

# **ERMA Southwest Tutorial: A Guide for Facility Owners and Operators, Oil Spill Contingency Plan Preparers, and Plan Reviewers to help determine the proximity of a Facility to Surface Waters\*.**

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**Web Location for Southwest ERMA:**

<https://erma.noaa.gov/southwest/erma.html#/x=-119.95105&y=36.61737&z=6&layers=1+13320>

(Copy this URL and Paste the address into your Browser, e.g. MS Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, etc.)

\*You will need a Geographic Coordinate (Latitude and Longitude) for the Facility in order to make the proximity determination. No ERMA Login is required for this exercise.

## Overview:

This tutorial will explain the methodology for Facility Owners and Operators, Oil Spill Contingency Plan Preparers, and Plan Reviewers to use ERMA to determine the proximity of a Facility to Surface Waters of the State of California.<sup>†</sup>

The procedure involves two pieces of information:

- 1) The geographic coordinate(s) of the facility in question, provided by the end user.
- 2) A GIS layer of a ¼ mile buffer zone drawn around the USGS Blue Lines (National Hydrography Dataset). This layer is provided by the ERMA application.

The procedure presented herein is quite simple. It requires the end user to enter the geographic coordinate for the facility in question, and then view the location on the ERMA screen in relation to a ¼ mile buffer zone around the USGS mapped Blue Lines.

## ERMA Basics

ERMA provides a simple set of tools for map navigation and analysis. These tools are located on the upper left side of the Map Window (Figure 1).

**Hint:** Open the “Help” tab located in the upper left corner of the Map Window (below the “M” in the ERMA title) for an explanation of the ERMA toolset.

## Procedure for State Waters/Facility Proximity Determination

1. Open an internet browser such as Mozilla Firefox (recommended), Google Chrome (recommended) or Microsoft Internet Explorer and navigate to the ERMA Southwest Web Application.

<https://erma.noaa.gov/southwest/erma.html#/x=-119.95105&y=36.61737&z=6&layers=1+13320>

2. The ERMA application will open displaying the statewide GIS layer of a ¼ mile buffer around all blue line streams. The ¼ mile buffer zone appears as the light blue area on the ERMA map display. Please note that it may take several seconds to load this large dataset.
3. Select the “**Zoom**” tab from the Table of Contents menu bar. This will bring up the **Zoom Tools** window. Enter the geographic coordinates of the facility in question into the **Zoom to (Lat / Lon / Zoom Level)** search box. Use the Zoom Level pulldown menu

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<sup>†</sup> Note that ERMA includes U.S. Geological Survey data such as the National Hydrography Dataset that may, of necessity, be preliminary in nature. Such data and information are not guaranteed to be correct or complete. Users are cautioned to consider carefully the provisional nature of these data and information before using them for decisions that concern the conduct of business that involves operational consequences. Conclusions drawn from, or actions undertaken on the basis of, such data and information are the sole responsibility of the user.

to set the zoom level to 15, then press the “Go” button. ERMA will zoom to the input coordinates and mark the location with an “X” (See Figure 3).

**Hint:** Enter a known latitude and longitude in any of these formats:

Decimal Degrees (For example: 35.556, -119.888)

Degrees decimal minutes (For example: 40 45.800, -120 55.678)

Degrees minutes seconds (For example: 34 24 34.567, -120 45 65.543)

4. You can now determine if the facility location (X) lies within or outside of the ¼ mile buffer zone for surface “**Waters of the State**”. If the X is within the light blue area then it is within ¼ mile of “**Waters of the State**”.

