



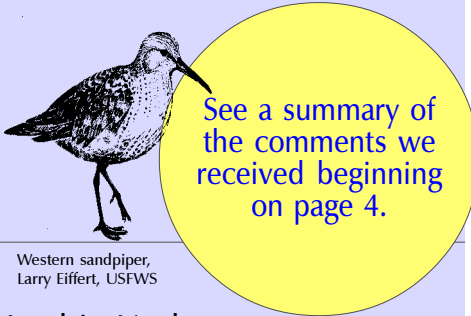
Proposed Marin Baylands National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update 2, April 2001

Greetings!

This is the second in a series of updates from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designed to inform and involve you in the planning process for the proposed Marin Baylands National Wildlife Refuge in Marin County, California.

These planning updates will keep you informed about opportunities for you to become directly involved in the planning process as development of the environmental compliance document, Land Protection Plan, and Conceptual Management Plan progresses.



See a summary of the comments we received beginning on page 4.

Western sandpiper, Larry Eiffert, USFWS

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Your Help is Needed

The study of the proposed Marin Baylands National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) continues. A study area has been delineated that is approximately 17,600 acres, see the map on page 3. All



Mallard hen and chicks. Photo © Ducks Unlimited Canada

comments help guide the study of the proposed refuge. We encourage you to continue to help us identify key issues and concerns relative to the proposed refuge. Your participation is vital to the planning process. The Service seeks community involvement and values highly all partnerships developed during the course of studying this refuge proposal.

Announcement

You are Invited to Attend an Open House

Details on the two Open Houses

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Embassy Suites Hotel
101 McInnis Parkway,
San Rafael, California

Wednesday, May 2, 2001

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Best Western Novato Oaks Inn
The Oaks Room
215 Alameda del Prado
Novato, California

Please do not park in the adjacent restaurant's parking lot, we were warned that violating vehicles will be towed!

See the Open House Program on page 2.

Two Open Houses—one on May 1, 2001 and another on May 2, 2001—will give you an opportunity to meet with representatives from the Service and learn more about the proposed Refuge as we continue the scoping process. These Open Houses are offered to allow you to ask questions and get answers, and comment on the issues and scope of the proposal in an informal setting.

Your comments and questions will be considered in future planning documents. The same information will be presented at both meetings and participants will be encouraged to talk directly to Service staff who will be available at tables with signs identifying staff members' areas of expertise such as land acquisition, the planning process, and habitat management. Service staff will listen and record questions and comments.

**Open House Program
for the
Marin Baylands
National Wildlife Refuge**

7:00 to 7:15	Greetings and Sign-in
7:15 to 7:45	Overview of proposed Refuge and Study
7:45 to 9:00	Converse with Service staff at specific stations

Where is the Study Area?

The study area is located on the west side of San Pablo Bay and San Francisco Bay from the Petaluma River to an area south of the city of Mill Valley. The Marin Baylands are part of the diked baylands which form the northwestern boundary of San Pablo Bay. Once subject to tidal inundation, these baylands were diked off for agricultural use more than 100 years ago. Approximately 85 percent of the marsh lands that once surrounded San Francisco Bay are gone. This loss has severely reduced the estuary's ability to support fish and wildlife populations, maintain active floodplains, and insure water quality. Other habitats within the study area include tidal marsh fringes along the baylands, seasonal wetlands, fresh/brackish creeks and associated riparian habitats, open Bay water, and in some cases adjacent uplands including grasslands and mature oak woodlands.

Most of these areas provide essential wintering habitat for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl, including curlews, dunlins, sandpipers, mallard, teal, pintail, canvasback, and scaup. The tidal salt marshes are essential to sustain the Federally endangered salt marsh harvest mouse and California clapper rail.

The proposed Refuge would protect and conserve important tidal marsh, seasonal marsh, and uplands. Enhancement and management of these tidal marshes and diked baylands would greatly enhance the recovery prospects for several Federally listed threatened and endangered species and would also improve habitat for migratory shorebirds. New opportunities for compatible outdoor recreation and environmental education activities would be created.

What does it Mean when Lands are Included within the Proposed Study Area or Proposed Refuge Boundary?

