



SAVE WETLANDS

Newsletter of the Citizens Committee To Complete The Refuge

Newsletter Issue 36

Fall 2006

Sunset over the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

This edition is a tribute to all we have accomplished in the past, and an appeal to each and every reader to continue to fight the good fight for environmental protection. Each and every one of us can make positive contributions but only if we continue to try.

Reflections

Come and stand at the Refuge Headquarters in Fremont on the hill looking west, and you will

see one of the most memorable sights on San Francisco Bay. Not because the sun sets the salt ponds aglow, nor because a myriad of stark white egrets stand at attention along the marsh edges, nor because a harbor seal lazes along looking up at you with curiosity, though all are there. No, it's because those sights were not wiped out by Leslie Salt Company's planned community for 65,000 people, just below the hill.

Look behind you and see massive development marching across the landscape, stopped only by the boundary of the refuge. You can stand in the midst of a peaceful oasis because of one thing--the work of a small band of people that met in the office of the Santa Clara County Planning Department in 1967 to participate in the dream of planner Arthur Ogilvie to establish a national wildlife refuge on San Francisco Bay.

With Congressman Don Edwards' enthusiastic reception and support of this idea, and the determination of us who met that day, the dream came reality in 1972. You witness the miracle accomplished by just a handful of ordinary people. And we did it all again in 1988 when another small group, 10 people this time, met around that symbol of environmental action--a dining room table--and decided to talk once again with congressman Edwards. This time we decried the continuing losses of marshlands and wildlife habitat, whereupon he used his legislative skills once again, to double the size of the refuge, with both democratic and republican support. Our bill passed into law in 1988, the first year it was submitted, another modern-day miracle.

Although it is repeated so often as to seem trite, it remains true--a small group with vision, devotion and persistence can work wonders. This refuge is a tribute to all who worked for it in the sixties, and again in the eighties, and all of you who continue to profoundly change the character of the south San Francisco Bay.

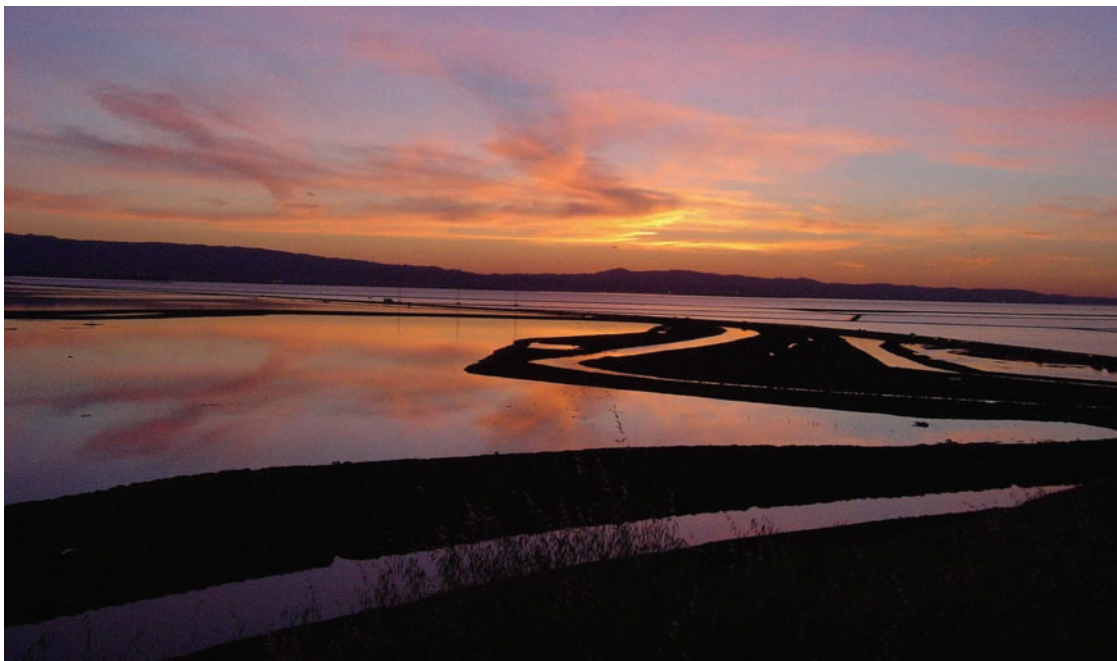


Photo Courtesy of Linda Patterson

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Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

By now you may have heard the story of how our wonderful Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge was created and its boundaries expanded. You might know the story of Bair Island and how a huge development was thwarted and precious wildlife habitat was preserved and added to our refuge. But do

you know what CCCR continues to do on behalf of wetlands and endangered species habitat? The following are some of the things we have been involved in during the past few years that affect not only local environmental protection but protection at the national level and beyond. It is clear that in order to protect this wonderful refuge and our bay ecosystems, we must be willing to speak out on issues that affect local, state and national regulations and policies as well.

- * We have taken an active interest in Clean Water Act (CWA) regulations and policies. We have responded to proposed changes in Corps regulations that affect the public's access to information regarding proposed permit actions, mitigation and monitoring policy, and the nationwide permit program. The nationwide permit program is due for reauthorization in the coming months and we believe if not properly conditioned, the nationwide permits can have significant and adverse impacts on wetlands and other waters of the United States and all who depend on them (including humans).
- * We regularly respond to Corps of Engineers Public Notices at the local and state level. For example, we worked long and hard with U.S. Fish and Wildlife staff to fight for a major project redesign on the 746-acre Catellus (Pacific Commons) project in Fremont, to protect several threatened and endangered species populations that occur on the site. We have commented on mitigation bank proposals in Solano, Santa Rosa, and Marin counties, and several Sunrise Douglas projects in Sacramento County which will decimate an important vernal pool complex.

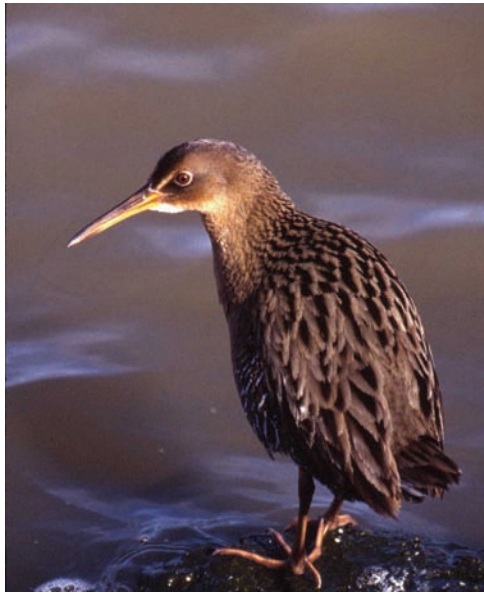


Photo courtesy of Katherine Rambo

- * We respond to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Negative Declarations and Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) such as the much flawed proposal for the San Luis Drain and the piece-mealing of many projects in the Merced area, an area that has the potential for tremendous losses of irreplaceable, large, and intact vernal pool communities.
- * CCCR is a member of the California Endangered Species and Habitat Alliance. We recently sent member Arthur Feinstein to southern California to speak on behalf of the Endangered Species Act before Secretary of the Interior Kempthorne at one of his "Listening Sessions." Arthur spoke on the need to preserve and strengthen the existing Endangered Species Act, not weaken it, as has been threatened during the last few years.
- * We have established a record of providing information regarding possible CWA violations to both the Corps and EPA, and we have been involved in Clean Water Act lawsuits. We have been fighting the unauthorized filling of waters of the U.S. in the Mowry Slough area of Fremont in the courts for years now. We await the court's decision on this latest round.
- * We continue to work hard to educate the public about how the health of the Bay and its wetlands impacts the quality-of-life for all bay area residents.
- * We continue to receive calls from throughout the bay area, the state, and from other countries, notably Japan and Venezuela, to assist their efforts to protect wetlands.

Our efforts are often the work of no more than an individual or handful of individuals. A single, dedicated person can have a tremendous positive influence that benefits us all. Please join us in our efforts to protect our remaining resources for future generations. Thank you for your continued support.



Goldfields

Photo courtesy of Carin High

Friends of Charleston Slough

Mountain View

Early county documents described Charleston Slough as the most productive tidal marsh in the South Bay. You can imagine our shock on one day in 1975, approaching the slough on the levee between Palo Alto and Mountain View, to find only an unbroken sheet of water! All that lush cordgrass marsh was completely inundated.

Thus began our detective career. What had happened? We learned that Leslie Salt, then owner of the 110-acre slough, had replaced the 60-inch pipe that carried tidal flows into and out of the slough with a smaller one, higher in the dike, and gated down to boot.

No proof, but it appeared that the duck club that leased the land was involved here, for an "improved" pond, and possibly the city of Mountain View, looking for a source of bay water for its Shoreline sailing lake.

At our insistence, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission issued a Cease and Desist order to Leslie, upon which Leslie promptly donated the pond to the city of Mountain View. That free gift produced expenses to the city that have amounted to quite a few million dollars in its efforts to comply with BCDC's order to restore some 55 acres of tidal marsh by a date long past.

For many years, the city was inactive until it installed the Alstom cylindrical control gate (1981). Tidal variations of just inches that were achieved prompted the city to inform BCDC that it appeared impossible to meet its permit conditions. Words like, "having gone the extra mile." and "good faith effort," left the slough essentially in its 1975 condition. That got us fired up to investigate what went on. We were resolved to get that slough restored or know the reason why!

We knew a flap gate that was intended to return water to the bay was not opening properly, but what we didn't know until much later was that when the Alstom construction cofferdams were pulled out, mud came flowing down, piling up on a concrete apron beneath the vital flap gate, sealing it securely evermore in the closed position. It was the workmen who had been on the scene that shared this information with us, graphically describing how they tried vainly to drive the mud back with fire hoses.

Many years later things improved when the Shoreline people learned from the Corps of Engineers about the Nekton free-flowing gates. Since their installation and opening to the tides in 1998, the tidal range in the slough is on target at several feet, and the increased flows have channelized the sheet flow waterway that we discovered in 1983.

The latest *Charleston Slough Monitoring Report No. 3, August 2005*, says in part the project is performing generally as expected and the restoration is progressing overall as planned, yet "Full biological monitoring of the plant communities has not yet begun because sedimentation has not yet progressed to a level which will bring about substantial changes in vegetation." At present the slough bottom shows little sign of emerging vegetation, while fringe area growths are creeping in, especially around the viewing platform at the inboard end of the slough.

These same sediments also have so damaged pump impellers that it has been necessary to design a major revamping of the system to provide periodic backflows to scour a channel to the pump.

The present permit calls for at least 30 acres of vegetated tidal marsh, including channels, by 2009. This a far cry from the 1980 BCDC requirement to restore 30 acres of tidal marsh within 7 years! That's why people have grown old and infirm during the life of this restoration.

So what has our involvement been with this long-running saga?

We applied pressure to reactivate a moribund effort to restore the slough, identified surveyors' errors and discrepancies, suggested improvements, and maintained constant vigilance over the slough and BCDC. As a result, today we see earnest measures being taken to restore this once-wonderful cordgrass marsh to its original glory.

