Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline is a 739-acre area of shoreline and wetlands that lie along the southern edge of San Leandro Bay. The Arrowhead Marsh is a portion of the shoreline that was restored from developed land to wetlands in 1997. Recently, the East Bay Regional Park District (District) has been working to provide better habitat for the endangered California clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mouse at this marsh by combating a problem that has arisen.

**Threatened by Invasive Vegetation**

To provide quality marsh habitat, the District must control non-native smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*), which has invaded the restored wetlands. Smooth cordgrass is an invasive species that outcompetes desired native plant species, alters ecological processes in marshes, and reduces the habitat of native species. It is currently classified in the “most invasive and damaging” plant category by the California Exotic Pest Plant Council. Cordgrass forms a dense mat of vegetation that traps sediment, raising ground levels too high for marshes to receive the water inflows they need, eventually turning them into meadows.

This project reflects an increased awareness that the ecological health of all upstream properties affects the health of the San Leandro Bay. It also affirms marshes’ important ecological function as a filter of pollutants and a tool for protecting water quality.

**Quick Facts**

- **Action:** Control invasive species
- **Acres:** 40 acres
- **Funding:** $30,000
- **Provided by:** Millenium Holdings
- **Completed:** [In progress]
- **Target habitats:** tidal marsh
- **Target species:** California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse
- **Improvements:** Remove invasive species, regrade marsh