

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

To: All Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, Phase 2

The California State Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy), Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) have prepared a joint Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for Phase 2 of the South Bay Salt Pond (SBSP) Restoration Project. We invite your comments on the scope and content of the environmental information and the analysis in the document. For agencies, these comments should be limited to the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, including your use when considering a permit or other approval for the project.

A description of the project, location, and environmental impacts are contained in the attached materials.

The Draft EIS/EIR is available online at:

<http://www.southbayrestoration.org/planning/phase2/>

Also, printed copies of the Draft EIS/EIR are available for public review at the libraries and agency offices listed in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits under State and Federal law, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than September 22, 2015. The 60-day public review and comment period is between July 24, 2015, and September 22, 2015.

A public meeting will be held on August 4, 2015, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at the Mountain View Community Center located at 201 S. Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View, California. The details of the public meeting have been posted on the SBSP Restoration Project's website (<http://www.southbayrestoration.org/events/>).

Please send your questions, comments, responses, and the name of a contact person in your agency or organization, to:

Brenda Buxton, Project Manager
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA, 94612
510-286-0753

PROJECT LOCATION

The SBSP Restoration Project, Phase 2, encompasses approximately 2,400 acres of former industrial salt production ponds in the South San Francisco Bay (map figures of the ponds are available at <http://www.southbayrestoration.org/maps>). Phase 2 activities would occur in the Alviso and Ravenswood pond complexes. These complexes are part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, owned and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Alviso Pond Complex:

The SBSP Restoration Project, Phase 2 includes the following pond clusters in the Alviso pond complex:

- Alviso – Island Ponds (A19, A20, and A21);
- Alviso A8 Ponds (A8, A8S); and
- Alviso – Mountain View Ponds (A1 and A2W) and the adjacent Charleston Slough, which is part of City of Mountain View.

Ravenswood Pond Complex:

The SBSP Restoration Project, Phase 2 includes the following ponds in the Ravenswood pond complex:

- Ravenswood Ponds (R3, R4, R5, and S5).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The SBSP Restoration Project is a multi-agency effort to restore and enhance tidal wetlands and managed pond habitats in South San Francisco Bay while simultaneously providing flood management and wildlife-oriented public access and recreation. Phase 2 actions presented and analyzed in this EIS/EIR are part of a long-term restoration plan that was laid out in the SBSP Restoration Project's 2007 Programmatic EIS/EIR.

Previously, Phase 1 restoration actions were implemented at ponds in both of these pond complexes. Phase 2 of the SBSP Restoration Project proposes to continue habitat restoration activities initiated during Phase 1 while also providing recreation and public access opportunities, and maintaining or improving current levels of flood protection in the surrounding communities.

Habitat restoration actions would include the following:

- Breaching levees at one or more locations to allow tidal flows into the ponds
- Increasing habitat complexity by adding islands or upland transition zones
- Modifying pond bottom elevations or topography to redirect tidal flows
- Using dredged or upland fill material to speed marsh vegetation establishment
- Installing water control structure to improve hydrology control in former salt ponds that will not yet be made fully tidal.

Recreation and public access actions would include the following:

- Constructing or improving walking trails and/or elevated boardwalks

- Installing viewing platforms

Flood risk management actions would include:

- Raising or improving existing levees or berms or adding new levees as needed so that current levels of flood protection are not reduced by project activities that would bring the Bay closer to communities or roads.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This joint Draft EIS/EIR is a project-level environmental document that tiers from the 2007 SBSP Restoration Project Programmatic EIS/EIR. The joint Draft EIS/EIR identifies the anticipated effects of the project alternatives (negative and beneficial) and describes and analyzes direct, indirect, and cumulative potential environmental impacts of the project alternatives, including the No-Action/No-Project Alternative, in accordance with NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508) and CEQA (14 CCR 15126.6(e)(3)(B)).

Results of the evaluation included assessments of possible effects on environmental and cultural resources including: hydrology; water quality; geology; biology; recreation; cultural resources; land use; public health and vector management; socioeconomic and environmental justice; traffic; noise; air quality; public services; utilities; visual resources; and greenhouse gases and climate change. The majority of impacts were determined to be less than significant. The analysis also determined that the Project could have significant unavoidable – though largely temporary – impacts on existing recreation and public access features.

LOCATIONS OF PUBLIC REVIEW COPIES

The joint Draft EIS/EIR is available for public review at the following public libraries and agency offices:

San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex Headquarters, 1 Marshlands Road, Fremont, CA 94555.

Alviso Branch Library, 5050 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95002.

Biblioteca Latino America, 921 South First St., San Jose, CA 95110.

California State University Library, 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd., Hayward, CA 94542.

Fremont Main Library, 2400 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont, CA 94538.

Menlo Park Library, 800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Mountain View Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View, CA 94041.

Rinconada Library, 1213 Newell Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303.

King Library, 150 E San Fernando St., San Jose, CA 95112.

Redwood City Main Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063

San Mateo County East Palo Alto Library, 2415 University Ave., East Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Santa Clara County Milpitas Library, 160 N Main St., Milpitas, CA 95035.

Santa Clara Public Library, 2635 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara, CA 95051.

Sunnyvale Public Library, 665 W Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Natural Resources Library, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240-0001.