Philip LaRiviere (650) 493-5540



Photo courtesy of Sam High

Save Wetlands in Mayhews (SWIM)

Newark

A MAYHEWS LANDING RETROSPECT

Another year has come to a close for the residents of Mayhews Landing. And a fine year it has been for the reptiles and rodents; for the foxes and raptors and the close-knit pheasant family. They hold no memories of the past; of the times when the sound of wind through the grasses was replaced by the growl of diesel engines as earth-moving machines tore through the marsh. Little did they know of the cold-hearted fear that pierced the hearts of ancestor salt marsh harvest mice and burrowing owls.

It was more than twenty years ago, in March of 1982, that the City of Newark planning commission approved an 876 unit condo development and golf course on Mayhews Landing. The humans who had daydreamed their way through biology and science classes were poised to convert a saltwater marsh to fresh. A general plan amendment had given the go-ahead for construction and the race was on to fill the marsh.

Conservation-minded folks objected to the lack of environmental documents. Federal and state agencies stepped in with public notices and consultations over endangered species. By 1982 the landowners, Albert J. Seeno and Ed DeSilva had been served with three Corps of Engineers Cease and Desist orders for unauthorized wetland fills. In official correspondence, the City of Newark called on the Corps to give its blessing to a golf course and condo development which would remove "a public nuisance" that Mayhews Landing had in their view become (a nice pickleweed marsh).

But all the clamor for development; all the pleading by

golfing aficionados; all the threats of impending community decay if Mayhews Landing was not paved forgot one very small and furry item. Salt marsh harvest mice, an endangered species lived in the marsh. The call for a survey of the mice had barely gone out when the developers brought out their retort in the form of bulldozers. A September 1985 morning that began with bird song ended with the sound of wildlife running for cover. Burrowing owl mounds were flattened. Pickleweed marsh was shredded and wetland channels filled with mud.

This marked the last great assault on the wetlands of Mayhews Landing. A federal order was given to restore the wetlands. Tide-gates were opened. Success was not immediate but gradually life returned to the marsh. The developers continued with efforts to build housing and city officials dreamed of wearing those funny pants and swatting at a small white ball. Reality, however, carried more weight. Calls for conserving wildlife habitat and open space at Mayhews Landing convinced the Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire the site as an important addition to the Don Edwards unit of San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

The family of grey foxes spends evenings hunting for voles. Gopher snakes seek relief from noonday heat in the shade of trees. The days of autumn bring the distant call of geese and ducks who will spend their winter in the channels and sloughs of Mayhews Landing. Spring brings the multi-voiced frog chorus. An old silo stands ready to be converted to bat habitat. Ever so slowly, Mayhews Landing is being transformed to benefit the residents it holds near and dear. They may not recall the nightmares of the past but they will remark on the changes of the future. ■

Margaret Lewis (510) 792-8291

Calls for conserving wildlife habitat and open space at Mayhews Landing convinced the Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire the site as an important addition to the Don Edwards unit of San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Photo courtesy of Linda Patterson



Tri-City Ecology Center

Fremont Union City Newark

The Ecology Center has been part of the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge since 1986. Most of the time we are looking ahead to the next challenge. However, to continue to work with optimism and enthusiasm, it is a good idea to look back and count your successes. Here are a few highlights:

1. The Warm Springs Seasonal Wetlands Unit was added to the Wildlife Refuge in 1992. These beautiful 255 acres of wetlands and vernal pools, at various times, were on the market for housing, a business park and a reliever airport. After acquisition, three endangered species were discovered on site. This is a glorious addition to the refuge.

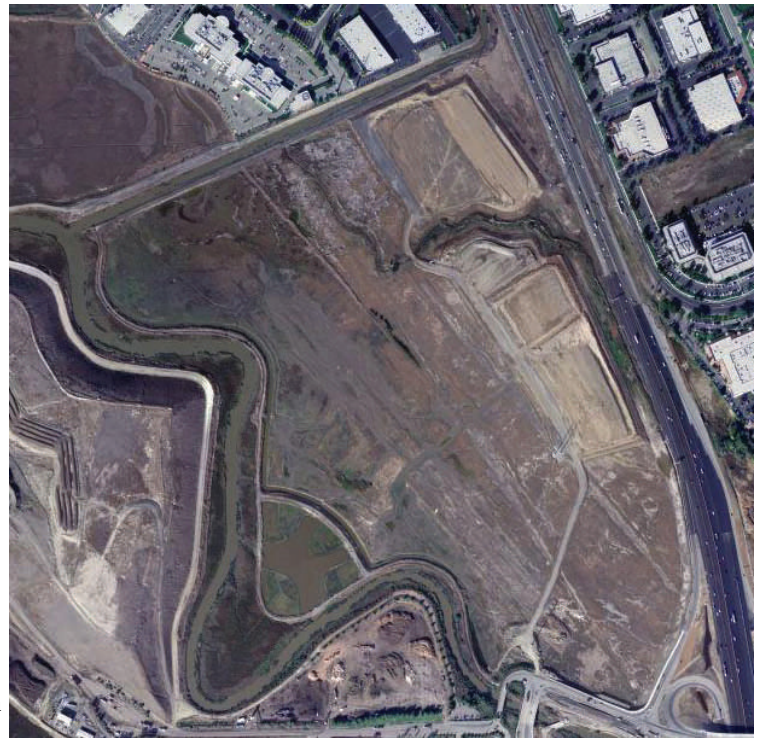
2. In 1998, Catellus Nature Preserve was set aside for inclusion into the refuge as part of the development agreement for Pacific Commons, a commercial development. Early negotiations (1992) with Catellus allowed only 50 acres of wetland preservation. After many meetings over a period of six years, the number rose to 390 acres.

