



San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail  
 Site Description for  
**Point Isabel Regional Shoreline**






**Location, Ownership, and Management:** Point Isabel Regional Shoreline is located at the end of Isabel Street, in the southern portion of the City of Richmond. The site is part of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, but is managed by the East Bay Regional Park District.

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Primary launch – stairs to gravel beach	Pocket beach – small gravel beach	Emergency Egress – cobble path

**Facility Description:** Point Isabel Regional Shoreline is a popular windsurfing launch due to the ideal wind direction and frequency. The primary water access location features cement stairs that lead to a small gravel beach protected behind a rock jetty. The stairs to the beach are substantially eroding and can be hazardous.

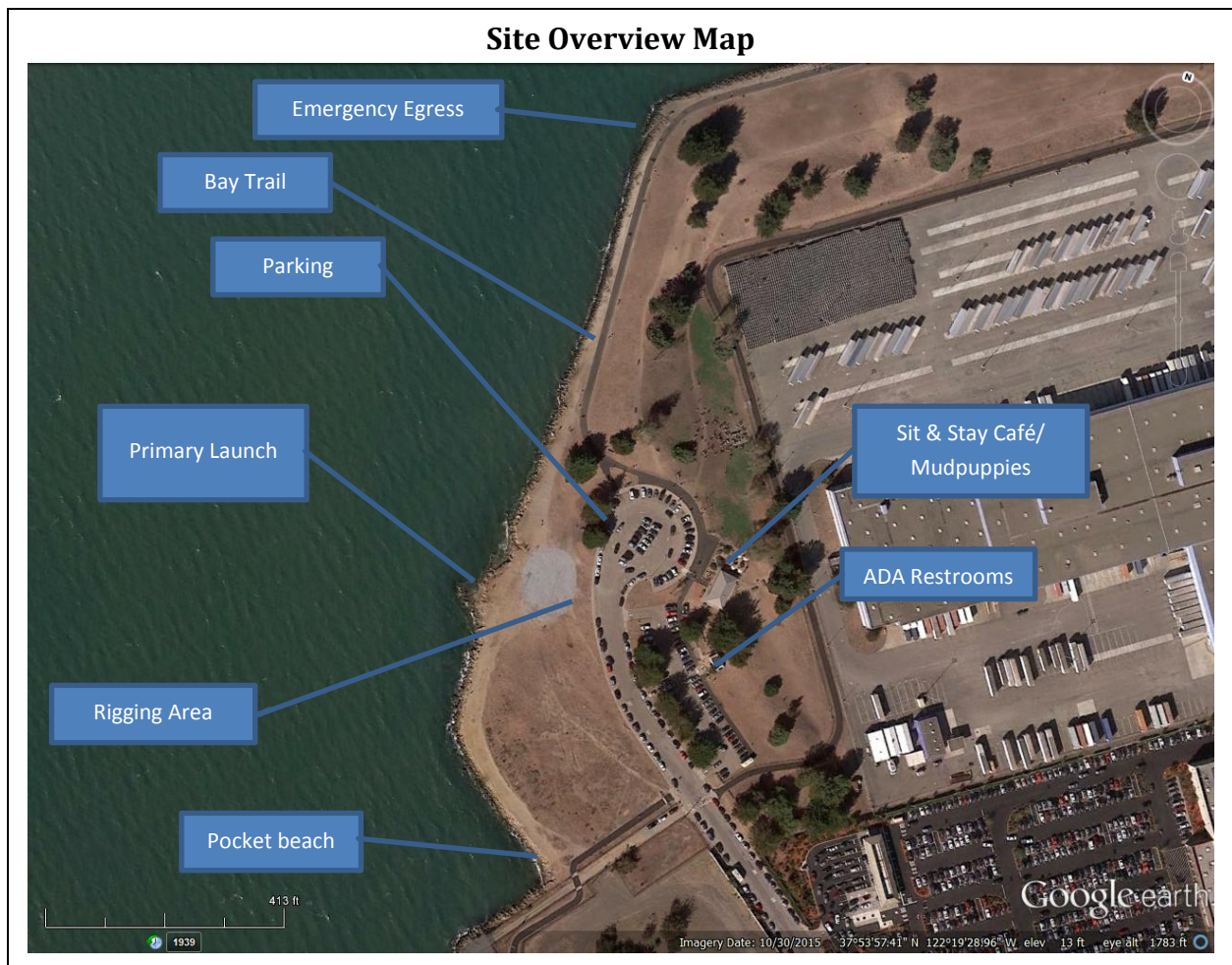
There is also a pocket beach in the southern portion of Point Isabel that is used by kayakers under calm conditions. Access to this beach requires a short scramble down the rock revetment. In addition, a water entry path of cement cobble is located just south of the Hoffman Channel, which is primarily used by dogs to access the water but also provides an emergency egress for windsurfers.

