



BRAC Environmental Office  
Hamilton Army Airfield  
1 Burma Road  
Novato, CA 94949

## 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 forum 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 July 14, 2004.** To receive further information regarding the RAB, community involvement, environmental cleanup 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 on **Wednesday, July 14, 2004, 7 p.m.**

### For More Information

#### Army BRAC Environmental Office

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1 Burma Road, Novato, CA 94949  
tel: (415) 883-6386 fax: (415) 883-1033

Ed Keller, BRAC Environmental Coordinator,  
Edward.Keller@usace.army.mil

Joy Lanzaro, BEC Assistant  
Joy.L.Lanzaro@usace.army.mil

#### Navy BRAC Environmental Office

Jennifer R. Valenzia  
tel: (619) 532-0919 fax: (619) 532-0940  
Jennifer.valenzia@navy.mil

### Information Repositories

Marin County Public Library, Novato Branch  
1720 Novato Boulevard, Novato, CA 94947  
tel: (415) 897-1141

Army BRAC Environmental Office (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)

# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

HAMILTON ARMY AIRFIELD

## A NEW FACE AT HAMILTON

### Eric Polson, Consulting Engineer

#### What is your role at the California State Coastal Conservancy and in the Wetlands Project?

As a consulting engineer, I assist the Coastal Conservancy with planning, design, permitting and construction management for the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project and similar projects in the North Bay. In this role I work directly with project managers and project teams at the Coastal Conservancy and San Francisco District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as with many regulatory and resource agencies and local government officials.

#### How long have you been working on the Hamilton Wetland Restoration Project?

I have been working on the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project planning and design since 1996. However, beginning in 1992, I was involved in the initial identification and investigation of potential wetland restoration projects throughout the San Francisco Bay Region, which included the present Hamilton project site.

#### What do you find most interesting about Hamilton and the Wetlands Project?

The most interesting aspect of the project involves developing a high quality wetlands design within the existing budget constraints. Given the complexities of the local and regional environmental, regulatory, and political issues this can be a very challenging task! There are about 15 Federal, State and local governmental agencies, more than 20 environmental and special interests groups, and many interested neighbors who each want the design to satisfy their goals. Designing a tidal plains and seasonal wetland habitat template to persist in perpetuity given the subsurface geology of the site is one of the most significant engineering challenges of the Project. Another significant engineering challenge is constructing the Project next to the new Hamilton homes and the existing infrastructure facilities, particularly the Novato Sanitary District outfall pipeline.

#### How do you address these challenges in the design process?

The design challenges are addressed through significant inter-agency and inter-organization coordination. Starting in 1996, the Hamilton Restoration Group (HRG), comprising representatives of all interested agencies, organizations and individuals, was formed to advise and oversee the initial project planning and design. The Wetlands Project will

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### Restoration Advisory Board Members