3. Another project in the works is the King & Lyons' (K&L) Bayside Business Park II. This 150-acre site contained scattered wetlands throughout as well as a private airport. Upon completion, this unique project will add about 100 acres to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (DESFBNWR) in south Fremont. Restoration on the property began in 1987 with the unusual agreement that commercial construction will not begin until all mitigation requirements are met and monitored for 5 years. In July 2006, the Corps signed off on the wetlands restoration effort. Groundbreaking may begin in 2007.

An added accomplishment has been the restoration of the neighboring "mouse pasture" (immediately north of the K&L property). The salt marsh harvest mouse (SMHM) from the above site have been transferred to this area and are thriving.



Grey fox family at Mayhews Photo courtesy of Wayne Miller



King & Lyons Bayside Business Park II

Photo courtesy of USGS via TerraServer USA at: <http://terraserver-usa.com/image.aspx>

None of these "successes" would have been possible without the many people who attended meetings, wrote letters, commented on EIRs, documented threatened sites and talked to their local officials. Our thanks go out to all of you.

The 428-acre Patterson Ranch in south Fremont is adjacent to the East Bay Regional Park District's (EBRPD) Coyote Hills Regional Park and near the refuge. It contains 88-acres of wetlands and a willow grove near Patterson Slough. Development of the site was proposed in 1983 and again in 2000. The current attempt to develop began in 2004 and is ongoing. A development plan was submitted to the City of Fremont in June 2006; it includes 284 acres of publicly owned open space and 800 residences.

In March 2006, "The North Fremont Rezoning to Agriculture Initiative" was submitted to the city by the Friends of Coyote Hills and Fremont (FCHF). It impacted a 500-acre area that included the Patterson Ranch and Cargill's Fremont Coyote Tract. The voters' decision will be reported in the next issue of the Newsletter.

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Friends of Redwood City

Redwood City

Fate smiled on the Friends of Redwood City in the form of the last year's stunning measure "Q" referendum victory and in an associated unanticipated but timely group membership renaissance.

Measure "Q" in effect posed the question: does a need for housing justify approval of an incredibly badly planned urban project having 23 significant unmitigable EIR identified impacts? The "Marina Shores Village" project consisted of 17 condominium skyscrapers of heights up to 240 feet on an isolated 45 acre Bay front peninsula across a narrow slough channel from the Bair Island wildlife refuge and directly in the landing pattern of the County Airport.

Unanimous City Council approval and support of the entire political, civic and development power structures notwithstanding the voters in their wisdom answered with a resounding "No," despite a deceptively worded ballot and an astounding 20 to 1 campaign spending ratio.

The group which coalesced to put the referendum on the ballot and then win the ensuing David and Goliath victory was composed mostly of new people but also included all active members of Friends of Redwood City from the 1982 battle that saved Bair Island. So it was natural that after the victory we coalesced into a newly invigorated Friends of Redwood City.

It was realized early in the campaign that in view of our City's reputation for never having seen a major development proposal it didn't like (recent example: Marina Shores Village), that the referendum was in effect a prelude to a looming contest over the future of the Redwood City Cargill salt ponds. It is expected that a new Foster City-sized urban development will be proposed for that area. Although both the City and Cargill deny the existence of such plans, compelling evidence indicates the contrary.

Unseating entrenched well-funded incumbents, particularly in a "group think" governed city such as ours, is difficult, but we hope to do just that.

It is truly remarkable what can be accomplished by a small group of dedicated motivated people. The core of FORC comprises less than a dozen people, about the same as the original group that saved Bair Island back in 1982.

Our talented measure "Q" campaign manager, Cathy Moyer, is in the early stages of launching a California trail construction/ maintenance organization like the highly effective, useful and popular volunteer trail crews of Colorado, New Mexico and other western states. Such an organization could be a great boon for our funding-starved wildlife refuges, parks and open space preserves.