Point Isabel provides a variety of other amenities that make the site a good launch for non-motorized small boats. A picnic area is located adjacent to the primary water access. The two ADA-accessible restrooms are located near the parking area and close to Sit & Stay Café.

Free parking is available in a large lot north of the site and along Isabel Street. Many windsurfers park along Isabel Street and rig in the grass adjacent to the sidewalk. The parking area has eight ADA spaces.

**Other Identifying or General Information:**

<p>Site ID: <u>CC19</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>Richmond Area</u>                  SF Bay Plan Region: <u>Central Bay</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>Yes</u>                  Near Food or Drink: <u>Yes</u></p> <p>Proximity to Other Sites: Shimada Friendship Park is located approximately 1.2 miles northwest of Point Isabel. To the south, Albany Beach is located approximately 1.3 miles away. Farther south, designated Water Trail sites at the Berkeley Marina and Small Boat Launch are 2.4 and 3.5 miles away, respectively.</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>                  Water Entry Path: <u>Yes</u>                  Mudflats Affect Site Usability: <u>No</u>                  Beach Wheelchair Available: <u>No</u>                  Stair Water Entry: <u>Yes</u>                  Beach: <u>Yes</u></p>	<p>Firm-Surface Beach Crossing: <u>No</u>                  Fee for Launch or Parking: <u>No</u>                    Other Launch/Landing Notes: Existing steps lead to a gravel beach that is protected behind a small riprap jetty. The primary launch is severely eroded and generally in poor condition.</p>
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*Windsurfers have been using the ruderal area adjacent to Isabel Street as an informal rigging area for decades. Rocks, sticks, and brush can damage sails – a formal rigging area with washdown facilities would substantially improve user experience at the site.*

**Site Appears to be Suitable For:**

<p>Kayak: <u>Yes</u>                  Windsurfer: <u>Yes</u>                  Kiteboard: <u>Yes</u>                  Whaleboat: <u>No</u>                  Stand Up Paddleboard: <u>Yes</u></p>	<p>Canoe: <u>Yes</u>                  Outrigger Canoe: <u>No</u>                  Sculling: <u>No</u>                  Rowboat/Dinghy: <u>No</u>                  Dragonboat: <u>No</u></p>
 <p><i>In addition to ideal wind conditions, the scenic views from Point Isabel make for a unique and memorable experience.</i></p>	

**Transportation and Parking:**

<p>General Spaces (number): <u>98 + street parking</u>                  ADA Parking Spaces (number): <u>8</u>                  ADA Parking Description: Eight ADA spaces are located throughout the parking area, including near the restrooms and café.                  Duration (hours): <u>4</u></p>	<p>Overnight Parking Possibly Allowed: <u>No</u>                  Overnight Parking Description: <u>5AM - 10PM</u>                  Loading/Unloading Area: <u>No</u>                  Public Transportation: No transit lines run to Point Isabel - the nearest bus stop is approximately 1.3 miles away.                  Bay Trail: <u>Yes</u></p>
 <p><i>Parking at Point Isabel is frequently at capacity on weekends. The District is looking into designs to increase parking on site.</i></p>	 <p><i>Point Isabel contains over 2.5 miles of Bay Trail and is a very popular off-leash dog park, with over 1 million in annual visitation.</i></p>

**Path of Travel:**

Distance to Launch from Parking Area (feet): 128  
 Distance to Launch from ADA Parking (feet): 160  
 Distance to Launch from ADA Restrooms (feet): 450  
 Distance from ADA Restrooms to ADA Parking (feet): 30  
 Path of Travel Exists: No

Path of Travel Description: No accessible path of travel exists between the boat launch and the parking area. Users access the launch by walking across a grass/dirt field from the parking area to the shoreline.