#### Co-Chairs

Ed Keller  
Army BRAC Environmental Coordinator

Jennifer Valenzia  
Navy BRAC Environmental Coordinator

Tunstall Lang  
Community Co-Chair

#### Community Members

Marucia Britto

Preston Cook

Joan Dekelboun

Richard Draeger

Patricia D. Eklund

Jeff Johnston

Sue Lattanzio

Matthew McCarron

William McNicholas

Manuel Mier

Ross Millerick

Sabriña Molinar

#### Regulatory Agency Representatives

Naomi Feger (510) 622-2328  
Regional Water Quality Control Board

Laurent Millier (510) 622-2440  
Regional Water Quality Control Board

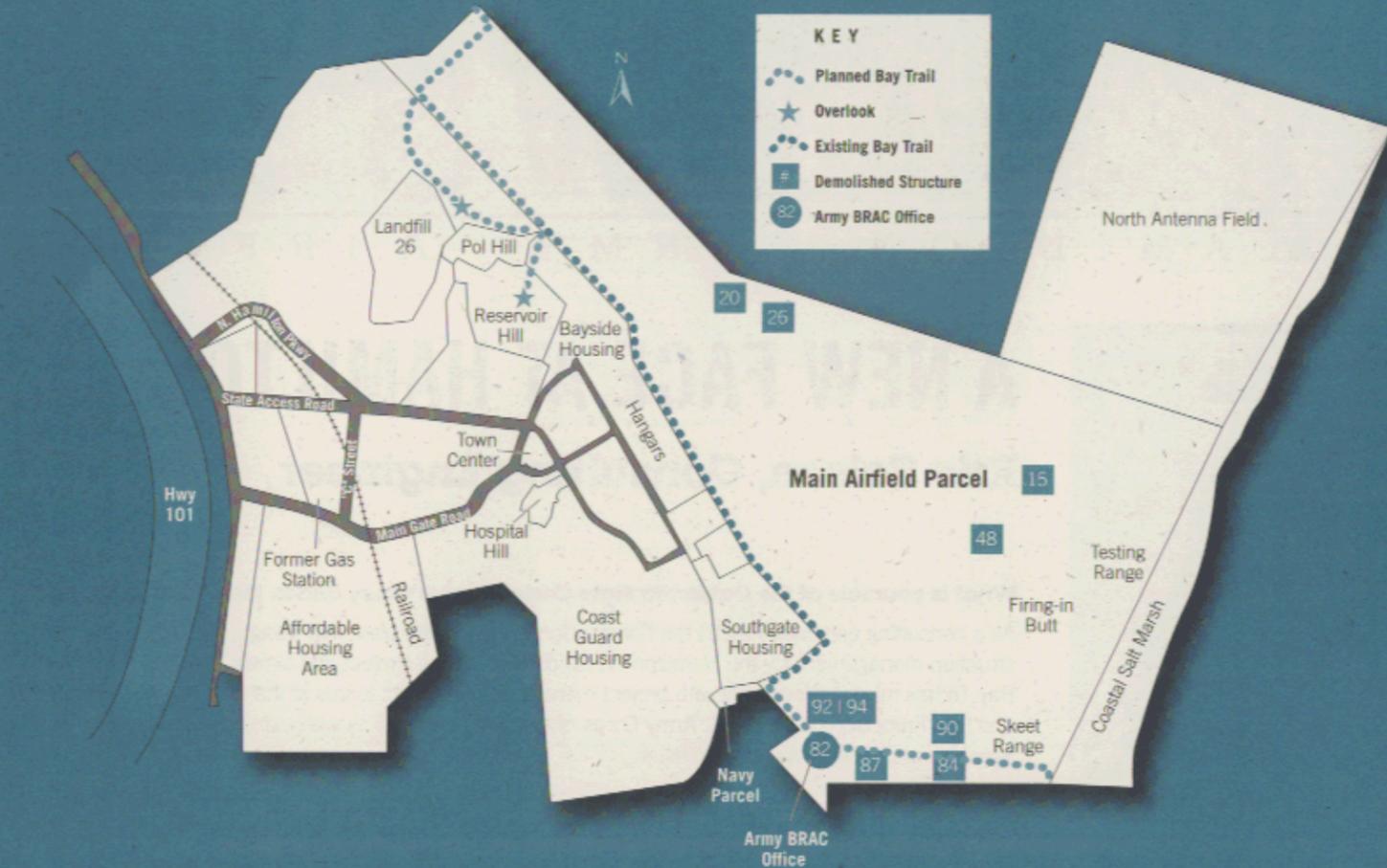
Lance McMahan (916) 255-3674  
California Department of Toxic Substances Control

Theresa McGarry (916) 255-3664  
California Department of Toxic Substances Control

#### Technical Support

Ray Zimny  
US Army Corps of Engineers

Jim McAlister  
US Army Corps of Engineers



## Make Way For Wetlands

Preparations for the wetland restoration project continued this spring as the Hamilton Wetland Restoration Project (HWRP) demolished abandoned structures on the Navy ball field parcel and the Army BRAC Main Airfield parcel. Ultimately, all of the buildings on the airfield property will be demolished to make way for the wetland.

Between February and April 2004, the HWRP demolished a total of 16 structures, including four large Buildings - 84, 90, 92, and 94 - grouped along the south side of the runway. Some of the buildings' for-

mer locations are noted on the figure. Salvageable material was taken to the recycle yard and other debris was hauled to the local dump. During Hamilton's heyday, these buildings were used for repair and maintenance of airplanes and of electronics, and also provided storage space. Because of the age of the buildings, lead-based paint was presumed to be present on all painted surfaces. Prior to demolition, paint was manually chipped from the buildings, and then the walls and roofs were sealed with a coat of primer to prevent any potential release of

lead-based paint into the environment.

