



**BRAC Environmental Office**  
 Hamilton Army Airfield  
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 Novato, CA 94949

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# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

## HAMILTON ARMY AIRFIELD

### Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Update

#### RAB Responsibilities

The Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), is an advisory board made up of interested and concerned community members who reflect the diverse interests of the local community as well as representatives of state, local, and federal agencies. The RAB is designed to serve as a focal point for the exchange of information between the Army and Navy and the community regarding those restoration activities presently underway, as well as those planned for future studies and remediation.

The Hamilton RAB meets quarterly. **The next RAB meeting is January 14, 2004.** To receive further information regarding the RAB, community involvement, environmental clean-up at Hamilton, or to be added to the Hamilton RAB mailing list, please contact: **Joy Lanzaro (415) 883-6386.**

#### Upcoming Meetings

The next **RAB Meeting** will be held at the Novato Police Station Meeting Room.

♦ January 14, 2004, 7 p.m.

#### For More Information

##### HAAF Army BRAC Environmental Office

Hamilton Army Airfield  
 1 Burma Road, Novato, CA 94949  
 tel: 415.883.6386 fax: 415.883.1033

Ed Keller, BRAC Environmental Coordinator  
 haafbec@earthlink.net

Joy Lanzaro, BEC Assistant  
 haafasst@earthlink.net

##### Information Repositories

##### Marin County Public Library, Novato Branch

1720 Novato Boulevard, Novato, CA 94947  
 tel: 415.897.1141

##### HAAF Army BRAC Environmental Office

Please call for an appointment.

[www.spk.usace.army.mil/cespk-pm/haaf/rab/rab.html](http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/cespk-pm/haaf/rab/rab.html)

[www.efds.w.navy.mil/Environmental/Novato.htm](http://www.efds.w.navy.mil/Environmental/Novato.htm)

#### Restoration Advisory Board Members

##### Co-Chairs

**Ed Keller**  
 Army BRAC Environmental Coordinator

**Thomas Macchiarella**  
 Navy BRAC Environmental Coordinator

**Tunstall Lang**  
 Community Co-Chair

##### Community Members

**Marucia Britto**

**Preston Cook**

**Joan Dekelboum**

**Richard Draeger**

**Patricia D. Eklund**

**Jeff Johnston**

**Sue Lattanzio**

**Matthew McCarron**

**William McNicholas**

**Manuel Mier**

**Ross Millerick**

**Sabrina Molinari**

##### Regulatory Agency Representatives

**Naomi Feger**  
 Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Jim Ponton**  
 Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Lance McMahan**  
 California Department of Toxic Substances Control

**Theresa McGarry**  
 California Department of Toxic Substances Control

**Rich Seraydarian**  
 US Environmental Protection Agency

##### Technical Support

**Ray Zimny**  
 US Army Corps of Engineers

**Jim McAlister**  
 US Army Corps of Engineers

### AIRFIELD PROPERTY TRANSFER COMPLETE

#### Wetland Restoration Now Underway

With Governor Davis' signature, the 630-acre Hamilton Army Airfield property was officially transferred to the California Coastal Conservancy. Members of the Department of Army and representatives and regulatory agencies of the state of California, pictured at right, gathered to celebrate the federal to state property transfer at a Hamilton Army Airfield Transfer/Recognition Ceremony on November 12, 2003. Almost three decades after it was designated "excess property" by the Army, and almost a decade after its formal closure, the restoration of the Airfield to a wetland ecosystem can now begin. The Hamilton wetland will eventually connect to 1,900 acres of wetlands already owned by the state.

Ed Keller, the U.S. Army's BRAC Environmental Coordinator for Hamilton, has devoted the last five years of his life to making the clean-up and transfer of the Airfield property a reality. Ed managed and directed many technical analyses and remediation activities necessary



Joe Whitaker awards Ed Keller a Distinguished Service Medal for his role in the property transfer.



Top Row L to R: Major Rob Roberson, Department of Army BRAC Program Manager; Neal Fishman, CSCC; Major Murray Starkel, USACE-SF; David Bowles, Office of Governor Davis; Joe Whitaker, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army - Installations and Housing  
 Bottom Row L to R: Tom Roth, Office of Congresswoman Woolsey; Loretta Barsamian SFRWQCB; Tony Landis, DTSC

of our country's resources" affirms Ed, drawing parallels between Hamilton's dignified 50 year military history and its new critical environmental mission. "Now that all the regulatory approvals are in place, the real work of creating the wetland can begin."

Restoration of the wetland will be directed by Tom Gandesbery of the California Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy). "The transfer of this parcel is an exciting milestone for the Hamil-

ton Wetland Restoration Project (HWRP) and reflects the hard work of many individuals and agencies," explained Gandesbery, the HWRP's project manager. "The Conservancy anticipates continued coordination with the Army, BRAC, the Corps, the City of Novato, Marin County, the resource agencies, and the local community to ensure that the wetland project is beneficial to the restoration of the whole area," he added.

