

Bay Area Audubon Council

WETLANDS POLICY STATEMENT

Bay Area Audubon Council
Golden Gate Audubon Society
Madrone Audubon Society
Marin Audubon Society
Mount Diablo Audubon Society
Napa-Solano Audubon Society
Ohlone Audubon Society
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Sequoia Audubon Society

It is the Policy of the Bay Area Audubon council, and its member society, to promote the protection, restoration and enhancement of wetlands and marshes. In addition to the statements and policies contained the in **WETLANDS RESOLUTION**, promulgated by the Wetlands Coalition, June 1984, the Bay Area Audubon Council **URGES**:

1. That the **QUANTITY AND DIVERSITY** of wetland habitats be maintained or increased whenever possible.
2. **RESTORATION** as a viable and essential means to renew productivity in damaged wetlands. Our policy is to search out and identify sites suitable for restoration and to support efforts to restore them.
3. That **MITIGATION** for the loss of wetlands assure:
 - a. That there be no net loss of wetland acreage
 - b. Mitigation acreage be of equivalent (or better) habitat value. Factors such as size, contiguity, vegetation and wildlife requirements should be considered.
 - c. Mitigation be accomplished on-site; or, if not feasible, at the closest site where similar, or better, environmental conditions can be created.
 - d. Mitigation be provided before or concurrently with the development.
 - e. Monitoring and enforcement plans sufficient to insure the success of the enhancement. Monitoring should be conducted by an agency independent of the development.
4. The retention, protection and enhancement of **SEASONAL WETLANDS** as an essential part of our total wetland resource. Seasonal wetlands are areas which become inundated or saturated during the rainy season, and include diked historic baylands, some now in agricultural use. They provide necessary habitat for migratory birds.
5. The retention of **SALT PONDS**, or their enhancement as more biologically productive habitat. Created from historic baylands, salt ponds should be preserved as bay related wildlife habitat whenever salt production is abandoned. Numerous species of waterbirds, fish, and invertebrates now favor salt ponds over surrounding baylands with lower salinities.
6. Provision for and the protection of **BUFFER ZONES** between development projects and wetlands. These zones must provide areas of refuge for wetland species during high water periods and protection from human disturbance.

7. That **PUBLIC ACCESS** be governed by the sensitivity of the wetlands involved.
8. Establishment of **WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY INFLOW STANDARDS** which protect the health of San Francisco Bay. The legislature should establish and maintain progress to monitor both bay and inflow water quality with specific emphasis on agricultural and urban/industrial toxic substances. When established, fresh water inflow standards must be enforced.
9. Strict **ENFORCEMENT** of existing laws and regulations pertaining to the protection of wetlands. We call upon the Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and local governments to allocate adequate funding for enforcement, and to move rapidly in issuing citations and prosecuting violators.