



California

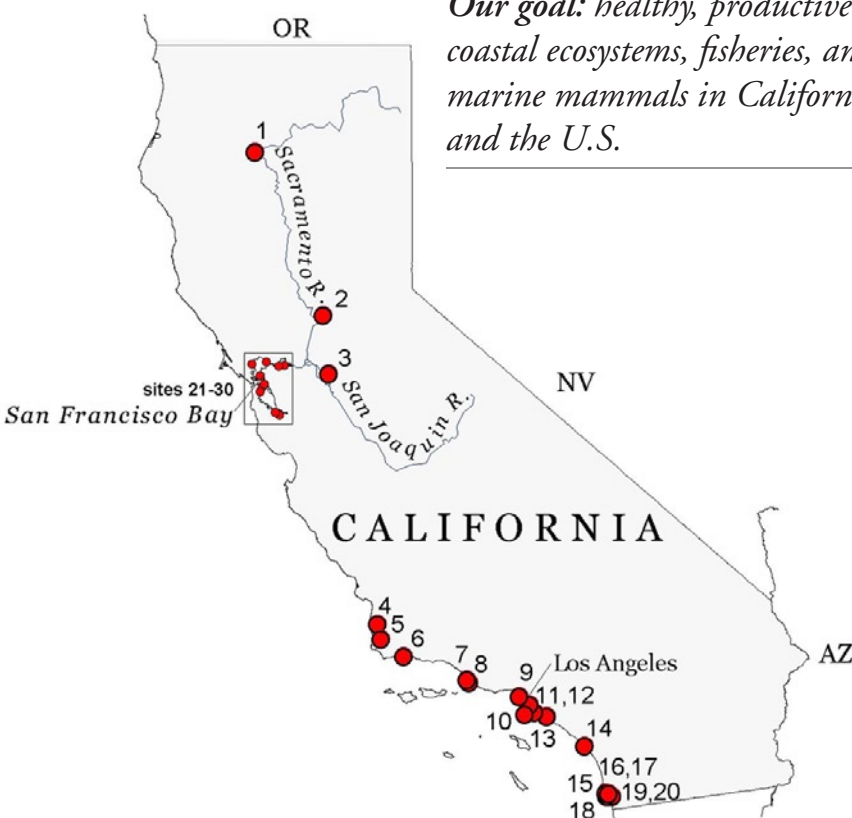
NOAA Works to Improve California's Coastal and Marine Areas

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) acts for the Secretary of Commerce as a federal trustee under the Superfund Act to protect and restore natural resources in coastal and marine areas. In California, mining activities, oil refineries, chemical plants, military facilities, and other municipal and industrial activities release contaminants into habitats that may affect NOAA trust resources. NOAA trust resources in California include herring, rockfish, flatfish including Pacific halibut and English sole, Dungeness crab, abalone, clams, sea urchins, harbor seals, sea lions, whales, and dozens of other species and their supporting habitats (e.g., tidal wetlands). Because of their declining abundance, federal and state threatened and endangered coho and chinook salmon, steelhead, Steller sea lion, the Guadalupe fur seal, sea turtles, and whales are of special concern in California. NOAA's stewardship also safeguards our nation's waterways and coastal activities, ranging from safe navigation and marine transportation to recreational activities along navigable waters.

Cleaning Up and Restoring Sites in California

The Office of Response and Restoration's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (OR&R/CPRD) partners with other agencies and responsible parties to ensure that waste site cleanups not only reduce risk but also restore natural resources and improve the quality of the environment.

Our goal: healthy, productive coastal ecosystems, fisheries, and marine mammals in California and the U.S.



Protecting and Restoring Coastal and Marine Resources

NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (CPRD) protects and restores natural resources in marine and coastal environments that are affected by hazardous waste sites. NOAA Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the state of California, and other trustee agencies to identify risks to natural resources, recommend site cleanups that protect habitat and wildlife, and design projects to restore injured resources and habitats.

Waste Sites

1. Iron Mountain Mine
2. McClellan Air Force Base (Western Parcels)
3. McCormick & Baxter Creosoting Co.
4. Casmalia Resources
5. Vandenberg AFB
6. AERA/SWEPI (Former Hercules Gas Plant)
7. Port Hueneme Naval Construction Battalion Ctr.
8. Halaco Engineering Co.
9. Playa Vista Development Project
10. Palos Verdes Shelf
11. Montrose Chemical Corp.
12. Long Beach Naval Station
13. Bolsa Chica Lowlands
14. Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base
15. San Diego Training Center
16. Naval Training Center (Boat Channel)
17. Solar Turbines, Inc.
18. North Island Naval Air Station
19. NASSCO/SW Marine Shipyard
20. Naval Station San Diego
21. Hamilton Army Airfield
22. Mare Island Naval Shipyard
23. Tosco Corp, Avon Refinery
24. Concord Naval Weapons Station
25. United Heckathorn Co.
26. Oakland Army Base
27. Alameda Naval Air Station
28. Hunters Point Naval Shipyard
29. Rhone-Poulenc, Inc./Zoecon Corp.
30. Moffett Naval Air Station

