

DESCRIPTION

The Pajaro River flows through diverse and important habitats. Types of problems currently facing the watershed include erosion and sedimentation, pesticides, nutrients, heavy metals, pathogens, streambed flow alterations, endangered habitat, and riparian vegetation removal. Agricultural lands are considered to be the major source of nutrient and sediment loading into the Pajaro River. Wetlands are being degraded due to land development and current farming practices. Low-density residential development, flood control projects, sand and gravel and mercury mining, and off-road vehicle activity have also directly impacted water quality in the watershed.

Land use modifications have resulted in riparian and in-stream habitat loss, changed the geomorphology of streams and rivers, increased flooding, and reduced groundwater recharge. Due to the high demand for housing in recent years, substantial portions of the upper watershed areas have now been developed for new residential subdivisions. Due to the close proximity of the watershed to large urban centers, and the extent of urbanization occurring, pollutant loads to rivers and streams have significantly affected overall water quality for the entire watershed. Recent off-road vehicle activity along riparian corridors and in the Clear Creek Area has exacerbated sediment migration and degraded riparian areas.

Historic mercury mining activities in Hernandez Lake area, and gravel mines in the Pajaro River, have resulted in heavy metals migration and disrupted geomorphologic functions in portions of the watershed. Airborne and waterborne transport of asbestos from the Clear Creek area is currently being evaluated.



Pajaro River

(Copyright © 2005 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project).

For more photos, visit:
www.californiacoastline.org.

REASON FOR CCA IDENTIFICATION

The Pajaro River is a 2002 303(d)-listed **impaired waterbody that flows into a Marine Protected Area** (Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary).

POLLUTED RUNOFF CONDITIONS

	Top 5 Runoff Pollutants of Concern					Efforts to Address Pollutants (See next page)
	2002 303(d)-Listed Pollutants TMDL Priority (& Proposed Completion if available)			Other Pollutants of Concern		
Selected Coastal Zone Waterbodies	<u>Fecal Coliform</u>	<u>Nutrients</u>	<u>Sediment</u>	?	?	
Pajaro River ▲	▲ Low	▲ Medium	▲ Medium			
Tafton Road Drainage ■						
Potential Sources of Pollutants in Coastal Waterbodies						
Agriculture		▲	▲			b, c, d, e, f
➤ Pasture Grazing	▲					
➤ Range Grazing			▲			
➤ Crop Production		▲	▲			
➤ Agricultural Storm Runoff		▲	▲			
➤ Subsurface Drainage		▲				b
➤ Irrigation Tailwater		▲				b, e
➤ Agricultural Return Flows		▲				

Pajaro River CCA

Potential Sources of Pollutants, continued	<u>Fecal Coliform</u>	<u>Nutrients</u>	<u>Sediment</u>	?	?	Efforts to Address Pollutants
Forestry (Silviculture)						
Urban Areas						a, g
➤ Urban Runoff/ Storm Sewers		▲				a
➤ Wastewater--Land Disposal		▲				
Marinas & Boating						
Hydromodification			▲			
➤ Channelization		▲	▲			
➤ Streambank Modification			▲			
Wetlands & Riparian Areas						c, f, g, h
➤ Removal of Riparian Vegetation		▲	▲			
Channel Erosion			▲			b
Habitat Modification			▲			
Resource Extraction			▲			
➤ Surface Mining			▲			
Unspecified Nonpoint Source	▲	▲				
Natural Sources	▲					

MAJOR EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT NPS MANAGEMENT MEASURES

a) Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network			http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/monitoringnetwork/welcome.html
NOAA, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary	Bridget Hoover	(831) 883-9303	info@monitoringnetwork.org bhoover@monitoringnetwork.org
➤ Consortium of approximately twenty citizen monitoring groups that monitor the health of the watersheds flowing into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.			
b) Erosion & Nutrient Management in Salinas & Pajaro Rivers			http://www.carcd.org/wisp/monterey/
Monterey County Resource Conservation District	Tom Lockhart	(408) 424-1036	
➤ Education and direct technical assistance to reduce off-farm transport of sediment and pesticides absorbed to soil particles, transport of nitrates to surface and ground water, and improve irrigation and nutrient management.			
c) Pajaro River Watershed Agricultural Water Quality Protection Program			www.sccrcd.org
Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District	Karen Christensen	(831) 464-2950	ed@sccrcd.org
➤ The mission of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District is to help people protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through information, education, and technical assistance programs.			

