



San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail
 Site Description for
Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline
(Eckley Pier)



Location, Ownership, and Management: Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline is a 1,568-acre park located along the shore between Crockett and Martinez. The Regional Shoreline exists in two sections that are not contiguous and are separated by private property. The Bull Valley Staging Area offers access to Eckley Pier and the western portion of the park, accessible from Carquinez Scenic Drive. Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline is owned and managed by the East Bay Regional Park District.

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Entrance to Eckley Pier	Beach to west of Pier	Beach to east of Pier

Facility Description: Facilities at Eckley Pier include several picnic tables, drinking fountains, grass lawns, trails, and a fishing pier. The fishing pier is the most popular and heavily used feature at the park. There is a paved path of travel that leads from the parking area across the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and to the fishing pier. Informal access to the water occurs at two informal locations adjacent to the entry to the fishing pier:

- West of Pier: A short, unpaved path leads from the paved entry to the pier down to a small sand/gravel beach. Numerous pilings and old industrial equipment are submerged offshore west of the pier.
- East of Pier: Just past the railroad tracks, an approximately 50 foot unpaved path leads east from the paved trail to the pier. The path passes underneath eucalyptus trees and down a small slope to a cobble beach that contains many bricks. Bricks have been cleared to form a clear path through the water in the middle of the beach.

The East Bay Regional Park District is currently kicking off the Eckley Water Access and Shoreline Improvement Project, which includes identification of options for an ADA accessible water entry path.

Other Identifying or General Information:

<p>Site ID: <u>CC2</u> In WT Plan: <u>Yes</u> Existing or Planned: <u>Existing</u> Ownership: <u>Public</u> County: <u>Contra Costa</u> Geo-Region: <u>Carquinez Strait</u> SF Bay Plan Region: <u>Carquinez Strait</u> Launch or Destination: <u>Launch</u> Home of a Club: <u>No</u> Used by a Program that Assists Persons with Disabilities: <u>No</u></p>	<p>Appreciated for Windy Conditions: <u>No</u> Near Food or Drink: <u>No</u> Proximity to Other Sites: The nearest locations are across the Carquinez Strait within the City of Benicia. This includes West 9th Street Boat Launch (1.5 miles northeast, Matthew Turner Park (1.4 miles north), and the Benicia Marina (2.5 miles northeast). The Martinez Marina is located 4 miles to the east.</p>
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Description of Launch/Landing:

<p>Fixed Dock/Pier Launch/Landing: <u>No</u> Float: <u>No</u> Transfer/Launch Assistance System: <u>No</u> Gangway: <u>No</u> Boat/Trailer Ramp: <u>No</u> Mudflats Affect Site Usability: <u>No</u></p>	<p>Beach Wheelchair Available: <u>No</u> Stair Water Entry: <u>No</u> Beach: <u>Yes</u> Firm-Surface Beach Crossing: <u>No</u> Fee for Launch or Parking: <u>No</u> Water Entry Path: <u>No</u></p>
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Beach west of Eckley Pier



Beach east of Eckley Pier

Site Appears to be Suitable For:

Kayak: <u>Yes</u> Windsurfer: <u>No</u> Kiteboard: <u>No</u> Whaleboat: <u>No</u> Stand Up Paddleboard: <u>Yes</u>	Canoe: <u>No</u> Outrigger Canoe: <u>No</u> Sculling: <u>No</u> Rowboat/Dinghy: <u>Yes</u> Dragonboat: <u>No</u> Other: <u>No</u>
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Transportation and Parking:

General Spaces (number): <u>28</u> ADA Parking Spaces (number): <u>2</u> ADA Parking Description: The parking area includes two ADA spots and 10 minute parking for loading and unloading. Loading/Unloading Area: <u>Yes</u> Bay Trail: <u>Yes</u>	Overnight Parking Allowed: <u>No</u> Overnight Parking Description: Park hours are 8am to 7pm, but these may change seasonally. The park has a curfew of 10pm - 5am. Public Transportation: No public transportation is available to the site.
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Path of Travel:

Distance to Launch from Parking Area (feet): 299
 Distance to Launch from ADA Parking (feet): 600
 Distance to Launch from ADA Restrooms (feet): 47
 Distance from ADA Restrooms to ADA Parking (feet): 252
 Path of Travel Exists: Yes



Path of Travel Description: From the parking lot, the paved path goes through two small gates and across the train tracks. The gates could cause impediments to accessibility. Once across the tracks, the paved path continues to the fishing pier. The water access paths are unpaved and not currently accessible.