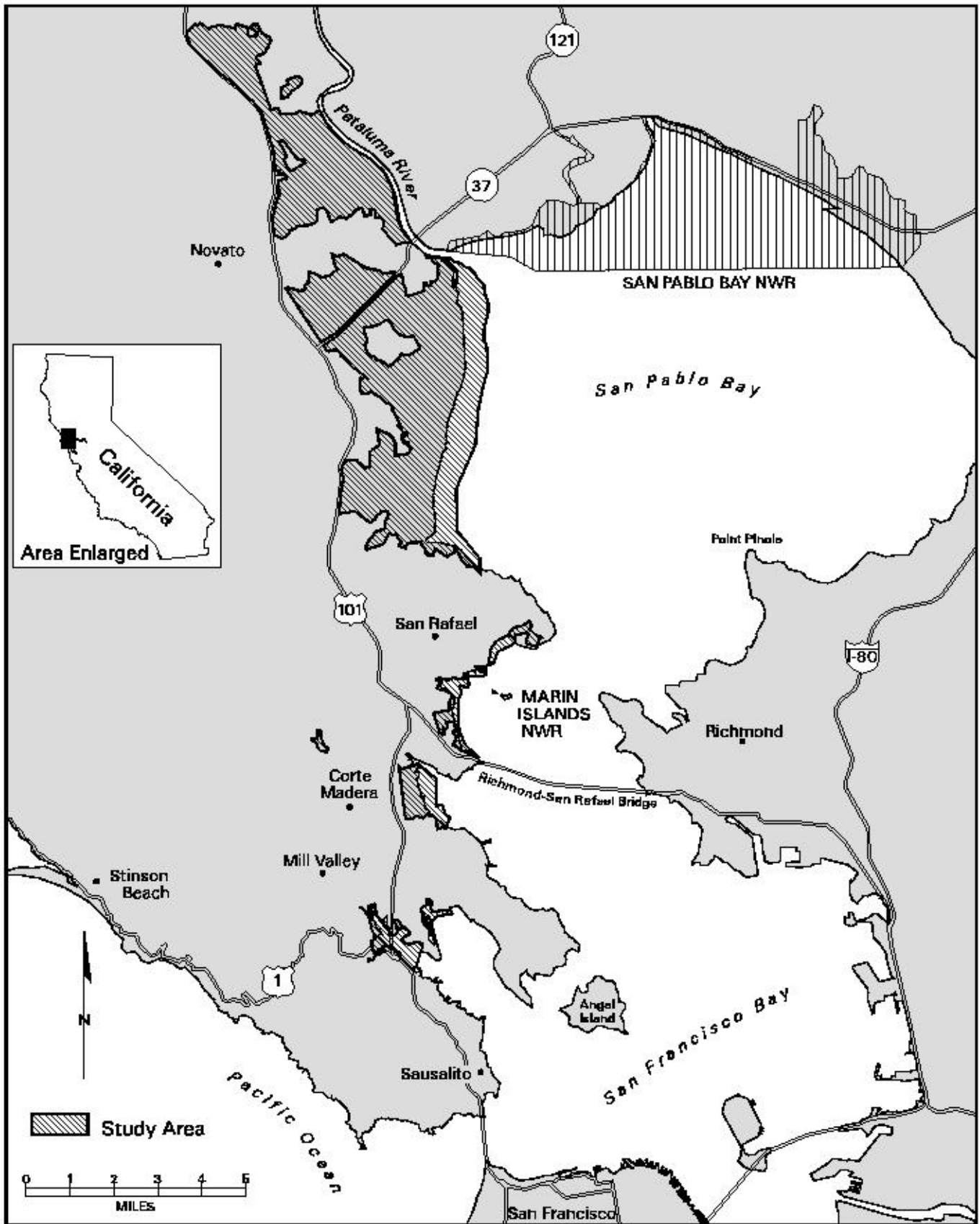
Including lands within the study area is for planning purposes only and does not grant the Service jurisdiction or management control over those lands, does not interfere with private property rights, nor make lands part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. What study-area lands, if any, may be included in the proposed Refuge boundary is determined during the planning process. All lands in the study area may not be included in the proposed Refuge boundary. Establishing a Refuge boundary does not confer any special regulatory or management status on lands included within the boundary. Lands do not become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System unless they are acquired by the Service or placed under an agreement with the individual landowner. Not only that, it is Service policy to acquire lands from willing sellers only.



Greater Scaup
by Larry Eifert

PROPOSED MARIN BAYLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Study Area



Thank You for Participating

Thank you to the more than 100 participants who attended the first open house on November 30, 2000, and to all who have sent us comments. In general, we received strong support for establishing the proposed Marin Baylands National Wildlife Refuge. A summary of the other main comments and issues identified follows.

