

Water Quality Report Card

Regional Water Board:	North Coast, Region 1
Beneficial Uses Affected:	Water Contact Recreation (REC-1)
Implemented Through:	NPS Permits, Stakeholder Action
Effective Date:	Not Applicable
Attainment Date:	Not Applicable

Pathogens in Mendocino County Listed Beaches

STATUS	Improvement Needed
Pollutant Type:	Nonpoint Source
Pollutant Source:	Naturally Occurring Nonpoint Source Runoff

Water Quality Improvement Strategy

Several beaches in Mendocino County are on the USEPA Clean Water Act 303(d) list for impairment by Enterococci bacteria. Under the [Coastal Pathogens Project](#), Enterococci concentrations at six ocean beaches were assessed from 2017 through 2023 for exceedance of the Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) Water Quality Objective (WQO) - MacKerricher State Park (near Virgin Creek), Pudding Creek Beach, Hare Creek Beach, Caspar Headlands State Beach, Big River Beach at Mendocino Bay, and Van Damme State Park. Concentrations at three beaches - Pudding Creek Beach, Hare Creek Beach, and Van Damme State Park were found to exceed the REC-1 WQO (underlined in the plot below). Assessment using microbial source tracking, land cover, and land use data indicate the primary source is dog feces, with a mix of naturally occurring (shorebird) feces. Microbial source tracking identifies fecal sources of water contamination by detecting microbes found in the feces of humans, cattle, pigs, poultry, or other animals. Dog feces, the major controllable source of contamination at these beaches, will be addressed by working with State Parks to provide and maintain disposal stations, education on the impact of dog waste on water quality, and the benefits of proper dog waste disposal.

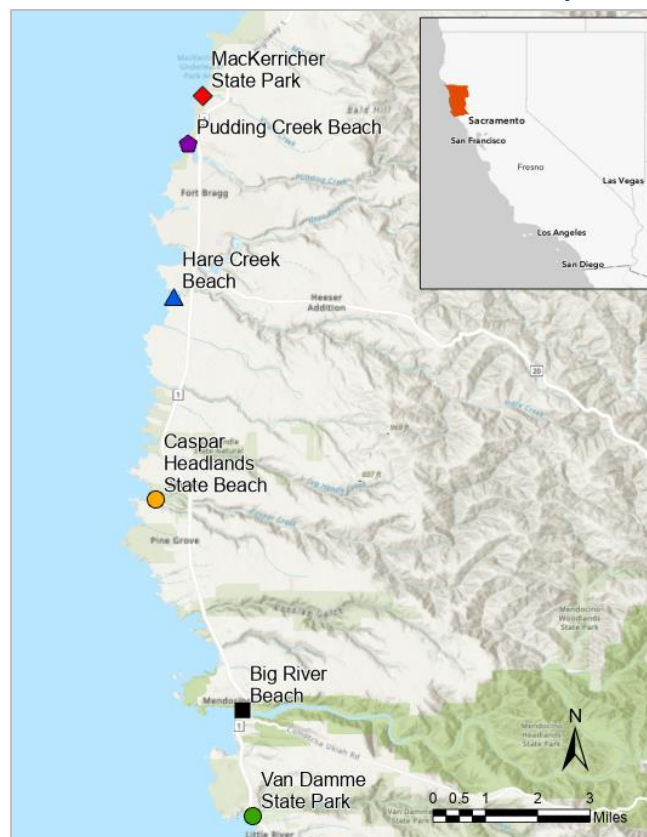
REC-1 Water Quality Objectives (WQO)

Indicator	Magnitude (cfu/100 mL)	
	Geometric Mean ¹ (GM)	Statistical Threshold Value ² (STV)
Enterococci	30	110

¹Six week rolling GM calculated weekly.

²Calendar month STV not to be exceeded by >10% of samples.

Mendocino Beaches Watershed Map



Water Quality Outcomes

- Enterococci concentrations at three beaches exceed the REC-1 WQO thresholds of 30 cfu/100 mL (GM), and 110 cfu/100 mL (STV), indicating that improvement is needed.

Water Quality

Six-week rolling Geometric Means (GM) at Mendocino County Ocean Beaches (2017-2023)

