



Don't Pave My Bay: **Fact Sheet**

Minnesota-based agribusiness giant Cargill Inc. is proposing to build a massive development on more than 1,400 acres of restorable Bayfront salt ponds in Redwood City. In May 2009, Cargill's development partner, Arizona-based luxury home builder DMB Associates, submitted its proposal to fill these salt ponds with up to 12,000 units of housing at or near sea level. Redwood City's General Plan says it should be assumed that this site "should remain open space forever," and the property zoning is "Tidal Plain," allowing Cargill to use the site for salt making, agriculture or public recreation – but not housing or related development.

DMB proposes:

- Up to 30,000 new residents in 8,000 to 12,000 units
 - A 38% increase from the current city population of 79,000
- Behind a 12-foot levee covering up to 200 acres
 - Residents' homes would be at or below sea level
 - 355 acres of residential development
 - 1,000,000 square feet of commercial/office space
 - Adjacent to a 24/7 heavy industrial site and major port facility to the north, and overflow sewage ponds to the south
- A new four-lane highway across the salt ponds, parallel to Highway 101
- 223 acres of pavement for new streets, over 15% of the restorable salt pond site
- 80,000 new daily car trips
 - Including 8,000 additional peak hour car trips at Marsh and Woodside Road interchanges with Highway 101
- One or more new multi-lane overpasses from the salt ponds and over the mobile home parks and Highway 101
- Drinking water imported from Kern County
- Required new infrastructure may include
 - New sewage treatment plant
 - Playing fields that double as polluted stormwater storage
 - On top of a huge concrete "bathtub" to hold runoff
 - Water treatment plant

Save The Bay opposes Cargill and DMB's massive Bay salt pond development. The project would put new development in the path of rising sea levels and destroy Bay shoreline open space that should be restored. This is not an infill site and is not the place for housing and commercial development; Redwood City should continue its smart growth redevelopment downtown. We urge Redwood City, state and federal agencies to reject the project and promote full restoration and protection of habitat and open space on this site.

SAVE THE BAY

- As the SJ Mercury News, SF Chronicle and over 145 Bay Area elected officials have declared, this is an unacceptable site for housing. The Redwood City salt ponds are at or below sea level on an undeveloped tidal plain located over a mile from Caltrain and downtown.
- Urban sprawl, massive Bay fill and diking have already reduced the Bay's size by one-third. Filling and paving over salt ponds would be a major step backward to the 1960s when developers could fill in the Bay without limit or regulation.
- Resource protection agencies from the US EPA and Army Corps to the SF Bay Water Board have highlighted the environmental value of protected and restored salt ponds in Redwood City. Development of the Redwood City salt ponds is Bay fill that would permanently destroy needed habitat for endangered Bay wildlife, including the California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse, and numerous threatened species that depend on the Bay for survival.
- The Redwood City salt ponds were formerly part of the Bay and have been recommended by scientists to be restored to tidal wetlands and other habitat as part of larger regional efforts to re-establish 100,000 acres of healthy tidal wetlands ringing the Bay.
- These salt ponds are already within the authorized expansion boundary of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge; their restoration would link continuous wetlands from Bair Island to the north down to San Jose.
- Wetlands are the lungs of the Bay, giving life to hundreds of fish and wildlife species and billions of small organisms that form the base of the food chain and provide major benefits to the community:
 - **Clean water** - Healthy Bay wetlands trap polluted runoff before toxics can reach open Bay water
 - **Economic benefits** - A 1992 case study estimated that California's wetlands provided as much as \$22.9 billion in value annually
 - **Helps Curb Global Warming** - tidal salt marshes capture carbon from greenhouse gases in the air efficiently and effectively
 - **Flood and Erosion Control** - Wetlands act as sponges, absorbing large quantities of water runoff during rainstorms and tidal inflow
- Crystallizer ponds like the ones in Redwood City have been successfully restored to thriving wetland habitat, including currently at the Napa Plant Site.
- Building housing here is a threat to the South Bay's only deepwater port, and would locate homes and schools next to a round-the-clock heavy industrial site and sewage treatment ponds.
- We need to stop this Bay fill and protect this open space for future generations, just as our parents and grandparents voted to save Bair Island and the Palo Alto Baylands, and created Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, the nation's largest urban wildlife refuge.