

DESCRIPTION

This Critical Coastal Area (CCA) watershed flows into the Redwood National Park “Area of Special Biological Significance” (ASBS), an ocean area monitored and maintained for water quality by the State Water Resources Control Board. The Klamath River CCA overlaps with the central part of Redwood National Park CCA.

Klamath River is the second largest river by volume in California, flowing southwestward from the Cascade Mountains for approximately 263 miles through Oregon and California to its final four river miles within the California coastal zone. Primary uses of this river include domestic, agricultural, and industrial water supply; cold and warm water fisheries; and recreation.

Klamath River is impaired by nutrients and organic enrichment (primarily from grazing, dairies, and irrigated agriculture in the upper watershed), and temperature (due to damming and riparian vegetation removal). Sediment and bacteria are also nonpoint source pollutants of concern in the watershed. A major fish kill in late 2002 was reportedly attributable to a combination of factors, including low stream flows, high water temperature, heavy fish traffic, and fish disease.

The only waterbody in this CCA that is listed as impaired on the current (2016) Clean Water Act 303(d) list is **Klamath Glen, in the Lower Klamath River** (impaired by sedimentation/siltation, organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen, water temperature, and nutrients). Potential sources of these pollutants, organized by **Source Categories**, are listed as **Agriculture** (agriculture, grazing-related sources, and irrigated crop production); **Silviculture** (silviculture, and logging road construction/ maintenance); **Hydromodification** (flow alteration/regulation/ modification); **Habitat Modification** (removal of riparian vegetation, and drainage/filling of wetlands); and **Construction/ Land Development** (road construction).

CRITERIA FOR CCA IDENTIFICATION

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

This CCA also met the 2002 CCA identification criterion of a coastal watershed that flows into an [Area of Special Biological Significance](#) (Klamath River ASBS), which is also a State Water Quality Protection Area.

In addition, this CCA met the 2014 CCA identification criterion of a coastal watershed where an impaired waterbody on the 2010 303(d) list (Klamath River) flows into a state-identified Principal Bay or Estuary (Klamath River Estuary). See California Department of Fish and



Klamath River Estuary

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

Wildlife's "[California's Living Marine Resources: A Status Report](#)" (2001) and associated [map of the Principal Bays and Estuaries of California](#).

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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