



San Francisco Bay Joint Venture

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MANAGEMENT BOARD: Voting members

*Bay Area Audubon Council
Bay Area Open Space Council
Bay Planning Coalition
Citizens Committee to
Complete the Refuge
Ducks Unlimited
Audubon California
PRBO Conservation Science
PG&E Corporation
Save San Francisco Bay
Association
Sierra Club
The Bay Institute
The Conservation Fund*



Central Valley Joint Venture

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MANAGEMENT BOARD: Voting members

*California Waterfowl
Defenders of Wildlife
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Audubon California
PRBO Conservation Science
River Partners
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land*

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Request for support in opposing cuts to the North American
Wetlands Conservation Act

Dear Senators Feinstein and Boxer:

On behalf of the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Joint Ventures, together with all of the non-governmental organizations which compose these Joint Ventures, we ask that you stand firm against the damaging provision in HR 1 that would zero-out funding for FY 11 operation of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA).

NAWCA is one of our nation's most successful grant programs, greatly assisting public-private conservation partnerships. It has been absolutely foundational to our efforts to protect and restore vital wetland habitat, benefiting both wildlife and people in virtually every corner of our state.

California currently has 113 NAWCA projects either completed or underway that have conserved a total of almost 665,000 acres of wetlands habitat. Since its inception, \$69 million in NAWCA funding in our state alone has stimulated partner contributions of almost \$325 million toward producing this impressive conservation result. These dollars deliver California jobs in the construction, environmental and engineering sectors. Few programs have such non-federal match for green jobs and environmental health.

Key habitats in California have benefited directly from NAWCA including critical areas in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region and the Central Valley. In the Bay/Delta region alone over 172,000 acres of degraded wetlands, salt ponds and waterways have been restored or significantly enhanced through NAWCA funding. If the Bay/Delta system is to be restored to meet the co-equal goals of a reliable water supply for millions of California homes and farms and a sustainable ecosystem for fish, wildlife and local communities, NAWCA investments must remain as an absolutely essential part of the funding strategy.

In the Central Valley, the heart of the Pacific Flyway upon which millions of migratory waterbirds depend, NAWCA has provided the essential framework for restoration investment. Over a half million acres of wetlands and riparian forests have been restored or enhanced by a federal investment of less than twenty-five cents for each conservation dollar spent.

Rather than to zero-out the NAWCA account, we call on the Congress to fund NAWCA at the level proposed in the President's Budget for 2012. This level of investment will allow us to continue making progress toward our conservation obligations in a highly cost-effective manner - benefiting wildlife, people and the national economy through more effective ecosystem services and outdoor recreational opportunities, including youth opportunities through the President's Great Outdoors Initiative.

We also ask for your support to ensure that funding for our national system of Joint Ventures, established through the North American Waterfowl Plan and recognized by Congress, are funded at the level of the 2012 President's Budget. Joint Ventures are the engines that deliver NAWCA and other related habitat projects. They are self-directed partnerships of local, state and federal agencies, organizations, corporations, tribes, and individuals that have formally accepted the responsibility of implementing national and international bird conservation plans. In California we currently have five very active Joint Ventures, including the Central Valley JV and the San Francisco Bay JV. The Joint Venture framework provides a highly effective and efficient method of rallying energy and resources toward conservation projects that benefit the public. Every federal dollar spent in support of the Joint Venture network is multiplied ten-fold in promoting private and nonprofit projects toward national conservation goals.

Thank you for your continued leadership for conservation in California. We respectfully ask for your support to stand against the unwise efforts to remove funding for some of the most important and productive work being done in California and throughout the country.

Sincerely,



Diane Ross-Leech
Chair, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture



Erik Vink
Chair, Central Valley Joint Venture