

SOUTH BAY SALT POND RESTORATION PROJECT
PUBLIC MEETINGS
APRIL 4, 5, AND 9, 2003

Public Comments, Questions, and Concerns on:
Wetlands Restoration
Public Involvement
Recreation and Access

April 4th, 9:30 to 12:30, Holly Community Center, Union City
April 5th, 9:30 to 12:30, Mayne School, Alviso
April 9th, 9:30 to 12:30, Cubberly Community Center, Palo Alto

APRIL 4TH UNION CITY

Restoration

1. Are you going to monitor ponds at Newark? Then examine data there to help with the new ponds.
2. Need to control *Spartina* regionally each year before June or it resumes easily—look at timing for most benefit for eradication.
3. Are you looking at migratory bird populations over the rest of the south bay to see that impacts are not detrimental?
4. How does raising or lowering salinity levels (in ponds) in different percentages affect wildlife? Changes are through circulation patterns and also water temperature variations.
5. Will there be more nursery areas as part of restoration?
6. Will you look at different models but be careful that they apply to specific areas being restored?
7. Need to look at the needs of different agencies that have effects on bay to coordinate them effectively for the benefit of people and wildlife - look at questions then see if data exists to answer them.
8. Public access and wildlife protection groups *have to talk* to each other.
9. Are Bay Trail people involved in this restoration plan?
10. Rare plant restoration needs to be part of this restoration project: bird's beak (*Cordylanthus*), spineflower (*Chorizanthe*), adobe sanicle (*Sanicula maritime*) – habitat is dune upland, sandy soil.
11. Work with East Bay Regional Parks at Coyote Hills and Patterson Ranch opportunities for wetland/upland habitat to restore; there are little uplands in restoration area.
12. Will restoration values be extended to upland in the plan?
13. Fresh water restoration important in other areas other than plan; offshore habitat is important for specific species—islands for terns.
14. How will roosting sites be considered in relationship to public access-denied trails? Are the trails mostly hiking or will there be others open to bikes? What is the impact of biking on birds?

15. What is the timing of the NEPA process?
16. Get together with other land managers (farmers, etc.) to see how it all fits together, including additional properties acquired by other agencies not covered in this restoration plan.
17. Will U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service be effective at interim management?
18. Are we making priority list of specific wildlife, i.e. birds, endangered species, to be considered in the long-term plan?
19. Leslie Salt: get their former figures, information on ponds.
20. What endangered species are gaining and losing habitats? Can Fish and Wildlife Service provide this information? Does not seem to be watching effects different agencies have while restoring habitats on specific species.
21. How are we prioritizing for species?
22. How are we going to get sediment coming in over the years? Dredging, etc.? Sediments in one area may affect diversity in other areas.
23. Do we have a predator control plan? Foxes and cats.
24. Will there be areas restricted to the public?
25. Flood control issue: Flood channels will impact Mosquito Abatement Districts. Work with Flood Control people. Make sure all needs/problems are discussed.
 - Small cities have flood control offices but they're not often easily visible. Make sure to include regional flood control.
26. How soon will there be monitoring of increased salinity in ponds with waterfowl?
27. Do you anticipate raising the salinity levels of the Bay (with discharging pond waters)? Huge fluctuations and range of salinities are seen under normal conditions.
28. How will technical committee overlap with National Science committee/panel? How to apply National Science input/theories to South Bay?
29. How much prioritization will be given to locally-based technical committees?
30. Will all agencies agree on who is on technical committee?
31. How will this project affect circulation of San Francisco Bay waters?

32. Changing habitats for a variety of species: loss and gain for different species—loss for salt marsh harvest mouse and gain for shorebirds.
 - Seaport Blvd (end). Pacific Shores removed salt marsh habitat to protect birds.
 - Try not to delete habitat for some while enhancing others.
33. How will we get sediments into areas that need them and remove sediment from sloughs that are overloaded?
34. Information on current bird use/wildlife use of ponds should be made available to public. Place as much data as possible that you will use in making decisions on the website, e.g., pond elevations, presence of gypsum in each pond, etc.
35. San Mateo Mosquito Abatement District (MAD)
 - desires interaction of development of ponds with mosquito and long term maintenance.
 - MAD spends much money on taking care of other people's projects (which they don't want to happen here)
 - They want to be involved in development so that no big problems occur (West Nile, mosquito infestations, etc.)
 - Bair Island water addition resulted in 3 new kinds of mosquitoes (new problems that were not addressed)
 - Needs to be involved in treatment program development, monitoring and maintenance.

