

**4-120 -A Site Summary- Cayucos Point & San Geronimo Creek****4-120 -A**

County: **San Luis Obispo**  
USGS Quad: **Cayucos**

Thomas Guide Location  
590 D-2  
NOAA Chart: **Estero Bay 18703**

Latitude N  
35.4464  
Longitude W  
120.9392

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014
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**SITE DESCRIPTION:**

See Division D map. Estero Bluffs State Park property (State Park goes from Villa Creek south to N. Ocean Blvd. in northern Cayucos). Cayucos Point and to the north is a wave-cut rock platform, and is a major harbor seal haulout. Mixed sand and gravel pocket beaches in between rocky platforms; rocky platform approx. 1/2 mile long. San Geronimo Creek empties in small pocket sandy/gravel beach. The 3.5 mile long coast line contains rocky intertidal tide pool habitat, and sandy coves with coastal terrace grasslands above.

**SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN**

The species of concern are present year round,. Harbor seal pupping peak is March-June. Sea otter pupping is Jan-March. Tidewater gobies (designated critical habitat) nesting in estuary sediments April-July.

**RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN**

Tidewater gobies in San Geronimo Creek estuary (designated tidewater goby critical habitat).

Rocky intertidal habitat haulout for large numbers of marine mammals.

Throughout Division D, black abalone (endangered) may be present in rocky intertidal habitat (designated critical habitat). Designated critical habitat for leatherback sea turtles (endangered), most commonly observed Aug. – Nov.

Red-legged frogs (threatened) and Western pond turtles (species of special concern) may be found in the creek.

American black oystercatchers, grebes, pigeon guillemots, and brown pelicans can be observed here.

This rocky platform is a major Harbor Seal haulout. 1,200 mammals have been observed here. Southern sea otters can also be observed offshore. These species are present year round.

**CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES**

Contact SHPO and Native American Heritage Commission

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

Type	Name / Title	Organization	Phone
E/T	District Office	State Parks & Recreation Dept.	(805) 927-2065
T	Melissa Boggs Environmental Scientist	CDFW-OSPR	(805) 558-1005
T	Mike Harris Sea otter expert	CDFW-OSPR	(805) 772-1135
O	Brian Hatfield Marine mammal expert	Bio Res Div. USGS	(805) 927-3893
T	Jenny Marrek Biologist	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	(805) 644-1766
C	Larry Meyer	Native American Heritage Commission	(916) 373-3712
T	Elizabeth Petras Biologist	National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-3238
E/T	Dispatch State Parks	State Dept. Parks and Recreation	(951) 443-2969

**ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:**

## 4-120 -A Site Strategy - Cayucos Point & San Geronimo Creek

County and Thomas Guide Location

590 D-2 San Luis Obispo

NOAA CHART

Estero Bay 18703

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### CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

Fish Disturbance - Avoid disturbing bottom lagoon sediments to protect tidewater gobies (critical habitat) especially April-July, goby nesting season. Equipment and foot traffic entering wetted areas should be avoided to the maximum extent practical to prevent crushing tidewater gobies, their burrows, and eggs. Any anchors deployed in water should be placed in waters greater than 4 feet deep to avoid crushing tidewater goby burrows. If supplemental water is used to flush recommend gradually increasing the intensity/volume during the flush.

Streamside Vegetation - Minimize disturbance to streamside vegetation.

Wave washover - May carry oil over natural berm into the lagoon during extreme onshore and tidal conditions.

Wetland/riparian habitat – Mud flats, marshlands, and creeks contain fragile habitat subject to damage from human activities such as walking and vehicle use. Oil can be trampled into sediments by responders where it will not be recoverable. Avoid walking in mudflats, marshy areas, and riparian habitat/waterways whenever possible. Use skiffs to access response sites if conditions permit. When crews must walk in soft bottom wetland areas to access cleanup sites, restrict the number and size of pathways. Mark authorized pathways with flagging or tape. Place temporary ramps (e.g. plywood sheets) in sensitive marshy areas where heavy use is expected.

Sensitive Biota - Nearshore waters include sensitive rafting areas for birds, sea otters, and other marine mammals. To protect seabirds, limit spill response activities within 1,000 feet of nesting seabirds when possible. Try to remain at least 100 yards away from marine mammals and sea turtles (designated critical habitat for leatherback sea turtles) and if approached closely by a marine mammal or turtle while motoring, reduce speed and shift to neutral; do not engage props until the animals are observed at the surface, clear of the vessel.

Throughout Division D, black abalone (endangered) may be present in rocky intertidal habitat (designated critical habitat).

#### HAZARDS and RESTRICTIONS:

Within Estero Bluffs State Park.

