

County: **San Luis Obispo**
 USGS Quad: **Morro Bay South**

Thomas Guide Location
 611 D-5
 NOAA Chart: **Estero Bay 18703**

Latitude N
 35.3727
 Longitude W
 120.8637

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

SITE DESCRIPTION:

See Division E map. Morro Strand Beach south, Pismo Clam Preserve (Dept. Fish and Game designation). Designated critical habitat for threatened western snowy plovers. From just north of Morro Rock to Azure Street is designated Pismo Clam Preserve area. The southern portion of this Preserve is within the City's jurisdiction, Morro Bay Harbor Department and the northern section of the Preserve is within Morro Strand State Beach. Fine to medium grained sandy beach just north of Morro Rock.

Morro Bay Power Electrical Plant water intake is at the south end of this beach at north side of Morro Rock; contact Dynegy Energy.

SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN

Snowy plover nesting season occurs March-Sept., they nest in the foredunes. Pismo clams are present year round. California grunion spawn April-May.

RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN

Western snowy plovers nest on this beach. Snowy plovers may have active nests, or chicks may be actively moving about the area. Care should be given to minimize disturbance and avoid injury to either nests, or chicks. Snowy plovers are small, white and tan colored shore birds. Beach bird-nesting sites are shallow depressions scratched out from the sand surface on sandy beaches above the highest tide line. The nest sites are typically very well disguised and difficult to see, even for trained eyes. Nest sites may contain either eggs, or chicks which are potentially vulnerable to trampling by vehicles or foot traffic. Snowy plover adults and chicks are known to move between the nest sites and the active water line. Over-wintering snowy plover adults may be foraging throughout the response area.

Shore and sea birds are present year round and are of concern, brown pelicans, willets, sanderlings, and curlews.

Southern sea otters can be observed offshore. Designated critical habitat for leatherback sea turtles (endangered), most commonly observed Aug. – Nov.

Pismo clams are found on this beach in moderate numbers, and are present year round.

CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES

Archaeological sites are of concern in this area. 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
E	Eric Endersby Harbor Manager	Morro Bay Harbor Dept	(805) 772-6254
C	Lynn Gamble Historic Info Center	SHPO/UCSB	(805) 893-7341
O	Steven Goschke Plant Manager	Dynegy Energy Morro Bay Power Plant	(805) 595-4214
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	Elizabeth Petras Biologist	National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-3238
C	SHPO	State Office of Historic Preservation	(916) 445-7000
E/T	Dispatch State Parks	State Dept. Parks and Recreation	(951) 443-2969

ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:

4-145 -A Site Strategy - Morro Strand Beach (Pismo Clam Preserve)

County and Thomas Guide Location

611 D-5 San Luis Obispo

NOAA CHART

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4-145 -A

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CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

PRIMARY PLOVER PROTECTION STRATEGY: During nesting season, March-September, to aid in avoiding damage to nests, consider delineation of nesting areas and designate responder "pathways" with flagging or tape. Nests and critical habitat protection areas will require oversight by natural resource specialist prior to response effort execution. All responders should be briefed on procedures for avoiding birds and nest sites to aid in minimizing damage to nest sites and associated wildlife. Oil spill response and cleanup activity should be limited to locations below high tide line unless otherwise authorized by trustee agency specialist, or designee (biological monitor). The area to be protected will be monitored by an assigned biological monitor. Oil removal will be conducted by hand crews unless other methods are recommended by the biological monitor. Pre-clean the beach and stockpile kelp and surfgrass rack in designated areas for re-distribution after response efforts are completed. A staging area will be determined as most suitable for response and natural resource protection. Travel on beach should be restricted to the wet sand as much as possible; vehicle traffic should be operated at slow enough speeds to avoid/minimize impacts to wildlife (15 MPH); if possible avoid driving over wrack.

SECONDARY PLOVER PROTECTION STRATEGY: At the discretion of the biological monitor, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Snowy plover or least tern eggs may be removed from nest's by authorized and qualified personnel to an approved facility to avoid injury. This determination will be made on-site utilizing oil trajectory and oil impact timing information.

Dune Habitats – Minimize mechanical and human activities in vegetated dune habitat.

Other 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 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.

SHORELINE PRE-CLEANING may be warranted before oil reaches the beach when the shoreline is covered with kelp, driftwood, etc which could become oiled and create more oiled waste. Consult with trustees prior to engaging in activities on shoreline. Move un-oiled vegetation, driftwood, etc. above the high tide line. When the shoreline is narrow, un-oiled debris may need to be stockpiled elsewhere. It is suggested that photos be taken to document distribution of beach debris prior to collection so that it can be replaced to its pre-spill distribution when spill cleanup is complete. Pre-cleaning of shorelines should be conducted by hand crews to the greatest practical extent to minimize disturbance to wildlife and their habitats.

HAZARDS and RESTRICTIONS:

Power plant water intake is on north side of Morro Rock (south end of sandy beach); contact Dynegy Energy.

SITE STRATEGIES

Strategy 4-145.1 Objective: Delfect or exclude oil from impacting this beach.

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 number	harbor boom	swamp boom	Other boom type	sorb boom	Anchoring no	Boat type and gear	Boom boat	Skiffs punts	Skimmers No	Type	Special Equipment or comment No and kinds	staff deploy	Staff tend
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4-145.1

Offshore containment & recovery

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), to Morro Bay Blvd. Exit, go west to Embarcadero St. which turns into Coleman Dr., turn into Coleman Park parking area. Site is beach just north of Morro Rock.

From the north: Take Hwy 101 S to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 1 S (or Hwy 5 S to Hwy 41 W to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 1 S), follow directions as above.

LAND ACCESS: Vehicles/heavy i.e.. Beach access from Coleman Park.

WATER LOGISTICS:

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking Morro Bay boat launch approx. 1 mile south.

and Services Available:

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

Staging area: Coleman Park parking area.

Command Post: U.S. Coast Guard office in Morro Bay. CDFW office in San Luis Obispo.

Airports: SLO County Airport is approx. 30 min. south. Paso Robles Airport is approx. 30 min. inland.

COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:

Dept. Fish and Game, USFWS, and State Dept. of Parks and Rec. should be consulted before staging motorized equipment and heavy traffic are permitted. The southern portion of this beach, from Morro Rock north to Morro creek, Morro Rock City Beach, is owned and managed by the City of Morro Bay. North of Morro Creek beach is owned and managed by State Dept, of Parks and Recreation.

