

2-506 -C/A Site Summary- San Pablo Bay Eelgrass Bed

2-506 -C/A

County: **Contra Costa**
USGS Quad: **San Quentin**

Thomas Guide Location
AAA West Contra
NOAA Chart: **18654 San Pablo Bay**

Latitude N
3 7 59
Longitude W
122 25

Last Page Update : 1/1/2000

SITE DESCRIPTION:

This large eelgrass bed is located between Point San Pablo and Point Pinole one mile northwest of the West Contra Costa Sanitary Land Fill. This eelgrass bed, like all eelgrass beds can vary in distribution, density, and height from year to year. Because the most of the bed is deeper than 8 feet (MLLW), it is rarely exposed to oil, only when tides are so low that the eelgrass tops are exposed on the surface (hence the sliding sensitivity). This is a shallow subtidal soft bottom area of the bay. The eelgrass bed occupies approximately 300 acres. It is easily visible from the air at low tide. It may be difficult to find at high tide.

SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN

This eelgrass bed has A-level protection priority when exposed.

RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN

The eelgrass itself becomes vulnerable to oil at tide levels below +2 ft and its vulnerability increases as the tide drops. The eelgrass bed is densest and will therefore collect the most oil during late summer and early fall.

Black brant (geese) depend upon the eelgrass for food during the winter.

Herring spawn in the eelgrass during the winter months (Nov-Feb) and viable eggs (Feb-Apr).

CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES

This is unlikely to include any cultural or historic resources.

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

Type	Name / Title	Organization	Phone
T		NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-3232
E	Chevron Long Wharf	Chevron Corp., Operations Control Room (24hrs.)	(510) 242-4494
E	EBRPD Dispatch EBRP	East Bay Regional Park District	(510) 881-1833

ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:

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County and Thomas Guide Location
AAA West Contra Contra Costa

NOAA CHART
18654 San Pablo Bay

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Latitude N Longitude W
 37 59 122 25

Last Page Update : 7/1/2005

CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

HAZARDS and RESTRICTIONS:

Shallow water, submerged obstructions likely, eelgrass may foul propellers. Wind chop to three feet possible.

SITE STRATEGIES

Strategy 2-506.1 Objective: Assess need for protective booming: Eelgrass is only vulnerable at very low tides when eelgrass tops are exposed to floating oil.

Biological staff must assess this site to determine if eelgrass is at risk. Because this bed is fairly deep, eelgrass tops are rarely, if ever, exposed to floating oil, and then only at very low tides. Oil readily sticks to floating eelgrass tops, and once eelgrass gets fouled with oil, oil becomes a subsurface threat to fish and other organisms which thrive in this cover. Scientific staff must review tidal information to see if minus tides less than -0.5 may result in eelgrass exposure, and must conduct on-site evaluation as necessary. Any booming recommendations should be expedited through ICS to operations.

Strategy 2-506.2 Objective: Deflect oil from coming into contact with the eelgrass during low tides.

Deflection booming: if a large amount of heavy oil is expected to enter the eelgrass bed within 2 hours of low tide, 2000 feet of 9X9+ Hboom should be deployed in an attempt to deflect the oil around the eelgrass. The location and manner in which the boom is deployed will depend upon the wind and current at the time of the deployment. The deflection is unlikely to be effective if any portion of the boom is perpendicular to the wind or current. Oil can pass directly over the eelgrass at high tide without sticking to the eelgrass.

Table of Response Resources

strategy number	harbor boom	swamp boom	Other boom type	sorb boom	Anchoring no	tvpe and gear	Boom boat	Skiffs punts	Skimmers No	Type	Special Equipment or No	comment and kinds	staff deploy	Staff tend
2-506.1													1	
2-506.2	2000	0	0	0	6	#22lb danforth	3	0	0	0			4	

LOGISTICS

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

Access by water only. Launch ramp at Richmond Marina or Chevron Refinery. This large eelgrass bed is located between Point San Pablo and Point Pinole one mile northwest of the West Contra Costa Sanitary Land Fill. This eelgrass bed, like all eelgrass beds can vary in distribution, density, and height from year to year. Because the most of the bed is deeper than 8 feet (MLLW), it is rarely exposed to oil, only when tides are so low that the eelgrass tops are exposed on the surface (hence the sliding sensitivity).

LAND ACCESS: Boat access only

WATER LOGISTICS: shallow draft vessels only

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking and Services Available: Richmond Marina, Pt San Pablo Yacht Harbor, and Chevron Refinery

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

Richmond Harbor and Chevron Refinery

COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:

