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Shoreline no longer big mess

Volunteers remove 1,000 pounds of junk

By Michelle Beaver, STAFF WRITER
Inside Bay Area

An Elmo doll, a VCR, a washing machine and tires galore.

These were the contents not of a garage sale but of the Eden Landing shoreline in Hayward.

Until Earth Day, that is. Saturday, volunteers removed more than 1,000 pounds of trash from the wetlands and eradicated non-native plants.

The majority of the garbage consisted of Styrofoam and little bits of plastic, said Marilyn Latta, habitat restoration director for Save the Bay. Her organization partnered on the Earth Day event with the California Department of Fish and Game, which owns the 6,000-acre Eden Landing.

"A lot of people were very curious about what the area looked like, since there hasn't been public access," Latta said. "They were amazed, and they all wanted to know where all this trash was coming from."

Most of the garbage drifts from streams via the tide and becomes caught up in plants.

The small and medium

debris filled 80 large trash bags.

Eden Landing is part of 15,000 acres of South Bay salt ponds that are jointly managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Ninety percent of the South Bay shoreline has been lost due to salt ponds, housing developments and in-fill projects, Latta said. Some of the damage can be corrected, though. In the fall of 2006, Eden Landing will be flooded in an effort to restore the wetlands to its pre-1800s glory.

"There are going to be wonderful public access opportunities," Latta said. "To bring tidal wetlands is really important because it will create such a rich and productive environment."

The project will include a two-mile shoreline path. There will be about 30 more Eden Landing cleanup days in the coming year, the next of which is Saturday, June 3, from 9 a.m. to noon. For more information, visit <http://www.savesfbay.org>.

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Jane Tyska - STAFF

Wulf Bieschke, Kathie Ready and Peggy Sheridan (left to right) pick up trash in front of the San Lorenzo Theatre during Saturday's clean