Coastal Resource Coordinators (CRCs) get involved early in site cleanups to:

- ensure that ecological assessments and the entire cleanup process evaluate and mitigate any risk to sensitive species and habitats;
- incorporate environmental restoration into cleanup actions;
- monitor the successful recovery of trust resources and habitats; and
- reduce the need for expensive re-evaluations.

Because CRCs help make site cleanup and restoration decisions in coastal regions, everyone saves time and money by avoiding litigation and duplication of effort. Responsible parties benefit from an early resolution of liability for damage to natural resources. Best of all, we can address environmental threats sooner, increasing the chances for effective protection, recovery, and restoration of coastal and marine resources and their habitats.

The California State CRC Program

In 2001, NOAA and the state of California entered into a new partnership to provide the state direct access to NOAA's technical expertise. NOAA now has a Coastal Resource Coordinator (CRC) assigned to work directly with state response agencies and state trustee representatives, to achieve protective cleanups at military bases and industrial facilities where the state is the lead cleanup agency. The California State CRC actively assists the Department of Toxic Substance Control and the Regional Water Quality Board to establish a consistent approach to evaluate ecological risk to trust resources. NOAA also works with state and federal co-trustees to identify coastal restoration opportunities, primarily in the Central Coast and Southern California.

Areas of Special Concern in California

The **San Francisco Bay watershed** provides critical habitat for several runs of endangered salmon and steelhead. The watershed serves as a nursery and spawning area for commercial and recreational species. Releases of contaminants into the San Francisco Bay watershed from industrial, mining, and military facilities have impacted enough of the Bay's water and sediments that fish consumption advisories are in place for most species.

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Division (CPRD) has been very active in cleanup and reuse issues at several active and closing military bases in San Francisco Bay. Contaminants such as heavy metals and PCBs released from these military facilities may be impacting San Francisco Bay sediments and estuarine natural resources. CPRD's technical expertise is facilitating the development of protective cleanup levels for Concord Naval

Weapons Station, Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Hunter's Point Naval Shipyard, Hamilton Army Airfield, and the former Alameda Naval Air Station. CPRD is working with the Army and state cleanup and natural resource agencies to expedite cleanup at the closed Hamilton Army Airfield in order to prepare the site for restoration to tidal wetlands.

At the United Heckathorn waste site, formerly a major source of DDT contamination to the Bay, CPRD played a major role in helping EPA design an ecological risk assessment and the protective cleanup action. NOAA CPRD took the lead in developing criteria and choosing an appropriate restoration project (Lower Tubbs Island in San Pablo Bay) as part of the comprehensive settlement to compensate for natural resource injury. The selected restoration will restore 80 acres of diked-bay lands to tidal action with eventual wetland creation.

NOAA CPRD has developed a watershed database and mapping project for San Francisco Bay (<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/watershed/watershedtools.html>). This unique tool compiles data from many sources that can be easily mapped, such as the locations of hazardous waste sites, contaminants, toxicity data, and information on natural resources in the San Francisco Bay watershed. This tool provides resource managers and our partners with information to make effective decisions about site cleanups and restoration options. The San Francisco Bay project represents the new prototype of CPRD watershed projects and includes products from NOAA's National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and Centers for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS); GIS-mapped waste sites; digital Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) data; and input from San Francisco regional partners (e.g., EPA, NOAA Fisheries, and state and local resource management agencies).

In the **Sacramento River**, acid mine drainage from mining sites such as Iron Mountain Mine has threatened populations of anadromous salmon and steelhead, including the endangered winter-run chinook salmon. NOAA worked with EPA and co-trustees to achieve a comprehensive settlement for remedial actions that will be protective of anadromous fish and restore injured natural resources. The CRC continues to work with EPA to achieve protection through remediation of contaminated sediments and to evaluate the effectiveness of remedial actions in controlling metal discharges to the watershed.

Other areas of concern include **Monterey Bay**, the **Gulf of the Farallones**, **Cordell Banks**, and the **Channel Islands**. These areas are National Marine Sanctuaries, recognized by Congress as areas of unique value which merit special protection.

For information about NOAA's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division in **California** please contact:

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www.response.restoration.noaa.gov/cpr/cpr.html

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