

# State of the San Francisco Estuary Conference 2013

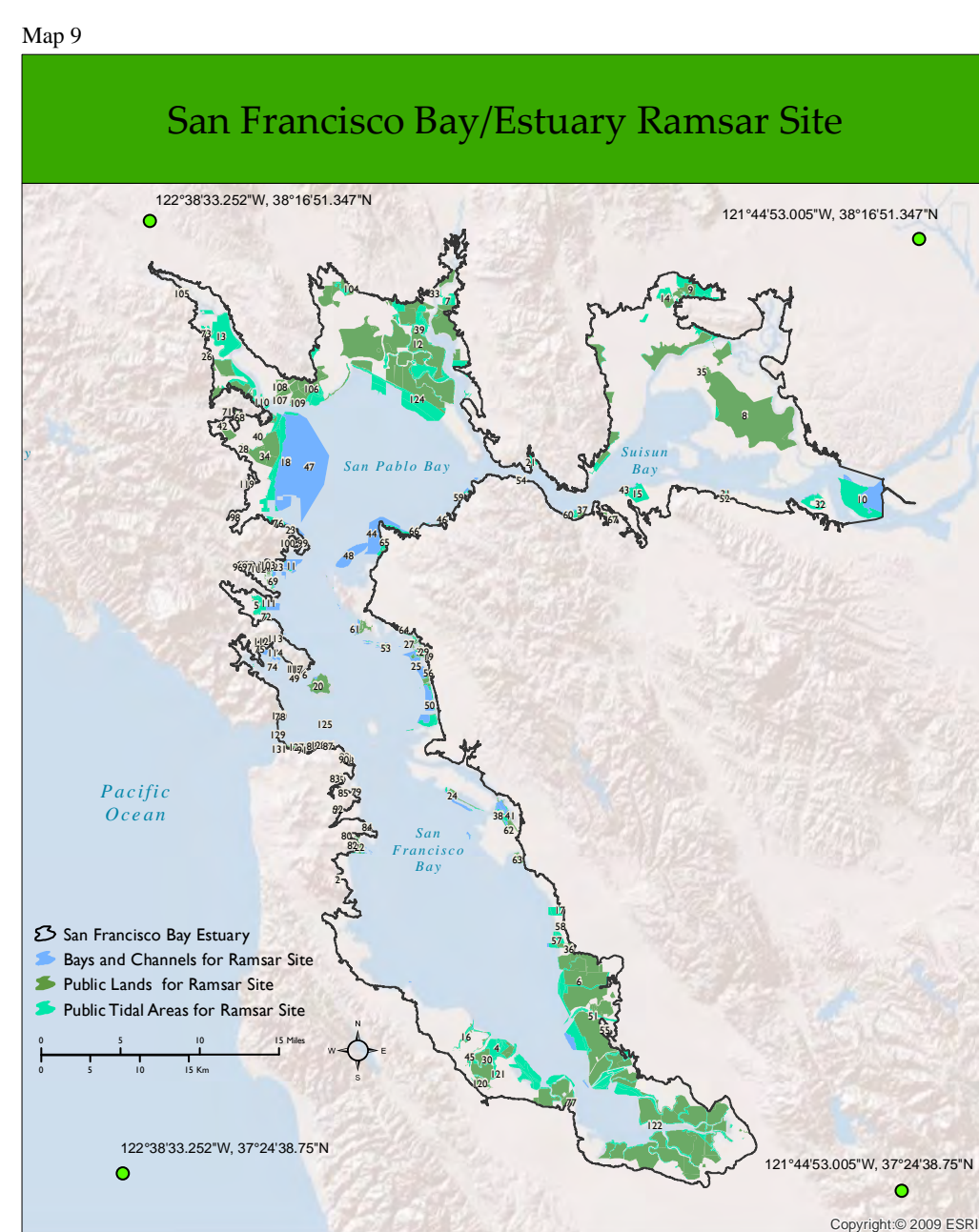
## 2013 Awardees



Photo by: Verne Nelson

## Outstanding Environmental Project Awards

### US Ramsar Conservation Lands



Officially known as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Ramsar is the only inter-governmental treaty devoted to a particular habitat, the protection and wise use of wetlands through voluntary measures. The treaty was signed in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran. To be designated a "Wetland of International Importance," a site must meet one of nine criteria. San Francisco Bay met all nine. After several previous attempts to secure designation, the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture spearheaded the application in partnership with Audubon California and GreenInfo, to assemble the scientific data, secure enrollment letters, develop maps, and submit the application.

On February 2, 2013, World Wetlands Day, SF Bay officially became the 35th US Ramsar site and the 6th in California.

### Yosemite Slough Wetlands Restoration North Side, Phase 1



#### Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, San Francisco

Located on the western shoreline of South San Francisco Bay, the Yosemite Slough Wetlands Restoration Project, when complete, will restore 34 acres of natural habitat, including 10 acres of tidal wetlands, mudflats for shorebirds, and nesting islands for special status birds. The project's first phase was successfully completed in June 2012.

#### Key project elements included:

- Removal of existing structures on the north side of the canal along with debris and contaminated soils.
- Restoration of 7 acres of seasonal wetlands.
- Re-vegetation with native plants to increase local biodiversity.
- Creation of a nesting island for shorebirds, isolated by a tidal channel to protect nesters from feral animals and human disturbance.
- Reduction in the amount of polluted runoff as a result of restored seasonal wetlands catching and filtering water.
- Completion of a segment of the Bay Trail along the north Slough shoreline.

Funding partners for the \$14.3 million project included California State Parks, State Coastal Conservancy/Wildlife Conservation Board, Association of Bay Area Governments, Bay Conservation Development Commission, the City of San Francisco, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation, U.S. EPA Region 9-San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund/San Francisco Estuary Partnership, the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, and the Barkley Fund.

### Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta



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The newest Park District visitor center is located at Big Break Regional Shoreline in Oakley. Completed in 2012, the 5,500 square foot building is certified 3 Green Globes by the Green Building Initiative for green building design, engineering, construction and facility operations. The visitor center is staffed by Park District naturalists who provide visitor orientation and interpretive programming highlighting the Delta, its ecosystems, and wildlife. The Delta Discovery Experience expands use outdoors with a covered amphitheater and exterior exhibits, including a 1,200 square foot interactive map of the local Delta water system. Big Break also offers trails, picnic and meadow areas, boat and kayak launch facilities, and an observation/fishing pier.

### Tidewater Service Area Outreach Project



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In 2011, East Bay Regional Park District opened the Tidewater Boating Center, overlooking San Leandro Bay and the Oakland Estuary Channel. The Tidewater Service Area Outreach Project was launched with the opening of the center to ensure that the youth of East Oakland were taking full advantage of the recreational and interpretive programs in their watershed and estuary. In an effort to provide much-needed services to the community, the park district created partnerships with public charter schools, community-based organizations, low-income housing developments and other non-profits to educate and empower youth, specifically on how to keep the Bay-Estuary clean and healthy.

### Western Recycled Water Coalition



The Western Recycled Water Coalition is a successful collaboration among 22 districts, cities, and an investor-owned water utility. Having previously secured \$34.7M in federal funding to build 8 projects, current members have secured an additional \$3.4M to plan recycled water projects that will develop 120,000 acre-feet of reliable, local water supplies for agriculture, industry, wetlands, and urban landscape. These 25 projects provide multiple benefits, helping to preserve overdrawn river and groundwater supplies, and protecting the sensitive Bay-Delta. This innovative partnership approach to funding projects will help to develop a sustainable water supply solution across the watershed while directly supporting a healthy and resilient San Francisco Estuary.