Ralph Nobles (650) 365-0675

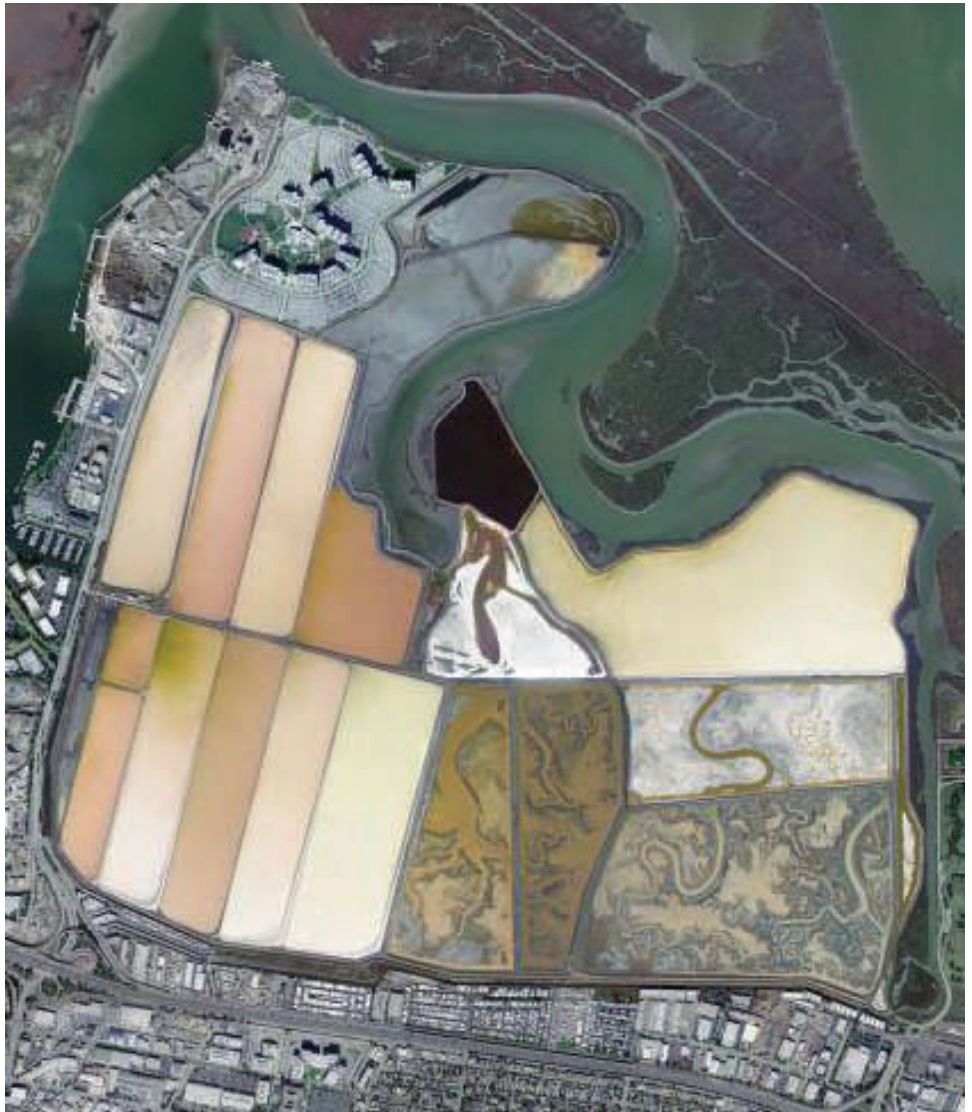


Photo courtesy of USGS via TerraServer USA at: <http://terraserver-usa.com/image.aspx>

Save our South Bay Wetlands

Alviso

Sunnyvale

A small group of wetlands activists formed Save Our South Bay Wetlands (SOSBW), an affiliate the Citizens Committee to Complete the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, in an attempt to protect seasonal wetlands in the south bay. The intrepid members of this group were Glenn Rogers, Dan Shattuck, Ginny Becchine, Kevin and Barbara Monahan, and I.

The County of Santa Clara owned a parcel of land about 100 acres in size at the intersection of Highway 237 and Lawrence Expressway in Sunnyvale which they hoped to “develop” into a park in conjunction with the City of Sunnyvale.

There were in fact jurisdictional wetlands on the site according to the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE), however, vigilant groups such as SOSBW must monitor sites such as this to make sure that jurisdictional determinations by the COE are respected and enforced lest the wetlands be accidentally plowed under by a bulldozer. The city and the county in their haste to “improve” the habitat only mother nature knows how to make, were inclined to gloss over the wetlands issue.

SOSBW participated in the Environmental Impact Report that was prepared for the site. We attended many County Park Department meetings, County Board of Supervisors meetings, Sunnyvale City Council meetings, and Sunnyvale Park Department meetings. We literally had to teach and educate these entities about the true value and function of the seasonal wetlands on the site. Sunnyvale thought that a lake was the equivalent of seasonal wetlands.

Sunnyvale wanted barbecue pits, horseshoe pits, and grass to play on. There are many lighted softball fields directly adjacent to the Sunnyvale Baylands Park at Twin Creeks. The Park was to be the recreation area after softball games.

SOSBW was key in seeing that the seasonal wetlands were preserved, and that some of the planned improvements were reduced. We made the lake go away, too!

Tom Espersen (408) 720-1955

Baylands and Creeks of South San Francisco Bay: A Publicly Accessible Map Reveals the Landscape and Cultural Context for Restoration

The restoration of South San Francisco Bay involves re-establishing a diverse range of wetland habitats to create a resilient, functional South Bay Landscape. Yet many of the individual habitats of interest have not been seen within the region in significant size for generations. As a result, information about landscape-level patterns -- such as habitat mosaics, subregional variation, and the relationship between Baylands and watersheds -- has been limited.

As part of the Oakland Museum of California's *Creek and Watershed Map Series*, we produced a foldout, poster-size, double-sided map synthesizing geographic, ecological, and historical information about the South Bay past and present. One side presents new wetlands mapping of the South Bay below Dumbarton Point conducted by SFEI as part of the National Wetlands Inventory. The map also includes recent mapping of creeks, storm drains, and watersheds by William Lettis and Associates, and extensive place name annotation.

The reverse side of the map, titled “South Bay Landscape through Time,” presents the South Bay circa 1850 and explores the changing human relationship to the South Bay Baylands since European contact. The map provides a view of the complex patterns of tidal channel networks and marsh pannes

that emerge within large tidal marshlands. These data were compiled from precise historical maps by the United States Coast Survey. The map also illustrates tribal regions, Ohlone shellmounds, 19th-century commercial landings, historical place names, and adjacent creeks and willow groves.

Since successful restoration of the South Bay will also involve restoring cultural connections to this largely unfamiliar landscape, the map explores the ways that people in the South Bay have intimately interacted with this broad transitional environment between dry land and open bay. We illustrate how particular tidal channels became corridors for commerce, the remarkable shellmounds of the Bay shore, waterfowl hunting in the “sloughs,” and the expansion of salt harvest from a small-scale traditional activity to an industrial operation. The map is available at local environmental education centers and through the Oakland Museum at:

www.museumca.org/creeksmaps.html
(just click on the order button)

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Citizens For Alameda's Last Marshlands

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."

