

# watershed

## Success! Governor Signs Landmark Bill for San Francisco Bay

### Bill Establishes Authority to Secure Wetland Restoration Funding

Terminating legislation seemed to be Governor Schwarzenegger's mission this year as he set a record for most bills vetoed. But nearing the final hour for approving bills, he signed the one that does the most for San Francisco Bay.

Assembly Bill 2954, sponsored by Save The Bay, establishes the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority to secure crucial funding to restore Bay wetlands. Creating this Authority is the primary recommendation in Save The Bay's 2007 "Greening the Bay" report, which found widespread public support for restoration and willingness to bear the cost, but no agency with the mandate to secure funding.

"Getting this bill passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in a challenging political environment, in just eight months, is a remarkable achievement

for Save The Bay. The creation of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority can dramatically improve the area's quality of life and economy through the restoration of wetlands," said Save The Bay Executive Director David Lewis.

Save The Bay staff worked tirelessly to draft this legislation and secure support. We generated direct appeals from prominent business, environment, and local government organizations, and more than 700 letters from individual citizens, all asking the Governor to sign AB 2954.

Scientists agree that establishing 100,000 acres of wetlands is essential to a healthy, sustainable Bay. There are currently 40,000 acres of healthy tidal marsh and an additional 36,176 acres of restorable Bay shoreline in public ownership. Completing these planned

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#### Get your hands dirty!

*Save The Bay is seeking critical volunteer support to improve the health of the Bay and to help restore wetland habitat. In fact, we need hundreds of volunteers this winter to meet our ambitious goal to plant 20,000 native plants at several wetland restoration sites along the Bay shoreline.*

*Sign up today at*

[saveSFbay.org/bayevents](http://saveSFbay.org/bayevents)

**SAVE THE BAY**  
[www.saveSFbay.org](http://www.saveSFbay.org)



# Extending Bay Wetland Restoration

## Volunteers Help Establish 100,000 Acres of Healthy Tidal Marsh

Bothin Marsh is a gorgeous wetland area located at the north end of Richardson Bay. A well-traveled portion of the Bay Trail weaves alongside the marsh, and on any given day, one can see sandpipers,



egrets, great blue herons, curlews, grebes, finches and hawks, as well as the endangered California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse.

This mix of tidal wetlands, sloughs and Bay provides habitat for these year-round resi-

dents, as well as a stop for migratory birds traveling on the Pacific Flyway.

Ravenswood Pond is located on the opposite side of the Bay—a former salt pond and vast swath of open space on the south side of the Dumbarton Bridge. This section of the Bay shoreline is a critical piece of the puzzle known as the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration project, the largest tidal wetland restoration project on the West Coast. This site will include nesting islands for avocets and snowy plovers, as well as a public trail and wildlife viewing platform.

Perhaps most importantly, the completion of the project will return the Bay shoreline to the East Palo Alto and Menlo Park communities, who have little access to the Bay.

By adding Bothin Marsh and Ravenswood Pond to our restoration sites—distinct Bayside locales including former salt ponds, wetlands and island habitats—Save The Bay is now two steps closer to reaching our ambitious goals to restore 100,000 acres of healthy wetlands

ringing the Bay and to plant 20,000 native seedlings this winter.

At Bothin Marsh, Save The Bay will work with Marin County Parks and Open Space District (MCPOSD) to enhance habitat for Bay animals by removing non-native iceplant and planting native seedlings.

“We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Save The Bay,” said Greg Reza of MCPOSD. “We look forward to using successful restoration techniques to protect sensitive wetland habitat at Bothin Marsh.”

Ravenswood Pond, which is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is currently diked off from tidal flow; but a planned breach in the next few years will return Bay waters to this pond. Restoration is set to begin in the spring—for now volunteers will prep the site by removing trash and non-native plants and will also be treated to tours of the preserve.

“As the first managed pond to be actively restored to tidal wetlands, Ravenswood is the flagship of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project,” said Cheryl Strong, biologist with the San Francisco National Wildlife Refuge Complex. “Our collaboration with Save The Bay will improve this habitat for people and wildlife.”

Wetlands are the lungs of the Bay, giving life to hundreds of fish and wildlife species. That is why Save The Bay engages youth and adult volunteers from the entire Bay Area to restore these vital habitats. And we are proud that our programs benefit our volunteers as well.

In the words of long time Save The Bay volunteer, Matt Isles, “I lend a hand to your efforts because the true reward is the feeling of accomplishment and contribution to something larger and more important than myself.”