Issues regarding what lands should be included in or excluded from the study area or proposed refuge boundary were identified.

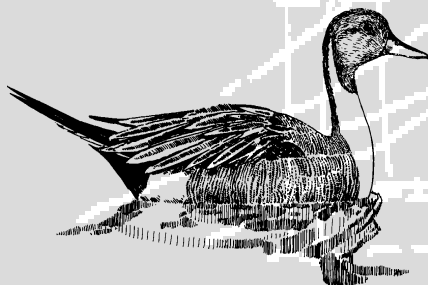
- Additional lands should be included in the study area.
- Some lands should be removed from the study area.
- Habitat/wildlife buffers should be on refuge land not on adjacent private property.
- Include only public lands
- Include only private lands.
- Include all baylands and adjacent uplands in private ownership.
- Establishing a refuge boundary may not be the most effective way to protect habitat in the Bay Area.

Concerns regarding impacts from the proposed national wildlife refuge on local land use planning, existing activities, etc., were identified.

- Affordable housing is needed, for example, on the St. Vincent's/Silveira properties.
- How would the proposed refuge impact flood control, mosquito abatement, public transportation, wastewater treatment, airport operation, utilities, existing rights-of-way?
- How would the proposed refuge impact planned development within and adjacent to proposed refuge?
- How would lands within and adjacent to the proposed boundary be impacted, for example, Bel Marin Keys?
- Will the proposed refuge impact water quality?
- What are the impacts of contaminants at the former Hamilton Airfield?
- How would the proposed refuge affect cultural resources?

How would the proposed refuge be managed was a question with specific concerns.

- What access and types of recreation and public use would be allowed? Hunting, fishing, trails, facilities (parking, visitor center, restrooms)?
- What is the relationship of the Fish and Wildlife Service with managers of other public lands?
- Are there enough funds available to operate and manage a refuge?
- Habitat restoration should create clear benefits for the local community. Marin County should gain not lose from the refuge proposal.



Pintail, Larry Eiffert, USFWS

Thank You for Participating continued



The endangered California clapper rail. Photo USFWS.

Several questions, concerns, and suggestions were raised regarding the Service's planning process.

- How was the study area determined?
- How did the Fish and Wildlife Service become interested in Marin Baylands?
- Improve notification of landowners, interested individuals, groups, and local governments.
- Coordinate with County-wide planning efforts and keep all appropriate agencies as well as

interest groups informed.

- Extend the public comment period.
- Hold another public meeting.
- The Service planning effort duplicates and undermines the city and county planning processes. The Service should delay its study until local jurisdictions complete their plans.

Potential land acquisition for the proposed refuge was of interest to a number of individuals who provided the following questions and suggestions.

- How will price for land be established?
- Does your agency use condemnation?
- What type of funding for acquisition is available and when?
- Consider conservation and/or agricultural easements.
- Offer incentives to local communities to protect habitat and wildlife.
- Acquire specific tracts of land.

These comments are an important part of our study and will be considered as we evaluate the refuge proposal. We look forward to your continued participation and all future comments as the study progresses.

Proposed Planning Schedule

Please note this schedule is tentative and will change as planning progresses and issues are identified. We will keep you informed of the changes.

Planning Update #1 Issued	November 2000
Public Open House	November 30, 2000
Planning Update #2 Issued	April 2001
Public Open Houses	May 1 and 2, 2001
Draft environmental compliance document, LPP and CMP Released for Public Comment	October 2001
Public Comment Period Closes	November 2001
Notice of Decision	January 2002

How Do I Provide Comments?

We would like to receive your comments by May 31, 2001, in order to consider them during development of the planning documents. Please send your written comments to Cathy Osugi . . .



. . . via mail: Cathy Osugi, Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
NWRS-Refuge Planning
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232



. . . via fax: (503) 231-6161



. . . or via e-mail: FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
(Please refer to "Marin Baylands" in the subject line.)

What Happens After the Open Houses?

A schedule of key planning steps is on page 5. Based on the issues and concerns raised at the public Open Houses and in your letters and e-mail messages, we will develop and assess refuge boundary alternatives and other actions to protect wildlife in the Marin Baylands. An environmental compliance document will evaluate the potential effects that each alternative would have on the physical, biological, and social and economic environment. A Conceptual Management Plan (CMP) will describe potential management activities being considered for the proposed Refuge as well as public uses and their compatibility with the purpose of the Refuge. A Land Protection Plan (LPP) will describe resource protection needs and the proposed Refuge boundary, and identify and prioritize tracts of lands the Service would be interested in acquiring from willing participants. You will have an opportunity to review and comment on these draft planning documents. Their availability will be announced in a future planning update. Service officials will review your comments and decide what course of action to take.



The endangered salt marsh harvest mouse and its habitat.

*Photo © Tom Tutt,
SJSU Instructional
Resources*

Important Points of Contact

For Information on Proposed Refuge Management:

Marge Kolar, Refuge Complex Manager
 San Francisco Bay NWR Complex
 P.O. Box 524
 Newark, California 94560
 Phone (510) 792-0222; fax (510) 792-5828

Bryan Winton, Refuge Manager
 San Pablo Bay NWR
 P.O. Box 2012
 Vallejo, California 94592
 Phone (707) 562-3000; fax (707) 562-3001

For Information on Land Protection Planning:

Cathy Osugi, Wildlife Biologist
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (NWRS/RPL)
 911 NE 11th Avenue
 Portland, Oregon 97232-4181
 Phone (503) 231-6838 or (800) 662-8933; fax (503) 231-6161

For Information on Land Acquisition:

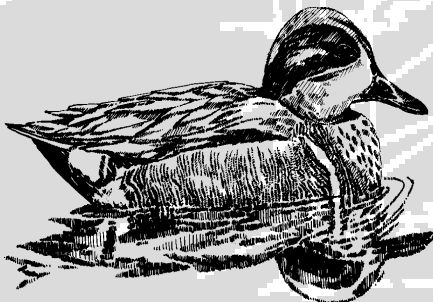
Steve Dyer, Senior Realty Specialist
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 2800 Cottage Way, W-2610
 Sacramento, California 94825
 Phone (916) 414-6445; fax (916) 414-6462

For Planning Information On-Line:

Check out the Refuge Planning home page. We'll be offering electronic versions of some of our planning documents including a Question and Answer information paper at www.r1.fws.gov/planning.

To phone-in or e-mail changes of address:

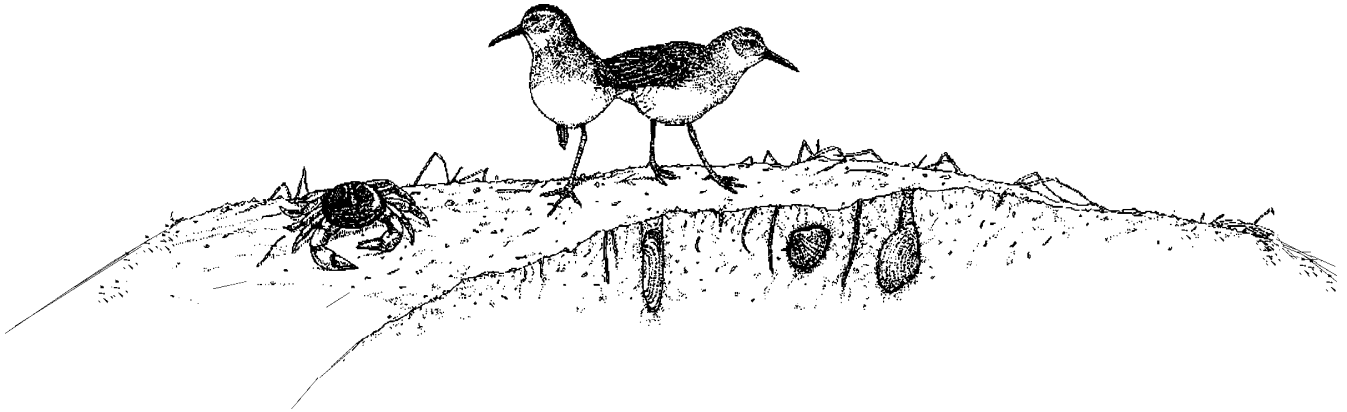
Our e-mail address is FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov (For e-mail messages, please type "Marin Baylands" in the subject line). Let us know if you have a change of address or would like to add or delete an address. Unless we hear from you, your name will remain on the mailing list for all future Planning Updates. Call 800-662-8933 for changes and additions to our mailing list.



Green-winged teal, Larry Eiffert, USFWS

Proposed Marin Baylands National Wildlife Refuge Planning Update 2 Announcing:

- Two Open Houses—May 1 and 2, 2001—to be held in San Rafael and Novato respectively.
- Please provide your comments by May 31, 2001.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish & Wildlife Service

Attn: NWRS/RPL

911 NE 11th Avenue

Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

Address correction requested