Margaret Mead

In 1994 a group of concerned citizens began to monitor the City of Alameda's negotiations related to the closing of the Alameda Naval Air Station, and in particular the airfield where a colony of endangered California least terns have been nesting for 40 years. The City of Alameda wanted to surround the nest site with upscale houses. The struggle to save the nesting site of this endangered species was a battle that went on for months, then years.

Finally, it was decided that 565 acres of the airfield would be transferred from the Navy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the Navy cleans up its hazardous waste sites on the airfield. To date the clean up and transfer have not occurred, but the USFWS is managing the 565 acres for the least terns, and the off shore breakwater for brown pelicans and harbor seals.

In the meantime a group of citizen volunteers formed Friends of Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR) to promote the establishment of a National Wildlife Refuge for the terns and pelicans. FAWR is playing an important role in maintaining a weed control program within the nesting area on a monthly basis when the terns are not in residence. FAWR gathers driftwood along the Alameda shoreline to spread around the nest site to give the appearance of a beach. Oyster shells have also been acquired to enhance this area. One FAWR member constructed many small A-frame structures called "tern chalets" as shelters for the tern chicks.

Through FAWR's efforts, school children from the cities of Alameda and Oakland have received educational information concerning the importance of preserving and protecting our natural resources. Field trips to explore portions of the 565 acre tern habitat have been enjoyed by these children.

In the late 1980's a group of concerned citizens fought to save wetlands along the San Leandro shoreline in the area of the famous Roberts Landing. The housing development plan was to fill wetlands on land over which the State Lands Commission had jurisdiction. Citizens for Alameda's Last Marshlands (CALM) played an important role in determining the wetlands were not suitable for housing as most of the area had been the site of the Trojan Powder Factory and hazardous wastes remained.

The developer attempted to discredit the hazardous waste issue, but CALM members pursued the facts, and in turn were threatened with a lawsuit. In the end the developer had to spend over one million dollars for hazardous waste clean up. Much to our dismay, housing was eventually allowed on 92 acres of the 450 acre wetlands site.

Since 1971 citizens have been involved with public agencies in preserving and protecting the Hayward shoreline and its wetlands. A fine shoreline trail allows the public to enjoy the views of the San Francisco Bay and the beauty of the natural areas along the trail.

Frank and Janice Delfino (510) 537-2387

Baylands Conservation Committee

Palo Alto East Palo Alto Menlo Park

It takes constant vigilance to preserve the vision and reality of our precious baylands

The Baylands Conservation Committee and its predecessor, Save the Marsh Committee, were instrumental in local Baylands Protection.

In 1962 our earliest members, the Save the Marsh Committee, were appalled by a Santa Clara County plan for the South Bay that included a large convention center, hotels, restaurants, tennis courts, a community college and a Seaside Resort - all to be built on tidal marshlands. This so-called "Three Fingered Lake Plan" called for diking off the South Bay at the Dumbarton Narrows. Our group and others successfully got the County to shelve that plan. But it prompted the City of Palo Alto to designate our 600-acre Flood Basin primarily for Flood Control and secondarily for wildlife conservation - effectively squelching

any more urban plans for that area.

In 1964, the City of Palo Alto built the first Baylands Interpretive Center on San Francisco Bay. In 1965, Palo Alto voters, led by Enid Pearson, passed our Park Dedication Initiative. Almost all of the Palo Alto Baylands were dedicated as parkland in that year. Within a few short years, our baylands were written up in the New York Times as one of 30 places to visit if travelers found themselves with an extra day in San Francisco.

Also in the 1960's, Utah Construction and Mining started posting signs along the Palo Alto bayfront saying that they had patents on the wetlands. Enid Pearson, who was then on the Palo Alto City

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Baylands Conservation Committee

Palo Alto East Palo Alto Menlo Park

(Continued from page 8)



California least tern Photo courtesy of USFWS

Council, brought this to the attention of her colleagues, who promptly took action to protect Palo Alto's ownership of this saltmarsh area.

In the mid-70's Santa Clara County, which had leased the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor, proposed a major expansion of the harbor and a costly dredging. This is when the Baylands Conservation Committee (BCC) was formed from the Save the Marsh Committee nucleus. Over the years millions of dollars had been spent dredging for this 108-berth harbor. Over 200,000 cubic yards of mud had been hydraulically dredged and pumped to the Faber tract. Ten acres of cordgrass marsh in the harbor itself were dredged up and deposited on 10 acres of the Palo Alto airport site. Twenty acres of wetlands lost in one operation!

The Baylands Conservation Committee asked hard scientific and financial questions. As a consequence, the 1975 dredging plan was significantly scaled back. Most important, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission required that there be a Master Plan for the Palo Alto Baylands before any further dredging would be approved. A group called the Palo Alto Harbor Association bought a beat-up old dredge which was named the EmilieR, and there were lots of accusations when WE reported to THEM that their dredge was sinking. We were accused of puncturing the 50 gallon drums that floated this wreck. When the engine died, we were accused of putting iron filings in the oil. When the yacht club left an unattended barbecue that set fire to the club deck, we were accused of that also.

BCC participated in the Baylands Master Plan process, and as a result it became apparent that the harbor was not viable, primarily because the County was not willing to pay for any more dredging. The boat owners, not wanting to lose their harbor, TWICE circulated initiatives that would have required the City to maintain the Yacht Harbor. BCC TWICE defeated these initiatives and in the mid-1980's the Yacht Harbor was closed. The berths were towed away to a harbor in the Delta (certain members of BCC watched the berths being towed out during a twilight picnic shared with the local Norway rats).

The public scarcely noticed this change as the harbor had been largely inactive.

