San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail

Site Description for

Crown Memorial State Beach

Location, Ownership, and Management: Crown Memorial State Beach stretches for approximately 2.5 miles along the southern shore of Alameda Island. Crown Beach is operated by the East Bay Regional Park District under a cooperative agreement with the State of California and City of Alameda.

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The ramp at Crab Cove provides ADA access to the water, but the narrow ramp and potential submerged riprap may limit use.	*With 2.5 miles of beach, parking, restrooms, picnic areas, and shower towers, Crown Beach's facilities provide high quality water access.*	*The wide beach and frequent summer winds make Crown Beach an ideal launch for boardsailors.*

Facility Description: With 2.5 miles of sandy beach, Crown Beach is a popular launch and destination for paddlers and boardsailors. There is no developed boat launch; however, access to the water occurs all along the beach and via an intertidal ADA path located near the Crab Cove Visitor Center in the eastern portion of the park.

A concessionaire provides rental equipment and lessons on weekends during the spring and daily during the summer. It offers kiteboarding and windsurf lessons, and windsurf and kayak equipment rentals. Boardsailing is concentrated in the central portion of the beach.

The East Bay Regional Parks District provides a variety of shoreside facilities, including nine restrooms (4 ADA), a bathhouse with changing rooms, and the Crab Cove Visitor Center. Shower towers are located near the bathhouse and the Boardsports concession buildings. Parking in the District's lots is $5 per vehicle and $4 per trailered vehicle when the kiosk is attended. Free street parking is also available along adjacent roadways. Park hours are from 5 am – 10 pm.

Site Overview Map

Other Identifying or General Information:

Site ID: A14 In WT Plan: Yes Existing or Planned: Existing Ownership: Public County: Alameda Geo-Region: Oakland Waterfront SF Bay Plan Region: Central Bay Launch or Destination: Launch Home of a Club: No Used by a Program that Assists Persons with Disabilities: No Appreciated for Windy Conditions: Yes Near Food or Drink: No	Proximity to Other Sites: The closest potential Water Trail site is approximately one mile west at the Encinal Launching and Fishing Facility, adjacent to the Ballena Isle Marina. Tidewater Boating Center, a designated Water Trail site that features numerous amenties for non-motorized boaters, is located approxiamtely three miles northeast on the Oakland Estuary.

Description of Launch/Landing:

Fixed Dock/Pier Launch/Landing: No	Beach: Yes
Float: No	Beach Wheelchair Available: Yes
Transfer/Launch Assistance System: No	Firm-Surface Beach Crossing: No
Gangway: No	Water Entry Path: Yes, at Crab Cove
Boat/Trailer Ramp: No	Fee for Launch or Parking: Yes
Mudflats Affect Site Usability: No	
Stair Water Entry: No	

Site Appears to be Suitable For:

Kayak: Yes	Canoe: Yes
Windsurfer: Yes	Outrigger Canoe: No
Kiteboard: Yes	Sculling: No
Whaleboat: No	Rowboat/Dinghy: No
Stand Up Paddleboard: Yes	Dragonboat: No

Crown Beach is popular with kayakers and paddle boarders when conditions are calm. Frequent winds and the wide beach combine to make Crown Beach a premier windsurfing and kiteboarding location. Boardsailors typically launch from informally designated areas in the central portion of the beach, limiting potential conflict between user groups.

Transportation and Parking:

General Spaces (number): 51-75 ADA Parking Spaces (number): 2 Duration (hours): 17 Overnight Parking Possibly Allowed: No Loading/Unloading Area: No ADA Parking Description: Data is for the main parking lot and restrooms in the central portion of the park; however, there is also parking available near the Crab Cove Visitor Center and along city streets.	Paid parking May-September, $5 per vehicle, $4 per trailered vehicle. Park hours from 5 am – 10 pm. Free street parking is also available along adjacent roadways. Bay Trail: Yes, the Class I Bay Trail runs the entire length of Crown Beach, connecting to spur trails through Alameda and to Oakland. Public Transportation: AC Transit runs regular bus routes that stop at several locations along Crown Beach.

A popular segment of Bay Trail runs along Crown Beach, providing a level and accessible path of travel along the entire shoreline.

Path of Travel:

Distance to Launch from Parking Area (feet): 193
Distance to Launch from ADA Parking (feet): 193
Distance to Launch from ADA Restrooms (feet): 233
Distance from ADA Restrooms to ADA Parking (feet): 40
Path of Travel Exists: Yes

Path of Travel Description: Paved parking lots lead to accessible paths to the edge of the sand. No acccessible path occurs across the sandy beach; however, beach wheelchairs are provided free of charge. In addition, there is an intertidal accessible ramp located near the Crab Cove Visitor Center.