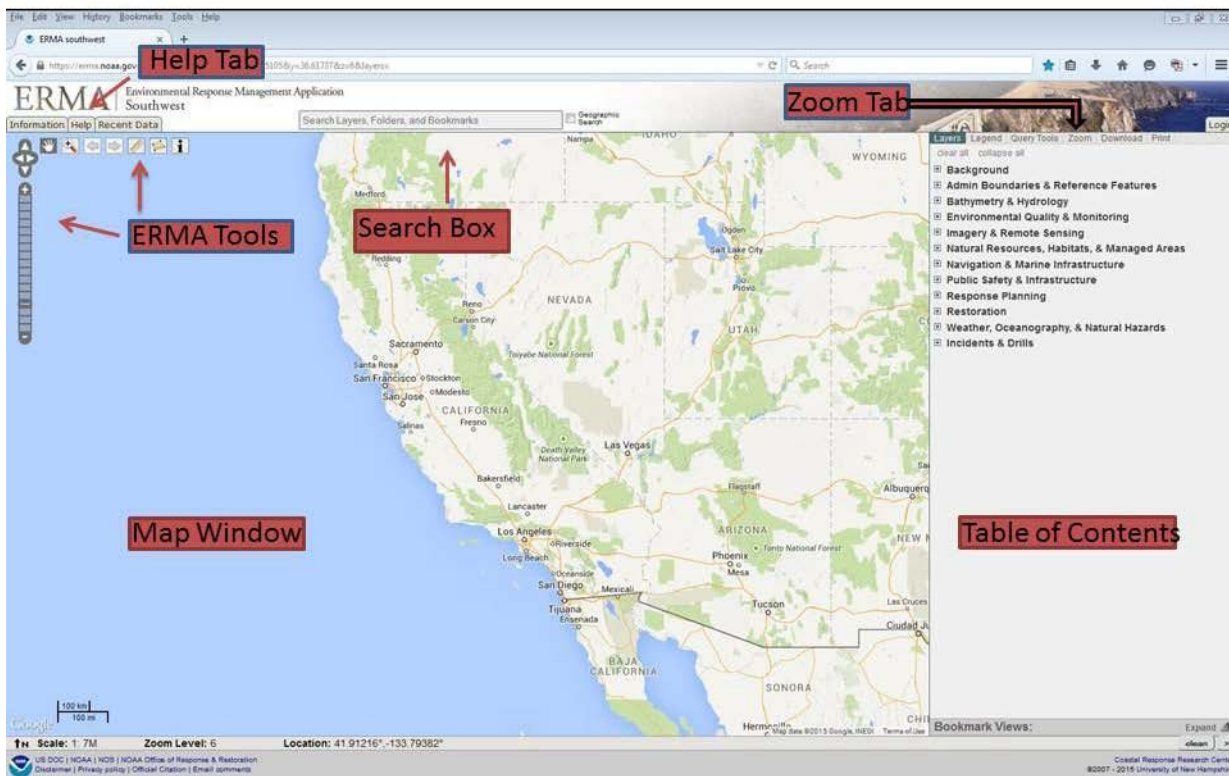


Figure 1. Location of Southwest ERMA tools, the Map Window, the Table of Contents, the Search Box, the Zoom Tab and the Help tab.

