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News Release



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It's Official: Skaggs Island to Become Part of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Navy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ink Deal for March 31 Transfer

FREMONT, CA – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) announced today that it has signed the final documents with the U.S. Navy to transfer Skaggs Island, a former Naval base, to the Service for inclusion in the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, effective March 31.

The 3300-acre island will increase the size of the 13,000-acre San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge by a quarter and add much-needed haven in the North Bay for birds and other wildlife.

“Skaggs Island is a missing piece of the puzzle for restoration in the North Bay, and we’re excited to see it become part the refuge,” said Don Brubaker, manager of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. “Thanks to great teamwork between the Navy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the support and cooperation of a lot of partners, we were able to make it happen.”

Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), a key advocate for the restoration of Skaggs Island, introduced legislation in 2008 that enabled the property to be transferred from the Navy to the Service. In 2010, the Navy demolished more than 100 structures and completed an extensive environmental cleanup of the site, which served as a naval communications base from 1942 to 1993. The island is one of the largest diked wetlands in the North Bay, and is located 40 miles northeast of San Francisco, near the shore of San Pablo Bay in Sonoma County.

The San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge was created in 1974 to protect migratory birds, wetland habitat and endangered species like the salt marsh harvest mouse and California clapper rail. The refuge and San Pablo Bay support the largest wintering population of canvasbacks on the West Coast.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov

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