Hayward Regional Shoreline

Restored Hayward Marsh Project
Hayward, CA

History

Salt ponds were once a naturally occurring component of San Francisco Bay's tidal marshes, including the Hayward Regional Shoreline. Pond vegetation provided food for waterfowl while salt was harvested by the Ohlone people and, later, by early Spanish and Mexican settlers. Beginning in the 1850s, much of the Bay's wetlands were diked to form additional ponds for commercial salt production.

Some of these man-made salt ponds have since been restored to tidal marsh and other wetland habitats, including ponds within Hayward Marsh. Since 1985, these Hayward Marsh ponds have used treated wastewater to create fresh and brackish marshes. While these marshes provide habitat for many species, the wastewater infrastructure has exceeded its useful life, necessitating updates to the pond system. Additionally, predicted sea level rise conditions are expected to alter the wildlife habitats and trail infrastructure. Given these anticipated changes, it is time to re-envision the future of Hayward Marsh.

Opportunities for Wildlife Habitat Improvements

The endangered salt marsh harvest mouse inhabits dense pickleweed stands within salt marshes. Within Hayward Marsh, a 27-acre area dominated by pickleweed is set aside as a Mouse Preserve. This Preserve, along with other portions of Hayward Marsh, is also dominated by cordgrass, which provides habitat for the endangered Ridgway's rail (California clapper rail).

The islands located within Hayward Marsh function as important nesting grounds for birds such as the California least tern, the western snowy plover, and the black skimmer.

The Restore Hayward Marsh Project will preserve and improve the benefits Hayward Marsh provides for its wildlife residents.

Project Goals

The Restore Hayward Marsh Project seeks to plan for sea level rise and habitat resiliency, expand public access, enhance wildlife habitat, increase shoreline resilience, and improve the ability of the District to adapt to future conditions. The project's goals will be further refined during the design process.
Hayward Marsh Today
Opportunities for Improvement

1. Improve Existing Bay Trail
2. Repair Eroding Levees
3. Decrease Sedimentation
4. Increase Wildlife Habitat
5. Remove Outdated Wastewater Infrastructure