

**4-450-A Site Summary - Santa Maria River****4-450-A****County :** Santa Barbara **ACP Division/Segment :** SL - K - S 001**NOAA Chart :** 18700**Map Book :** 774 A-5**Decimal Degrees** 34.97078 -120.65021**Site Description:**

Santa Maria River is the border between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo County lines. A 365 acre wetland, one of the largest in San Luis Obispo/Santa Barbara Counties, provides habitat for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl, fish and amphibians. North and south of the river mouth are wide extensive fine to medium grained sandy beaches backed by well developed sand dunes. Strong winds and high surf conditions are common. River mouth may be closed by sand berm, especially during summer months. Just south of the river Santa Barbara County Parks owns and manages Guadalupe Dunes Natural Preserve and the Guadalupe Oil Field is on north side of river (site #445). Species of concern are present year round. Designated critical habitat for leatherback sea turtles; river critical habitat for tidewater gobies and steelhead trout; beach designated critical habitat for western snowy plovers and California least terns. California red-legged frogs utilize this habitat. Waterfowl, shorebirds, seabirds, brown pelicans, and peregrine falcons utilize this habitat year-round. Sensitive plant species are also of concern such as the la graciola thistle. Southern sea otters common offshore.

**Resources at Risk:***ESI and Habitat:* 10A Salt - and brackish-water marshes

7 Exposed tidal flat

3A Fine- to medium-grained sand beaches

**List of Resources at Risk:**

	Resource Name	Status	Presence
Amphibians	California red-legged frog	FT	Year-round
Birds	Western snowy plover	FT	Year-round
Birds	California least tern	FE, SE	Apr - Sep
Fish	tidewater goby	FE	Year-round
Fish	steelhead - Central/Northern California	FT	Year-round
Mammals	Southern sea otter	FT, SP	Year-round
Plants	La Graciosa thistle		Year-round
Reptiles	leatherback sea turtle	FE	Aug - Nov

FT-Federally Threatened, FE-Federally Endangered, FP-Federally Protected, SE-State Endangered, ST-State Threatened, SP -State Protected, SR-State Rare, SSC-Species of Special Concern, BGEPA-Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, SSSP-State Special Status Species

**List of Key Contacts:**

Type	Name/Title	Organization	Phone
C	/	Central Coast Archeological Information Center	(805) 893-2474
C	/	Native American Heritage Commission	(916) 373-3710
E	Dan Pederson/Park Manager	Santa Barbara County Park Department	(805) 896-7007
O	Brian Hatfield/Marine Mammal Expert	US Geological Survey, Biological Division	(805) 927-3893
T	Mary Larson/Steelhead	California Department of Fish & Wildlife	(562) 537-8624
T	Justin Viezbicke/Marine Mammal Stranding	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 506-4315
T	Melissa Neuman/Marine Biologist	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 481-4594
T	Rick Bush/Fisheries Biologist	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-3562
T	Tina Fahy/Sea Turtle Recovery Coordinator	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-4023
T	/	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal T&E Species	(805) 644-1766

C – Cultural, Historic, Archaeological; E – Entry/Owner/Access; O – Other; S – Safety; T – Trustee; X – Exclusion or Security

**Additional Site Summary Comments:**

Western snowy plovers nest March - September; California least terns nest April - September; refer to Typical Sandy Beach Site Summary and Strategy pages (Site 4-000-A) for information on response operations when dealing with snowy plovers and least terns. Tidewater gobies nest in estuary sediments April - July; steelhead peak spawning March - July; California red-legged frog breed November - March; leatherback sea turtles most commonly observed August - November; southern sea otters pup year-round.

**Concerns and Advice to Responders:**

Minimize disturbance in riparian/wetland areas when possible. When crews must walk in soft bottom wetland/riparian areas, restrict the number and size of pathways and avoid trampling oil into sediments. If river conditions allow, boom/fencing deployment and recovery to be done by only having one person slowly walk across creek to position the boom/fencing to reduce disturbance. Avoid disturbing bottom lagoon sediments to protect tidewater gobies (endangered) especially during goby nesting season April - July; site is goby critical habitat. Equipment and foot traffic entering wetted areas should be avoided to the maximum extent practical to prevent crushing tidewater gobies, their burrows, and eggs. If supplemental water is used to flush recommend gradually increasing the intensity/volume during the flush for gobies. Steelhead (critical habitat upstream) peak spawning March - July. Beach designated critical habitat for snowy plovers and least terns; refer to Typical Sandy Beach Site Summary and Strategy pages (Site 4-000-A) for information on response operations when dealing with snowy plovers and least terns. Southern sea otters (threatened) pup year-round.