Within the upland areas of the park, the path of travel consists of paved Bay Trail or sidewalks from the parking area to the restrooms, café, and through the park.

**Other Site Amenities:**

Total Restrooms: <u>2</u> Total ADA Restrooms: <u>2</u> Restroom Description: Restrooms are ADA accessible and provide flush toilets Benches: <u>Yes</u>	Boat Washing: <u>No</u> Rigging/Staging Area: <u>No</u> Picnic Tables: <u>Yes</u> BBQ: <u>Yes</u> Boat Storage: <u>No</u>
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*With picnic tables, restrooms, and a café, Point Isabel provides an ideal resting stop or destination for paddlers on the Water Trail.*



**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:**

The launch facilities at Point Isabel are not currently accessible. Upland facilities, including parking, trails, restrooms, benches, picnic tables, and BBQ are accessible. The Point Isabel Water Access and Shoreline Restoration Project will provide ADA access to the water upon completion.



*The existing launch is not accessible, with the eroded steps and submerged boulders making access challenging for all users. The District is in the process of engineering a new launch that will provide ADA access to the shore, which may feature an ADA ramp and a path of travel from the parking area and restrooms.*

**Safety and Security, including Parking:**

Point Isabel is a very popular park, with over 1 million in annual visitation. Car break-ins are known to occur and there are signs reminding people not to leave valuables in the car.

The riprap that comprises the shoreline can be hazardous for windsurfers that get stuck too far inshore and are unable to tack back to the launch. The emergency egress can be an important exit in such situations.

**Wildlife and Habitat Considerations:**

Point Isabel and adjacent shoreline is fairly urban, with limited natural habitat occurring in the immediate vicinity. Wetlands along the Richmond shoreline are located approximately 0.75 miles to the north. The Albany Mudflats Ecological Reserve / State Marine Park, an important feeding ground for a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl, is located approximately 0.5 miles to the south. In addition, Brooks Island is within four miles of the site. Brooks Island contains 18 species of nesting birds, including herons, gulls, and terns.



*Paddling in the Albany Mudflats Ecological Reserve / State Marine Park is prohibited (Title 14, CCR, Section 632 (b) (60)). Given that Point Isabel is used primarily by windsurfers who seek the open waters of the Bay, visitation to nearby sensitive shorelines is not anticipated to substantially increase. Signage could inform paddlers to avoid entering the Albany Mudflats and to avoid landing on Brooks Island.*

**Education, Outreach, and Stewardship, Including Signage:**

The Water Trail educational sign includes information about safety precautions, not landing in sensitive habitats, how to boat responsibly near wildlife, and buffer distances from sensitive species. More detailed information about boater safety is found on the Water Trail website and in the Water Trail brochure.



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

As of September 2016, the District is performing coastal engineering and design of the proposed water access. The project goals are to:

- Improve water access by constructing kayak/windsurf ramp and steps and improve navigation in and out of ramp area;
- Create a new rigging station with pea gravel including the addition of wash-down capability and providing appropriate San Francisco Bay Water Trail identification and interpretive signs;
- Improve emergency egress from the water by reconfiguring boulders from the end of the existing dog access ramp near the end of the Hoffman Channel;
- Add up to 30 additional parking spaces at the end of Isabel Street;
- Improve shoreline protection - repair erosion and add rip-rap on the south side of Hoffman Channel and along the shoreline facing the Bay.

