



Castro Cove Trustee Council

News Update

May 2015

Highlights

Cullinan Ranch

Restoration efforts underway at Cullinan Ranch.

Breuner Marsh

Restoration efforts underway at Breuner Marsh.

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Background Information



From the early 1900s until 1987, the Chevron Refinery in Richmond, California released wastewater into Castro Cove, part of the San Francisco Bay. Years later some of the sediments in the Cove still had high levels of contamination, and in 1999 the California Regional Water Quality Control Board identified the Cove as a regional toxic hot spot. In 2010, Chevron removed the contaminated sediments under a Water Board order. Meanwhile the Castro Cove Natural Resource Trustees (see page 4 of this newsletter) worked with Chevron to conduct a natural resource damage assessment and determine what should be done to compensate for the historical injuries to Castro Cove habitat, fish, and wildlife. In 2010 Chevron agreed to a legal settlement with the Trustees. The settlement included \$2.65 million to fund habitat restoration projects. Two regional projects, Breuner Marsh and Cullinan Ranch, were selected by the Trustees with input from the public. Both projects are underway and recently achieved significant milestones.

Restoration Project Highlights

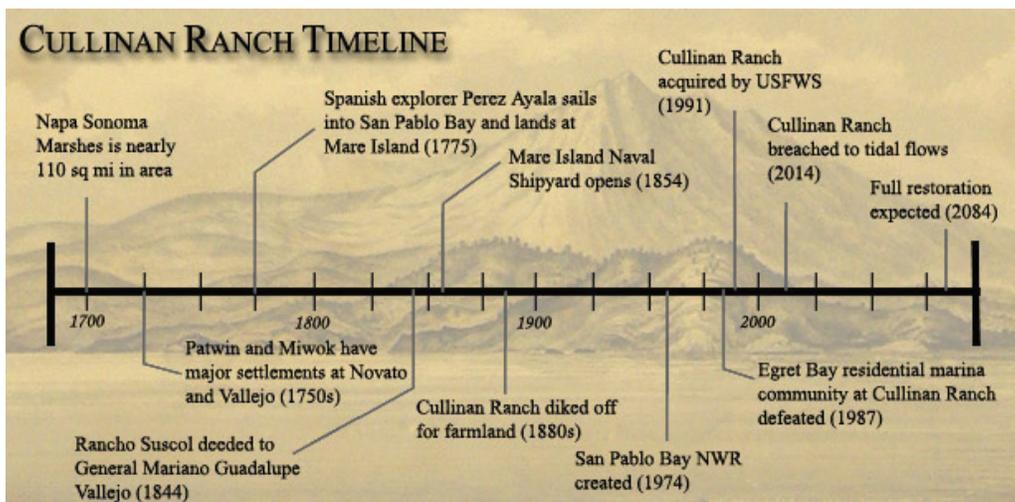
Cullinan Ranch

The Cullinan Ranch site in Solano County north of Castro Cove was once a tidal marsh. Farmers diked off the area over a hundred years ago. Plans for commercial development of the 1,500 acre property were halted in the 1980s and soon after, the site was purchased and added to the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

For years, sufficient funding was not available to restore the site as tidal habitat. The Castro Cove Trustees provided \$1.65 million to help this project get underway. Remaining funds came from several other sources including NOAA, USFWS, and the California Wildlife Conservation Board. In January 2015 after years of planning and preparation, several levees were breached and tidal waters were restored to Cullinan Ranch. A new Cullinan Ranch wildlife viewing platform and boat launch are among the public recreational facilities constructed in 2013. The photos below show the dramatic changes that took place once tide waters were restored in January of 2015. *(Photos courtesy of NOAA and Ducks Unlimited).*



The Cullinan restoration will provide habitat for many species, including the endangered Ridgway's rail, the salt marsh harvest mouse (seen in photos to the left), anadromous salmonids, and a range of other wetland-dependent birds, mammals, and fish. *(Rail photo courtesy of East Bay Regional Park District; Mouse photo courtesy of the US Fish and Wildlife Service).*



The timeline above shows the interesting history of Cullinan Ranch. The ongoing efforts will ensure the area will be restored and maintained for future generations. *(Timeline courtesy of Ducks Unlimited).*

Restoration Project Highlights

Breuner Marsh

The Breuner Marsh project in the City of Richmond is restoring coastal habitats and providing new public access in a 150-acre parcel adjacent to the Bay. The property, partially filled and cut off from the Bay many decades ago, was obtained by the East Bay Regional Parks District in 2009. Restoration is providing increased habitat for tidal marsh species. Many birds and other wildlife including two special status species, the Ridgway's rail (formerly known as the California Clapper rail) and the salt marsh harvest mouse, will benefit. The project also will provide



foraging and rearing habitat

for many fish species. A new Breuner Marsh pedestrian and bike path will close a 1.5 mile gap of the San Francisco Bay Trail. Construction began in 2013 with debris removal and fencing. In late 2014 a dedication ceremony was held for the nearly completed project. Soon after, portions of levees that had walled off the site from the Bay were removed, and tide waters returned to Breuner Marsh. Public parking, restrooms, trails, picnic facilities and

interpretive exhibits are being developed. The Castro Cove Trustees provided \$1 million from the Chevron settlement to help initiate the \$8.5 million project. The remaining \$7,500,000 has been provided by the East Bay Regional Park District and additional grants.



An aerial view of the newly restored Breuner Marsh property.

Castro Cove Trustee Council Budget Update

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|---|-----------------------|
| Amount Received | \$2,850,427.88 |
| Allocations | |
| Cullinan Ranch | \$1,650,000.00 |
| Breuner Marsh | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Agency Oversight | \$160,000.00 |
| Total | \$2,810,000.00 |
| Total Amount Remaining <i>(including earned interest)</i> | \$45,721.05 |

Useful Links

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/OSPR/NRDA/Chevron-Castro-Cove>

<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/southwest/castro/index.html>

About the Trustees



**U.S. Fish &
Wildlife Service**

The United States Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) is a federal agency within the Department of the Interior. The FWS works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.



**National Oceanic
and Atmospheric
Administration**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is a scientific agency within the United States Department of Commerce focused on the conditions of the oceans and the atmosphere. NOAA warns of dangerous weather, charts seas and skies, guides the use and protection of ocean and coastal resources, and conducts research to improve understanding and stewardship of the environment.



**California Department
of Fish and Wildlife**

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is a department within the government of California, falling under its parent California Natural Resources Agency. The Department of Fish and Wildlife manages and protects the state's diverse fish, wildlife, plant resources, and native habitats.