Recreation/Access

1. Will development of Bay Trail continue during interim management period? (specifically Baumberg ponds and connections to the area)
2. How will habitat areas which Cargill will retain be factored into restoration decisions in acquired properties? (i.e. can salt ponds existence be taken as a given?)
3. Concerns with identifying and documenting vegetation and changes the restoration will cause. Concerned with macro & micro vegetation documentation.
4. Concern with security of scientific equipment used to monitor environmental variables (theft, vandalism).
5. Will canoe trails be developed as part of the long-term plan?
6. Signs are needed on Sloughs to prevent boats from going too fast (need *No Wake* zones).

7. What are the new areas of hunting and when will they be available for public comment/knowledge?
8. Fishing access in sloughs: will there be a change from the present?
9. What is the level of input from the Agencies (regarding the Bay Trail)? Bay Trail staff wants to be involved early in the process.
10. How will the publics' desires/wants be integrated with the agency goals—say, BCDC & Bay Trail?
11. Concerns with general public access near waste water treatment plants. Safety concerns for public and plants. Supportive of education but there are concerns with general public access—i.e. the San Jose/Santa Clara plant.
12. Emphasize public education to get understanding of why restoration, recreation, etc decisions are made.
 - Public education should not stop; it should be long-term (decades).
13. Habitat protection/restoration should be the starting point—public needs to know that this is the emphasis.
14. Public education is needed to understand recreation is going to be incorporated in areas that won't jeopardize wildlife areas.

Public Involvement

1. Need to know information as baseline so public can make intelligent comments, coordinate information; we need to start with what is in/at salt ponds *now*; for this we need an online database, common knowledge base (for elevation, subsidence, primary levels for flood control, etc).
2. Cargill's maintenance plan—have this posted on the website—all information on their ponds for management, salinity, elevation, etc. Site as reference—for public to give input.
3. Where do you go from here for different kinds of meetings? Put this information on website.
4. Who is on the technical committee?
5. Will FWS, DFG and Coastal Conservancy decide who is on technical committee?
6. Email mailing list when new data is posted on website.
7. Will the public have any input on technical committee decisions?

APRIL 5TH ALVISO

Restoration

1. Ice plant removal on levees is needed.
2. Habitat restoration is a priority.
3. Community involvement above (habitat restoration) especially local communities.
 - Use as an opportunity for local kids (hands-on/in backyards) for environmental education.
4. What's going on with the Redwood City Pond (crystallizers) and Pond 3C?
5. Why does San Jose want Pond A18?
6. The issue of natural succession/pioneer species should be addressed.
7. Is funding secured for the project?
8. Flood protection is the largest issue; Alviso would be under water. Idea for proposed bypass channel for Guadalupe River through ponds.
9. Sentiment in Alviso that State/Federal government didn't try to prevent the last flood.
10. Cisco no longer planning to bring North First street campus on-line. Want to sell property around buildings—KB homes, high density—variance opportunity with City. People acting in community together—petition.
11. Ferry service on Guadalupe River/Alviso Slough bypass channel.
12. Priority is getting salt water back into Guadalupe to counteract fresh water input.
13. Pond A18: flood protection at Zanker Rd. landfill; public access/trespass safety; tie in existing restoration?
14. Take all invasive plants into consideration during restoration.
15. Sunnyvale sewage plant concerned about A3W since adjacent to the facility
 - Flood levee maintenance
16. Interim: management of channel at Sunnyvale ponds—ownership—between A3W and A4.
17. Monitoring of invertebrates on systematic basis.

- What is our monitoring process while restoration is occurring?
 - What effect do these changes have on ecosystem?
18. Coordinate management of A4 with rest of pond management/restoration.
 19. New Chicago Marsh inholdings—how do landowners get restitution, compensated for loss?
 20. In Alviso Slough—increase salt water to make less brackish.
 21. Don't make decisions on which ponds are managed vs. tidal too early. Benefits to Alviso Slough from increased tidal restoration of A8.
 22. Coordinate with other agencies regarding invasive species/mitten crabs.
 23. More water in new Chicago marsh: too dry. Greener vegetation.
 24. Native plant seeding in restoration areas.
 25. Don't just think you need to protect all areas with existing bird breeding. Some sites may not have good reproduction because of containments (SFBBO)
 26. Retain rookeries and nesting spaces for herons and egrets (one on Coyote Creek).

Recreation/Access

1. Access for hunting via walk-in, boat launch, vehicles.
2. Seasonal access: problems with security, off-road vehicles etc.
3. Time-line for various modes of access (foot, vehicle, boat)—make sure public is aware.
4. Inclusion of ponds managed for sailing access.
5. Concerns about hunting safety for people and especially for the waterfowl seeking refuge.
6. Emphasize habitat for sake of wildlife over hunting/consumptive purposes.
7. Be sure we are considering impacts of pets and use appropriate/proper signage.
8. Consider pedestrian bridge between A10 and Knapp Parcel—check feasibility.
9. Have completion of Bay Trail paved.