A website providing an up to date project overview and offers opportunities for public input is available at: <http://www.cleengineering.com/pt-isabel-water-access-portal/>



*The windsurfing community has been very active in working with the District to improve water access within Point Isabel, resulting in the Point Isabel Water Access and Shoreline Restoration Project.*



**Accessibility of Sites within the Richmond Area Waterfront Geo-Region:**

There are eight potential/existing Water Trail sites identified within this geo-region: Point Molate Beach Park; Keller Beach; Ferry Point; Boat Ramp Street Launch Area; Richmond Municipal Marina; Barbara & Jay Vincent Park; Shimada Friendship Park; and, Point Isabel Regional Shoreline. Of these, Ferry Point and Barbara & Jay Vincent Park provide the most accessible water access.

The Richmond Area Waterfront Geo-Region provides opportunities to enjoy windy conditions, calm conditions, wildlife viewing, and urban experiences. Currently, few locations within this geo-region offer accessible features. The most broadly accessible site is Ferry Point, which offers new accessible restrooms, accessible parking and other amenities such as picnic tables, drinking fountain, and loading/unloading area. Ferry Point will soon include a Water Trail Grant funded firm surface path across the beach. As described above, an improved launch at Point Isabel is currently being designed by the District that will include ADA access to the water. In addition, a new accessible boat launch is proposed for the Richmond Municipal Marina associated with mitigation for the proposed Richmond Ferry Terminal.

