

**4-540-A Site Summary - Santa Ynez River****4-540-A****County :** Santa Barbara **ACP Division/Segment :** SB - D - S02**NOAA Chart :** 18700**Map Book :** 894 F x 1**Decimal Degrees** 34.69194 -120.6008**Site Description:**

Special Permission required for access through Vandenberg Air Force Base (see Land Access for more info). The lagoon at the mouth of the Santa Ynez River includes nearly 400 acres of salt and fresh water marshes, mud flats, and open water. During summer months, the lagoon is closed to the ocean by a sand berm. When open and at low tide, most of the lagoon becomes exposed mud flats, except for narrow tide and river channels. Tidal influence extends about one mile inland. North and south of the river mouth are extensive, wide fine to medium-grained sand beaches backed by vegetated sand dunes. The lagoon and surrounding beaches provide habitat for numerous species of raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds, and seabirds (including brown pelicans). Strong winds and high surf are common. Ocean Beach County Park is located adjacent to the river, approx. 1/4 mile inland. North and south of the mouth is VAFB property. Surfperch can be found offshore. Wetland habitat and fish (steelhead and tidewater goby) are at risk when the creek mouth is open to the ocean during rain and/or high surf and tides.

**Resources at Risk:***ESI and Habitat:* 3A Fine to medium-grained sand beaches

9A Sheltered tidal flats

9B Vegetated low banks

10A Salt - and brackish-water marshes

**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	willow flycatcher		Year-round
Birds	California least tern	FE, SE	Apr-Sep
Fish	steelhead - Southern California	FE	Year-round
Fish	tidewater goby	FE	Year-round
Mammals	southern sea otter	FT, SP	Year-round

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	Main Office/	Central Coast Archeological Information Center	(805) 893-2474
E	Santa Barbara County Park/	Santa Barbara County	(805) 568-2461
E	Law Enforcement Desk/24hr	Vandenberg AFB	(805) 606-3911
E	Vandenberg Conservation Office/	Vandenberg AFB	(805) 606-6804
T	Federally listed/T/E Species	USFWS	(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 from Mar-Sep and California least terns nest from Apr-Sep.

**Concerns and Advice to Responders:**

The lagoon is habitat for two threatened/endangered (T/E) fishes. Two T/E bird nests from Mar-Sep. Animals and their associated habitat can be injured by oil and response activities unless responders minimize disturbance in the lagoon. Avoid disturbing the dunes and upper beaches, only drive vehicles on the wet sand and avoid trampling oil into sediments. Follow protective conditions from IC and resource biologists.

**Hazard and Restrictions:**

Special Permission required for access through Vandenberg Air Force Base (see Land Access for more info).

A. Unhealthy levels of coliform bacteria have been found intermittently in streams and on beaches in this area. Use appropriate PPE, safety procedures, and include reference to potential health problems in any site safety plan.

B. Safety Considerations- Roads, trails, beach cliffs and hillsides may be unstable in wet weather. Beware of flashfloods in canyons during rainy weather, ticks, poison oak, and rattlesnakes. Beware of trains at unregulated Railroad Crossings. Care must be taken when working on beaches backed by high cliffs. Safe entries to, and exits from beaches in this area are related to tides and beach sand levels- YOU MAY GET STRANDED ON THE BEACH - Plan accordingly.

**Site Strategies:**

**Strategy: 4-540.1 Objective:** Boom- Deploy exclusion booms across the inlet entrance.

**Strategy:** Deploy exclusion booms across the inlet to minimize the likelihood of oiling the estuary. Place the booms in a configuration that forms an adjustable oil collection pocket that can accommodate changes in flow direction. Back exclusion booms with sorbent booms to minimize leakage. Line the shorelines and any side channels within the inlet to prevent collateral oiling. If there is recoverable oil on-water, deploy sorbents and contact the IC immediately regarding the use of skimmers. Monitor, adjust, and replace booms as needed to maintain effectiveness.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Boom	Swamp Boom			2400	feet	
Boom	Sorbent Boom			1000	feet	
Vessel	Skiff or Punt			1		
Staff	Staff			5		
Anchor				6		

**Logistics:**

**Directions:** From Lompoc, take Hwy. 246 (Ocean Ave) west approx. 10 miles to Ocean Beach County Park entrance. A small boat can be launched into the lagoon from the parking lot. Foot traffic only. Vehicles (4WD and heavy equipment) may access the beach approx. 1 mile north of the river on VAFB property from the Wall Beach parking lot. During dry periods, when the mouth of the Santa Ynez River is closed, approximately 6 miles of surf and wall beaches are accessible from this point.

**Land Access:** This site is located on Vandenberg Air Force Base. Access to beaches and land sites must be authorized through the Air Force Base. Responders must call the Law Enforcement Desk at 805-606-3911 and the Vandenberg AFB Conservation Office at 805-606-6804 for access authorization to air base roadways, lands and shorelines. An escort may be required in some locations.

**On-Water Limitations:** Avila Harbor is the nearest full service civilian harbor. Facilities for small vessel loading occur at the Boat House near Rocky Point just south of Point Arguello. These facilities can be utilized with permission from VAFB. Area is rocky.

**Facilities, Staging Areas, Command Posts, Available Equipment:** Equipment: MSRC facility in Carpinteria; approx. 85 miles SE Staging area: Parking lot at Ocean Beach County park Potential command post sites: Lompoc, approx. 9 miles west Closest airports are in Lompoc and Santa Maria.

**Communications Problems:** Cell phone communications are limited.

**Additional Operational Comments:** Due to the probable occurrence of western snowy plovers and/or California least terns at this site, please review the Sandy Beach Site Summary and Strategies (Site 4-000-A) for information on response operations when dealing with these sensitive species.