**Hazard and Restrictions:**

Contact resource agencies due to nesting birds and sensitive fish species in estuary.

**Site Strategies:****Strategy: 4-450.1 Objective:** Deploy Containment Boom

**Strategy:** When river mouth is open block entrance with short skirted containment boom (swamp boom) at appropriate angle for swift currents and changing tidal influences; place above high tide line. If creek conditions allow, boom deployment and recovery to be done by only having one person slowly walk across the creek to position the boom (and fence posts or anchors on the bank) to reduce disturbance. Install boom in a configuration/angle which blocks channel and diverts oil to a collection point. Consider booming shorelines of inlet to prevent oiling. Maintenance/monitoring necessary; check boom for effectiveness.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Boom	Swamp Boom			1000	feet	
skimmer				1		
Staff				6		
Vehicle	ATV					

**Strategy: 4-450.2 Objective:** Erect Filter Fence

**Strategy:** When creek mouth is closed install 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 fence barrier for exclusion/containment. Use this method when the cross-section of the watercourse does not exceed 30 feet in width, water flow volume is low, the channel bottom is capable of receiving and holding metal stakes, and the spill consists of heavy oil. If creek conditions allow, filter fence deployment and recovery to be done by only having one person slowly walk across the creek to position fencing (and fence posts) to reduce disturbance. Maintenance/monitoring of filter fencing necessary.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Fence	Construction Fencing			500	feet	
skimmer				1		
Stakes				50		
Staff				6		
Vehicle	ATV			1		
Misc.	Oil Snare (pom-pom)					

**Strategy: 4-450.3 Objective:** Build Berm

*Strategy:* When creek mouth is open, under low flow conditions block creek entrance with sediment berm or sandbag berm, 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. Manual building of berm preferred over heavy equipment even when heavy equipment can access site. Maintenance/monitoring necessary; check for berm effectiveness.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Heavy Equip	Backhoe					
Sandbags						
Piping						
skimmer				1		
Staff				6		
Vehicle	ATV			1		

**Strategy: 4-450.4 Objective:** Other: See Strategy Box

*Strategy:* For inland spill, contain spill as close to the source of discharge as possible using hay bales, booming techniques, sorbents, skimmers, vacuum trucks and other appropriate means. Building a sediment dike in river should be last response priority due to sensitivity of riparian habitat.

Table of Response Resources

**Last Page Update**

**Logistics:**

*Directions:* From the north: Take Hwy 101 S (or Hwy 5 S to Hwy 41 W to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 101 S) to Halcyon Rd. exit in Arroyo Grande and go straight (south) to Hwy 1 (Cienega St. which turns into Mesa View Dr.), turn left (south) on Hwy 1. Continue on Hwy 1 for approx. 10 miles to Main St. in Guadalupe (Hwy 166) and turn right (west). Continue west on Main St.. For 1.2 miles to beach parking lot. From the south: Take Hwy 101 N to Hwy 166 in Santa Maria. Go west on 166 (Main St.) to the beach parking lot. If gate at kiosk is locked call SB County Parks for access (Dan Pedersen 805-896-7007 cell). Santa Maria River inlet is north of parking area approximately half mile.

*Land Access:* ATV or 4-wheel drive vehicle access possible w/ permission from SB Co. Parks, CDFW, USFWS.

*On-Water Limitations:* Limitations: Depth, obstruction. Launching, Loading, Docking and Services Available: Port San Luis Harbor, approx. 40 miles north.

*Facilities, Staging Areas, Command Posts, Available Equipment:* Staging Area: Guadalupe Beach parking lot. Command Post: Hotels in Santa Maria. Airports: SLO County Airport is approx. 45 min. north. Santa Maria Airport is approx. 15 miles south east.

*Communications Problems:* None.

