



For Immediate Release

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\$36.8 Million Natural Resource Damages Settlement to Restore Natural Resources and Improve Recreational Opportunities in Areas Affected by Cosco Busan Oil Spill

Projects will Address Impacts from Ship that Struck the Bay Bridge

State and federal trustee agencies will use most of the funds from a \$36.8 million settlement of natural resource damages to restore natural resources injured by the Nov. 7, 2007 oil spill in the San Francisco Bay and improve Bay Area recreational opportunities impacted by the spill. The funds are part of a \$44.4 million settlement with Regal Stone Limited and Fleet Management Limited, the companies responsible for the container ship *Cosco Busan* that spilled 53,000 gallons of oil into the bay after hitting the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

“This funding will go a long way to restore the Bay Area’s wealth of natural resources that were severely damaged by oil released from the *M/V Cosco Busan*, and to enhance shoreline parks and outdoor recreation throughout the Bay Area,” said Scott Schaefer, Acting Administrator for the California Department of Fish and Game’s Office of Spill Prevention and Response. “We appreciate the hard work and outstanding effort of our trustee agency partners in identifying and developing projects to restore these valuable natural resources.”

The trustees, including the California Department of Fish and Game, California State Lands Commission, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management, estimate that the spill killed 6,849 birds, impacted 14 to 29 percent of the herring spawn that winter, oiled 3,367 acres of shoreline habitat, and resulted in the loss of over 1 million recreational user-days.

Approximately \$32.3 million will be spent on a wide variety of restoration projects. The trustees will be releasing a Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan, which proposes specific projects to address specific injuries. About \$5 million is set aside for bird restoration, \$4 million for habitat restoration, \$2.5 million for fish and habitat (eelgrass) restoration, and \$18.8 million for recreational use improvements. An additional \$2 million will fund restoration planning, administration and

oversight, with any unused funds to be spent toward more restoration. The plan will be available shortly for public comment.

“This is an excellent example of how the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration process can provide for the benefit of all after catastrophe strikes,” observed Susan Moore, Field Supervisor for the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife. “Following the public comment period and finalization of the restoration plan, the settlement will provide outstanding restoration benefiting the fish, wildlife and people of the greater San Francisco Bay area.”

The proposed projects include:

- Habitat improvements at Muir Beach, Albany Beach, Aramburu Island, and South Bay Salt Ponds;
- Creation and improvement of bird roosting and nesting habitat on the Berkeley Pier, Tule Lake, Farallon Islands and South Bay Salt Ponds;
- Eelgrass and oyster bed restoration at multiple sites around the Bay; and
- Recreational use improvements throughout the spill area.

"The beaches and rocky shoreline of the National Park sites in the Bay Area were seriously impacted by the oil spill three years ago," said Superintendent Frank Dean of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. "The National Park Service will use the funds from this settlement to enhance the enjoyment of visitors to these special places."

"San Francisco Bay is one of our greatest ecological treasures." said Robert Haddad, Chief of NOAA's Assessment and Restoration Division. "Restoration of critical natural resources will provide multiple benefits to the community and economy via green jobs during construction and creating better opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy the Bay."

Copies of the Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan, including injury assessment and restoration project details, are available at www.dfg.ca.gov/ospr/Science/cosco_busan_spill.aspx or by contacting Steve Hampton at (916) 323-4724 or shampton@ospr.dfg.ca.gov. A short video summarizing the document is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqO65L49ZD4>.

The Trustees will hold two public meetings on October 19:

- Noon in the First Floor Auditorium in the Elihu M. Harris State Building, 1515 Clay Street, Oakland;
- 7pm at the Mill Valley Community Center, 180 El Camino Alto, Mill Valley.

At these meetings, the Trustees will present a brief overview of the restoration plan and accept public comment.

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