



Office of Spill Prevention and Response

Sensitive Site Strategy Evaluation Program

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) manages the Sensitive Site Strategy Evaluation Program (SSSEP), a statewide program that tests and evaluates the effectiveness of oil spill response strategies that are designed to protect sensitive biological resources in coastal marine waters.

These biological resources, also known as sensitive sites, in California's marine region include native:

- Fish
- Birds
- Marine mammals
- Other wildlife
- Habitat used for breeding, nesting and feeding (i.e. wetlands, estuaries, lagoons)

Sensitive sites:

There are well over 600 environmentally sensitive sites along California's coast.

- Each site has information about various species including those that are threatened or endangered.
- Each site has a response strategy detailing the most effective method for protecting the area in the event of an oil spill.
- Examples of environmentally sensitive sites include saltmarsh, wetlands, estuaries, lagoons, eelgrass beds and habitats of plant and wildlife species of concern.



Area Contingency Plan

An Area Contingency Plan (ACP) acts as a guide during oil spill emergencies that specifies the roles of responders and maintains a list of stakeholders to contact at each of California's three major ports.

Each port has representatives from over 50 federal, state, local government agencies, as well as industry and environmental groups. The ports are located in:

- San Francisco Bay Area
- Los Angeles/Long Beach
- San Diego

Located near these ports are six ACPs:

1. North Coast
2. San Francisco Bay
3. Central Coast
4. North Los Angeles
5. South Los Angeles

6. San Diego

Equipment used to clean up spilled oil is boom, a plastic protective barrier that floats on top of the water and helps contain floating oil or exclude oil from sensitive areas. Boom comes in different sizes and types.

Common types of boom are:

- Fence boom
- Curtain boom
- Inflatable or containment boom
- Sorbent boom
- Fire boom
- Snare boom

Factors that affect deployed equipment are:

- Tides
- Currents
- Sea state
- Weather conditions

The program consists of scheduled exercises designed to test the site-specific response strategies and familiarize the contracted Oil Spill Response Organizations (OSROs) or other authorized responder with the locations and strategic details of the sites. OSPR provides recommendations to modify and improve the strategy if needed – a critical part of their work during a field test.

Information on sensitive sites, ACPs and the program can be found on OSPR's website at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/OSPR>