*To volunteer at Bothin, Ravenswood and our other sites around the Bay, go to*  
[saveSFbay.org/bayevents](http://saveSFbay.org/bayevents)

watershed

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# Saving the Salt Ponds

## Save The Bay Continues To Fight Shoreline Development In Redwood City

November’s election results bring renewed hope for federal environmental policies that can benefit San Francisco Bay: action to combat climate change, support federal refuges and protect endangered species. Voters in two counties also approved Measure WW, to continue funding for the East Bay Regional Park District that will enhance Bay shoreline parks and habitat restoration.

In Redwood City, however, voters rejected Measure W, the Charter Amendment that would have guaranteed city voters the final say on development of Cargill’s 1,433 acres of retired salt ponds and other open space.

Cargill’s developer DMB Associates alone spent \$1.3 million to mislead and scare Redwood City voters, but the result still leaves many hurdles to build on these restorable Bay wetlands. Even many opponents of Measure W say they opposed development at this site. They know that a healthy Bay is essential to our quality of life and economy, and precious open space along the Bay shoreline is not an acceptable place for housing.

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restoration projects will nearly double the Bay’s wetlands. Now with the enactment of AB 2954 securing critical funding to revitalize this land is on the horizon.

“This new Authority fills a large gap by linking the supportive Bay Area population and the urgent priority for funds to restore wetlands. It’s a creative solution to a regional need,” said Henry Gardner, Executive Director of the Association of Bay Area Governments—which will appoint board members to the Authority.

Filling and paving over these 1,433 acres would be a major step backward to the 1960s when developers could fill in the Bay without limit or regulation. This land can and must be restored to natural thriving wetlands that benefit people and wildlife.

Scientists say we need to establish 100,000 acres of healthy wetlands around the Bay to protect water quality, combat global warming, prevent floods, and provide critical habitat for Bay wildlife—restoring Cargill’s Redwood City ponds would get us closer to that goal.

Save The Bay, Sierra Club, Friends of Redwood City and our thousands of supporters will continue to fight against any development on these ponds. We’ll broaden our community coalition and strengthen legal protections for the Bay. Please help us by continuing your generous support for Save The Bay and signing up for our Bay Saver Email Action Network at [saveSFbay.org/baysaver](http://saveSFbay.org/baysaver)

*David Lewis*

The bill’s author, Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Sally Lieber, said it well: “It’s our responsibility to take care of and restore San Francisco Bay, one of our State’s most valuable and beautiful natural treasures. Our greatest asset is also one of our greatest protections against the impacts of global warming. Our Bay wetlands provide natural flood control and capture greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere.”

Learn more: [saveSFbay.org/greeningthebay](http://saveSFbay.org/greeningthebay)

—Jessica Castelli



*Cargill plans to fill in and pave over up to 1,433 acres of restorable San Francisco Bay salt ponds that should be returned to natural wetland habitat.*



*Living in salt water marshes and tidal sloughs, the California clapper rail is an endangered species native to San Francisco Bay. Save The Bay works to restore critical wetland habitat to provide these shorebirds food, protection and isolation from predators.*

**NEWSLETTER AND  
CALENDAR INSIDE**

## Finding Solutions to the Bay Pollution Problem

### Save The Bay Names 23 Bay Trash Hot Spots; Partners with San Jose to Reduce Runoff Pollution

Trash is a serious problem in San Francisco Bay—it poisons and entangles Bay wildlife, pollutes the water and harms our quality of life and economy. As the Bay’s leading advocate, Save The Bay mobilizes and educates residents—and now partners with cities—to control the pollution problem.

To draw attention to Bay pollution prior to Coastal Cleanup Day, Save The Bay released our third annual list of Bay Trash Hot Spots. This year’s list included 23 trash-polluted waterways draining directly to San Francisco Bay. These 23 hot spots are among the waterways and shoreline areas that the San Francisco Bay Regional

Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) is examining for violating federal Clean Water Act water quality standards.

To further our goal of reducing runoff pollution in the Bay, Save The Bay teamed up with San Jose, our primary partner for **Cities Keep it Clean**. This ambitious new program is the region’s first formal plan for sharing innovative programs, such as curbside e-waste recycling and safe pharmaceutical disposal, that empower communities to reduce trash and runoff in the Bay.

“Save The Bay’s **Cities Keep it Clean** meshes well with San Jose’s Green Vision, and we look forward to helping protect the Bay,” said San



Jose Mayor Chuck Reed. “I hope other Bay Area cities will join this effort. By working together regionally, we can reduce pollution in the Bay and creeks and protect these beautiful natural resources.”

Explore the interactive map of the 2008 Bay Trash Hot Spots:

[saveSFbay.org/baytrash](http://saveSFbay.org/baytrash)

Learn more about our pollution prevention work: [saveSFbay.org/keepitclean](http://saveSFbay.org/keepitclean)

—Amy Alton