10. Allow or provide for boat access to view or actively participate in the actual restoration as it occurs.
11. Consider public impact study conducted by San Jose State and the results of that study (continue this type of study as restoration begins and proceeds).
12. Provide one or two new access areas during this interim period—to help gain interest and support for project.
13. Don't open trails if they can't be policed.
14. Consider creation of a trained volunteer trail patrol—something like trained search & rescue squads.
15. Consider providing safety near Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant, if public access is allowed (for public traveling through area and for limiting access to plant).
16. Look at where new public access points will be, especially in relation to existing infrastructure/facilities and current access (i.e. consider relocating some access points).
17. Provide map of Bay Trail that shows paved areas vs. non-paved (show grades of trail) and put on the Web.
18. Provide access back to Drawbridge.
19. Provide a canoe/kayak trail within the marsh.
20. Would like to see Bay Trails completed here (Alviso Ponds).
21. By whom/how will levees be maintained?
22. How will the restoration project impact tidal flood insurance for public, in particular around the Alviso Ponds?
23. Could there be a ferry boat location in Alviso? Evaluate the feasibility of this option.
 - Connect this with public access/recreation opportunities
 - Use ferry to connect uncompleted Bay Trail areas.

Public Involvement

1. Volunteer opportunities: native plants, invasive species.

2. Committee opportunities: develop structure/menu for interested citizens.
3. Coordinate with local government, planning (Staff, Planning Commission)
 - Need to brief City Staff as well as City Councils.
 - Frequent update/planning needed because staff, commissioner, elected officials turnover.
4. More illustrations/photos of restoration areas—before and after.
5. How will public comments/suggestions be utilized?
 - What level of influence?
 - How to document *all* public comment?
 - Will the comments be summarized on website?
6. Need to decipher acronyms.
7. Offer nature encounters to local office workers—access to Bay Trail (Mountain View, Ponds A-1, 2)
8. More access for birders to “Drawbridge” around Milpitas—use local birders for monitoring.
9. Opportunity for public to express preferences among menu of alternatives.
10. Some public access during interim management phase (demonstrates commitment to restoration/public use).
11. Branded South Bay Restoration volunteer restoration activity (yearly, quarterly, TBD)
12. Restoration information to community groups with current Bay shoreline activities—incorporate into programs/materials.
13. SFBBO should be involved: existing data, monitoring restoration sites.
14. Increase boating access to Bay (perhaps a ferry to San Jose)
15. South Bay Yacht Club can support small meetings.

APRIL 9TH PALO ALTO

Restoration

1. Why not just remove levees and let nature take its course?
2. Trade-offs between tidal marsh and managed ponds? What are the benefits of managed ponds?
3. Benefit of “hands-off” approach (self sustaining system as opposed to managed system).
4. Costs need to be considered. What’s the budget and what can be accomplished with given funds?
5. Methyl Mercury concern: Interim management should provide information on methyl mercury process?
6. South Bay has tidal flushing deficiencies; will restoration be affected?
7. Are there thoughts about bringing in water from other sources (Coyote Creek)?
8. Interest about how ponds will be managed differently than Cargill during interim management.
9. Soil analysis?
10. Minimizing cost (using gravity rather than pumps may be sufficient) is a concern in ponds for birds (botulism, etc)
11. Need islands in managed ponds for birds—maintenance of water levels.
12. Water movement and level requirements for various species needs to be considered.
13. Use research results rather than costs to determine how ponds are managed.
14. Need better organized documents on website (add dates)
15. Will there continue to be seasonal wetlands, which have value to wildlife?
16. How will levees/upland be maintained? Will trees be planted?
17. Is the Corps of Engineers participating?
18. State paid more money, why did Federal government get more land?

19. Concern for long-term funding.
20. A2 East: what is the interim plan? Whatever is done will impact one, Site 25 and two, the Mid-Peninsula Open Space District (need to coordinate with Navy and NASA).
21. Haven't seen planning focus on public access.
22. Is there a champion group for public access?
23. During interim management have a time period (non-wildlife sensitive) where trails are open to bicycling—perhaps August-October.
24. Would like to have public access during interim management and restoration, “managed introduction of humans.”
25. *Self sustaining* isn't really self sustaining; some management will be required regardless.
26. Any plans for research studies prior to restoration? Who would be involved?
27. PG&E needs to know locations where water levels will change between power lines and water.
28. What levees will remain for access for PG&E?
29. What is the concern for releasing pond water into the Bay?
30. Will ponds be closed to the Bay?
31. What are impacts and types of involvements of surrounding cities?
32. Three ponds will be opened to the Bay—A21, A20, A19—will they be part of interim plan?
33. Beware of seal haul-out areas when developing restoration plans.
34. Mercury deposits, water quality, increased fresh water outflows from water control plants—all concerns.
35. What is the long-term plan for bittern?
36. Will there be a presentation for BCDC?
37. How does interim plan relate to long term?