Other decisions that came out of the Master Plan included scaling back the grandiose airport plans, new public access, a sailing station (now used by windsurfers), and restoration to tidal marsh of an 11 acre dredged spoil disposal site on Yacht Harbor Point. Our member, Helen Proctor, designed native landscaping for this hitherto neglected area, and it now provides a beautiful environment for all visiting the Baylands.

Also during the 1980s, the Santa Clara Valley Water District proposed building a new levee that would have wiped out 43 acres of wetland inside the Palo Alto Flood Basin. Our Swamp Physicist, Phil LaRiviere, provided enough scientific testimony that the City Council hired the firm of Lindsley Kraeger Associates to make an independent hydrologic analysis of the potential for flooding in the area. As a result, a much more modest, but adequate solution was found by simply raising the bicycle path along the frontage road, with no loss of wetlands.

Our members gathered over 8,000 signatures for a statewide initiative to provide funds for wetlands acquisition. Each thousand signatures represented about a million dollars for wetlands.

BCC also participated in a project proposed by the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant to use treated sewage water to restore marsh in the 150 acre ITT property, a somewhat neglected seasonal wetland. This area now supports freshwater marsh and also has a separate area managed for the endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. This property has been renamed the Emily Renzel Wetlands.

In the 1990's our member Betsy Peterson and her husband Pete left their entire estate of \$1.5 million for wetlands acquisition and it was used to help purchase Bair Island.

Most recently BCC was very active in opposing an industrial garbage processing plant proposed by Palo Alto city staff for Byxbee Hill parkland. In February the City Council voted to kill the project.

We have testified before the City Council and Planning Commission many times on projects proposed in the Palo Alto Baylands. Ongoing are issues of Zero Waste, photovoltaic tracking panels, a proposed automall on the 13-acre Municipal Services Center site, and one Councilmember's idea to reconfigure the golf course to gain space for more playing fields and to build a boutique hotel.

It takes constant vigilance to preserve the vision and reality of our precious baylands

Emily Renzel (650) 321-4165

The Uneasy Chair



Salt pond appraisal:

The California Office of Real Estate Appraisers (OREA) recently held hearings seeking to suspend or remove the license of one appraiser who helped write the appraisal which was relied upon by federal and state agencies in the purchase of 16,500 acres of Cargill Salt lands in 2003. The other appraiser on the same report settled the license charges brought by OREA for \$4000 and a public reproof on his record. The final hearing argument briefs were due until the 17th of November, after which the results will be released by OREA.

The OREA accusation named multiple violations of required professional standards resulting in an over-valuation of the property. OREA questioned the independence of the appraisers and their selection of a market for the property.

The Citizens Committee has supported the work of John Hansen in pursuing the problems with this appraisal. Our ability to acquire the lands appropriate for the preservation of our precious resources is jeopardized by the fraudulent values and prices paid on these bogus appraisals.

Bison Range:

After one year of the agreement between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes, the shared management of the National Bison Range in Montana has proved to be far less than satisfactory. Our Freedom of Information Act request verified this conclusion and revealed events on the refuge that were extremely detrimental to the wildlife resources. We are continuing to address this problem with the hierarchy of the Department of the Interior.

Refuges:

The Blue Goose Alliance is a national group made up of upper management retirees of the Fish and Wildlife Service and others interested in our wildlife refuges. Its goal is independence for the refuge system under the Department of the Interior, but with separate status as a land management agency. I remain a member of the board directors. Checkout the web site: <http://www.bluegoosealliance.org/>

Mowry Dump:

In 1996 we joined with BayKeeper to bring suit against Cargill

Salt over its illegal dump on the Mowry Slough levee. We got two summary judgements in our favor, but with Cargill's repeated appeals, our faithful pro bono attorneys have not been paid one cent.

Toroges Creek:

In 1998, the city council of Fremont voted unanimously to permit a golf course in the hills that would allow scraping off hilltops to fill 2,990 feet of Toroges Creek to a depth of 75 feet, terminating in a 300-foot spillway.

We made a gallant and heartbreaking effort to see this project modified, to no avail. A frustrating, financially, and emotionally draining series of mediation meetings were terminated with the State Water Board approving the project. In spite of all this, no ground has been turned as yet.

Our attorney Roy Gorman found this process utterly demoralizing. Roy had law and justice on his side, however, the Board voted with the comment, "lots of people will have fun playing on this golf course."

On another note, congratulations to Don and Edie:

Finally, to end on a joyous note we send our congratulations and love to Don and Edie Wilkie Edwards on their 25th wedding anniversary. This refuge has been blessed to have the warm, enthusiastic, and generous encouragement and support of these two in a way that is unmatched anywhere. We send them our deepest thanks, congratulations, and especially our love!

And Now For Some Fun Facts:

The National Wildlife Refuge on San Francisco Bay was a pioneering venture in many ways, establishing these refuge "firsts":

First "Friends" group, started circa 1967, established the SFBNWR in 1971. Group still in action today!

First urban NWR, many other urban refuges followed (Philadelphia, New Orleans, Denver, Portland, etc.)

First and greatest Environmental Education Program, centered out of EE Center in Alviso

First extensive use of a Volunteer Program, now an extensive program nationwide.

