

Albany Salt Marsh Expansion

Expand and enhance the existing Albany Salt Marsh located immediately northwest of the intersection of Buchanan Street and Highway 80, and north of the Golden Gate Fields racetrack. The existing salt marsh, which is approximately 2 acres, would be expanded to approximately 4 acres into land owned by Golden Gate Fields that is used partly for parking and for maintenance and corporation yard purposes. Approval by Golden Gate Fields, or acquisition of the land, would be required to complete this project.

Prior studies, commissioned by Friends of Five Creeks (a non-profit group), have been prepared to evaluate the feasibility of this salt marsh expansion. In 2001, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted by Levine-Fricke to determine subsurface conditions of the area. As a result of this assessment, there were no documented sources or specific areas of potential hazardous material releases identified at the site. However, the assessment recommended that if the site is excavated for conversion back into a salt marsh, that additional subsurface soil and groundwater assessment be conducted. In 2002, Balance Hydrologics conducted a hydrologic feasibility assessment of wetland restoration for the site. A combined program of measuring and modeling tidal water levels was used and two alternatives were modeled. The study found that the tidal regimes in the Albany Mudflats and the existing Salt Marsh make it conducive to restore and expand the salt marsh wetland. The report also recommended the desired elevations (through excavation) that would be needed to create the desired habitat. Future studies would need to design for anticipated sea level rise, including potential flooding of Buchanan Street.

Rationale: The site was historically part of a submerged tidelands system that was prevalent around the San Francisco Bay. Much of the tidelands in the area of the Albany Salt March were filled and virtually all that remains is this 2-acre marsh. Enhancing this salt marsh, and expanding its size to approximately 4 acres, would benefit fish and bird wildlife species.

Cost: The estimated cost to restore and expand the Albany Salt Marsh is \$2,100,000.
The estimated cost to acquire the existing 2 acre salt marsh is unknown at this time.
The estimated cost to acquire 2 acres of adjoining land is unknown at this time.