The Rocky Shoreline Tide Ramp provides ADA access to the water. The site is not ideal for a kayak launch due to the narrowness of the ramp and the potential for submerged riprap boulders located offshore the water entry area.

Other Site Amenities:

Total Restrooms: 9 Total ADA Restrooms: 4 Restroom Description: There are several portable, unisex restrooms located throughout the park. Near the launch there is one, portable, unisex restroom. In a further parking lot there is another portable, unisex restroom. Near the bathhouse there are three unisex restrooms.	Boat Washing: No Rigging/Staging Area: Yes Picnic Tables: Yes Benches: Yes BBQ: Yes Boat Storage: No

Overnight Accommodations:

Hotel: No	Hostel: No	Ship: No	Camping: No	Other: No

Additional Notes Related to Accessibility:

The site offers accessible parking, drinking fountains, restrooms, picnic areas, trails, and path of travel, along with an ADA-accessible ramp into the water. The accessible ramp is just outside of the Crab Cove Visitor Center, but the ramp is narrow and would be difficult to navigate with equipment from a wheelchair.

Beach wheelchairs are available free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis. They require an assistant to push and are not intended to enter the water.

The Nepture reservable picnic area, Crolls Garden reservable picnic area, Crab Cove Visitor Center and the bathhouse are all accessible for wheechair users.

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

Crown Beach is popular with kayakers and paddle boarders when conditions are calm. Frequent winds and the wide beach combine to make Crown Beach a premier windsurfing and kiteboarding destination. Boardsailors typically launch from informally designated areas in the central portion of the beach, limiting potential conflict between user groups.

Safety and Security, Including Parking:

There is an emergency phone is located near the Boardsports shop. Emergency situations at the site are relatively rare, despite the high number of users. Boarders typically will help each other out when someone experiences equipment malfunctions or other issues. Additionally, winds tend to be on-shore, which pushes boardsailors back towards shore in cases of equipment failure or inexperience. No shipping lanes occur in the immediate vicinity of the shoreline.

Wildlife and Habitat Considerations:

The Alameda shoreline is a developed park along most of the Regional Shoreline, limiting potential impacts to sensitive species and habitats.

At the east end of the park is the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, which harbors aquatic birds and other salt marsh wildlife. Launching in this area is prohibited to facilitate ongoing restoration work and boaters should keep recommended distances from sensitive habitats. Crab Cove at the north end is a marine reserve where all plant and animal life is protected. Offshore eelgrass beds are regularly monitored in accordance with mitigation for beach restoration at this site and have been expanding. No impacts to eelgrass bed habitats have been observed from existing high levels of non-motorized boat use in the area.

Education, Outreach, and Stewardship, Including Signage:

Crab Cove Visitor Center, located on McKay Avenue within Crown Beach, contains exhibits and aquariums highlighting flora and fauna of San Francisco Bay and other marine areas. Naturalist-guided programs for school groups and other organized groups are available in the Crab Cove Visitor Center Wednesday through Friday by advance reservation.

The District also offers "Memory Lane", a self-guided trail that leads you from the time Native Americans lived in the area to the present. The tour is available via mobile device or a brochure in the visitor center.

Accessibility of Sites within the Oakland Waterfront Geo-Region:

There are nine potential/existing Water Trail sites identified within this geo-region: Middle Harbor Park, Jack London Square/CCK, Jack London Aquatic Center, Grand Avenue Boat Ramp, Encinal Launching and Fishing Facility, Crown Memorial State Beach, Tidewater Boating Center (designated), Elmhurst Creek, and Doolittle Drive. Of these, Middle Harbor Park, Jack London Square/CCK, Jack London Aquatic Park, Crown Memorial State Beach, and Tidewater Boating Center provide a variety of accessible facilities.

The Oakland Waterfront Geo-Region provides opportunities to enjoy windy conditions, calm conditions, wildlife viewing, urban experiences, dining, and overnight accommodations. As mentioned above, numerous locations within this geo-region offer accessible features. The most broadly accessible site is Tidewater Boating Center, which offers a long gangway with resting areas, permanent accessible restrooms, accessible parking, a long low-freeboard dock and other amenities such as picnic tables, drinking fountain, and loading/unloading area.

