South Bay Restoration:
What can we learn from history?

Presentation to South Bay Salt Pond Restoration
Habitat Restoration Work Group
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Sponsors of this work:

Santa Clara Valley Water District
City of San Jose
Oakland Museum
USFWS
Alameda County Flood Control
SFEP-USEPA
City of Palo Alto
City of Sunnyvale
and others
Were there different kinds of marsh in different parts of the South Bay?
What kinds of edge habitats should we be thinking about?
Backshore margin: ponds
Backshore margin: Willow marshes
May 6, 1895:
"Plants collected beside the RR track between Newark and the Drawbridges, Alameda Co. This is a level (marshy) country bordering the marshes (with a good deal of alkaline soil about apparently). This stretch of about 8 miles is the richest in flowers of the whole 52 miles from Alameda mole to San Jose and shows how gorgeous the whole plain bordering the marshes probably was before the introduction of foreign weeds and the grazing of cattle and horses . . . [t]he general impression in color is a mass of yellow owing to the abundance of Lasthenia and Blepharipappus though in places this gives way to masses of green and white of *Trifolium fucatum*. In places the yellow is dotted with the white heads of *Trifolium wormskioldii lehm.* in pools of large size . . .

EcoAtlas Historical Database Record 312E-K
Transcribed by Elise Brewster, SFEI, from Journals of J. B. Davy at U.C. Berkeley Jepson Herbarium Archives.
Photo: Russell ca 1930
Backshore margin: discontinuous channels
Are there valuable ecological remnants?
Can we learn anything from the waterfowl hunting history?
“A good day’s bag.”

USGS 1915
Does mercury exposure vary by diking history?
What are the recent and historical trends in the shoreline?

Jaffe et al. 2003
Watershed change studies completed or underway by SFEI and/or colleagues

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