Building 82, which houses the Hamilton Army Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) office [see figure], remains standing in order to provide a convenient base of operations for the ongoing Army environmental cleanup and the HWRP contractors and field crews. It will be demolished in the next few years. Also remaining are the pump stations near the levee.

## Firing Ranges to be Investigated for Contaminants

In 2001, an exhaustive search was conducted by the Army to document all possible locations on Army BRAC property where contamination from disposal of waste or ordnance may have occurred as a result of military activities. The findings, as detailed in the Archives Search Report dated September 2001, indicated the existence of three ranges - the Firing-in Butt, Skeet Range, and Testing Range. The ranges were used for target practice and weapon alignment. Their locations are shown in the figure.

The Army conducted a field sampling investigation of all three ranges in March 2004 and recommended that the skeet range and the testing range be further investigated for contaminants associated with shotgun shells, clay pigeons, and lead bullets.

Details about the field sampling investigation can be reviewed in the Source Identification Report for the ASR Sites 4, 18, and 19 (USACE April 2004) at the Army BRAC library or the Novato Public Library or online at: <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/cespk-pm/haaf/docs.html>.

## Bay Trail Improvements Coming to Hamilton

Keep your eye out for improvements to the Bay Trail. Early this summer, the City of Novato anticipates awarding a contract to construct two new trailheads with a parking area and a spur trail to a vista overlook on Reservoir Hill. The existing Bay Trail traverses the main levee on the west side of the airfield parcel. The addition of the spur trail will allow walkers to make a loop rather than simply walk out and back to the levee.

Construction is scheduled to begin later this summer. For more information on the status of the Bay Trail's construction, please contact Pam Shinault at the City of Novato Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department at (415) 897-4323.

## ERIC POLSON Continued from front page

continue to meet with the HRG as the final project design and construction plans are developed and completed. Also, the Wetlands Project will include a 13-year monitoring and adaptive management program to ensure that the habitat areas function properly after the construction is complete.

### What is the most rewarding aspect of your work?

Finishing the design and starting the construction phase of projects that I helped identify, select, and plan over a decade ago. Also, to be able to use dredge materials—which were once considered a waste product—to jump start the restoration of these tidelands into productive natural habitats is very rewarding.

### Have you worked on or know of any other wetlands restoration projects in California similar to the Hamilton project? What was the outcome?

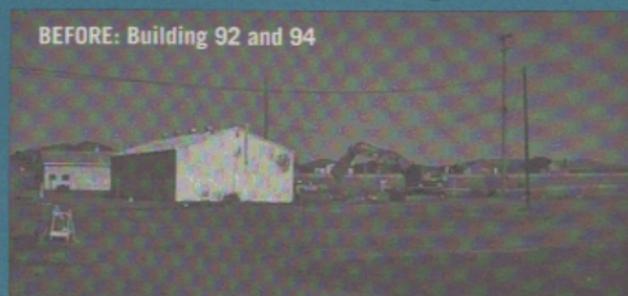
There are other similar projects along the California coast as well as on the east coast of the U.S. and world wide, and many are highly successful. I worked on the nearby Sonoma Baylands project that was completed and restored to tidal action in 1996. At first, the area was primarily upland and mudflat habitat. However, over the last few years the project has started to develop significant intertidal and channel habitat, which is the ultimate goal for projects like Hamilton.

### What is your professional background?

My degrees are in forest, environmental and civil engineering. My specialized expertise is primarily in water resources engineering, fluvial morphology, navigation channels and aquatic and intertidal habitats. I have 20 years of experience as a professional engineer. In the first part of my career, I worked for the US Army Corp of Engineers in flood control design and operations, and worked on the design, construction and maintenance of ship channels in the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta. In the early 1990s, I helped develop the San Francisco Bay Region Long Term Management Strategy (LTMS) which created a 50-year master plan for all dredging and dredge material management in the San Francisco Bay Region. The LTMS also identified potential beneficial reuse sites around the regional and Hamilton was one of the preferred sites. A decade later, we are finally starting to use dredge materials at Hamilton.

### What do you like to do outside work?

Like most people I enjoy taking care of family and property improvement. I also enjoy river and ocean kayaking, white water rafting, backcountry skiing, mountain biking and hiking. I do love river boating and I have done a lot of wilderness river trips throughout the west and Alaska. One of my favorite trips is rowing my raft down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, a great 18-day adventure.



BEFORE: Building 92 and 94



AFTER



BAY TRAIL