

County: **San Mateo**  
 USGS Quad: **San Gregorio**

Thomas Guide Location

Latitude N

Longitude W

3 7 21

122 24

NOAA Chart: **18680 Point Sur to San Francisco Bay**

Last Page Update : 7/1/1994

**SITE DESCRIPTION:**

Site includes Tunitas Creek mouth and lagoon and a mile of beach bounded north and south by rocky headlands. The area is within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The beach is a broad, fine grain beach with steep cliffs. The lagoon behind the beach is deep and surrounded with dense riparian shrub growth. The creek discharges across the beach in a braided channel. The beach and creek mouth are very isolated by private property and the steep surrounding cliffs. Because the difficulty of access due to private ownership restrictions and steep cliffs, these two habitats of concern are combined as a single tactical site and will require direction and arrangements by IC/UC to provide safe access.

**SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN**

The stream mouth is an A-priority year around. Smelt spawning areas are also A-priority during spawning periods: Feb-July (night smelt) May-Aug (surf smelt) - A priority.

**RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN**

The sandy beach and small dunes are habitat for bird use and fish spawning. The creek and lagoon have riparian and fish habitats vulnerable to oil injuries.

Both sea birds and riparian birds use these areas for foraging and nesting. This may be western snowy plover nesting habitat.

The endangered San Francisco garter snake inhabits the wetland marsh and riparian areas along the creek and lagoon.

This is a smelt spawning beach: Feb-July (night smelt) and May-Aug (surf smelt). The lagoon supports warm water fish species and a modest steelhead trout run: adults migrate from November through May and juveniles may be found in the lagoon year-round.

**CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES**

There are probably historic and cultural sites present. 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		CA State Parks, Northern Comms Center (Dispatch)	(916) 358-0333
O	Jonathan Bishop Oil Spill Prgm Coord.	CA Coastal Commission	(415) 904-5247
O	Alison Detmer	CA Coastal Commission	(415) 904-5205

**ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:**

## 2-269 -A Site Strategy - Tunitas Beach and Creek

County and Thomas Guide Location

San Mateo

NOAA CHART

18680 Point Sur to San Francisco Bay

## 2-269 -A

Latitude N

Longitude W

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Last Page Update : 7/1/2005

### CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

First concern is oil being washed into Tunitas Creek lagoon. Second concern is possible penetration and burial of oil into beach sands which would damage or destroy smelt eggs. Also of concern is disturbance of shorebirds, particularly the plovers which live in the high beach and wrack line. Access is limited and dangerous except through very restricted private ownership. Contact IC for access to gain access through private ownerships.

### HAZARDS and RESTRICTIONS:

This site has very steep cliffs with poor access. Locked gate and potential fire hazard area.

### SITE STRATEGIES

Strategy 2-269.1 Objective: offshore containment and recovery activities to minimize or avert oil from impacting shoreline habitats and wildlife

This site is difficult to protect as is most of the outer coast. Mechanical shoreline protection techniques are not likely to be effective because of high wave energy and/or rocky conditions at this site.

- a) Recommended response strategy is on-water containment and recovery.
- b) Pursue feasibility of alternative response technologies (e.g. dispersants and in-situ burning) to reduce the volume of oil reaching the site.

Strategy 2-269.2 Objective: Exclude oil from creek using boom when surf and flow conditions may admit oil to creek.

Protect creek with boom and sorbent to collect along edge as far seaward as possible. Review and report on the possibility and advisability of using pompoms on a rope for tarballs collection. Access is a problem here: get instructions from IC.

Strategy 2-269.3 Objective: Exclude oil from creek by diking when surf and flow conditions may admit oil to creek.

Exclude oil from lagoon by hand constructed dike using sediments. A syphon or flow-through culvert may be necessary to allow outflow. Access is a problem here: get instructions from IC.

### 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 and kinds	staff deploy	Staff tend
2-269.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		ART & On-Water Skimming	5	
2-269.2	0	200	200 SN	200	2	2					pompom 200'	2	
2-269.3	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	Dozer or earth moving equip & culvert or PVC		

### LOGISTICS

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

South on Hw1 from Hwy 92. Drive 3/10 mile past Tunitas Bridge and turn right into private road with locked gate. Access is very restricted: contact UC for access assistance and instructions. Site includes Tunitas Creek mouth and lagoon and a mile of beach bounded north and south by rocky headlands. The area is within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

**LAND ACCESS:** 4WD steep dirt road behind locked gated north of creek - combo 1126

**WATER LOGISTICS:** very limited by this site access from south beach @ low tide

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking nearest boat launching is Pillar Pt Harbor.

and Services Available:

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

Parking along Hwy 1 at top of high cliffs.

**COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:**

**ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:** communications on the beach are minimal but are outstanding on the hwy above and south

