

Water Quality Report Card

Eutrophic Conditions in Famosa Slough

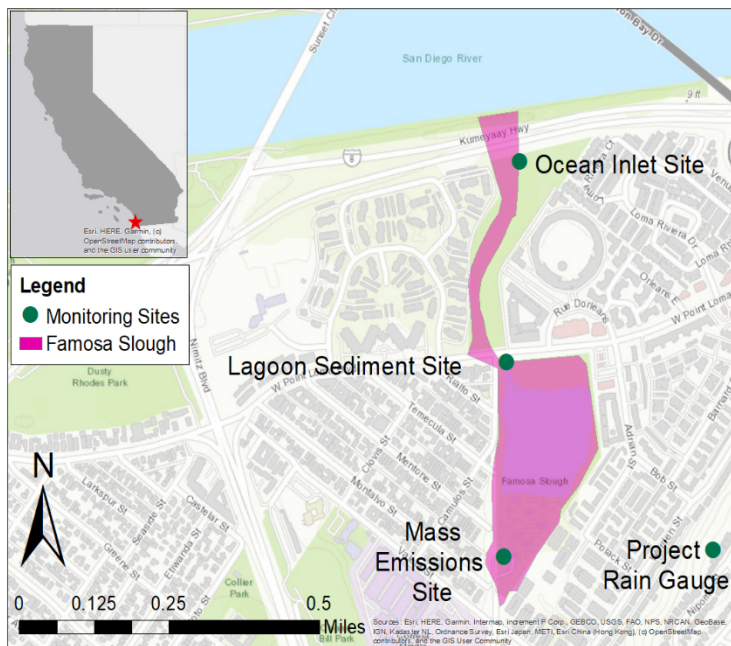
Regional Water Board:	San Diego, Region 9
Beneficial Uses Affected:	COMM, EST, MAR, MIGR, RARE, REC-1, REC-2, WILD, SHELL, SPWN
Implemented Through:	MS4 Permit
Effective Date:	January 2018
Attainment Date:	January 2028

STATUS:	Improvement Needed
Pollutant Type:	Point Source
Pollutant Source:	Urban Storm Water Runoff

Water Quality Improvement Strategy

Famosa Slough is a 37-acre estuarine wetland on the south side of the San Diego River approximately 1.25 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. The slough is a remnant of the once extensive Mission Bay wetland in the City of San Diego. Famosa Slough provides habitat for shore birds and wildlife and is a designated [State Marine Conservation Area](#). Famosa Slough was added to the federal Clean Water Act 303(d) Impaired Waters list in 1990 for eutrophic conditions caused by excessive nutrient loading from urban runoff. Eutrophic conditions are of greatest concern in summer when excessive algae growth can cause low dissolved oxygen (DO) and lead to mortality of estuarine organisms. The San Diego Water Quality Control Board is focusing on a water quality restoration plan (WQRP) using pollution controls as an alternative to adopting a TMDL as a Basin Plan amendment. The WQRP allows for more flexibility and adaptive management than a TMDL. Implementation focuses on using the Regional MS4 permit requirements, where the City of San Diego is responsible as a CoPermittee, to eliminate dry-weather flows and reduce the nutrient impairment. The Slough's response to nutrient inputs is measured by monitoring macroalgae biomass and DO. The City of San Diego plans to further investigate the low DO levels through sediment oxygen demand studies and circulation studies using salinity as a marker.

Famosa Slough Map



Water Quality Outcomes

- Since 2018, the macroalgal biomass target has been met, but the dissolved oxygen target has not been met.
- Since 2018, based on watershed loading estimates, the annual nitrogen and phosphorus load reductions have been met (not shown).
- More information can be found on the [Famosa Slough Nutrient TMDL](#) webpage.

Water Quality Compliance Targets

	Dissolved Oxygen	Macroalgae Biomass
Target	> 5.0 mg/L for ≥ 90% of day	< 60 g/m ² dry weight
Status	Target not met	Target met

Water Quality

