4-135 -A Site Summary- Toro Creek Inlet

4-135 -A

		Thomas Guide Location	Latitude N	Longitude W
County:	San Luis Obispo	591 D-7	35.41288	120.87364
USGS Quad:	Morro Bay North	NOAA Chart: Estero Bay 18703		

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

SITE DESCRIPTION:

See Division E map. Toro Creek, designated steelhead trout critical habitat, fronted by a fine to medium grained sandy beach, designated critical habitat for western snowy plovers. Creek mouth empties just seaward of Chevron Estero Marine Terminal. Inland, creek runs through terminal and under Hwy 1, then flows onto beach. Beach fronting creek is highly utilized for recreational purposes including fishing and surfing and is designated critical habitat for western snowy plovers. To the north and south are State Beaches but beach fronting Toro Creek is private property. The Chevron Estero Bay Marine Terminal is no longer active, but there are still pipelines (inactive) that run from the facility, out onto the beach next to Toro Creek and out into the ocean.

SEASONAL and SPECIAL RESOURCE CONCERN

Species of concern are present year round. Tidewater gobies nest in estuary sediments, peak nesting April-July. Critical habitat for steelhead, peak spawning March - July. Western snowy plover nesting season is mid-March- Sept. Plovers nest in the foredunes.

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.

Shorebirds include western gulls, willets, sandpipers, black oyster catchers (on rocky intertidal); sea birds include brown pelicans, pelagic cormorants, grebes, loons, scoters, common murres.

Kelp beds offshore.

Shorebirds include brown pelicans, marbled godwits, willets, sandpipers, gulls.

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

Tidewater gobies are federally endangered and are found in this creek. Chevron consultants conducted a goby survey 1995 and Gobies were found 300' upstream from bridge. Steelhead (threatened) and southwestern pond turtles (species of special concern) are also found in Toro Creek.

CULTURAL, HISTORIC, and ARCHEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES

This area also has archaeological sites of concern. 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
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	Jenny Marrek Biologist	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	(805) 644-1766
C	Larry Meyer	Native American Heritage Commission	(916) 373-3712
O	Eugene Pack Manager	Chevron	(805) 772-2611
T	Elizabeth Petras Biologist	National Marine Fisheries Service	(562) 980-3238
C	SHPO	State Office of Historic Preservation	(916) 445-7000
T	Dispatch State Parks	State Dept. Parks and Recreation	(951) 443-2969

ADDITIONAL SITE SUMMARY COMMENTS:

County and Thomas Guide Location	NOAA CHART	Latitude N	Longitude W
591 D-7 San Luis Obispo	Estero Bay 18703	35.4128	120.87364

Last Page Update : 5/1/2014

CONCERNS and ADVICE to RESPONDERS:

Fish Disturbance - Avoid disturbing bottom lagoon sediments to protect tidewater gobies especially April-May goby nesting season and March - July, peak spawning for steelhead (critical habitat for steelhead). 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. 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.

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.

PRIMARY PLOVER PROTECTION STRATEGY: Beach is designated critical habitat for western snowy plovers (threatened). To aid in avoiding damage to nests, consider delineation of nesting areas. Nests and critical habitat protection areas will require oversight by natural resource specialist prior to response effort execution. All responders will 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 will be limited to locations below the 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. Solid waste and rack will be directed to separate collection locations. 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 STRAGEGY: 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.

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:
Sensitive Biota - Nearshore waters, within a mile of the shoreline 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.

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

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 unoiled 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:
Chevron pipelines idle; contact Chevron for location of pipelines before using/staging heavy equipment on beach. Mobil pipelines (carry cutter stock and San Joaquin Valley crude oil) crosses Toro Creek approx. 1 mile inland.

Boom can be placed manually without boats. Consider anchoring boom in rip rap and/or using Hwy 1 bridge abutment. Consider lining rip rap, underneath Hwy bridge, with boom.

SITE STRATEGIES

Strategy 4-135.1 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. 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 sand bags. 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.

Strategy 4-135.2 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 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.

Strategy 4-135.3 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 number	harbor boom	swamp boom	Other boom type	sorb boom	Anchoring no	Anchoring type and gear	Boom boat	Skiffs punts	Skimmers No	Skimmers Type	Special Equipment or comment No	Special Equipment or comment and kinds	staff deploy	Staff tend
4-135.1								1	SSS			Backhoe or sandbags, piping, plastiic sheeting	4-6	
4-135.2		300			2			1	SSS				4	
4-135.3			300 FF					1	SSS			Excelsior fencing, metal stakes	2-4	

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. Creek is across from Chevron Estero Bay Marine Terminal, 4000 Hwy 1, approx. 5 miles north of Morro Bay.
From the north: Take Hwy 101 S (or Hwy 5 S to 46 W to Hwy 1 S) . Follow as above.

LAND ACCESS: Foot access through gate.

WATER LOGISTICS:

Limitations: depth, obstruction

Launching, Loading, Docking and Services Available: Morro Bay boat ramp approx. 5 miles south.

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

Staging Area: Chevron Estero Bay Marine Terminal across street
Command Post: U.S. Coast Guard offices in Morro Bay, approx. 5 miles south. CDFW office in San Luis Obispo.
Airports: SLO County Airport approx. 40 minuets south. Paso Robles Airport approx. 45 min. inland.

COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS:

ADDITIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMENTS:

Consult with Chevron for location of oil pipelines on beach before excavating and/or staging heavy equipment.


Toro Creek
Former Chevron
Marine Terminal
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Feet
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CDFW - OSPR & USCG Site: 4-135 Name: Toro Creek Inlet
G. White (OSPR) & M. Boggs (OSPR) Date05/08/2014
Harbor Boom
Swamp Boom
Skimmer
Sorbent Boom
Other Boom
Offshore Containment Recovery
Dike or Berm
Filter Fence
Imagery: NAIP 2010 (Summer) 4-Band