

watershed

Targeting Trash to Save the Bay

We've come a long way since San Francisco Bay was rimmed by active garbage dumps. We no longer take our spectacular Bay for granted ... or do we?

Most of us do our part to keep our local environment healthy. Bay Area towns are often found on *National Geographic's* list of America's ten greenest cities. So it's surprising to note that in one of America's greenest regions, we have work to do, and that is to stop the trashing of our beautiful Bay.

Did you know that, on average, you can find **three** pieces of trash along **every** foot of streams that lead to the Bay, and that garbage currently smothers many shoreline marshes? Because much of this trash isn't biodegradable, it's going to be here for awhile. It's awful to look at, but more than an eyesore, it's a clear and present danger to Bay wildlife. Trash interferes with Bay

wetlands and fish habitat, entangling animals and poisoning wildlife that eat plastic.

Save The Bay's **Keep It Clean!** pollution prevention campaign is tackling trash pollution. Last year our online survey underscored how people's daily actions pollute the Bay. This spring's ambitious advertising campaign on BART and Muni, featuring Bay animals turning the tables on human polluters, showed tens of thousands of Bay Area residents how they can make the Bay healthier.

Save The Bay is working to give cities the tools to reduce Bay pollution by pushing for new storm water permit requirements that will reduce runoff trash flowing into the Bay. Increasing public awareness, media attention, shoreline cleanups and monitoring "hot spots" of trash are all helping build the support needed to secure a strong permit this fall.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Inside this issue

- *Volunteers help restore oyster and eelgrass populations*
- *Save The Bay Director honors founding members*
- *Join our fall Bay events*

Visit our Web site saveSFbay.org

- *Become a Save The Bay member*
- *Join the Bay Savers Email Action Network*
- *Sign up to volunteer with us and for exciting Discover The Bay outings*



Volunteers Pitch In to Help Restore the Bay's Dwindling Native Oyster and Eelgrass Populations

“Can we eat the Bay’s oysters?” volunteers often ask Marilyn Latta, Save The Bay’s Habitat Restoration Director. Her answer: “if we restore enough habitat and also clean up the Bay, then hopefully some day we can.”

The native Olympia oyster, *Ostrea conchaphila*, was once abundant in estuaries along the west coast of North America. But loss of habitat, over-harvesting and degraded water quality have severely depleted native oyster populations in San Francisco Bay, reducing a once-dominant local fishery to a few scattered populations.

“Being able to eat the Bay’s oysters someday would be icing on the cake, but many people don’t realize that restoring the native oyster population is vital to the health of the Bay ecosystem,” says Latta.

Oysters play an important ecological role as filter feeders, taking phytoplankton from the water column, transferring nutrients to Bay sediments, and increasing water clarity. The loss of oyster beds has caused a cascading series of impacts to Bay food webs.

Now, because of a unique collaboration among academics, non-profit groups, government agencies and volunteers, bringing back a healthy oyster population to the Bay is becoming more of a possibility.

Throughout the summer, several ecologically-minded volunteers helped San Jose State University graduate student Sumudu Welaratna and Save The Bay monitor Bay oyster populations. Hanging out on sunny Bay docks for the afternoon, the volunteers checked for oyster settlement on various installed surfaces submerged in the Bay. They were thrilled to find oysters settling at

restoration sites in Palo Alto and South San Francisco.

This project, which involves Save The Bay, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, San Jose State University, University of California at Davis, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Coastal Conservancy and others, studies oyster settlements to determine the best techniques for future restoration.

Restoring Native Eelgrass

Like oysters, eelgrass is an underwater species that was once abundant in the Bay, but has significantly dwindled over the past 150 years from dredging and filling. Native eelgrass provides vital habitat for fish and invertebrates, part of the food chain that connects to shorebirds and marine mammals.

Since 2005, Save The Bay has partnered with Katharyn Boyer’s Lab at San Francisco State University’s Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies to pilot three techniques to restore eelgrass in the Bay: seed buoys that transplant seeds

from a donor site to a restoration bed, broadcast seeding, and frames that are used to transfer whole eelgrass plants.

This summer, wearing waders and trudging from the shoreline through shallow Bay water with clipboards in hand, community volunteers discovered that all three techniques are working to increase new establishment of seedlings underwater.

“Our oyster and eelgrass projects offer volunteers an opportunity to discover the life that dwells in the Bay, and play a direct role in improving Bay habitat. We are hopeful that we’ll continue to see success in the restoration of both of these fascinating subtidal species,” says Latta.

—Jessica Castelli



Photo: Doug Oakley

▲ Help restore native species to the Bay. Sign up at saveSFbay.org.