First established refuges for the recovery of several endangered species:

For plants: Antioch Dunes NWR (Antioch Dunes Evening Primrose, Contra Costa Wallflower)

For an insect: Antioch Dunes NWR (Lange's metalmark butterfly)

For an amphibian: Ellicott Slough NWR (Santa Cruz Long-toed salamander)

Small wonder that, with a record like that, we have launched a group of employees who have spread their wings in a multitude of ways and places:

Tom Harvey, Manager of Stone Lakes NWR

Louise Vicencio, biologist at the Napa Land Trust

Roy Lowe, Manager, Oregon Coast NWR Complex
 Doug Roster, Deputy Manager at Nisqually NWRC
 Mike Parker, manager of Red Rock Lakes NWR
 Kevin Foerster, manager of Sacramento NWRC
 Sheila McCartan, ORP at Nisqually NWRC
 John Steiner, a tenured prof. at Alameda College
 Linda Drey Nightingale, Bay area educator
 Debbie Johnston, Environmental Services for Fort Lewis
 Steve Lewis, maintenance staff at Humboldt NWR
 Fran Maiss, Deputy at Klamath NWRC
 Marge Kolar, Regional Chief of Refuges for CA/NV
 Steve Berendzen, Refuge Supervisor for Utah, Wyoming, Montana
 Dick Munoz, Manager of SE Idaho NWRC
 Matt Gay, went on to NCTC
 Sandy Spakoff went on to NCTC
 Janet Ady, who together with Matt and Sandy, runs all environmental education training at NCTC
 Walt Stieglitz, Regional Director for Alaska (ret)
 Jim Ferrier, zone law enforcement officer, NC
 Jean Takekawa, Refuge Manager, Nisqually NWR (Washington)
 Rick Coleman, Regional Chief of Refuges, Region 6, Rocky Mt./Prairie Region
 Bart McDermott, Deputy, Seedskadee NWR (Wyoming)
 Marc Webber, Manager, Muscatatuck NWR (Indiana)
 Harvey Hill, Manager, Roanoke River NWR (N. Carolina)

ps: A personal thank you to Nancy Kittle and John Hart for including the Citizens Committee in their beautiful Sierra Club book, "LEGACY--Portraits of 50 Bay Area Environmental Elders." It isn't complete without Janice and Frank Delfino and Carolyn and Ralph Nobles, but next time...F.
Florence M. LaRiviere (650) 493-5540

Please help us to carry on!

There is no other all-volunteer group on the Bay that has worked so diligently to keep our remaining wetlands in their natural state and to fight for the preservation and restoration of others in every case possible.

We have brought about the public acquisition of thousands of acres of Bay wetlands for the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. **But** — there are many more sites to be obtained, namely the 1,400-acre Cargill ponds at Redwood City, and the eastshore ponds covering 9,700 acres, 7,000 acres of which are publicly owned but remain in salt production. Other lands in need of restoration include Patterson Ranch, Fremont Coyote, and the Whistling Wings and Pintail duck clubs on Mowry Slough.

So, we know times are hard, but if you are able, we would appreciate receiving your tax-free contribution of any amount. You know we have no paid employees and no office rental expense. Virtually all the monies received go to productive wetlands work. It has been said that we get more work done with less money than any other conservation organization on the Bay. Long live the Committee!

You continue to be wonderfully supportive.

We appreciate your continued generosity.

You have kept us going for the 21

years of our existence. Thank you!

Remember our pledge...

- We ask for contributions just twice a year through our newsletter.
- We will not share our membership data base with anyone.
- We will not bother you at dinner time or any other time regarding money.



Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Here is my contribution to help preserve our wetlands:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$ _____

I would like to help by writing letters to save wetlands. Please put me on the WETLANDS ALERT mailing list.
 Please add me to an e-mail ACTION ALERT LIST. My e-mail address is _____.

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to CCCR and mail your check and this form to the Committee at 453 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Thank you for your support — you make it all possible!



Antioch dunes evening primrose Photo courtesy of USFWS

JOIN A LOCAL GROUP!

Baylands Conservation Committee
Palo Alto, E. Palo Alto, Menlo Park
Emily Renzel 1056 Forest Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301 (650) 321-4165

Citizens for Alameda's Last Marshlands (CALM) Hayward, Oakland, San Leandro
Pat Anthony 111 Santa Teresa
San Leandro, Ca 94578 (510) 483-1782

Citizens for Open Space in Alvarado (COSA) Union City
Lynn Ragghianti 3250 Santa Isabela Court
Union City, CA 94587 (510) 489-4391

Friends of Charleston Slough
Mountain View
Philip LaRiviere 453 Tennessee Land
Palo Alto, CA 94306 (650) 493-5540

Friends of Foster City
Rick Baird 786 Crane
Foster City, CA 94404 (650) 574-1067

Friends of Redwood City
Ralph Nobles 3720 Country Club Drive
Redwood City, CA 94061 (650) 365-0675

Save Our South Bay Wetlands (SOSBW)
Alviso, San Jose, Santa Clara
Ginny Becchine 1046 Wright Avenue, Unit 1
Mountain View, CA 94043 (650) 968-4875
Tom Espersen 784 Danforth Terrace
Sunnyvale, CA 94087 (408) 720-1955

Save Wetlands in Mayhews (SWIM)
Newark
Margaret Lewis 36102 Spruce Street
Newark, CA 94560 (510) 792-8291

Tri-City Ecology Center
Fremont, Union City, Newark
Donna Olsen 37890 Alta Drive
Fremont, CA 94536 (510) 797-2755

Whistling Wings/Pintail Duck Clubs
Newark
Wally Peters 13493 Montfort Road
Herald, CA 95638

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Save Wetlands is the semi-annual Newsletter of the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge, an all-volunteer nonprofit public benefit corporation.

The mission of the Committee is to save the Bay's remaining wetlands by working to place them under the protection of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and to foster worldwide education regarding the value of all wetlands.

Support is welcome from anyone interested in saving wetlands, for which a tax-deductible contribution of \$10 per issue would be appreciated.

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