



April, 2004

Welcome to the third issue of the quarterly electronic newsletter of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project (SBSP). The restoration process is being managed collaboratively by the [California State Coastal Conservancy](#), the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), and the [California Department of Fish and Game](#). The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with a brief update on our effort to restore more than 15,000 acres of former commercial salt ponds in the South Bay which were purchased by state and federal agencies in March of 2003. For more detailed information about the restoration project please visit our web site at www.southbayrestoration.org. If you would like to unsubscribe from this quarterly update please contact tcorrigan@scc.ca.gov.

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1. Restoration Project Selects Executive Project Manager

In March, the California Coastal Conservancy provided a significant boost to staff working on the restoration project by selecting Steve Ritchie to serve as Executive Project Manager. Steve brings a wealth of experience to the project having served as director of both the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board and the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. As Executive Project Manager, Steve Ritchie is working closely with all of the partner agencies to manage this complex project, coordinate among various interests to resolve issues, and ensure that the project remains on schedule.

2. Initial Stewardship Plan Approved: First Salt Pond Discharges to the Bay to Begin by July

The Regional Water Quality Control Board recently approved waste discharge requirements for the restoration project's Initial Stewardship Plan. Once a few other regulatory agency approvals are obtained, project managers will be able to begin discharging water from the salt ponds in Hayward, Alviso and Redwood City. Water

control structures will be installed in selected ponds in May and controlled releases of water from the salt ponds will begin in July. Managers will release water from the ponds during the spring and summer months and will install additional water control structures next year to expand the number of connections between the ponds and the Bay. The project will continue to work with Cargill Salt to dilute other ponds over the next five years before connecting them with the bay. The water in the ponds will mix with bay water and gradually take on the same salinity as the bay. By circulating water through the ponds, managers will be able to halt the salt making process and begin converting thousands of acres of high salinity ponds to habitat more suitable for fish and ducks, shorebirds, herons and egrets. This will help to maintain the wildlife values of the ponds and enable the Project to conduct detailed studies of the site that will aid in the development of the long term restoration plan.

3. National Science Panel to Review Science Strategy April 20-21

The SBSP National Science Panel will meet at the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's office in downtown San Francisco on April 20-21 to review and comment on the draft Science Strategy and the Conceptual Models for the project. Dr. Lynne Trulio, the project's Lead Scientist, with the other members of the project's Science Team will present the draft Science Strategy and review a series of conceptual models that describe the basic features of the project landscape including tidal marsh habitats and managed salt pond habitats. The sessions, except for Wednesday from noon to 3 pm, will be open to the public. This is the second meeting of the National Science Panel. The panel's role is to provide high level science oversight into the overall planning process. For more information about the meeting, including a detailed agenda and directions, please check the project web site.

4. Local Government Leaders Weigh In on Restoration Planning

On March 18, the SBSP Project hosted the first in a series of Local Government Forums designed to give local elected officials and staff an opportunity to coordinate and provide feedback on the development of the restoration plan. Nearly 25 representatives from 16 different jurisdictions participated in the two-hour forum that included opportunities for local government leaders to identify their particular interests and concerns about the salt pond restoration. For a summary of the meeting, minutes please check the Events and Meetings section of the project web site. The next Local Government Forum is scheduled for mid-June. If you would like to be notified of upcoming Local Government Forums please contact Jennifer Krebs at 510-622-5686.

5. Stakeholder Forum and Work Groups Continue To Make Progress

The cornerstone of the restoration project's collaborative planning process is the 28-member Stakeholder Forum that meets regularly to provide publicly derived input on the restoration, flood management, and public access components of the plan. This year the Stakeholder Forum has also been meeting in more focused Work Groups to review and provide detailed feedback on issues related to planning and implementing the restoration program. Already the Stakeholder Forum has helped to finalize a set of guiding principles and objectives for the project. Between now and the end of this year,

the Forum and its associated work groups will assist the Project Management Team and the project consultants in:

- Developing a planning framework for the project that describes the overall approach for developing and selecting alternatives.
- Identifying opportunities and constraints that could affect the project goals and objectives.
- Developing initial project concepts for habitat restoration, flood management and public access and recreation.

All of the Stakeholder Forum and Work Group meetings are open to the public. Work Groups include Habitat, Access & Recreation, and Flood Management. Below is a list of upcoming Stakeholder Forum and Work Group meetings. For more information about these meetings including locations, agendas and summary reports visit the Events and Meetings section of the web site.

Date	Meeting
April 15	Stakeholder Forum Meeting (AM) Work Group Meetings* (PM)
May 25	Work Group Meetings*
Week of June 15	Work Group Meetings*
June 24	Stakeholder Forum Meeting

6. Speakers Bureau Available to Make Presentations to Your Organization or Community

There are numerous ways for you to stay informed about the Restoration Planning Project. In addition to reading this newsletter and regularly checking the project web site for updates, we encourage you to attend monthly Stakeholder Forum and Work Group Meetings. But if your schedule is already a little too full to participate in these activities or you would like a more general update about the project, consider inviting one of our speakers to give a presentation to the next your community group, service club or professional organization meeting. The San Francisco Bay Joint Venture is partnering with the SBSP project to coordinate a Speakers Bureau. Speakers are available to present a 30-minute slide presentation about the project and to answer general questions. For more information please contact Caroline Warner at the Joint Venture office 415-883-3854 or cwarner@sfbayjv.org.