

Bathing Water Profile for Sand Beach

Gairloch, Scotland

Current water classification <https://www2.sepa.org.uk/BathingWaters/Classifications.aspx>

Description

Sand Beach is an area of sand and shingle beach. It is situated west of Gairloch village in the North-West Highlands.

Gairloch is popular for a number of recreational activities including swimming, boating and snorkelling. The headland south of Big Sand is a North West Highland Snorkel Trail site.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0 to 200m. For local tide information see:

<http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide/EasyTide/index.aspx>



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Site details

Local authority	Highland Council
Year of designation	2017
Water sampling location	NG 75860 77940
EC bathing water ID	UKS7616091

Catchment description

A catchment area of 17 km² drains into Sand Beach bathing water. The hills Cnoc na Gaibhre Idhre, Meall Imireach and Cnoc Breac rise in the catchment. The River Sand flows from the hills into the bathing water.

Land use comprises of bogland, heather grassland, rough grassland and improved grassland. There is very little urban development and population density is low. The main village of Gairloch is located 3.5km to the east.

Risks to water quality

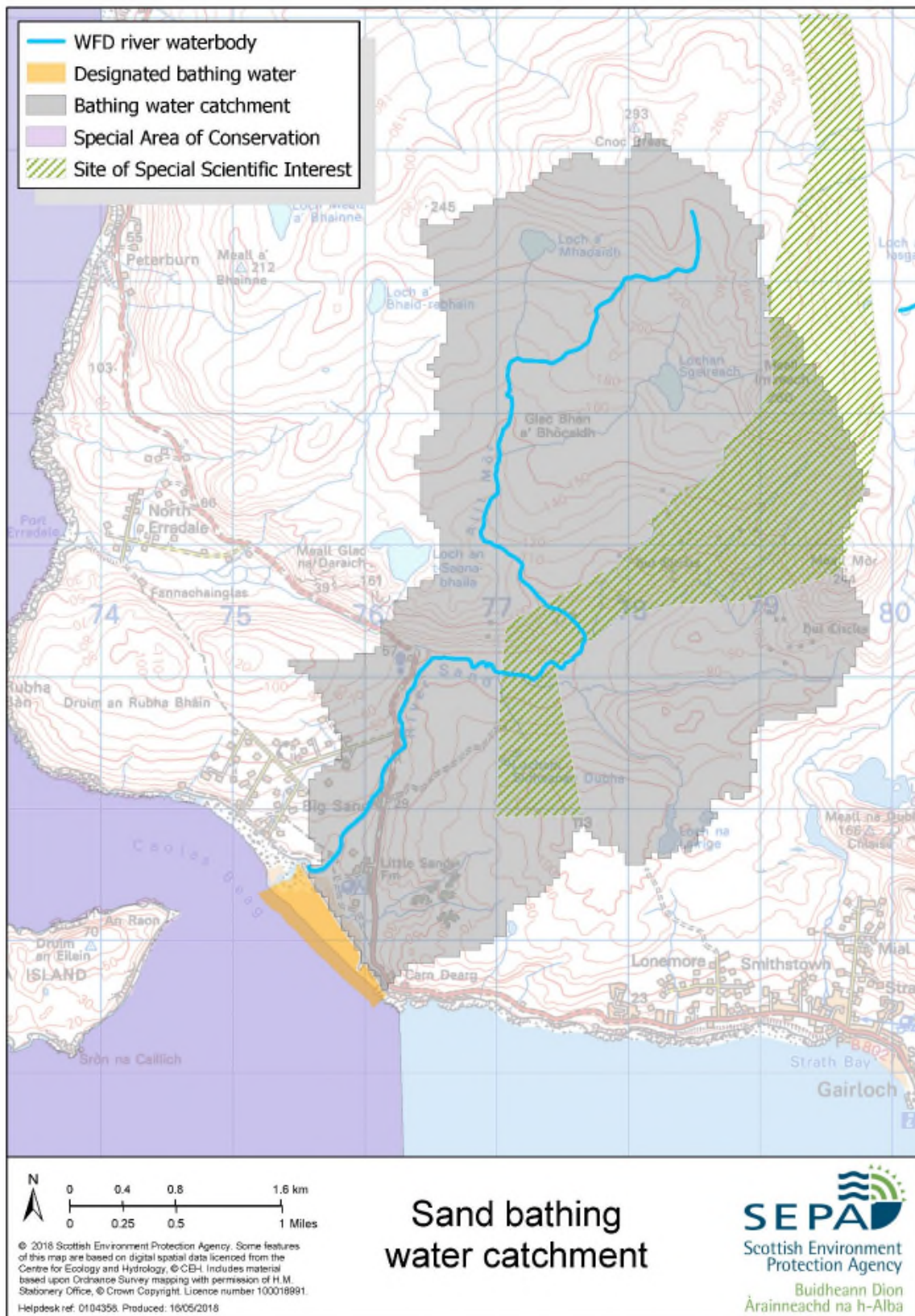
Our regulatory and scientific assessment indicates that there are no significant pollution inputs to this bathing water under normal weather situations.

In general, most natural waters will be affected by rainfall. Faecal pollutants are washed from agricultural or urban land into the sea. At some locations, waste water discharges from public sewerage infrastructure can affect water quality.

Map 1: Sand Beach bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Sand Beach bathing water



Managing bathing water quality

Pollution from agricultural sources

Agriculture does not have a significant impact on this bathing water.

Pollution from public and private sewerage

Scottish Water provides public waste water collection and treatment services in the village of Gairloch to the east of Sand Beach, but not in the immediately surrounding area of Big Sand, which is served by private systems.

In response to increasing operational challenges, Scottish Water is proposing to replace the existing Sewage Treatment Works at Fhasaich. An independently chaired Stakeholder Liaison Group is being set up in order to identify the best replacement options. Both Scottish Water and SEPA will participate fully in the workings of this group.

Private sewerage discharges to the River Sand and Loch Gairloch include those from a caravan park, youth hostel and homes.

Pollution from urban sources

Diffuse pollution from urban areas does not have a significant impact on this bathing water.

Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)

Marine waters are not at risk of cyanobacteria overproduction.

Algae

Current information suggests that this bathing water is not at risk of excessive growth of macroalgae (seaweed) or phytoplankton.

Jellyfish

There is a possibility of increased numbers of jellyfish in the water during summer months. Most species common to the UK are harmless. The Marine Conservation Society advises to 'look but don't touch'.

Responding to pollution incidents

Please call SEPA's 24 hour hotline (0800 80 70 60) to report pollution.

The local authority will erect signs to advise beach users of a pollution incident. Information will also be displayed on SEPA's website.

Beach cleaning and litter clean-up is maintained for this bathing water by The Highland Council. Beach users are encouraged to use the bins provided or to take litter home.

Contact details and information sources

SEPA Dingwall office Graesser House Fodderty Way Dingwall Business Park Dingwall IV15 9XB 01349 862021 www.sepa.org.uk	The Highland Council Glenurquhart Road Inverness IV3 5NX 01349 886606 service.point@highland.gov.uk www.highland.gov.uk	Keep Scotland Beautiful 01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org
Scottish Government Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters		

Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.0	May 2018	
1.1	April 2020	