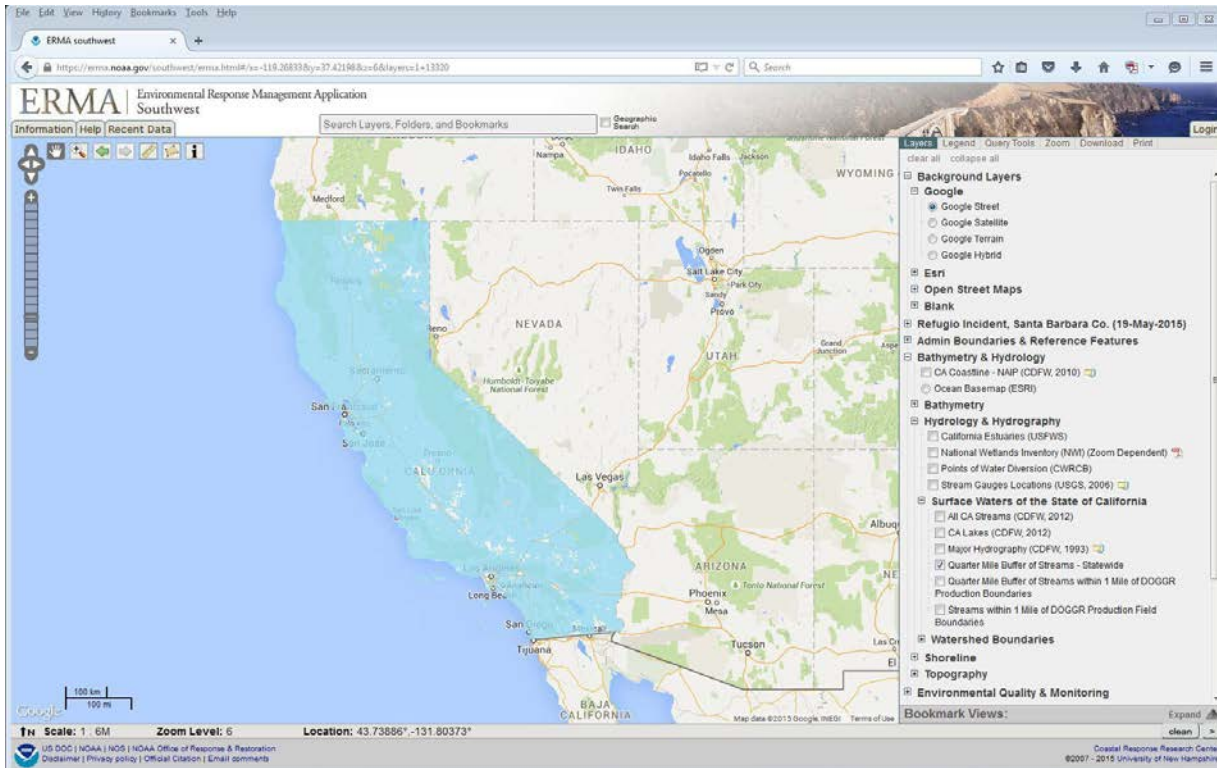


Figure 2. “Quarter Mile Buffer of Streams – Statewide”

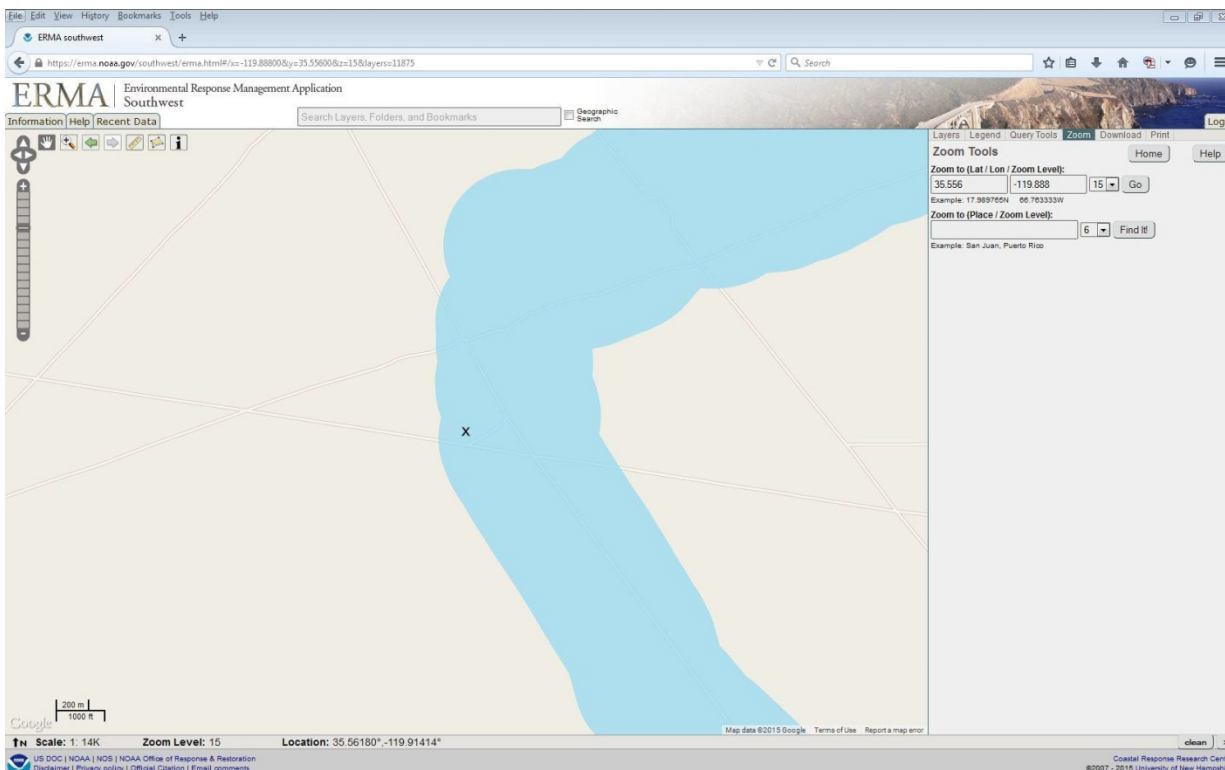


Figure 3. Southwest ERMA will zoom to the geographic location entered into the **Zoom to (Lat / Lon / Zoom Level)** search Box and mark it with an X. If the X is in the blue area then the facility location is within ¼ mile of surface Waters of the State.