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Photo: Russ Juskalian

Standing on the Backs of Giants to Save the Bay

Founding Members Provide Invaluable Advocacy and Financial Support

Since our founding, Save The Bay has achieved so much because of the thousands of dedicated individuals who support us with advocacy and resources. My staff and I stand on the backs of giants, starting with three women who founded Save The Bay, to stop the Bay from being filled in and paved over, and tens of thousands of members who joined them.

Our “founding members” accomplished amazing feats without environmental protection laws, Bay regulatory agencies, charitable foundations or the public awareness about ecology we have today.

Incredibly, our current membership includes over 1,000 of these founding members who joined Save The Bay in the 1960s. We honor their dedication, passion and persistence annually with a tea, always a highlight of my year. I’m proud to be a product of founding members—my parents joined in the 1960s in Palo Alto.

This year’s tea honored founding member John Sutter for his work leading Save The Bay in our very early days, and

for helping to create shoreline parks as a member of East Bay Regional Park District’s board of directors.

We are also proud that many founding members have told us now that they will continue supporting us with a planned gift in the future, so we can acknowledge and thank them today. Bequests from members help ensure that our organization will continue to be a strong force not just now, but for many more decades.

Over the years, Save The Bay has grown support from corporations, foundations and government contracts. But our members’ dues, gifts and bequests are the backbone of advocacy, restoration and education programs.

We are fortunate to still have a healthy Bay and spectacular wetlands that we use as a living classroom for students and adults. The generous support of founding and new members inspires us to tackle the challenging work still before us to make the Bay healthier.

Thank you!




Photo: Russ Juskaian

▲ David Lewis,
Executive Director

“It was so very easy to write in Save The Bay as a beneficiary of our estate plan after many years of annual gifts. It only makes sense that our estate would recognize how important Save The Bay has been to us and I can think of no better legacy for our children.”

—Jody London

For information on making a bequest to Save The Bay, contact Janine Kraus at 510-452-9261 x106 or Janine@saveSFbay.org.

Targeting Trash

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Trash dumping and littering is still startlingly common, and Bay Area creeks feature everything from diapers to couches. Heavy rains wash it all into the Bay. At a recent Yosemite Slough shoreline cleanup near Candlestick Park, Save The Bay volunteers removed nearly 3,500 pounds of trash! Trash pollution has global ramifications. In the Pacific Ocean, sailors have

discovered a floating garbage patch, twice the size of Texas, that’s full of plastic from all over the world. “Researchers claim this area contains six times more plastic than plankton,” notes Save The Bay Policy

Associate Athena

Honore. Locally, all of us can help tackle this problem by stashing our trash, picking up trash in our neighborhoods and signing up for volunteer cleanups.

—Marguerite Sprague



Tell the Regional Water Board

to approve strong trash control measures that will dramatically reduce trash flows to the Bay over the next several years.

Visit saveSFbay.org/action to send your message to the Water Board.

You can also sign up to help us clean up and restore the Bay at www.saveSFbay.org.

▲ Save The Bay’s recent ad campaign educated residents about how they could help reduce Bay pollution.

NEWSLETTER INSIDE

Sign up online for Save
The Bay's volunteer
restoration and Discover
The Bay events at
[saveSFbay.org/
bayevents](http://saveSFbay.org/bayevents)



Photo courtesy of Russ Juskalian

bay events

- **September 15—Coastal Cleanup Day at Eden Landing in Hayward and Bair Island in Redwood City** (cleanup by canoe). Help restore former salt ponds by cleaning up trash along the shoreline at Eden Landing, or help remove trash and non-native plants as we canoe along Bair Island.
 - **October 13—Down the Drain! Water Treatment Plant Tour and Canoe Outing in Palo Alto.** After an interesting tour of the treatment plant, learn how you can help keep the Bay clean as we paddle through the beautiful marshes of the Palo Alto Baylands. This easy canoe trip is good for the whole family.
 - **October 20—Autumn Canoe Trip on the Cosumnes River** near Thornton, Central Valley. Enjoy the fall colors and view sandhill cranes while paddling with naturalists from the Cosumnes River Preserve and Save The Bay on the last undammed river that flows to the Bay. No experience is necessary for this moderate canoe trip.
 - **November 3—Birds of the Delta Cruise in Antioch.** Join us for a day of exploring the Delta's islands and winding waterways as we look for winter migrating birds. This is a full-day comfortable boat excursion.
- Sign up online at saveSFbay.org.

Educating the Next Generation of Bay Savers

Service Learning about the Bay...on the Bay

Attention teachers, parents and students!

Save The Bay offers middle and high school students fun, standards-aligned educational field trips, including our on-the-water Canoes In Sloughs program and our wetland restoration projects. For over ten years, Save The Bay's

award-winning Watershed Education Program has engaged students with San Francisco Bay, the natural treasure that defines our region. To learn more and to sign up, visit our Web site at saveSFbay.org/education or call Alicia Moore at 510-452-9261 x 125.