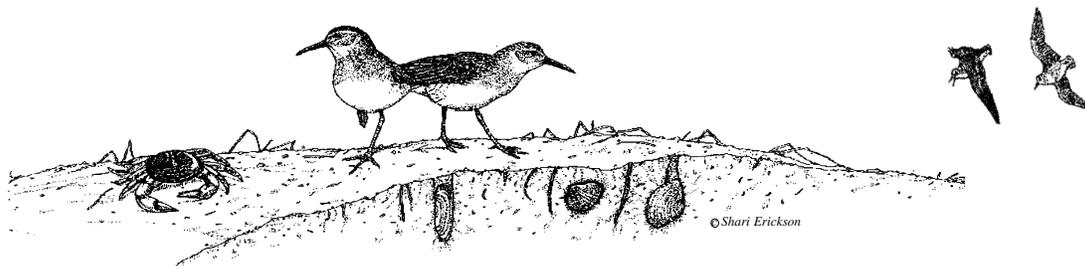




# Planning Update



UPDATE #6

FEBRUARY 1998

## WHAT'S NEW

The draft environmental assessment and land protection plan are complete for the proposed South San Diego Bay Unit of San Diego National Wildlife Refuge. Boundaries and alternatives have remained unchanged since we issued the last planning update in November 1997. Both of the draft documents have been sent to anyone who requested them, and the comment period is now open. The documents are also posted on our website at [www.r1.fws.gov/planning/plnhome.html](http://www.r1.fws.gov/planning/plnhome.html). **Please let us know if you would like to receive a copy of the final documents, or you will receive only planning updates.**

## PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The workshops will give you an opportunity to ask questions and submit comments in an informal setting. Each workshop will begin with a short presentation regarding the refuge proposal and the planning process. Staff from local Service offices and the Regional Office in Portland, Oregon will be available to discuss the proposal.

**Chula Vista:** 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., February 25, Chula Vista Nature Center, 1000 Gunpowder Pt. Dr., Chula Vista. (Buses will run between the parking lot and the Nature Center every 10 minutes during the meeting.)

**Imperial Beach:** 1 p.m.-3 p.m., February 26, Marina Vista Center, 1075 8th St., Imperial Beach.

**Coronado:** 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., February 26, Village Hall, inside Village Elementary School, 600 6th St., Coronado. (Enter at the door on H Ave., between 6th and 7th Streets.)

## SUBMITTING COMMENTS

If you have questions or concerns, please bring them to the workshops, call one of the numbers on the "Who to Contact" list, or send us a letter or e-mail message. The comment period is open through March 11, so make sure we receive your comments by that date.

**Please provide written comments to Charles J. Houghten, Chief, Planning and Mapping Branch (ARW-RE), 911 N.E. 11th Ave., Portland, OR 97232-4181.** Please send e-mail comments (with "South Bay" typed in the subject line) to [r1planning\\_guest@fws.gov](mailto:r1planning_guest@fws.gov) or complete the comment form available from our website at [www.r1.fws.gov/planning/plnhome.html](http://www.r1.fws.gov/planning/plnhome.html).

## THE PROPOSAL

The proposed refuge would protect habitat for hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, shorebirds, and seabirds, and eight animals and plants that are federally listed as endangered or threatened. The wildlife habitat within the proposed boundary is the internationally important to migratory birds.

The Service is interested in protecting habitats in South Bay, the salt works, the Naval Radio Receiving Facility, and remnant salt marshes and mudflats. A total of eight corporations, agencies, and governments own all the land inside the proposed boundary. If a boundary is approved, the Service would have authority to negotiate agreements with willing landowners to help wildlife. The Service may be able to accept land transfers in some circumstances, if owners are willing.

**THE ALTERNATIVES**

The enclosed environmental assessment describes and analyzes three alternative boundaries and a no action alternative. Under Alternatives A and B, the Service would extend National Wildlife Refuge System protection to all salt marshes and mudflats, the salt ponds, and the open water in South Bay from the Sweetwater Channel and Crown Cove south. Under Alternative C, the Service would protect the salt ponds and adjoining salt marsh and mudflats, and the open water in South Bay south of Emory Cove and the Chula Vista Marine Center.

Under **Alternative A**, the Service would protect about **5,000 acres**, including over 800 acres of degraded habitats that could be restored to enhance wildlife values.

Under **Alternative B**, the preferred alternative, the Service would protect about **4,750 acres**, including almost 600 acres of degraded habitats that could be restored to enhance wildlife values.

Under **Alternative C**, the alternative the Service approved in 1979, the Service would protect about **2,000 acres**. About 169 acres of Alternative C are degraded habitats that could be restored to enhance wildlife values.

Under **Alternative D**, the no action alternative, the Service would not establish a new refuge in South Bay.

**WHO TO CONTACT**

**Information on the Proposed South San Diego Bay Unit**

Dean Rundle, Refuge Manager  
 Andrew Yuen, Deputy Refuge Manager  
 San Diego NWR Complex  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 2736 Loker Avenue West, Suite A  
 Carlsbad, CA 92008  
 (760) 930-0168  
 FAX (760) 930-0256

Rebecca Young, Refuge Manager  
 Tijuana Slough NWR, Sweetwater Marsh NWR  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 301 Caspian Way  
 Imperial Beach, CA 91932  
 (619) 575-2704  
 FAX (619) 575-6913

**Information on Refuge Planning and Compliance**

Abbey Kucera, Fish and Wildlife Biologist  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 911 N.E. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor West  
 Portland, OR 97232-4181  
 (503) 231-6839 or (800) 662-8933  
 FAX (503) 231-6161

**Information on San Diego County Endangered Species' Issues or MSCP**

Sherry Barrett, Wildlife Biologist  
 Nancy Gilbert, Wildlife Biologist  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 2730 Loker Avenue West  
 Carlsbad, CA 92008  
 (760) 431-9440  
 FAX (760) 431-9618

**Information on Land Acquisitions**

Jane Scott, Realty Specialist  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 2736 Loker Avenue West  
 Carlsbad, CA 92008  
 (760) 930-0209  
 FAX (760) 930-0256

PLANNING SCHEDULE  
 FOR THE PROPOSED  
 SOUTH SAN DIEGO BAY UNIT

Public open houses:	
Chula Vista	Feb. 25, 1998
Imperial Beach	Feb. 26, 1998
Coronado	Feb. 26, 1998
Formal comment period ends	Mar. 11, 1998
Final Environmental Assessment/ Land Protection Plan	June 1998
Public notice of decision	June 1998