"Agency cooperation and public involvement have brought great improvements to environmental planning for HWRP. Our partnership is solid as we begin to tackle the environmental design details," said Dave Doak, the Hamilton project manager for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Set to begin as early as spring 2004, the HWRP will include a number of phases. The first and most crucial phase involves site preparation and importing dredge material (sediment) from the Port of Oakland and other dredging projects in San Francisco Bay. The dredge material is needed to build up the existing ground surface, which currently lies approximately 7-10 feet below

to receive clearance from agencies such as DTSC, RWQCB, and USFWS. "It feels great to finally achieve the goal of property transfer. Hamilton played an important role in the protection

*Continued to inside panel*

# RAB Welcomes Four New Members!

In July of 2003, the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) welcomed Sue Lattanzio, Ross Millerick, Jeff Johnston, and William McNicholas as new members. They join the existing eight members who will serve over the next two years, asking questions, providing feedback to the regulators, and keeping Hamilton and Novato residents informed regarding the progress of remediation. Recently, they were asked about their reasons for participation.

## Why are you interested in becoming involved in the RAB?

**Lattanzio:** I am a 25 year resident of Marin County, and a 16 year resident of Bel Marin Keys, a waterfront community of 700 homes directly adjacent to the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project. I am also Director of Friends of Novato Creek, a 501(c)(3) watershed protection environmental group. I feel my skills, education and experience will contribute to furthering the goals of the RAB.

**Millerick:** My family and I have lived in Marin County for 30 years and in Novato for 21 years. As a member of the Novato School Board, I have been involved in the early land use planning issues at Hamilton. I have a long term commitment to maintaining the natural environment we enjoy in Marin. My masters degree was earned in environmental engineering and my wife has served on Marin County Open Space Board.

**Johnston:** My wife Christine and I have been homeowners here at Hamilton since 1999. I have been selling homes in Marin for 25 years, and over the course of the last 4 years I have been the #1 Realtor in Marin for homes sold at Hamilton.

I am interest in becoming better informed for my family and for people who are considering making Hamilton their home. I want to be able to share information from the RAB meetings with neighbors and potential home buyers so that they have an accurate understanding of efforts, past and present, that are being undertaken to insure that Hamilton is safe and clean.

**McNicholas:** I am retired military and used the Hamilton base facilities until they closed. My interest is in how Hamilton is going to be changed and what input I may have in that process.

## What concerns do you have about Hamilton?

**Lattanzio:** Protection of the San Francisco Bay and the tidal wetlands is a critical challenge. Full disclosure of public documents is essential to the Hamilton process, the protection of the environment, and public health. Complete identification and categorization of the remaining contaminants on Hamilton is overdue and should be a priority.



Top Row L to R: William McNicholas, Sabrina Molinari, Ross Millerick, Sue Lattanzio, Jeff Johnston, Tunstall Lang. Bottom Row L to R: Matthew McCarron, Patricia Eklund, Preston Cook, Marucia Britto, Richard Draeger

**Millerick:** My concern is that we fulfill the plans that have been put in place for Hamilton. The process of bringing the remaining land into productive use as wetlands or public areas or housing needs to be carefully monitored.

**Johnston:** I am concerned about lingering effects that the media-created stigma is having on Hamilton's reputation, and that other "hot spot" areas could be discovered in the future.

**McNicholas:** I am concerned with how Hamilton is going to blend into the Marin way of life.

## What are you most excited about at Hamilton?

**Lattanzio:** I hope to use my technical skills and background to contribute significantly to the ongoing public review of the cleanup process at Hamilton.

**Millerick:** The mixed use of residential, commercial, and civic programs hold great promise for Novato.

**Johnston:** Hamilton is growing and vibrant. There is a strong sense of community in all of Hamilton's neighborhoods. The addition of the YMCA, resurrecting the cafe, and the promise of an Albertsons in the future all bode well for Hamilton.

**McNicholas:** The development of more marshlands and wildlife habitats is exciting. The challenge will be the implementation of the plans and securing the monies to do it in a timely manner.



# DOCUMENT UPDATES

**POL Hill.** The FOST went out for public comment from June 30, 2003 through July 30, 2003. Comments were received and the final document was prepared to send to the Army for their legal review and signature. The transfer of POL Hill and the Levee parcel are being packaged together. It is anticipated that the transfer will be complete by Spring 2004.

**Levee Parcel FOST.** The Army plans to transfer 13.21 acres to the City of Novato for the levee footprint, scheduled by the spring of 2004. The FOST for the Levee Parcel will be ready for public comment in late 2003.

**Navy Transfer.** The area for transfer is where the gas station proper is located, which is intended for sale by the Navy to the City of Novato for commercial and industrial use. The FOST was finalized and amended on September 15, 2003. The escrow for the Sale Parcel was extended until October 31st, 2003. The first sentence needs revision and the last sentence needs to be updated.

## Wetland Restoration Underway, Continued from front page

sea level, to an elevation close to the surrounding Bay shoreline. This phase is expected to continue over approximately 6 years. A second phase involves creating a subtidal channel to allow water from the Bay to enter into the farthest reaches of the wetland during high tide. "The tidal flushing is crucial to a healthy wetland, because it ensures a constant supply of nutrients and seed for marsh plants", Gandesbery explained. The process of bringing in the dredge material and creating the subtidal channel will reduce the time required to establish the wetland by decades.

