



Office of Spill Prevention and Response

ERMA Job aid: How to determine the proximity of a facility to tidally influenced waters of the state

DRAFT

Overview

This job aid explains the methodology for facility owners and operators, oil spill contingency plan preparers, and plan reviewers to use the Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) to determine whether a facility is within ¼ mi of tidally influenced waters of the state. It also shows how to determine whether the facility is in a high volume port or a facility transfer area, risk zones which determine the amounts of required response resources for facilities regulated by the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR).

You will need the geographic coordinates of the facility and a browser with an internet connection to make these determinations. You do not need to have an ERMA login. After navigating to ERMA using the link below, you will enter the location of the facility and observe its proximity to tidally influenced waters using the data layers listed below.

GIS data layers:

Tidally Influenced Waters: Quarter Mile Buffer of Tidally Influenced Waters (OSPR, 2025)

Risk Zones: Facility Contingency Plan Zones (OSPR, 2025)

ERMA Link: <https://erma.noaa.gov/southwest#layers=12+56605&x=-122.05013&y=37.16269&z=6&panel=layer>

Getting started with ERMA

1. Open an internet browser such as Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome and navigate to ERMA using the link above.
2. ERMA will open a window with the Quarter Mile Buffer of Tidally Influenced Waters GIS data layer already displayed. The ¼ mile buffer will appear as a light blue area on the map display.
3. ERMA provides a simple set of tools for map navigation and analysis. These tools are located on the right side of the screen through the "Other" option (Figure 1). If you select "Other," the "Help" option is the third selection from the top.
4. Proceed to the next section for instructions on how to enter a facility location.

