

October 20, 2010

**GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON'S STATEMENT ON THE PT. MOLATE SHORELINE
PROTECTION AGREEMENT**

Agreement to preserve North Richmond shoreline for habitat restoration, park creation and trails

Today, the Richmond Shoreline Protection Agreement (“Agreement”) was announced between Citizens for East Shore Parks (CESP) and SPRAWLDEF (Sustainability, Parks, Recycling and Wildlife Legal Defense Fund), two local environmental organizations, and the Guidiville Tribe. The Agreement supports the creation of the Guidiville’s plans to develop a billion-dollar destination resort area at the former Pt. Molate Naval Fuel Depot in exchange for significant environmental improvements to the proposed development and funding to purchase, preserve and restore much of the North Richmond Shoreline.

The Agreement settles a lawsuit filed by CESP and SPRAWLDEF against the Guidiville Tribe and Upstream Point Molate LLC. While Golden Gate Audubon was not a party to the litigation or the settlement negotiations, its Board of Directors has formally expressed conditional support for the settlement at the request of CESP and SPRAWLDEF.

Over the years, CESP and SPRAWLDEF have demonstrated their commitment to the preservation and restoration of the San Francisco Bay shoreline for wildlife, habitat and recreational uses. CESP in particular has been a leader in the creation and protection of public open space and park lands along the East Bay shoreline, particularly in the Richmond area. These groups stepped forward to initiate the litigation when no other groups could.

In an ideal situation, Pt. Molate would not be developed by anyone and would instead be converted to public open space and parkland, with suitable habitat restoration and sensitive wildlife areas. However, our assessment of options at the site led us to conclude that some development would likely occur at the site and that the CESP/SPRAWLDEF Agreement was the alternative mostly likely to produce the most benefits for the community and wildlife in the Richmond area. We would never support a shoreline development of this type without overwhelming offsetting benefit to local environment.

Pt. Molate is a valuable natural resource for birds, other wildlife, plants, and people who enjoy open space and the natural environment. It is within one of Audubon’s Important Bird Areas and includes rare species of plants. Under any management scheme, these natural values and public access to the shoreline must be protected. It is our understanding that many of these values will be protected or enhanced under the Agreement.

We also recognize that the City of Richmond is required to develop the Pt. Molate property in a manner that creates economic benefits for the City and that likely alternatives to the proposed development could have greater environmental impacts without providing the substantial mitigation that may result from CESP’s and SPRAWLDEF’s settlement.

After communicating with proponents and opponents of the settlement and the proposed development, the Golden Gate Audubon Board of Directors decided to support the settlement and to not oppose the project provided that it complies with the terms of the settlement and all applicable laws. We understand that there may be strong opposition to this Agreement and to the development itself. But we also believe that CESP, SPRAWLDEF and their negotiators have acted in good faith and with the intention of achieving the best outcome for the environment possible in the given circumstances.