

DESCRIPTION

In this Critical Coastal Area (CCA) watershed, Goleta Slough covers about 45 square miles, and receives drainage from seven creeks (Tecolotito, Carneros, San Pedro, Las Vegas, San Jose, Atascadero, and Maria Ygnacio) in Santa Barbara County. This slough is one of the few coastal wetlands that remain in California. Over 60% of the original area of estuarine wetlands in Goleta Slough was eliminated or isolated from tidal actions during the last century. The Marine Corps Air Station, built in 1941, eventually became the Santa Barbara Municipal Airport and portions of U.C. Santa Barbara.

Goleta Slough supports vital habitat for estuarine invertebrates, fish, migratory birds, and rare and endangered plants and animals. The Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve protects 440 acres of a variety of habitat types, including estuarine, riverine, and palustrine wetlands; coastal bluff scrub; introduced grassland; coastal sage scrub; and Southern coastal oak woodland. Also, the Goleta Slough State Marine Conservation Area (No-Take) protects 0.25 square miles of the lower slough.

Waterbodies in this CCA that are listed as impaired on the current (2016) Clean Water Act 303(d) list are **Tecolotito Creek** (impaired by sodium, chloride, nitrate, fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, and enterococcus bacteria); **Carneros Creek** (impaired by fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, enterococcus bacteria, nitrate, specific conductivity, and pH); **San Pedro Creek** (impaired by fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, enterococcus bacteria, sodium, pH, and water temperature); **San Jose Creek** (impaired by fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, enterococcus bacteria, chloride, sodium, specific conductivity, pH, and water temperature); **Atascadero Creek** (impaired by fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, enterococcus bacteria, chloride, sodium, dissolved oxygen, nitrate, toxicity, benthic community effects, pH, and water temperature); **Maria Ygnacio Creek** (impaired by fecal coliform bacteria, E. coli bacteria, enterococcus bacteria, turbidity, sodium, and pH); and **Pacific Ocean at Goleta Beach** (impaired by total coliform bacteria). Potential sources of these pollutants are all listed as **Source Unknown**.

CRITERIA FOR CCA IDENTIFICATION

The Goleta Slough [Critical Coastal Area](#) (CCA) was identified in 1995 based on the criterion of a coastal watershed that flows into an impaired bay or estuary on the 1994 Clean Water Act 303(d) list (Goleta Slough).

This CCA also met the 2014 CCA identification criterion of a coastal watershed where an impaired waterbody on the 2010 Clean Water Act 303(d) list (Goleta Slough, and Pacific Ocean at Goleta Beach) is adjacent to a [California Marine Protected Area](#) (Goleta Slough State Marine Conservation Area).



**San Pedro Creek and
Goleta Slough**

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For more photos, see the [California Coastal Records Project](#).

ADDRESSING POLLUTANTS

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to make a [list of impaired waters](#) that are not attaining water quality standards, and to develop a [Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\)](#) or similar approach to account for all sources of the pollutants that caused the water to be listed as impaired. TMDLs include allocations to both point and nonpoint sources (NPS) of the listed pollutants. The current (2016) 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies includes pollutants, potential pollutant sources, and year a TMDL was approved or is expected.

To address NPS pollutants, see [California's Nonpoint Source Management Measures](#) for guidance on selecting appropriate Management Measures, which consist of a suite of plans, practices, technologies, operating methods, or other measures that may be used to control NPS pollution.

Information for this factsheet was originally compiled by members of California's Critical Coastal Areas Statewide Committee in 2006. The factsheet was revised and updated in 2019 by the California Coastal Commission's Water Quality Program staff.

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