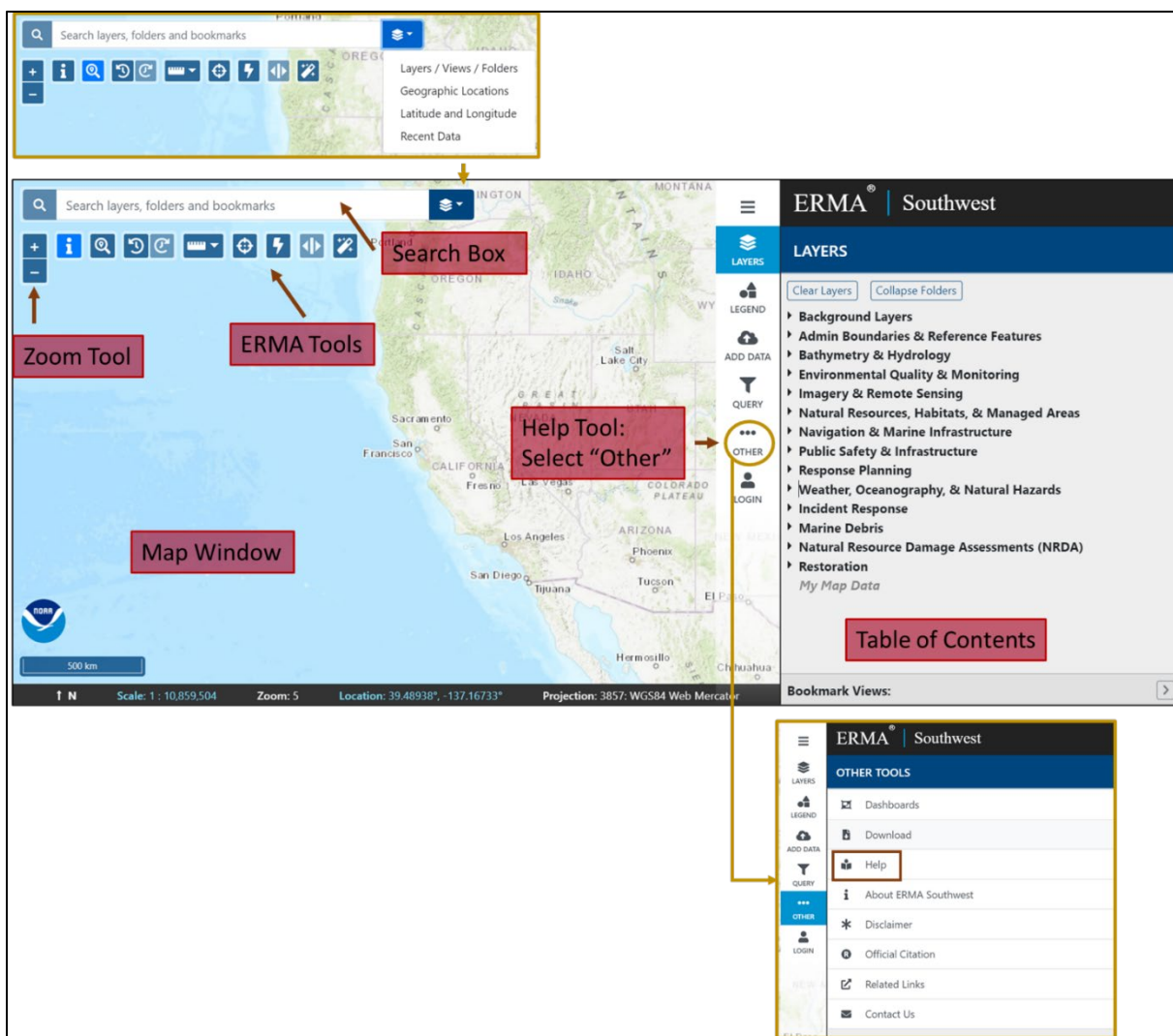


Figure 1. Southwest ERMA map window and navigation.

How to determine whether a facility is within $\frac{1}{4}$ mi of tidally influenced waters

1. Before entering the facility location, select the dropdown arrow to the right of the search box and click the Latitude and Longitude option (Figure 1). Then enter the geographic coordinates of the facility into the search box using any of the formats listed below. Once you have entered the latitude and longitude, a marker will appear on the map at the location you entered (Figure 2). Use the zoom buttons (+/-) to zoom in on your location.

Latitude/Longitude Formats:

Decimal Degrees (e.g., 35.556, -119.888)

Degrees decimal minutes (e.g., 40 45.800, -120 55.678)

Degrees minutes seconds (e.g., 34 24 34.567, -120 45 65.543)

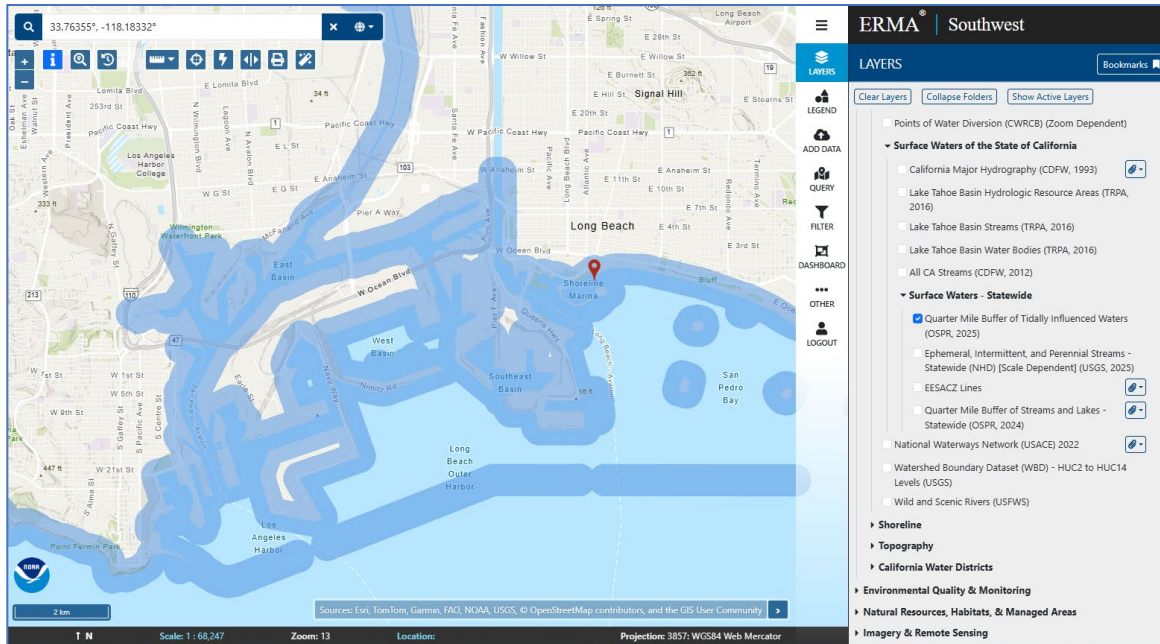


Figure 2. A location is displayed after latitude and longitude is entered in the search bar. If the marker is within the light blue area, the facility is within 1/4 mile of tidally influenced waters.

- After zooming in on your location, you can determine if the facility lies within 1/4 mi of tidally influenced waters, which may subject the facility to OSPR's Contingency Plan regulations (14 California Code of Regulations, section 805.1-801.15). If the location marker is within the light blue area, it is within the 1/4 mile buffer (Figure 2). Refer to sections 805.2 and 805.3 for further information regarding applicability and exemption criteria for facilities that are within 1/4 mi of tidally influenced waters.