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

Crown Memorial State Beach
June 10, 2016

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Recreation References: WT DREIR, pp. 3-32 to 3-37.	Crown Memorial State Beach has 2.5 miles of sandy beach and an ADA intertidal path, parking, restrooms, a visitor center, and a concessionaire. Facilities are well maintained and have sufficient capacity to accommodate increased levels of use.	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.
Navigational and Personal Safety References: WT DREIR pp. 3-38 to 3-51, and Figures 3.4.2-1 and 3.4.2-2.	Small boat users should be aware of winds and currents. No major shipping channels occur in the immediate vicinity of Crown Beach. A ferry route (San Francisco to Bay Farm Island) is located approximately 1.4 miles directly west of Crown Beach.	The Water Trail educational sign provides information related to navigational and personal boating safety.
Aesthetics References: WT DREIR pp. 3-56 to 3-68.	Crown Memorial State Beach is considered an urban launch, characterized by the developed beach park adjacent to the City of Alameda. Interpretive and wayfinding signs are located throughout the park and near the primary beach access locations.	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.

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Biology- Vegetation References: WT DREIR pp. 3-69 to 3-92 and Table 3.7.2-1 and Table 3.7.2-2.	The shoreline of Crown Beach is reinforced in the northern areas with riprap and is generally developed. The beach and offshore areas have undergone substantial restoration, including major beach nourishment and eelgrass restoration. Additionally, tidal wetlands occur within Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary in the east end of the park. Crab Cove at the north end is a marine reserve where all plant and animal life is protected.	Launching in the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary is prohibited to facilitate ongoing restoration work and boaters should keep recommended distances from sensitive habitats. Offshore eelgrass beds are regularly monitored and have been expanding. No impacts to eelgrass bed habitats have been observed from existing high levels of non-motorized boat use in the area. 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. Existing shower towers can be used to rinse equipment at Crown Beach.
Biology – Birds *References: WT FEIR text and map*	Due to the developed nature of most of Crown Beach, there are limited active nesting areas along much of the site; however, the east end of the park is the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, which harbors aquatic birds and other salt marsh wildlife.	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 nesting birds.
Biology – Rafting Waterfowl References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Table 3.8.2-1, Figure 3.8.2-1.	This site provides access to areas where rafting waterfowl congregate.	Disturbance of rafting waterfowl is not addressed in existing signs on site but is highlighted in the Water Trail educational sign, brochure, and website.
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	Ridgway's rail and black rail are known to occur within Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary in the east end of the park.	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-feet 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.

Resource Area	Impacts Analysis	Notes
Biology –California Least Tern References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figure 3.8.2-3	The largest Bay Area colony of endangered California least terns nests at the Alameda Point wildlife refuge approximately 2.5 miles north of Crown Beach. The wildlife refuge is closed to visitors. Historically, California least terns have also been observed at Oakland Airport; the vicinity of the airport is off-limits to boaters for security reasons.	The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include bird avoidance information.
Biology –Western Snowy Plover References: WT DREIR pp. 3-93 to 3-131 and Figure 3.8.2-3	Crown Beach provides sandy beach habitat for western snowy plover; however, no nesting occurs within four miles of the site. Most nesting in San Francisco Bay is associated with emergent or dry salt pond beds, or sometimes levee roads.	The Water Trail educational sign and brochure include bird avoidance information.
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	A secondary haul-out site has been observed at the end of the Encinal Beach breakwater within four miles of this site.	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. The permanent inclusion of this information in WT media is a good precaution to reach boaters who may paddle more than eight miles in one day or take a multiple-day trip.
Cultural Resources	No WT-related construction is planned at this time. NMSB users are not allowed to land in adjacent wetland habitat, potentially disturbing cultural artifacts.	The WT website includes information about avoiding disturbance to cultural artifacts.
Hydrology	No WT-related construction is planned at this time.	No changes to site hydrology would occur at the site.
Transportation, Circulation, and Parking	Parking during weekends can become congested. The lot is used by Bay Trail and Water Trail users.	Increased use by non-motorized small boat users is not expected to be great enough to overwhelm parking.

San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail

www.sfbaywatertrail.org

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WATER TRAIL

Crown Memorial State Beach, East Bay Regional Park District

- Designated Water Trail Site
- Potential Water Trail Site
- 4 Mile Buffer (from primary access)
- Shipping Channel
- Snowy Plover Habitat
- Pelican Roost
- Active Heronry
- Primary or secondary harbor seal haul out site
- CA Least Tern

CA Harbor Seal data from Water Trail FEIR.
Bird species data generalized from 2015 California Natural DiversityDatabase and 2012 Spartina Report. Shipping Channel from SF Harbor Safety Committee brochure.

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Miles

(6/6/2016)

Path: N:\GIS\WaterTrail\EBRPD\EBRPD Crown Beach 2016.mxd