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U.S. EPA, White House present Coastal America Award to Cargill

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(San Francisco, Calif. – 09/20/2006) As part of the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, along with the President’s Council on Environmental Quality, presented the Coastal America Spirit Award to Cargill Inc. for its donation and sale of 16,500 acres of San Francisco Bay salt ponds.

The South Bay salt ponds effort involved a number of partners, including Cargill, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, the Resources Legacy Fund, and Senator Diane Feinstein.

“The Coastal America Spirit Award recognizes Cargill’s efforts to protect, preserve and restore valuable wetlands in the bay,” said Wayne Nastri, the EPA’s regional administrator for the Pacific Southwest. “This partnership has resulted in 16,500 acres of San Francisco Bay shoreline being permanently protected and eventually restored. No project of this size or difficulty has ever been attempted on the West Coast.”

The land provides habitat for four endangered and threatened species, more than a million birds, including 70 native and migratory species, and has the potential to make the greatest contribution to revitalize water quality and wildlife enhancement in the Bay’s history.

In 1997, Coastal America established an awards program to recognize outstanding team efforts to restore and protect coastal environments. Coastal America has presented 19 awards throughout the country.

The Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership is a national organization that brings private sector funds and in-kind-services to coastal habitat restoration projects approved by federal agencies involved with Coastal America.

Nationally, over 400 companies and non-government organizations have signed on with the partnership, and contributed more than \$3 million in funds and services in 13 states. Within the last year, the California Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership has contributed to an oyster reef project in San Pablo Bay and a creek restoration project in Santa Rosa.

The award was presented at the Long Beach Aquarium during a reception held for California companies to learn more about the development of a California Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership.

For more information on the award program visit: <http://www.coastalamerica.gov/text/awards.html>, and to learn more about the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership visit: <http://www.coastalamerica.gov/text/cwrp.html>

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