

# Water Quality Report Card

## Sediment TMDL in Pescadero-Butano Watershed

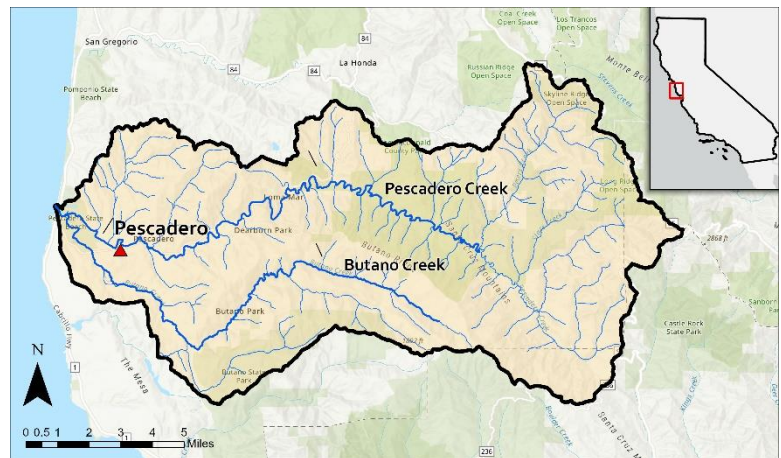
<b>Regional Water Board:</b>	San Francisco Bay, Region 2
<b>Beneficial Uses Affected:</b>	COLD, MIGR, RARE, SPWN, WILD, REC-1, REC-2
<b>Implemented Through:</b>	319(h)Grants, NPDES permits, WRDs, Waivers of WDRs, stakeholder efforts
<b>Effective Date:</b>	June 2019
<b>Attainment Date:</b>	2039 (estimated date)

<b>STATUS</b>	Conditions Improving	
<b>Pollutant Type:</b>	Nonpoint Source	Legacy
<b>Pollutant Source:</b>	Erosion/Siltation, Roads, Grazing, Hydromodification, Logging	

### Water Quality Improvement Strategy

Pescadero and Butano creeks drain 81 mi<sup>2</sup> of Santa Cruz Mountains in western San Mateo County. At their confluence lies Pescadero Marsh and Lagoon, a 320-acre brackish and freshwater wetland. Pescadero and Butano creeks are listed on the USEPA Clean Water Act 303(d) list as impaired by fine sediment due to excess erosion. These creeks also lack habitat complexity, important for coho salmon and steelhead trout survival. Excessive erosion has resulted in the deposition of up to four million tons of sediment in the marsh and lagoon, contributing to low dissolved oxygen (DO) conditions and periodic fish kills. Sediment sources include roads, channel incision, gullies, timber harvesting, and landslides due to legacy grazing and agricultural practices. To address this water quality impairment, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) was developed and is being implemented through the Pescadero-Butano Watershed Sediment TMDL and Habitat Enhancement Plan ([TMDL](#)). The TMDL calls for an 80% reduction in sediment from anthropogenic sources by 2039. It also recommends floodplain restoration and large woody debris (LWD) installation to improve aquatic habitat complexity for endangered species.

### Pescadero-Butano Watershed



### Water Quality Outcomes

- Completed road erosion inventories and a prioritized schedule of actions for timber harvest lands.
- Incorporated control of road erosion from County lands, into the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit.
- San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and State Parks implemented [Butano Creek Reconnection Project](#) in 2019 to address fine sediment pollution which has also increased dissolved oxygen conditions. No fish kills have been reported since.
- San Mateo County RCD and its partners completed three large floodplain restoration projects, reconnecting 150 acres of floodplains to channels, and implemented several LWD enhancement projects.
- Next steps include completion of Reports of Waste Discharge by implementing parties by the Fall of 2025. Based on the status of compliance, we will either develop watershed-wide permits or work with non-complying landowners.

### TMDL Waste Load Allocations/Load Allocations

Source Category	Current Load (tons/year)	Load Allocations	
		(tons/year)	Percentage of Natural Background
Natural Processes	120,000	120,000	100
Erosion at road crossings	35,000	8,000	6.5
Channel incision	30,000	6,600	5.5
Gullies	24,000	5,300	4.4
Erosion at timber harvest lands	23,000	5,100	4.2
Road surface erosion	16,000	3,500	3.0
Surface erosion on rangelands	4,500	1,000	0.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252,000</b>	<b>149,500</b>	<b>124.4</b>