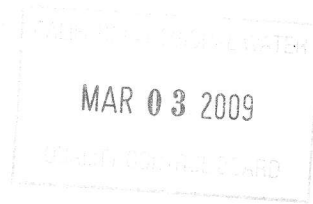






# Marin Audubon Society



P.O. Box 599 | MILL VALLEY, CA 94942-0599 | MARINAUDUBON.ORG  
February 27, 2009

Ms. Dyan C. White, Assistant Executive Officer  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400  
Oakland, California 94612

Dear Ms. White:

Thank you for including funding for the Richardson Bay Audubon Center & Sanctuary's Aramburu Island habitat restoration in the recently announced settlement with the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin. This funding will contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the island and benefit all of Richardson Bay wildlife.

Marin Audubon Society has a long history of trying to protect this habitat. We opposed the development of houses on the spit, the project that resulted in the creation of the island. The island was required by the County as a condition of approval for the development. It was intended to be mitigation for adverse impacts of the development, however, after the initial actions no management or oversight occurred and the island habitat degraded. To make matters worse, most adjacent habitats have been lost to urban development, even as recently as several years ago when seasonal marsh was filled at the nearby school.

This grant, when combined with other funding the Sanctuary has obtained, provides an opportunity to reverse the years of neglect and degradation of the island habitats by restoring some habitat elements that have been lost or degraded. Marin Audubon looks forward to being a part of the ongoing planning to improve and expand the habitats on Aramburu Island.

When successfully completed, this restoration project should greatly improve habitat for resident and migratory wildlife, including shorebirds, waterfowl, terns, and hopefully harbor seals. We anticipate that salt marsh, upland refugia and seasonal wetlands will be expanded and enhanced, and that unvegetated habitat will also be improved to benefit terns and marine mammals. The island should also provide refuge habitat, for the Bay's wildlife in times of need.

The Regional Board's decision to fund the Aramburu restoration project is wonderful news for the birds, for the health of Richardson Bay, and for all of San Francisco Bay. We thank the Regional Board for enabling this contribution to this important project.

Sincerely,



Barbara Salzman  
President