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

**Point Isabel Regional Shoreline  
September 16, 2016**

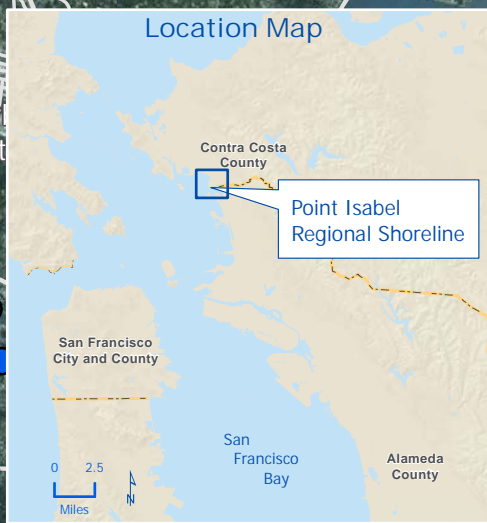
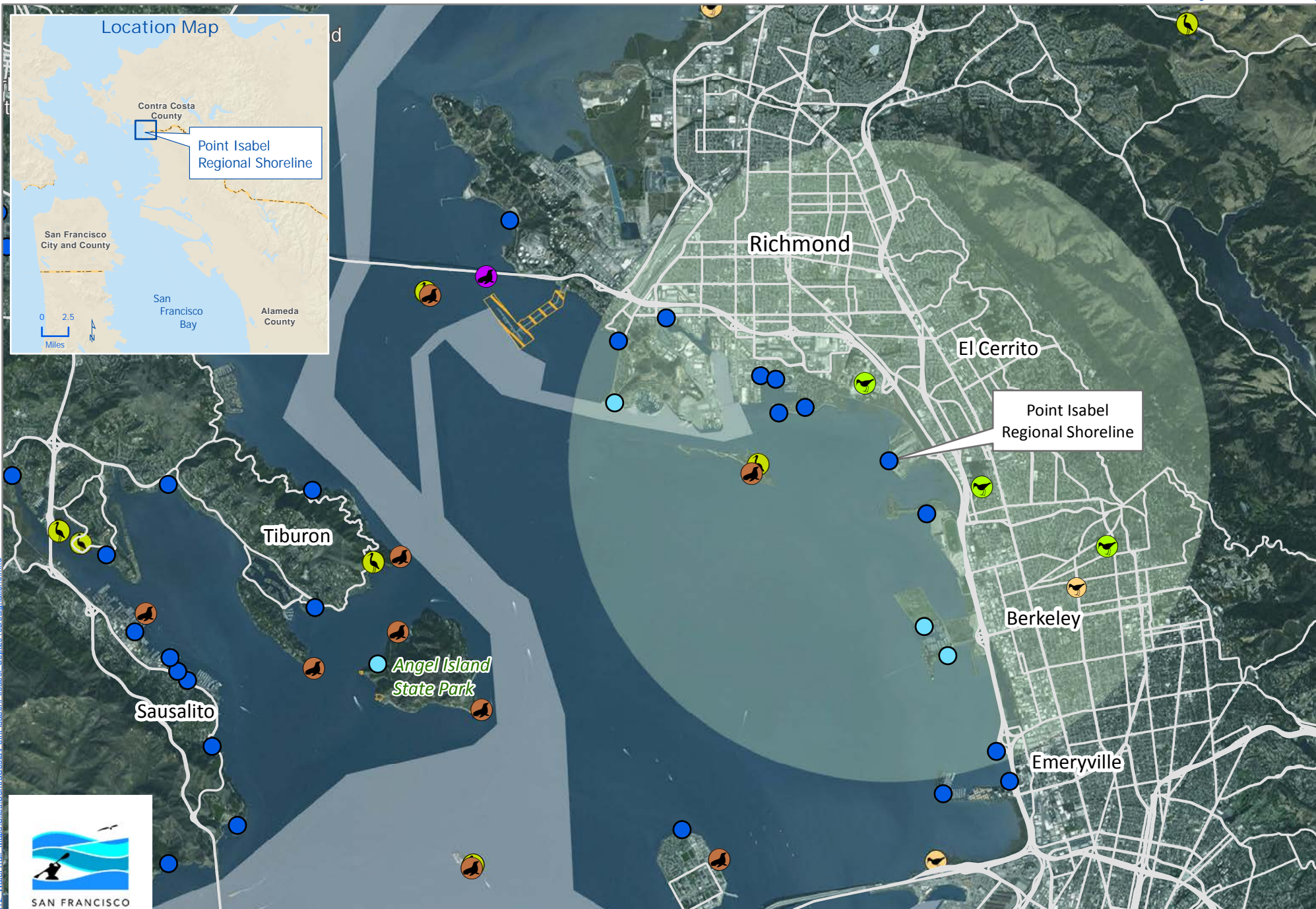
<b>Resource Area</b>	<b>Impacts Analysis</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p>Recreation References: WT DREIR, pp. 3-32 to 3-37.</p>	<p>Point Isabel Regional Shoreline is a developed park with high levels of existing public use. Facilities are well maintained and will have sufficient capacity to accommodate increased levels of use associated with the Water Trail once increased parking is developed as part of the Point Isabel Water Access and Shoreline Restoration Project.</p>	<p>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. In spite of the current heavy use, no user conflicts have been observed.</p>
<p>Navigational and Personal Safety References: WT DREIR pp. 3-38 to 3-51, and Figures 3.4.2-1 and 3.4.2-2.</p>	<p>Small boat users should be aware of winds and currents. No major shipping channels occur in the immediate vicinity of Point Isabel. Ships entering the Port of Richmond come from the Bay west of Brooks Island, more than 1.5 miles west of Point Isabel.</p>	<p>The Water Trail educational sign provides information related to navigational and personal boating safety.</p>
<p>Aesthetics References: WT DREIR pp. 3-56 to 3-68.</p>	<p>Point Isabel Regional Shoreline is considered an urban launch, characterized by the developed beach park adjacent to the City of Richmond.</p>	<p>The Water Trail will require the inclusion of a Water Trail identification sign at several of the primary beach access locations along the beach. A “sign program” will be developed with the East Bay Regional Parks Department to ensure that the I.D. sign and additional educational sign do not result in sign clutter at the site.</p>



