by migratory shorebirds in the fall and winter.

#### RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN

Mudflats and eelgrass beds are found in the Walker Creek delta to Preston Point. Saltmarsh can be found along the shore and in the Walker Creek estuary.

Several bird species of special concern are resident or casual visitors. California threatened species such as the California black rail, salt marsh yellowthroat, and merlin typically are present in the marshes. Brown pelicans are found here occasionally or seasonally. Herons, egrets, shorebirds and waterfowl use the site throughout the year. Shorebirds and waterfowl, including large numbers of brant, are very abundant here as they are elsewhere throughout the bay during the fall and winter months (Oct-Apr) and many are resident throughout the year.

River otters and harbor seals are not uncommon in the river. When the tides are high, seals tend to spend time near the oyster beds, presumably foraging for fish.

Coho salmon and steelhead migrate upstream from October through April. Smolts out-migrate from February to June. Pacific herring spawn in eelgrass beds throughout Tomales Bay, particularly in the northern portion. Oyster mariculture leases here. Herring spawn in the eelgrass during the winter months (Nov-Feb) and viable eggs (Feb-Apr).

Eelgrass beds are present in the outer river delta area. Extensive saltmarsh flora are present along the river banks of the delta transitioning into freshwater plants further upstream.

#### CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES

This is a culturally sensitive area as is the entire margin of Tomales Bay. For specific sites, contact the Pt. Reyes Park headquarters archeological staff, the California Dept of Parks and Recreation - Historically, a rich area of human habitation. Contact the California Dept of Parks and Recreation - Office of Historic Preservation (Eric Allison -(916) 653-9125), and the Northwest Information Center, (Bryan Much, Sonoma State College ((707) 332-1117)) for specific information on historic or cultural resources in this area.

#### KEY CONTACTS: Trustee (T); Entry/Owner/Access (E); Cultural (C); or Other Assistance (O)

Type	Name / Title	Organization	Phone
T	24hr Sanctuary Personnel	Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary	(650) 479-5311
E	John Finger	Hog Island Oyster Co	(415) 663-9218
E	John Kelly	Audubon Canyon Ranch	(415) 868-9214
E L	Pt. Reyes NP Dispatch PRNS	US National Park Service, Pt. Reyes (NS), Ranger	(415) 464-5170

#### ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:

## 2-168 -A Site Strategy - Walker Creek and Delta

County and Thomas Guide Location

Marin County Marin

NOAA CHART

Bodega and Tomales Bays 18643

## 2-168 -A

Latitude N

Longitude W

3 8 13

122 56

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### CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

Great potential for injury to wetland plants, eelgrass beds, waterfowl and shorebirds. Oil may penetrate into side channels of the marsh and upstream as far as tidal waters may extend. The concerns are oil contamination and response activity impacts to wetlands, rare and endangered species, and other vulnerable plants and wildlife which are present throughout the year. The primary objective is to minimize the exposure of oil to plants, animals and habitats present at this site. Other concerns are the impacts resulting from response activities. Avoid trampling wetlands, sensitive plants and animals, and soft mudflats, causing penetration of oil into the sediments and further injury to the environment.

### HAZARDS and RESTRICTIONS:

Shallow water area. Aquaculture facilities offshore of the delta.

### SITE STRATEGIES

These waters are extremely shallow and booming should be undertaken with the assistance of local oystermen who are familiar with this area (John Finger - Hog Island Oyster Company (415) 663-9218.) Only very shallow draft skiffs and boom boats can operate effectively in this area. Use anchors and stakes to secure the boom.

Strategy 2-168.1 Objective: Minimal Exclusion effort: Boom each channel mouth of the delta. This can be executed with minimal staff and small boats. It leaves the marshfront exposed.

a) Using small craft or oyster boats, boom the two entrances to Walker Creek delta and estuary. The southern opening should be boomed with about 350' of 4X4"+ skirted boom in a chevron configuration from the shoreline just north of Hamlet (yet before the pocket marsh along Hwy 1) and the delta bay front. The northerly opening requires 300' of 4X4"+ boom in a chevron configuration.

b) Boom small pocket marsh Northeast of Tom's Point with 300 ft swamp boom (4X4+)

Strategy 2-168.2 Objective: protective booming of Walker Creek Delta marsh front as augment to channel exclusions (2-168.1)

Deploy 1500 ft swamp boom (4x4+) across delta front and link to channel exclusions of (2-168.1). Extreme shallows will require operations with very shallow draft vessels and at high tide. Employ local oystermen if possible to make execution or for advice.

