



News Release

From the Castro Cove NRDA Trustees

For Immediate Release

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\$2.85 Million Released to Restore San Pablo Bay Marshlands Chevron Provides Funds to Compensate for Historical Contamination

State and federal agencies have settled an environmental injury case with Chevron, providing \$2.85 million to restore 200-plus acres of San Pablo Bay wetlands. The settlement agreement compensates for natural resource injuries from past contaminant releases from Chevron's Richmond refinery into Castro Cove, an isolated San Pablo Bay inlet.

"Less than 10 percent of San Francisco Bay's historic tidal marshes remain today, so this restoration is an important step forward in strengthening the bay ecosystem," said Stephen Edinger, administrator for the Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response. "California clapper rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse are two of the many species that will benefit from this funding."

The action concludes the Castro Cove Natural Resources Damage Assessment process. A portion of the Natural Resource Damages (NRD) funds will be used by East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to help restore at least 30 acres, and possibly as much as 45 acres, of tidal habitat in its planned Breuner Marsh restoration project located in north Richmond, just south of the Pinole Regional Shoreline. The settlement funds will leverage up to \$2 million in matching funds by EBRPD. The rest of the NRD funds will be used toward tidal wetland restoration at the 1,500 acre Cullinan Ranch part of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Cullinan Ranch lies just north of Highway 37 and west of Vallejo. The settlement funds are expected to leverage several million dollars in additional funds for this project as well.

The two restoration projects are designed to restore habitat functions equivalent to those injured by the long-term wastewater discharge and resulting sediment contamination of Castro Cove from the Chevron refinery. Those discharges ended in 1987.

Under a separate action by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Chevron is now cleaning up a 20-acre portion of the mudflats in Castro Cove. Chevron is spending an estimated \$20-30 million to clean up the area, which is more than a mile from the nearest homes.

In addition to responsibility for cleanup, under federal and state law, the company was liable for restoration of natural resources equivalent to those injured by the contamination. The Trustees determined that the contamination had injured tidal mudflat and wetland habitats and the fish and wildlife which rely on them. Their analysis concluded that the restoration of approximately 200 acres of tidal habitat would compensate for the injuries to these natural resources.

After the draft restoration plan was released for review and comment in 2008, the Trustees held a public meeting and received substantial input from interested parties. As a result, in their final decision, the Trustees reduced the proposed funding for Cullinan Ranch, where work is ready to begin, and increased funding for Breuner Marsh, which is still in the early planning process. The agencies designated as Trustees for natural resources injured by the releases of contamination into Castro Cove are the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response.

To obtain a copy of the completed Restoration Plan, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/ospr/Science/chevron_castro_cove.aspx or <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/southwest/castro/admin.html>