

# Watershed

The Newsletter of Save The Bay  
Summer 2001



## Protect the Bay from Fill and Pollution

**W**e love the Bay that makes our home so special. From its beautiful vistas and thrilling sailing to its quiet marshes and bustling harbors, the Bay offers something special to everyone. But the Bay is already one-third smaller because of shoreline development and fill, and its fish, wildlife, and water quality have become severely degraded. Continuing pollution from runoff, and the looming threat of more massive fill, challenge us to protect what remains of the Bay.

Save The Bay has worked for decades to protect the Bay from pollution and landfill. We owe the Bay that survives today to tens of thousands of Bay Area citizens who were mobilized

*continued on page 4*

# SAVE THE BAY

Save San Francisco Bay Association

## 10 Things You Can Do...

**E**ach of us can help protect San Francisco Bay's health by reducing pollution in the air and on the land that washes into the Bay. Minimizing pollution from our cars, households, and gardens can significantly contribute to a cleaner Bay. See the "Ten Things You Can Do" inside, and share these actions with your friends and family.

Hundreds of fish, birds, and other animals call the Bay home, and a healthy Bay is vital to our economy, tourism, climate, and quality of life. Protecting the Bay from pollution and unnecessary fill is a responsibility for all of us. You can help Save The Bay encourage responsible stewardship of the Bay and its watershed to keep it healthy for all of us and for the future.

## Save The Bay Prescribes CPR for The Bay

**F**or the health of our beautiful but beleaguered Bay, celebration, protection, and restoration are the best prescription. Our last issue of *Watershed* underscored why the Bay is worthy of celebration and affection. Save The Bay is supported by thousands of Bay lovers, from the Bay Area, from all fifty states, and even from several European countries. Once touched by the grandeur and variety of our remaining blue open space, many people continue to celebrate the Bay long after they've moved elsewhere.

But nearly seven million people now live in the Greater Bay Area. Many are newcomers to our cities, suburbs, and shores. The hectic pace of life in the Bay Area, the ever-increasing transportation pressures, and population clusters located further away from the edge of the Bay, mean fewer residents have the opportunity to experience the delight and wonder that the Bay still offers generously to those who know where to look for it.

Celebration is the purpose of our newest Save The Bay program, "Discover The Bay," which will introduce Bay residents to our region's number-one natural treasure: the Bay itself. Through guided walks on the shoreline and canoe trips on the Bay, lively lectures, and other exciting public events, we'll introduce thousands more Bay residents to the Bay's splendor. By experiencing the Bay directly, they too can celebrate that which makes the Bay Area such a special place to live.

This issue of *Watershed* examines the need to protect the Bay against pollution and the renewed threat of massive landfill. San Francisco Airport's proposal to fill the Bay raises again the very challenge that created Save The Bay 40 years ago – one we are meeting head-on. And



**David Lewis**

everyone can help to protect the Bay's complex, living ecosystem by taking individual actions, as we outline inside.

The autumn issue of *Watershed* will show how Save The Bay is working to restore tidal wetlands and habitat for endan-

gered species around the Bay, and how our many volunteers are bringing degraded wetlands back to life with their own hands and hard work on community projects around the Bay.

Celebrate, Protect, Restore: CPR for our beloved Bay.

**San Francisco Airport's proposal to fill the Bay raises again the very challenge that created Save The Bay 40 years ago.**

**Executive Director, Save The Bay**

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### Paddle With Save The Bay

**H**ave you ever seen salmon spawning, Sandhill cranes dancing or canoed under a full moon?

Come join other Save The Bay members and our field educators as we continue to explore unique ecosystems of the California Watershed from canoes. This fall we have scheduled trips on the Cosumnes and Feather Rivers and a special full-moon canoe paddle trip at Arrowhead Marsh.

#### October 6, Feather River, Oroville

Paddle the Feather River and observe Chinook salmon and Steelhead spawning in one of California's most impressive salmon runs. This adventurous paddle will take us through Oroville Wildlife Area as we navigate the gentle currents, bird-watch and enjoy fall settling over the riparian habitat. \$50.00 per person (including lunch) 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

#### October 30, Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland

Come trick or treating Save The Bay style. Join us at Arrowhead Marsh in Oakland for a twilight, full-moon paddle on Halloween Eve. Explore this magical, urban marsh from the safety of our canoes and enjoy the creatures that only come out at night. \$30.00 per person, 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

#### November 3, Cosumnes River, Lodi

Canoe the last undammed river in California and observe Sandhill cranes. Explore the Cosumnes River Preserve, an untouched, crucial riparian habitat and see what the Central Valley looked like before the Gold Rush. \$40.00 per person (including lunch) 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

#### Saturday Trips

Saturday, Sept. 8, 9:30 - 1:00  
Discover Suisun Bay through Goodyear Slough

Saturday, Sept. 22, 9:30 - 1:00  
Appreciating the Autumn Equinox on the Napa River

Saturday, Oct. 13, 9:30 - 1:00  
Paddle the Petaluma: One of the Estuary's largest marshes

Saturday, Nov. 17, 9:30 - 1:00  
Canoe around beautiful Bair Island

**Come Join Us! To register for trips call Josh Bagnato at 510/452-9261, or email [jbagnato@savesfbay.org](mailto:jbagnato@savesfbay.org).**

### Oyster Restoration in San Francisco Bay

**S**ave The Bay's Community-Based Restoration Program has begun an exciting new project studying the status of native oysters in the Bay. Over-harvesting and degraded water quality have depleted the native oyster (*Ostrea lurida*) population in San Francisco Bay, reducing a once dominant local fishery resource to a few scattered remnant populations.