Strategy 2-168.3 Objective: 2nd layer of exclusion: boom entire marsh front including the various channels. This strategy excludes oil from all channels into the delta and the exposed marshfront as well.

Using shallow draft vessels such as oyster boats, deploy 2500' of 4X4"+ skirted boom from Preston Point to Hamlet. Anchor the boom at 800' intervals and form chevrons in the channels to avoid oil entrainment under the boom. Back channels with sorbent.

Strategy 2-168.4 Objective: 3rd exclusion: When heavy oil threat is pending, deploy large boom set from Tom's Pt to north of Nick's Cove to exclude oil and redirect oil to Tom's Pt on ebb for collection.

Use when heavy oil impacts to Tomales Bay are pending and the primary exclusion/collection strategy for the Bay may not be effective and oil may spread into the east side of the bay.

Deploy 9,000 feet of 6X6 or larger boom from south of Hamlet to Tom's Point. At the channel immediately south of Tom's Point, the boom must be angled across the current to keep oil from entraining under the boom on the flood tide. These waters are extremely shallow. Anchor at about 600' intervals. The target time for deployment is about 4 hours using three boomboat equivalents.

Strategy 2-168.5 Objective: Upstream confinement for product spillage from Hwy 1 or upstream. Deploy boom across the lagoon near Hwy 1 to contain and confine spill to upper estuary and prevent product from flowing down into delta.

Deploy boom across the lagoon to contain and confine spill to upper estuary and brining it to a collection point near Hwy 1 (taking into consideration inhalation and flammability safety). Select a site where containment can be assured and deploy 200 ft of small boom across at a diagonal. Select a site based on prevailing conditions: 1) far enough away from product that safety compromised; 2) access for deployment; 3) only secondarily consider collection - because collection may not be advisable if the product is highly flammable. Repeat the booming to provide several layers of containment. Keep some slack near shore to assure containment even when boom drops during low tide. (strategy not shown on Site Strategy Diagram).

### Table of Response Resources

strategy number	harbor boom	swamp boom	Other boom type	sorb boom	Anchoring no type and gear	Boom boat	Skiffs punts	Skimmers No Type	Special Equipment or comment No and kinds	staff deploy	Staff tend
2-168.1	0	950		0	12 2 anchors and 10 stakes	0	1	0	shallow draft skiff	2	
2-168.2	0	1500	0	0	10 Stakes	0	2	0	0	4	
2-168.3	0	2500		600	8 anchors and stakes	0	2	0	skiffs must be shallow draft	4	

2-168.4	9000	0	0	20	22#/danforth + chain	3	1	0	shallow draft boomboats	11
2-168.5	0	400	0	0		0	1	0	stakes or small anchors	2

## LOGISTICS

**DIRECTIONS: to site (by land and/or by water, to nearest launch ramp and are access permits required.)**

Highway 1 follows the eastern shoreline of Tomales Bay. To get to Hwy 1 from Hwy 101: in San Rafael, take the Sir Francis Drake exit and proceed west to Olema and Pt. Reyes Station; in Petaluma, take the Pt. Reyes Petaluma Road to Pt. Reyes Station at the head of the bay, or take the Tomales Petaluma Road to the mouth of the bay. Hwy 1 parallels the site near the intersection with Tomales Petaluma Road. Site includes the Walker Creek delta wetlands and tidal flats between Preston Point on the north and the unnamed point on the south and the creek upstream to the limit of tidal influence. Site lies within the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

**LAND ACCESS:** Shallow draft vessel only, some land access upstream

**WATER LOGISTICS:** shallow draft only

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking Launch at Lawson's Landing or Nicks Cove.  
and Services Available:

**FACILITIES, STAGING AREAS, POSSIBLE FIELD POSTS AND EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE:**

Staging upstream at parking area off Hwy 1, Lawson's Landing or Nicks Cove. Facilities at Lawson's Landing and Marshall.

**COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:**

**ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:**