38. Any plans for upland habitats?
39. What are the plans for levees after ice plant/non-natives are removed for Bair Island?
40. Is Bair Island taken into consideration for the overall project?
41. What criteria for fill to bring levees to ponds areas? Will fill work in pond areas? Will LTMS criteria be used?
42. Are there any plans that do not consider using fill? Will *not* using fill work?
43. Any plans to research bathymetry of ponds? Can it reference to some benchmark?
44. Who are the “experts”?
45. Contaminants in surrounding areas and impacts on restoration—specifically Moffett, Palo Alto Gun Club.
46. One and a half meters below surface of bottom of marsh, mercury levels are significant.
47. What types of sediment to be placed in ponds?
48. What about burrowing owls?
49. Spread of Spartina, Pepperweed.
50. Who’s responsible for pulling all the data together for South Bay?
51. Will Bay Trail be developed on the south edge of Moffett in interim?
52. Funding, mitigation banks considered:
 - Can SFO fund restoration?
 - Other potential organizations who need to mitigate?
53. How are other agencies going to get involved?
54. Which resources do you focus on? Ponds, marsh, birds, fish.
55. Not much data on South Bay fisheries.
56. Are there disparities between agencies and public regarding public access?
57. Any plans to evaluate lead residues in ponds that had hunting?

Recreation/Access

1. Have areas of sensitive wildlife been mapped out? Can maps be procured? People looking at areas that aren't currently used by wildlife might think that public access should go there.
2. If area is currently open to public access, will it be taken away?
3. Who does maintenance of fences on former Cargill lands?
4. Hunting in Baumberg area: continuing lease with in-kind service for payment, or on lottery basis?
 - Continue hunting but do not lottery: it would be dangerous to uninformed public, i.e. unmarked hazards
5. The only motorized vehicles that should be allowed on levees are motorized wheelchairs (specifically public access areas).
6. Want access to new areas from existing parks; take advantage of existing parking infrastructure, e.g. baylands and Sunnyvale.
7. Complete the Bay Trail around Moffett Field.
 - Will trails have to meet ADA requirements? There is worry about impacts on adjacent habitat due to requirements for trails such as ADA.
8. What opportunities will be available for duck hunting? Concern about maintaining the quality of Baumberg. Possible solutions:
 - Long-term leases (like those used for cattle grazing) or perhaps applying for permits.
 - A hunting system that allows hunter to go out to site and leave equipment and decoys (because access is difficult and having to remove equipment each time would be big challenge).
9. Access for non-motorized water vehicles?
10. Public access for putting boats in (launches). A concern about these sites being accessible—not having to go through private sites.
11. Publish information/outcomes from these public meetings.
12. What will the impact be on the existing Bay Trail and future Bay Trail/public access behind Moffett Field (A3W)?
13. How will the public *access* salt ponds for viewing in future?

14. Will the Cargill fences/gates around Moffett ponds be maintained in future? Can the fences/gates be taken down to open up to public access? (long-term/interim)
15. No access to sensitive areas; or seasonal/restricted access according to wildlife needs.
16. No motorized vehicle access except wheelchairs.
17. Properly managed hunting in appropriate areas.
18. Talk with and gain NASA as partner regarding public access—especially Bay Trail.

Public Involvement

1. Drawbridge: make accessible to public via Railroad.
2. Obtain money from railroad for restoration, not lump sum—maintenance fee for operations budget.
3. How to resolve conflict over uses: are three goals equally weighted? Clarify definition of “wildlife oriented activity”.
4. Treated effluent from San Jose Pollution Control Plant
5. Up gradient flooding (Sunnyvale)
6. League of Women Voters can be a public outreach partner
7. BCDC commissioners—can they be members of public committee?
8. Landowner involvement: Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space District has a restoration project in Mountain View.
9. Post minutes of meeting on website.
10. Consider working with “Corporate Wellness” group (e.g. AM Sunday)—information meetings on site, brown bag lunch
11. Duplicate these display materials and place in city/county offices as a display along with website and contact info. ASAP for the Refuge Visitor Center, Alviso.
12. Publish all issues raised at meetings.