

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

Thomas Guide Location
 528 B-2

Latitude N
 35.59446

Longitude W
 121.12538

NOAA Chart: **Pt. Sur to Pt. Conception 18700**

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

SITE DESCRIPTION:

See Division B map. San Simeon Creek runs through San Simeon State Park Campground. There is a well developed freshwater marsh. The creek is fronted by a popular sandy beach, a snowy plover nesting beach designated critical habitat. State Park property and site is within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and Sea Otter Game Refuge. Offshore is the White Rock State Marine Conservation Area MPA [extends from Pico Creek south 6 miles and 1 mile offshore] and is governed by special protections established by the DFW Marine Region.

SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN

Species of concern are present year round. Tidewater gobies (designated critical habitat) nest in estuary sediments April-July. Steelhead (designated critical habitat) peak spawning March - July. Nov.- March red-legged frog breeding season. Snowy plover nesting season March-November (designated critical habitat). Harbor seals are present here year round. Marine mammal pupping season: Harbor seals March-June; sea otters Jan-March.

Throughout Division B, black abalone (endangered) may be present in rocky intertidal habitat (designated critical habitat). Also leatherback sea turtle designated critical habitat extends from shore out to 100 miles offshore; most commonly observed Aug - Nov.

RESOURCES OF PRIMARY CONCERN

Western snowy plovers nest on this beach (designated critical habitat). 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 including coots, killdeer, great blue heron, snowy egret, whimbrel, yellowlegs, sandpipers, bittern, grebes, dabbling ducks, brown pelican and snowy plover (threatened).

Red-legged frogs (federally threatened) and two striped garter snake also utilize this habitat. Southern sea otters can also be observed offshore.

Tidewater goby (endangered), western pond turtle (species of special concern), and steelhead trout (threatened) are in this creek.

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 |
| C | Lynn Gamble Historic Info Center | SHPO/UCSB | (805) 893-7341 |
| 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 | Scott Kathey Regulatory Coordinator | Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary | (831) 647-4251 |
| T | Jenny Marrek Biologist | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | (805) 644-1766 |
| C | Larry Meyer | Native American Heritage Commission | (916) 373-3712 |
| T | Becky Ota | CDFW for MPAs | (650) 631-6789 |
| T | Elizabeth Petras Biologist | National Marine Fisheries Service | (562) 980-3238 |
| C | SHPO | State Office of Historic Preservation | (916) 445-7000 |
| T | Carolyn Skinder Biologist | Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary | (805) 927-2145 |
| E/T | Dispatch State Parks | State Dept. Parks and Recreation | (951) 443-2969 |
| T | Steve Wertz | CDFW for MPAs | (562) 342-7184 |

ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:

4-080 -A Site Strategy - San Simeon Creek Inlet and Beach

County and Thomas Guide Location

528 B-2 San Luis Obispo

NOAA CHART

Pt. Sur to Pt. Conception 18700

4-080 -A

Latitude N

Longitude W

35.5944 121.12538

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

April-July minimize trampling in estuary sediments due to nesting tidewater gobies and steelhead (designated critical habitat for both species). 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 on the bank) to reduce disturbance. For goby protections, 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.

Nov-March minimize trampling estuary/creek vegetation due to frog breeding.

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. 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.

Black abalone (endangered) may be present on nearby rocky intertidal habitat.

Sensitive Biota - Nearshore waters include sensitive rafting areas for birds, sea otters, and other marine mammals. Seabirds. 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 leatherbacks) 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.

PRIMARY PLOVER PROTECTION STRATEGY: Beach is designated plover critical habitat. 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. 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 should be monitored by an assigned biological monitor. Oil removal should 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.

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:

State Park property; High recreational use area.

SITE STRATEGIES

Strategy 4-080.1 Objective: Exclude oil from getting into creek/estuary with berm 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.

It is important to keep oil from going under bridge into the best developed marsh area. In the advent of dike failure, deflect oil to south side of the channel west of bridge.

Strategy 4-080.2 Objective: Exclude oil from getting into creek/estuary with 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 at 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.

Strategy 4-080.3 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.

Strategy 4-080.4 Objective: Exclude/deflect oil from 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 | tvpe and gear | Boom boat | Skiffs punts | Skimmers No | Type | Special Equipment or comment and kinds | staff deploy | Staff tend |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|------|---|--------------|------------|
| 4-080.1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | SSS | Backhoe or sandbags, piping, plastic sheeting | 4-6 | |
| 4-080.2 | | 300 | | | 2 | | | | 1 | SSS | | 2-4 | |
| 4-080.3 | | | 300 FF | | | | | | 1 | SSS | Excelsior fencing, metal stakes | 2-4 | |
| 4-080.4 | | 0 | | 0 | 0 | | | 0 | | 0 | | | |

LOGISTICS

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

From the north: Take Hwy 101 S to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 1 N (or Hwy 5 S to Hwy 41 W to Hwy 46 W to Hwy 1 N), to just south of the town of San Simeon. Cross San Simeon Creek bridge (post mile marker 52.92) and turn right onto San Simeon Creek Rd. (follow camp ground signs). Enter campground and stay to the right until you reach the bridge and beach.
From the south: Take Morro Bay exit in San Luis Obispo, Hwy 1, to San Simeon Creek Rd. campground and continue as above.

LAND ACCESS: Foot only, unless permission from State Parks to move utility poles

WATER LOGISTICS:

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking Morro Bay boat ramp, approx. 20 miles south.
and Services Available:

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

Staging Area: San Simeon State Beach campground

Command Post: State Parks office at Hearst Castle or hotels in San Simeon

Airports: SLO County Airport approx. 1 hour south, Paso Robles Airport approx. 45 min inland. Private Landing strip approx. 5 miles north, north of Hearst castle visitors center.

COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:

