

MARIN BAYLANDS ADVOCATES

Campaign *for*
Marin Baylands



MARIN BAYLANDS
ADVOCATES



GOALS

- To ensure the permanent protection of bayland sites as habitat.
- To promote maximum restoration and enhancement of seasonal and tidal wetland values and functions consistent with the needs of the estuary ecosystem and species that depend on the ecosystem.
- To maintain and enhance wetlands values on lands remaining in agriculture.
- To avoid flooding, pollutant, seismic, and other adverse impacts by preserving baylands.

Marin Baylands Defined

Baylands are lands that are subject to tidal action, or that once were subject to tidal action before they were diked for agriculture or filled for development. Comprised of tidal and seasonal wetlands, lagoons, low-lying grasslands and their associated uplands, these lands are all that remain of the once-extensive tidal and seasonal marshes that once lined the Bay.

The Marin baylands consist of more than 10,000 acres along the shores of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays and Estuary. They support a broad variety of plants and animals and supply areas for feeding, breeding, roosting and other purposes for fish, birds, and mammals. Providing crucial habitat for the Estuary's endangered species such as California Clapper Rail and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, baylands are a source of overwintering and migratory habitat for the hundreds of bird species using the Pacific Flyway, and act as a movement corridor for native wildlife.



*Red-winged Blackbird,
a common baylands
breeder*



Individual bayland properties are unique, but their combined, contiguous mass supports biological diversity and floodplain benefits, which smaller, isolated habitats do not. They contribute to water quality by filtering runoff before it reaches the Bay and Estuary, recharging ground-water stores, and moderating the effects of floods by ponding and absorbing runoff, thus reducing flood crest elevations. Bayland vegetation also contributes to air quality.

Protecting baylands from development contributes to public safety, reduces expenses associated with seismic events, and prevents the effects of differential settlement, such as broken pipes, and sidewalks and streets pulling away from buildings.

Baylands contribute to our regional economic vitality, and they provide opportunities for recreational activities such as birding, hiking and biking, photography, and education in a variety of topics. Further, they enhance the quality of life of Bay Area residents with their beauty.



MARIN BAYLANDS CAMPAIGN The Campaign for Marin Baylands began in 1994 when representatives of leading Marin environmental organizations formed the Marin Baylands Advocates (MBA) to focus on protection of the County's baylands. The timing was crucial, as several major bayland sites were under imminent threat of development at that time. MBA founders began by organizing and conducting informational tours for agencies, foundations, elected officials and others, and by creating educational materials. Thirty-eight bayland sites in private ownership were identified as targets for protection. The Hamilton Wetlands Restoration, already being planned by the California Coastal Conservancy and Army Corps of Engineers, became the centerpiece of the Campaign's acquisition and restoration efforts.

MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE MARIN BAYLANDS ADVOCATES IS TO ASSURE THE PERMANENT PROTECTION, RESTORATION AND BIOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT OF MARIN BAYLANDS AS PART OF THE ECOSYSTEMS OF SAN FRANCISCO AND SAN PABLO BAYS.



ORGANIZATION: HOW WE WORK MBA is an all-volunteer organization, which meets monthly. MBA works jointly with our fiduciary agent, Marin Audubon Society, to acquire and restore baylands properties. Marin Audubon society is MBA's fiscal sponsor through its 501(c)(3) designation.

While MBA works on public outreach, fundraising, and developing strategies to purchase sites, Marin Audubon Society applies for grants, takes title, assumes insurance and other ownership costs, and oversees habitat restoration and/or enhancement as needed. Title to most sites will be transferred to public agencies, such as the Marin County Open Space District or the California Department of Fish and Game, for permanent protective ownership.

Assistance with bayland acquisitions is needed.
Donations to the Marin Baylands Fund may be sent to:

Marin Baylands Advocates
PO Box 2598
Mill Valley, CA 94942

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MBA SUCCESS STORIES

- 1 TRIANGLE MARSH:** a 34-acre site purchased in 1999 for \$750,000. The filled portions of the site will be restored to tidal marsh and transition/refuge habitat.
- 2 BEL MARIN KEYS:** in 2001, MBA provided publicity and fundraising assistance to the California Coastal Conservancy for purchase of this 1,613-acre bayland, which will be incorporated into the adjacent 900-acre Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project, creating a spectacular 2,600-acre wetland.

SIMMONS SLOUGH CORRIDOR: MBA and MAS are attempting to combine sites 3, 4 and 5 with two other properties to create a 270-acre habitat corridor, called the Simmons Slough Corridor, comprising the floodplain of Simmons Slough. The baylands will be enhanced as seasonal wetland habitat.

- 3 ATHERTON AVENUE BAYLAND:** an 84-acre site in unincorporated Novato purchased in 2000 for \$380,000.
- 4 OLIVE AVENUE WETLAND:** a 19-acre site purchased in 2002 for \$315,000.
- 5 MISSION VALLEY BAYLAND:** a 60-acre parcel donated to Marin Audubon Society by Mission Valley Properties in September 2003.
- 6 BAHIA,** one of Marin County's most environmentally significant properties, contains 335 acres of diked bayland plus 297 acres of associated upland and seasonal wetlands. Bahia was purchased in 2003 for \$15.8 million. MAS plans to restore the wetlands to diked tidal marsh. After purchase, 361.66 acres were transferred to the California Department of Fish and Game, and 207.6 acres to the Marin Open Space District. MAS retains and manages 61.8 acres.
- 7 PETALUMA MARSH:** This 180-acre parcel was purchased in September 2003 from Redwood landfill for \$275,000. Marin Audubon will restore 100 acres of diked baylands to tidal marsh.