<b>Resource Area</b>	<b>Impacts Analysis</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p>Biology- Vegetation References: WT DREIR pp. 3-69 to 3-92 and Table 3.7.2-1 and Table 3.7.2-2.</p>	<p>The shoreline of Point Isabel is reinforced with riprap and is generally developed. Tidal mudflats occur within Albany Mudflats to the south of Point Isabel.</p>	<p>Boating in the Albany Mudflats is prohibited to protect foraging bird species and boaters should keep recommended distances from sensitive habitats.</p> <p>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. A new rinse station is proposed as part of water access improvement project.</p>
<p>Biology – Birds <i>References: WT FEIR text and map</i></p>	<p>Due to the developed nature of the region, there are limited active nesting areas in the vicinity of the site. The Albany Mudflats Ecological Reserve / State Marine Park, an important feeding ground for a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl, is located approximately 0.5 miles to the south. Paddling in the Albany Mudflats Ecological Reserve / State Marine Park is prohibited (Title 14, CCR, Section 632 (b) (60)). Brooks Island is also within four miles of the site. Brooks Island contains 18 species of nesting birds, including herons, gulls, and terns.</p>	<p>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 birds.</p> <p>Given that Point Isabel is used primarily by windsurfers who seek the open waters of the Bay, visitation to nearby sensitive shorelines is not anticipated to substantially increase. Signage could inform paddlers to avoid entering the Albany Mudflats and instructing windsurfers not to land on Brooks Island.</p>
<p>Biology – Rafting Waterfowl References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Table 3.8.2-1, Figure 3.8.2-1.</p>	<p>This site provides access to areas where rafting waterfowl congregate.</p>	<p>Disturbance of rafting waterfowl is not addressed in existing signs on site but is highlighted in the Water Trail educational sign, brochure, and website.</p>
<p>Biology – Ridgway's rail and California black rail and high tide refugia References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figure 3.8.2-2</p>	<p>Ridgway's rail and black rail depend on habitat that does not exist at or in the immediate vicinity of Point Isabel.</p>	<p>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-foot wide), importance of staying clear of high-tide refugia, and that landing in marshes and on levees is prohibited. The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include this information.</p>

<b>Resource Area</b>	<b>Impacts Analysis</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p>Biology –Western Snowy Plover References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figure 3.8.2-3</p>	<p>Snowy plovers have been observed in the marshes to the north and east of Point Isabel; however, nesting in San Francisco Bay is associated with emergent or dry salt pond beds, or sometimes levee roads. These habitats are not found in the vicinity of Point Isabel.</p>	<p>The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include bird avoidance information.</p>
<p>Biology – Harbor Seals 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</p>	<p>A secondary haul-out site is located on Brooks Island, within four miles of this site.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Cultural Resources</p>	<p>WT-related construction is anticipated to occur in 2017. Disturbance would occur within Point Isabel, which is a restored battery dump. No cultural resources are anticipated to occur. NMSB users are not allowed to land in adjacent wetland habitat, where they could potentially disturb cultural artifacts.</p>	<p>Appropriate cultural resource analysis will occur through required permit and CEQA process. The WT website includes information about avoiding disturbance to cultural artifacts.</p>
<p>Hydrology</p>	<p>Proposed construction would require implementation of appropriate erosion control and stormwater management measures. Paving of the parking area could reduce sediment running into the South Sailing Basin during storm events.</p>	<p>Implementation of appropriate erosion control measures would ensure changes to hydrology would not significantly affect water quality. Appropriate erosion control measures will be required in the construction contract and by permit.</p>
<p>Transportation, Circulation, and Parking</p>	<p>Parking during weekends can become congested. Improvements to Point Isabel are intended to provide 30 additional parking spaces, which will help accommodate any increase in use that improved NMSB facilities would result in.</p>	<p>District staff manage high visitor numbers during summer months. Increased use by non-motorized small boat users is not expected to be great enough to overwhelm parking.</p>





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SAN FRANCISCO  
BAY AREA  
WATER  
TRAIL

Point Isabel Regional Shoreline,  
East Bay Regional Park District

- Designated Water Trail Site
- Potential Water Trail Site
- 4 Mile Buffer (from Point Isabel)
- Shipping Channel
- Security Exclusion Area
- Active Heronry
- Ridgway's/Black Rail
- Western Snowy Plover
- Primary or secondary harbor seal haul out site
- Harbor seal pupping site



CA Harbor Seal data from Water Trail FEIR. Ridgway's and black rail, Western snowy plover, and heronry data generalized from 2015 California Natural Diversity Database