

Tijuana Estuary Place Names

In order to avoid confusion when using certain terms, below are the place-name protocols we have adopted.

“Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve” (aka The Reserve, TRNERR)

TRNERR is a federal designation over other agencies’ lands. It is one of a system of 27 Reserves that are located along the coast throughout the United States. The Reserve system is administered by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) which is part of the federal Department of Commerce. At each of the 27 Reserves, NOAA has a formal partnership with a state agency through which the state manages the Reserve programs (Research, Education, Coastal Training and Stewardship) and NOAA funds about 70% of those programs. At TRNERR, the state partner is California State Parks.

TRNERR is just under 2500 acres. It overlays National Wildlife Refuge lands to the north (*“Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge”*) and California State Park lands to the south (*Border Field State Park*). At its inland end, the Reserve also includes San Diego County lands (a western portion of *“Tijuana River Valley Regional Park”*).

“Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge” (aka TSNWR, the Refuge)

TSNWR is, generally, the northern half of the Reserve and is operated by staff of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) which is part of the federal Department of Interior. Refuge Staff are headquartered at the *“Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center”*. The Refuge consists of land owned by both USFWS and the U.S. Navy.

“Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center” (aka the Visitor Center)

Located at the far northern end of the Reserve (and Refuge) in the City of Imperial Beach, the Visitor Center is on USFWS land leased to California State Parks for their operation of a visitor center and the facilities needed to operate programs of the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve. Through a Letter of Agreement, staff of the Refuge and Reserve enjoy a seamless partnership in management of both the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center and the larger Reserve.

“Border Field State Park” (aka Border Field)

The State Park covers most of the southern half of the Reserve. This 800 acre park includes trails, sediment basins, roads, a day use picnic area (*“Monument Mesa”*), restrooms and open space habitat. It is open for non-vehicular access 7 days / week from 9:30am to between 5pm and 7pm (depending on season). Public Vehicle Access seasonally changes depending on whether the entrance road is flooded. When clear, vehicle access to the park is available on Saturday, Sundays and Holidays. This website has updated information regarding public vehicle access.

“Monument Mesa”

This 4 acre picnic and parking area is within Border Field State Park, at its southwest corner. It is the most popular destination in the park due to its views of the estuary and the ocean and its proximity to the international boundary with Mexico. Monument Mesa is currently being

renovated. The new facilities will be completed by early 2011, but the uncertainty of flooding may prevent public vehicle access to the picnic area until May 2011.

“Friendship Park”

Friendship Park was once a portion of the Monument Mesa picnic area but is now wholly within the “*Border Infrastructure Project*”, owned by the federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Park is generally a half-circle around the 19th century monument that memorializes the starting point for the land survey that established the 2000 mile border between the United States and Mexico. It was a popular destination for people meeting up (through the fence) with friends and relatives in Mexico. Customs & Border Patrol agents now manage public access to Friendship Park during specific times, allowing limited numbers of people.

“Border Infrastructure Project” (aka BIS)

The BIS is a fenced corridor that consists of, generally, a 130’ wide corridor between the older fence constructed along the international boundary and a new fence constructed between 2008 – 2009. The BIS also includes a corridor patrol road, a maintenance road, drainage structures, planted slopes and a third fence that delineates the northern extent of federal ownership.