

Water Quality Report Card

Pathogens in Humboldt County Beaches

Regional Water Board: North Coast, Region 1

Beneficial Uses Affected: REC-1

Implemented Through: Not Applicable -Assessment

Effective Date: Not Applicable

Attainment Date: Not Applicable

STATUS: **Improvement Needed**

Pollutant Type: Nonpoint Source

Pollutant Source: Grazing
Naturally Occurring
Non-point Source Runoff

Water Quality Improvement Strategy

Six beaches in Humboldt County are being assessed as part of the Coastal Pathogens Project. The USEPA Clean Water Act section 303(d) list identifies three Humboldt County ocean beaches as impaired for Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) due to fecal indicator bacteria: Clam Beach (near Strawberry Creek), Luffenholtz Beach, and Trinidad State Beach. Assessment of enterococci concentrations from these beaches, and three additional Humboldt County beaches; Clam Beach (near Mad River mouth), Moonstone County Park, and Old Home Beach, shows exceedance of REC-1 Water Quality Objective (WQO) thresholds. Source assessment is currently underway but depending on beach specific conditions, suspected pathogen sources are likely to be a mix of naturally occurring (fecal matter from ruminant type wildlife, and birds), and nonpoint source runoff (fecal matter from cattle, dogs, and humans). More information about these beaches, as well as other aspects of the Coastal Pathogens Project, can be found on the Coastal Pathogen Project [website](#). The following table of REC-1 objectives are summarized from the [Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California](#)

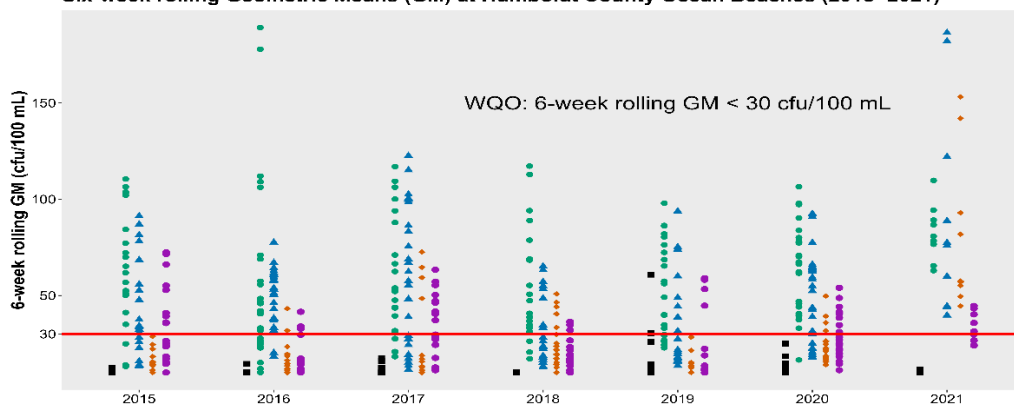
REC-1 Water Quality Objectives (WQO)

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

1.Six week rolling GM calculated weekly 2.Static calendar month STV not to be exceeded by >10% of samples.

Water Quality Assessment

Six-week rolling Geometric Means (GM) at Humboldt County Ocean Beaches (2015 -2021)



Ocean Beach

- Clam Beach near Mad River mouth
- Clam Beach near Strawberry Creek
- ▲ Luffenholtz Beach
- ◆ Moonstone County Park
- Trinidad State Beach
- Old Home Beach not represented (insufficient data)

Humboldt County Beaches



Water Quality Outcomes

- Assessment of data collected between 2015 and 2021 indicates that enterococci concentrations at all six beaches exceed the REC-1 WQO thresholds of 30 cfu/100 mL (GM), and 110 cfu/100 mL (STV), indicating that improvement is needed.
- Future actions may include revising or developing new nonpoint source permits, working with stakeholders to conduct additional targeted source investigation or assessment, and requiring corrective actions as needed.