

STARK, MILLER, FARR INTRODUCE BILL TO ESTABLISH SAN FRANCISCO BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

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Joining of Seven Wildlife Refuges Would Help Ensure Additional Federal Assistance

Washington, DC — Rep. Pete Stark (CA-13), Rep. George Miller (CA-7) and Rep. Sam Farr (CA-17) joined together to introduce the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex Establishment Act (H.R. 6479). The bill would unite the Bay Area's seven separate national wildlife refuges into a single wildlife complex in order to leverage greater federal funding for these unique habitats.

Rep. Stark:
"The Bay Area's wildlife refuges are an essential part of our community. By uniting these refuges, we strengthen our opportunities for greater federal support. That support is vital if we are to save rare California wildlife from extinction, fight global warming, and preserve a beautiful part of our country that can be enjoyed by future generations."

Rep. Miller: "The wetlands and estuaries now under protection are an important part of the health of the Bay-Delta. This new bill will help ensure that these vital areas remain a viable habitat for marine animals, fish and wildlife, and will protect this powerful economic engine for the Bay Area. I'm proud to support the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Complex Establishment Act."

Rep. Farr: "As everyone in California knows, water is life. This legislation will protect one of the largest watersheds on the state's Central Coast, combining the refuges from San Francisco to the Monterey Bay. The beautiful coastline and wetlands that make up the watershed in Monterey are the lifeblood of the community, creating tourism and supporting farmers and the fishing industry. I thank Chairman Stark for his work on this vital issue."

The Antioch Dunes, Don Edwards San Francisco Bay, Ellicott Slough, Farallon, Marin Islands, Salinas River, and San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuges together constitute the nation's largest collection of urban wildlife refuges, totaling more than 46,000 acres. Together, they are home to hundreds of wildlife species -- including over 128 threatened or endangered animals and marine mammals that depend on these refuges to survive.

In addition to rare flora and fauna, these refuges offer other benefits. In hosting more than 1.5 million visitors every year, they serve as powerful economic engines for northern California.

H.R. 6479 is endorsed by Save the Bay, an environmental organization that has been fundamental in protecting and restoring these wildlife oases in the Bay Area's urban environment.