Pajaro River CCA

d)	Manure and Erosion Pollution Prevention from Livestock Facilities			http://www.ecoact.org/Programs/Pollution_Prevention/Manure_Management/
	Ecology Action of Santa Cruz	Jennifer Harrison	(831) 426-5925	jharrison@ecoact.org
	➤ Project to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution from livestock facilities through trainings and technical assistance, a peer leader program, and development of a pilot program to haul and/or compost manure from small facilities.			
e)	Regional Integrated Program for Irrigation and Fertilization Mgmt Assistance in Santa Clara, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Mateo Counties			http://www.valleywater.org/
	Santa Clara Valley Water District		(408) 265-2600	pio@valleywater.org
	➤ Project will provide irrigation system evaluations, pump tests, and irrigation and fertilization management consultation to participating growers; plus two annual educational meetings, and provision of printed materials.			
f)	Reduction of Nutrient and Pesticide Loads			http://www.carecd.org/wisp/monterey/
	Monterey County Resource Conservation District		(831) 424-1036	
	➤ Implement water quality enhancement measures, specifically treatment wetlands, in agricultural drainage ditches in the Salinas River, Pajaro River and other north Monterey County, TMDL-listed watersheds.			
g)	Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP) for Santa Cruz County			www.iwrp.sccrcd.org
	Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District, Calif. Coastal Conservancy, and multiple local, federal, and state partners	Karen Christensen, and Kate Goodnight	(831) 464-2950 (831) 429-1776	ed@sccrcd.org kgoodnight@scc.ca.gov
	➤ Funding for designs and permits for 50-70 watershed restoration and water quality projects in seven watersheds. Focus is on fish passage improvement, rural roads sediment reduction, and wetland enhancement.			
h)	Partners in Restoration Permit Coordination Program for Santa Cruz County			www.sccrcd.org
	Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District, and, Sustainable Conservation	Karen Christensen	(831) 464-2950	ed@sccrcd.org
	➤ Development of first countywide permit coordination program modeled after successful effort in Elkhorn Slough. Regulator agencies agreed to issue “master permits” to the RCD/NRCS to cover a suite of restoration practices.			

REGULATORY/PLANNING JURISDICTIONS

➤ Santa Cruz County	http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/	Donna Bradford	(831) 454-7580	PLN714@co.santa-cruz.ca.us
➤ Calif. Coastal Commission, Water Quality Unit	http://www.coastal.ca.gov/nps/npsndx.html	Ross Clark	(831) 427-4873	rclark@coastal.ca.gov
➤ Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/	Bill Arkfeld	(805) 542-4627	barkfeld@waterboards.ca.gov
➤ State Water Resources Control Board	http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/v/	Steve Fagundes	(916) 341-5487	sfagundes@waterboards.ca.gov
➤ California Coastal Conservancy	http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/	Terri Nevins	(510) 286-4161	tnevins@scc.ca.gov
➤ Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game, Marine Region	http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa/	Kevin Urquhart	(831) 649-2882	kurquhart@dfg.ca.gov
➤ Calif. State Parks, Monterey District	http://www.parks.ca.gov/v/?page_id=572	Tom Moss	(831) 649-2854	tmoss@parks.ca.gov

Pajaro River CCA

➤ NOAA, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary	http://www.mbnms.nos. noaa.gov/	Chris Coburn	(831) 420-1670	Chris.Coburn@noaa.gov
---	--	-----------------	-------------------	--