How to determine the risk zone of a facility with 1/4 mi of tidally influenced waters

For purposes of contingency planning, tidally influenced waters are divided into the risk zones listed below. Risk zones are defined as specific geographic response areas (GRA) within the area contingency plan (ACP) regions. A facility's risk zone determines the amount of containment, on-water recovery, and storage resources that must be listed in a facility's contingency plan (see section 805.15).

The risk zones that are applicable to facilities are defined below. Note, Balance of the Coast is a third risk zone, but this applies to vessels only.

High Volume Port:

ACP 2: GRA 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

ACP 5: GRA 2

Facility Transfer Area and the Santa Barbara Channel:

ACP 1: GRA 3

ACP 2: GRA 10

ACP 4: GRA 5, 6, 7, 8

ACP 5: GRA 1, 3

ACP 6: GRA 4

1. Once you have determined that your facility is within ¼ mile of tidally influenced waters, turn on the Facility Contingency Plan Zones layer. You can do this by typing the name of the layer into the search field. As you begin typing, the layer will come up as a suggestion, and you can click on the name of the layer to turn it on.

You can also view the layer by clicking on the following link:

<https://erma.noaa.gov/southwest#layers=12+56160&x=-120.47394&y=37.76742&z=6&panel=layer>. If you navigate to the layer this way, you will need to enter your facility's location again.

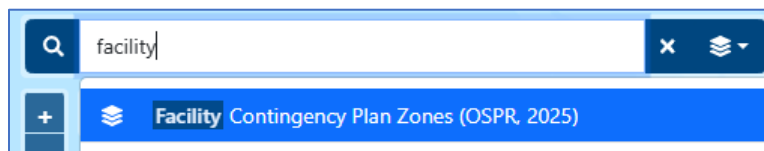


Figure 3: Type “Facility Contingency Plan Zones” into the search field to turn on the layer.

2. Click on the Legend option on the right side of the map window to display the Facility Contingency Plan Zones symbology (Figure 4). Refer to this symbology to determine whether the facility is within a Facility Transfer Area and the Santa Barbara Channel or a High Volume Port (Figure 5).

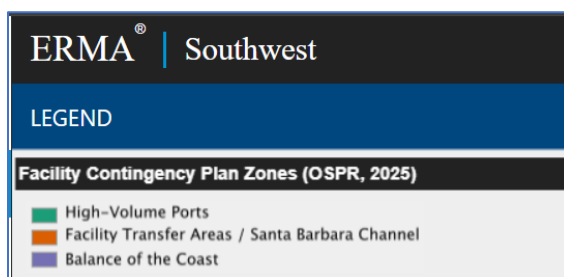


Figure 4: Facility Contingency Plan Zone legend depicting the symbology for each layer.

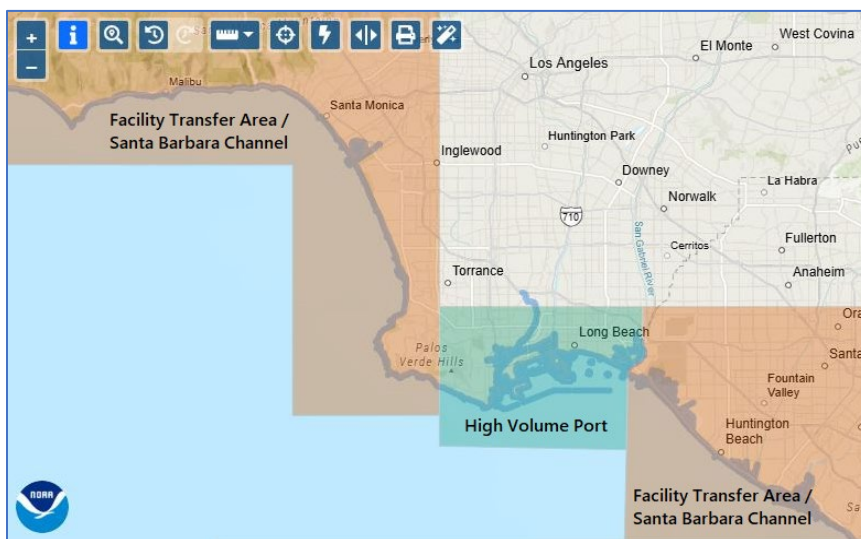


Figure 5: Map window depicting zones designated as Facility Transfer Area and the Santa Barbara Channel (orange) and High Volume Port (green).

3. Refer to section 805.15(f)(6)(D) for response resource requirements. If the facility is in a High Volume Port, see Table 2. If the facility is in a Facility Transfer Area and the Santa Barbara Channel, see Table 3. Be sure to make appropriate determinations for all locations where your facilities conduct operations.