Because oyster reef habitat functions as an essential bottom community in the Bay, this loss has caused a cascading series of impacts to Bay food webs. Save The Bay's project includes training volunteers to monitor water quality and other habitat requirements to determine the suitability of conditions for the native oyster at various locations within the Estuary.

To learn more about the restoration of native oysters and their history in San Francisco Bay, or if you would like to attend a workshop or volunteer day, or get information about scheduling a future workshop in your part of the Bay, please contact Save The Bay's Marilyn Latta at 510/452-9261 or email [mlatta@savesfbay.org](mailto:mlatta@savesfbay.org).

### A Voice on the Bay's Future BAY VOTE YES!

**S**an Franciscans will take to the polls on November 6th to decide whether or not SF sponsored Bay fill projects in excess of 100 acres should be subject to SF voter approval. Such decisions now rest with political appointees who have no accountability to the public. Approval of this amendment will ensure that future damage to the Bay will not occur without extensive public scrutiny. Contact Dirk Manskopf for more information at [dirk@savesfbay.org](mailto:dirk@savesfbay.org).

*continued from page 1*

## Protect the Bay from Fill and Pollution

by Save The Bay in the early 1960s. More than a century of diking and landfill, sewage and refuse had destroyed 95 percent of the fertile tidal wetlands supporting the Bay's food chain, and there were plans to fill in 60 percent of the remaining Bay. Save The Bay organized an outraged public to insist that the state create a new agency, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), to regulate fill in the Bay. Citizens stopped our national treasure from being filled in and paved over, and there has actually been a small net gain in the Bay's size over the last three decades.

San Francisco Bay looks and smells much cleaner than it did in the 1960s because of decades of work to clean up trash and raw sewage. But each year, 88 million pounds of pesticides and toxic chemicals drain into the Bay from roads, lawns, farms, construction sites, and abandoned mines. Parts of the Bay bottom are "hot spots," where decades of toxic sediment accumulated from mining, industry, and military bases is continually stirred up by the currents and tides. DDT, PCBs, and toxic heavy metals concentrate in the fish and birds that eat them, posing significant cancer risks to people who eat fish from the Bay.

And now the strong public consensus against shrinking the Bay is being challenged by a handful of political appointees in San Francisco, who propose to move the San Francisco airport runways miles further into the Bay on 1,400 acres or more of new landfill. The project's pollution would be devastating, a stunning reversal of decades without adding massive new fill to the Bay. In the last fifteen years, BCDC has approved fewer than one hundred acres of new fill throughout the Bay. The largest

single fill project in the last thirty years was eighty-four acres for the Dumbarton Bridge replacement. SFO's plan dwarfs any Bay fill in generations.

We can protect the Bay's complex, living ecosystem by individual actions and by implementing smart policies:

### Prevent Massive Bay Fill

Campaign Director Michele Moss ([mmoss@savesfbay.org](mailto:mmoss@savesfbay.org)) is leading Save The Bay's region-wide efforts to give the Bay a voice and to ensure that citizens have the chance to vote on large development projects that would pollute the Bay. Just five appointees on San Francisco's Airport Commission can endorse the project for the whole city, unless the San Francisco Charter is changed this November to give voters that right. Save The Bay is also working to ensure that San Mateo County's Board of Supervisors will be able to review and vote on any project that extends runways beyond current San Francisco County boundaries. Sign up to help with these efforts, wherever you live around the Bay!

### Clean Up Toxic Hot Spots

While we have known for a decade where polluted sediments are concentrated, state agencies have not implemented a cleanup campaign for the Bay. Governor Davis has not appointed champions of Bay protection to the Regional Water Quality Control Board and has not supported funding to clean up hot spots in waters around the state. Save The Bay is working to accelerate and fund full cleanup. To help, write a letter to Governor Davis or to your local paper in support of this goal.

**For more information visit [www.savesfbay.org](http://www.savesfbay.org), or call Grassroots Coordinator Dirk Manskopf at 510/452-9261.**





*Save The Bay is very grateful to the following individuals, foundations, corporations and government agencies which have provided very generous funding to our growing programs over the last 18 months. We could not continue to Celebrate, Protect, and Restore the Bay without their support.*

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# SAVE THE BAY

*Save The Bay has been working for four decades to protect and restore the San Francisco Bay-Delta and to improve public access to its shoreline. We are committed to keeping the Bay alive, healthy, and beautiful.*



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