

Feinstein Tours Wetlands Restoration Project

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SAN JOSE, Calif. -- The largest wetlands restoration project on the West Coast enters a new phase Monday.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein and other dignitaries plan to be at the salt ponds in the Alviso neighborhood of San Jose to look at the progress.

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Crews have been tearing out sections of levees along three of the former salt ponds in the bay between Alviso and Fremont.

The idea is to flood them with water from the San Francisco Bay, dilute the salinity and allow the ponds to turn into tidal marshes for birds and fish.

The project is also aimed at achieving flood control in the area.

The ponds are about a mile off shore so there is no risk of flooding of residences or businesses.

Wildlife experts hope there will be new plant growth within a few years with new fish and birds not far behind.

The plan is to eventually to restore all 15,000 acres of salt ponds into wetlands - making it the largest wetlands restoration project on the West Coast.

One of the goals of the project is to improve navigation so the community can expand on boating and other recreational opportunities.

The project rivals the restoration of the Florida everglades and Mississippi River Delta.

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