### SITE STRATEGIES

#### Strategy 4-120.1 Objective: Deflect or exclude from impacting this point.

Offshore containment and recovery (OCR) is the preferred option although heavy surf may hinder these operations. No specific response equipment listed due to the many variables associated with each spill regarding OCR. Early consideration should be given to the use of applied response technologies.

#### Strategy 4-120.2 Objective: Exclude oil from getting into creek/estuary with berming or sandbags

When creek mouth is open, under low flow conditions block entrance with sediment berm or sandbag berm (fine to medium grained sand), and install flow through pipes as necessary to prevent flooding. To create protective berm take sand from active unvegetated beach face to prevent damage to dune habitat. When erosion from waves or overflows could erode berm, armor berm and banks by covering with plastic sheeting anchored by sandbags. When overflow could occur due to accumulation of water behind the containment berm install underflow piping and/or a spillway in the berm. When overwash could bring oil into inlet over berm back exclusion/containment berm with containment and/or sorbent booms and/or snare. Regular monitoring and maintenance will be necessary (2 staff twice daily). Check for berm effectiveness and integrity, overwash, and leakage problems, boom position and security, and sorbent replacement as necessary.

Divert oil to the beach north of creek mouth for access for oil collection.

#### Strategy 4-120.3 Objective: Exclude oil from getting into cree/estuary with short skirted containment boom.

When creek mouth is open block entrance with a short skirted containment boom at appropriate angle for swift currents and changing tidal influences. When suitable berm materials are unavailable and/or when tidal flows, waterflows, or water depths are too great for berming install exclusion booms near mouth of Inlet/lagoon using short skirted boom and snare boom. Install boom in a configuration/angle which blocks channel and diverts oil to a collection point. If needed, line river/stream bank, rip-rap, side channels, and sandy beaches within lagoon, seaward of the exclusion/containment booms to restrict oil to open water area of main channel to protect vegetated banks and sensitive areas within the inlet/estuary. Use swamp boom backed by sorbent booms, if waters are shallower, and use harbor boom backed by sorbent booms, when water depths are greater. Check/maintain boom for effectiveness and integrity, overwash, and leakage problems, boom positioning and security, and sorbent replacement as necessary.

Divert oil to the beach north of creek mouth for access for oil collection.

#### Strategy 4-120.4 Objective: Exclude oil from getting into creek/estuary with fencing.

When creek mouth is closed consider installing excelsior fencing along top of natural berm to capture oil when there is a potential for high tidal washover.

When creek mouth is open use a filter barrier for exclusion/containment – Use this method when the cross-section of the watercourse does not exceed 20 feet in width, water flow volume is low, the channel bottom is capable of receiving and holding metal stakes, the spill consists of heavy petroleum, and berming or booming methods are not feasible due to lack of materials or accessibility. Construct a filter barrier across the channel using two parallel rows of metal stakes, upon which construction fencing is fastened. Place permeable sorbent materials such as snare or excelsior, between the two lines of fencing to capture oil. Re-adjust sorbent materials as necessary minimize entrainment and/or leakage and to accommodate flow, tidal, oceanic, and meteorological changes. Replace sorbent materials as necessary to maintain sorbent quality. Divert oil to the beach north of creek mouth for access for oil collection.

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
4-120.1									Offshore containment & recovery		
4-120.2							1	SSS	Backhoe or sandbags, piping, plastic sheeting	4-6	
4-120.3		100		2			1	SSS		4	
4-120.4	0	0	100 FF	0	0	0	0	1 SSS	0 Excelsior fencing and metal stakes		

### LOGISTICS

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

From the south: Take Hwy 101 N to Hwy 1 N, Morro Bay exit in San Luis Obispo. Site is approx. 1 mile north of Cayucos Creek. Vista turnouts for access to pocket beaches.

From the north: Take Hwy 101 or 5 S to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 1 S to Cayucos Point, approx. 1 mile north of Cayucos Creek.

**LAND ACCESS:** Foot access only.

#### **WATER LOGISTICS:**

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking Morro Bay boat ramp is approx. 8 miles South.  
and Services Available:

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

Command Post: Cayucos Veteran's Memorial building (support services needed). U.S. Coast Guard office in Morro Bay, approx. 8 miles South. CDFW office in San Luis Obispo.

Staging Area: Turnouts along HWY 1 and/or Veterans Memorial Building parking lot at south end of Cayucos County Beach, contact (805) 995-1228 or county OES for alternate number. Chevron Estero Bay Marine Terminal is approx. 4 miles south.

Airports: SLO County Airport, approx. 40 min south. Paso Robles Airport is approx. 45 min inland.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:**

#### **ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:**