Upcoming public meetings and hearings will be scheduled as the wetland restoration begins. For more information about various opportunities to get involved, visit the Conservancy's website at [www.scc.gov](http://www.scc.gov) and look at the Hamilton-Bel Marin Keys project page. "We urge the community to stay informed as we continue to plan and implement the Hamilton Wetland Restoration Project," said Gandesbery. "Stewardship is improved when the public is involved."



Tom Gandesbery, a project manager for the CA Coastal Conservancy, will oversee the restoration of the Hamilton wetland.

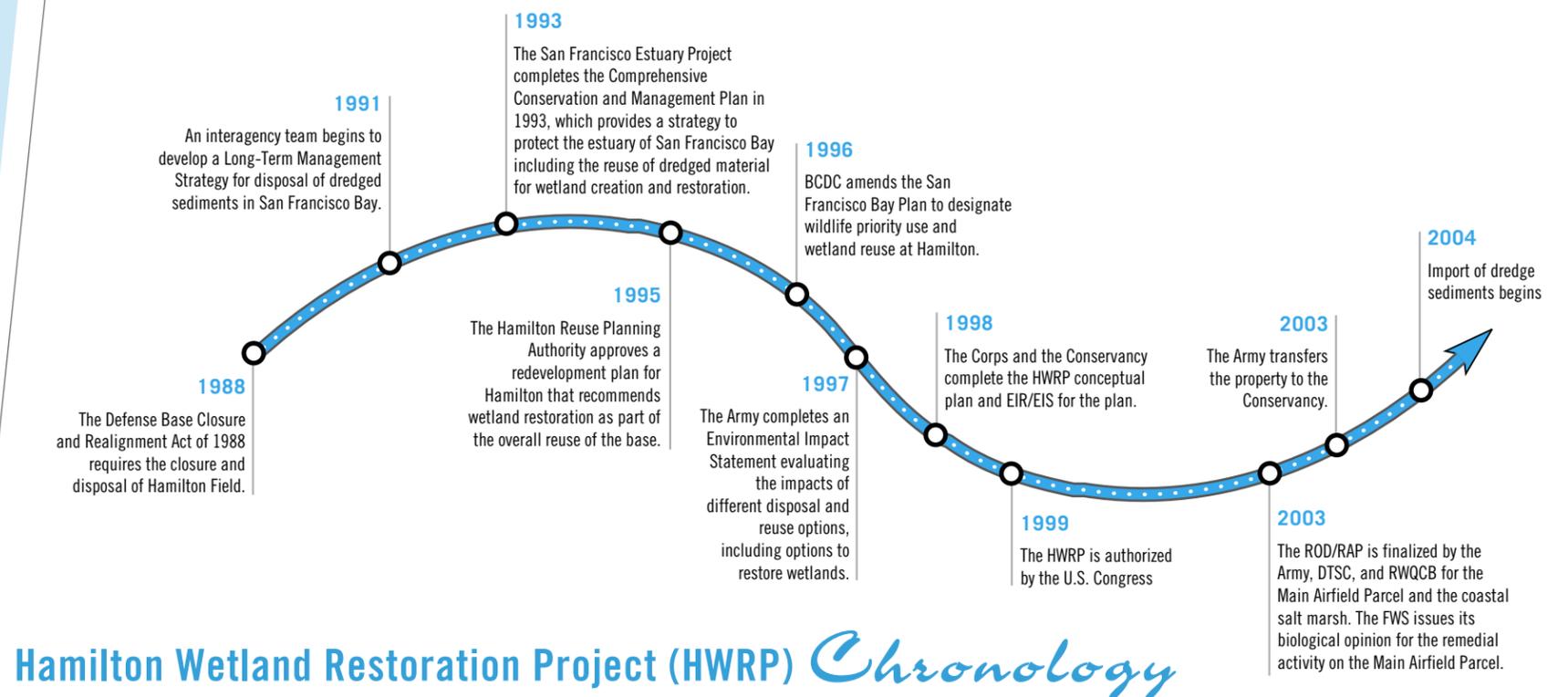
## What's Next

The Army, the Corps, and the Conservancy will be moving ahead with the following activities:

- ✦ The Army BRAC program will be **conducting remedial activities** on the Main Airfield Parcel including demolition of remaining buildings and excavation of soil at certain contaminated sites, as specified in the ROD/RAP.
- ✦ The Corps and the Conservancy will be **completing the engineering design** of the HWRP. The final wetland design will be used to address

certain area-wide contamination issues (such as DDT) that the HWRP is responsible for, as specified in the ROD/RAP.

- ✦ The Sacramento District of the Corps will be **finalizing a ROD/RAP** for the North Antennae Field. Completion of remedial planning and implementation of required cleanup will allow wetland restoration to be implemented at this site along with the Main Airfield Parcel.



# Hamilton Wetland Restoration Project (HWRP) Chronology