

# ACTION 31

## Foster support for resource protection and restoration by providing Estuary-oriented public access and recreational opportunities compatible with wildlife

Provide Estuary-oriented public access and recreational opportunities that avoid or minimize adverse impacts to sensitive habitats and wildlife while accommodating environmental education, biking, hiking, paddling, wildlife viewing, and other activities. These opportunities will increase citizen and decision-maker appreciation of the value of natural resources, and foster support for Estuary resource protection and restoration.

**TASK 31-1** Develop and distribute educational materials and maps to boaters and various partners that identify areas where shorebirds, waterfowl, and harbor seals forage, rest, and roost; these materials will help eliminate or minimize intrusion.

**2016-2021** Work with stakeholders to develop region-specific maps, signs, and other educational materials; identify two appropriate mechanisms for distributing materials to boaters two to three times per year.

**TASK 31-2** Add to the San Francisco Bay Trail, closing critical gaps in the main alignment (the “spine”) that links the shoreline of all nine Bay Area counties, while avoiding adverse effects on sensitive resources and wildlife.

**BY 2021** Add 40 miles of new trail segments to the Bay Trail spine.

**TASK 31-3** Add to the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, creating or enhancing high quality public water access every three miles, and paddle-in camping opportunities every eight miles. Access should be designed to avoid adverse impacts to sensitive resources and wildlife.

**BY 2021** Complete six new or enhanced San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail sites, including two new or enhanced kayak-in campgrounds.

### BACKGROUND

The Estuary and its shoreline provide important refuge, foraging, and nesting habitat for wildlife. These areas also provide opportunities for unique recreational and educational experiences. Participating in recreational activities along the shoreline, or in and on the water, allows the public to discover and appreciate the Bay’s natural resources, and inspires them to take an active interest in Estuary protection and restoration efforts.

The Estuary provides several regional trail systems. The San Francisco Bay Trail is 68 percent complete, with 345 of 500 planned miles

of trail open around the Bay. The Bay Area Ridge Trail (with views of the Bay) is 65 percent complete, with 360 of 550 planned miles open. The San Francisco Bay Water trail has designated 20 of 111 planned sites that meet criteria for public access to the water. In the Delta progress is harder to quantify, but residents currently enjoy numerous Sacramento River trails; the planned Great California Delta Trail will traverse all five Delta counties. In addition to (or in lieu of) new trail miles, development and restoration projects around the Estuary may also provide desirable recreational experiences.

Public access to the shoreline can have adverse effects on wildlife and even cause long-term impacts to populations and species. The type and severity of effects on wildlife depend on many factors, including how the sites are planned and built, the type and number of species present, and the intensity and nature of human activity. Recreational activities can be located, designed, and managed to prevent significant adverse impacts from human intrusion on sensitive habitats and wildlife species. Signage and other educational methods, such as docent programs, can be employed to promote stewardship, inform the public of the sensitivity of certain habitats and wildlife, and encourage safe, environmentally responsible recreation.

This CCMP action supports efforts to avoid adverse impacts to wildlife and recommendations such as those developed by California State Parks’ Division of Boating and Waterways, the Seabird Protection Network, the SF Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the SF Bay Trail Project, and the SF Bay Joint Venture. It also supports including these considerations in plans for new public access projects in transition zones and uplands, which may be impacted by rising seas.

### OWNERS

Association of Bay Area Governments (Tasks 31-2, 31-3)  
CA State Parks’ Division of Boating and Waterways (Task 31-1)  
SF Estuary Partnership (Task 31-1)

### COLLABORATING PARTNERS

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, CA State Coastal Conservancy, Delta Protection Commission, Delta Stewardship Council, SF Bay Area Water Trail project, SF Bay Conservation and Development Commission, SF Bay Joint Venture, SF Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, SF Bay Trail Project

### NEXUS

Actions 1, 3, 12, 26, 30, 32  
Goals 1, 2, 4  
Objectives b, e, j, l