Other Site Amenities:

<p>Total Restrooms: <u>2</u> Total ADA Restrooms: <u>2</u> Restroom Description: Unisex portable restrooms near the pier. There are flush toilets by the parking lot (174 feet from the ADA parking space).</p>	<p>Boat Washing: <u>No</u> Rigging/Staging Area: <u>Yes</u> Picnic Tables: <u>Yes</u> Benches: <u>Yes</u> BBQ: <u>Yes</u> Boat Storage: <u>No</u></p>
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Overnight Accommodations:

Hotel: <u>No</u>	Hostel: <u>No</u>	Ship: <u>No</u>	Camping: <u>No</u>	Other: <u>No</u>
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Additional Notes Related to Accessibility:

Facilities within the staging area appear broadly accessible, including ADA parking, paved paths of travel, ADA restrooms, and ADA picnic facilities. The path of travel from the parking area to the pier is paved, though the pavement is in poor condition in some areas and gates may pose impediments. Access to the water is not currently accessible.

Additional Notes on Use of Site (Boating and Non-Boating) and Existing and Planned Management:

Eckley Pier is an important water access location due to the lack of water access on the south shore of the Carquinez Strait. Water access use is currently limited due to the lack of formal launch facilities. Non-motorized small boaters, primarily kayakers, utilize the small beach to the east of the pier and the small cove to the west of the pier.

Safety and Security, including Parking:



Winds and currents on the Carquinez Strait can be strong; paddlers need to ensure that they stay within their skill level. Small craft should be cautious and avoid the barges and other large ships that frequent the shipping lanes offshore.

Wildlife and Habitat Considerations:

No nesting or major roosting sites are known to occur in the immediate vicinity of the site; however, small islands and wetland habitats within four miles of the site are known to provide habitat for a variety of species including herons, Ridway's rail, black rail, and western snowy plover. The site and adjacent shoreline is fairly rural, though the Union Pacific Railroad runs directly along the shoreline. Less developed areas also occur across the Strait in the Benicia State Recreation Area.

Accessibility of Sites within the Carquinez Strait Geo-Region:

There are six potential/existing Water Trail sites identified within this geo-region: Matthew Turner Park; West 9th Street Boat Launch; Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline (Eckley Pier); Benicia Marina; Benicia Point Pier; and the Martinez Marina. Of these, the Martinez Marina and the Benicia Marina provide the most accessible facilities; however, neither can be considered broadly accessible.

The experiences that are available in the Carquinez Strait Geo-Region are a mixture of urban and more rural experiences. There are several sites that offer a variety of accessible features. The Benicia Marina provides accessible parking, accessible restrooms, and a loading and unloading area, but the public launch is from a high-freeboard dock or ramp. The ramp is gently sloped and could provide barrier-free access to the water. Similarly, the Martinez Marina also provides accessible parking, accessible restrooms, and a loading and unloading area, but the public launch is from a high-freeboard dock or ramp.

The Eckley Water Access and Shoreline Improvement Project includes identification of options for an ADA accessible water entry path. The City of Benicia is also in the process of updating its waterfront plan, at which time there may be opportunities to enhance the accessibility of sites within the City.

**Summary of Environmental Review
based on the
San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail Plan Final Environmental Impact Report**

**Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline (Eckley Pier)
March 4, 2022**

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Recreation References: WT DREIR, pp. 3-32 to 3-37.	Eckley Pier boat launch facilities are informal, though collocated with recreation facilities serving the fishing pier and other amenities. Non-motorized small boat use is compatible and increased use would not be anticipated to result in conflicts.	Regarding recreational conflicts, Water Trail users may submit comments to Water Trail staff through the website if they witness or experience recreational conflict at any designated site.
Navigational and Personal Safety References: WT DREIR pp. 3-38 to 3-51, and Figures 3.4.2-1 and 3.4.2-2.	Small boat users should be aware of winds and currents and must always avoid impeding large vessels in Carquinez Strait.	The Water Trail educational sign provides safety information related to navigational and personal boating safety. It is likely that most non-motorized small boat users launching from the site will want to paddle close to shore; however, some experienced kayakers may cross the channel to Benicia.
Aesthetics References: WT DREIR pp. 3-56 to 3-68.	Eckley Pier is considered an urban/wildland interface site, characterized by the public park with views of open space across the Carquinez Strait and towards the Benicia State Recreation Area. The launch does not currently have signs except for parking restriction signs, fishing information, and place-name signs.	The Water Trail will require the inclusion of a Water Trail identification sign at the site. A “sign program” will be developed with the East Bay Regional Park District to ensure that the I.D. sign and additional educational sign do not result in sign clutter at the site.
Biology-Vegetation References: WT DREIR pp. 3-69 to 3-92 and Table 3.7.2-1 and Table 3.7.2-2.	The shoreline of the Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline is reinforced in some areas with riprap and generally developed with railroad tracks. Wetland vegetation has not been observed by WT staff at any tide levels within or in the immediate vicinity of the launch.	Preventing the inadvertent spread of exotic, invasive plant species is important at all launch sites. The WT educational sign and website ask WT users to help prevent the spread of invasive species by rinsing boats and equipment immediately after use.

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Biology – Birds <i>References: WT FEIR text and map</i>	There are limited active nesting areas in the vicinity of the site; however, small islands and wetland habitats within four miles of the site are known to provide habitat for a variety of species including herons, Ridway's rail, black rail, and western snowy plover.	The WT educational sign includes information about how to paddle responsibly around wildlife and to maintain a buffer distance from nesting birds. The WT website and brochure include more detailed information about not disturbing nesting birds.
Biology – Rafting Waterfowl <i>References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Table 3.8.2-1, Figure 3.8.2-1.</i>	This site provides access to areas where rafting waterfowl congregate.	Avoiding disturbance of rafting waterfowl will be highlighted in the Water Trail educational sign, brochure, and website.
Biology – Ridgway's rail (formerly California clapper rail) and California black rail and high tide refugia <i>References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figure 3.8.2-2</i>	Ridgway's rail and black rail depend on habitat that does not exist at or in the immediate vicinity of Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline. The nearest identified location for Ridgway's and black rail is within an area that is off limits due to industry security.	Signage is needed to emphasize the importance of not entering marshes, keeping a 50-foot buffer from rail habitat (not entering channels less than 100-feet wide), importance of staying clear of high-tide refugia, and that landing in marshes is prohibited. The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include this information.
Biology –Western Snowy Plover <i>References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figures 3.8.2-3</i>	Unique or important western snowy plover habitat does not exist at or in the immediate vicinity of Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline.	The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include bird avoidance information.
Biology – Harbor Seals <i>References: WT DREIR pp. 3-132 to 3-156, Figure 3.9.2-1, and Tables 3.9.2-1, 3.9.2-2, 3.9.5-1, and 3.9.5-2</i>	There are no harbor seal primary or secondary haul-out sites within four miles of this site.	The WT educational sign, brochure, and website all advise boaters not to land at haul-out sites and to always stay at least 330' away from hauled-out harbor seals and at least 500' away from March to July when seals are pupping. The permanent inclusion of this information in WT media is a good precaution to reach boaters who may paddle more than eight miles in one day or take a multiple-day trip.
Cultural Resources	No WT-related construction is planned at this time. NMSB users are not anticipated to land in wetland habitat (i.e., are not expected to enter areas where they could potentially disturb cultural artifacts).	The WT website includes information about avoiding disturbance to cultural artifacts.

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Hydrology	WT-related construction would incorporate appropriate measures to minimize impacts to hydrology.	There would be no potential for changes to site hydrology from site designation.
Transportation, Circulation, and Parking	Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline near Eckley Pier has a large parking lot, which is managed by District staff. The parking area has sufficient capacity for existing and foreseeable future use.	Increased use by non-motorized small boat users is not expected to be great enough to overwhelm parking.