

DESCRIPTION

Americano Creek and the Estero Americano form a portion of the northwestern border between Sonoma and Marin Counties. The entire Estero and a 6.5 river-mile portion of Americano Creek are within the coastal zone. Almost all of the land in the watershed is under private ownership.

The predominant land use in this Critical Coastal Area (CCA) watershed is livestock agriculture (grazing and dairy activities), which has seen little change in the past three decades. The water quality in part of the Estero Americano is impaired by nutrients and sediment. Other pollutants of concern resulting from agricultural activities include ammonia, copper, and bacteria.

Waterbodies in this CCA that are listed as impaired on the current (2016) Clean Water Act 303(d) list in this CCA are **Estero Americano estuary** (impaired by nutrients, and sedimentation/siltation), and **Americano Creek** (impaired by nutrients). Potential sources of these pollutants are all listed as **Source Unknown**.



Mouth of Estero Americano

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

CRITERIA FOR CCA IDENTIFICATION

The Estero Americano [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 303(d) list (Americano Creek) flows into a bay or estuary (Estero Americano).

This CCA also met the 2002 CCA identification criterion of a coastal watershed where an impaired waterbody on the 2002 Clean Water Act 303(d) list (Americano Creek) flows into a federal Marine Managed Area (Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary).

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 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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