

Saving the Bay

THE STORY OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY

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Did You Know?

The San Francisco Bay and Delta form the largest West Coast's estuary, which drains more than 40 percent of the state (60,000 square miles).

San Francisco Bay is 50 miles long and from 3 to 13 miles wide.

The average depth of the Bay is 12 to 14 feet, but spots are as deep as 100 feet.

The first National Bird Sanctuary was at Lake Merritt in 1869.

The herring fishery on San Francisco Bay is the last urban fishery in the United States.

The last whaling station in the United States was in Richmond (it closed in 1971).

The first permanent naval presence on the West Coast was on Vallejo's Mare Island in 1854.

The world's first regional waterway protection agency, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), was created in 1965 and made permanent in 1969 by then Governor Reagan.

The first bridge across the Bay was the Dumbarton railroad bridge in 1909.

San Francisco Bay is the largest estuary on the Pacific Coast of North and South America.

Seven times the volume of water of the Mississippi River rushes under the Golden Gate Bridge per minute.

In November 1869, the Transcontinental Railroad finally reached its ultimate terminus on San Francisco Bay at Oakland.

The California sea otter once teemed in the waters of San Francisco Bay, but vanished before the Gold Rush and for many years was believed to be extinct.

Before becoming San Francisco, the village that once sat where the Financial District is today was called Yerba Buena.

Yerba Buena Island in San Francisco Bay was originally called Alcatraz, then it was called Goat Island.

People spill, dump, or leak three million gallons of oil a year into San Francisco Bay.

Regular people and their cars leak more oil into waterways than oil tankers do.

Kay Kerr, Sylvia McLaughlin, and Esther Gulick founded the "Save San Francisco Bay Association" in 1961 (now known simply as Save The Bay).