**Coastal Program**

# The Coastal Program at Humboldt Bay

*Caring for Our Coastal Habitats*

## Overview

Newly established in 2005, the Coastal Program at Humboldt Bay was created to conserve one of the largest estuaries in California, second only in size to San Francisco Bay. The bay and surrounding area are characterized by coastal streams and river systems, salt and freshwater marshes, estuarine sloughs, lagoons, eelgrass beds, coastal dunes, coniferous forest, coastal prairies and agricultural lands. Currently, activities are focused from the Smith River estuary at the border with Oregon, to Humboldt Bay, and the Mad, Eel, and Mattole River systems.

**FROM 2005-2007**
**Restored**
➢ **22 acres of coastal wetlands**
➢ **27 acres of coastal uplands**
➢ **1.3 miles of coastal streamside habitat**
➢ **4 fish passage barriers removed**
**Protected**
➢ **1938 acres of coastal habitat**
➢ **3.5 miles of streamside habitat**

The Coastal Program at Humboldt Bay is one of a nationwide network of 22 U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Programs focused on protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat in the nation's coastal areas. The mission of the Coastal Program is to effectively achieve voluntary habitat conservation, through financial and technical assistance, for the benefit of Federal Trust Species (threatened and endangered species, migratory birds, marine mammals, inter-jurisdictional fish, and species of international concern).



## Location

The Humboldt Bay region is a vital link in the Pacific Flyway annually supporting over 100,000 migrating and wintering shorebirds, waterfowl and other waterbirds. The region is considered a site of International Importance for shorebirds by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

The region includes The Humboldt Bay and Castle Rock National Wildlife Refuges. The refuge at Humboldt Bay has been identified as one of the most critical areas in the United States, south of Alaska, for black brant. The Lanphere Dunes Unit of the refuge contains one of the most pristine dune ecosystems in the nation. Several Federally listed species occur in the region including coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, tidewater goby, western snowy plover, marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl and dune plants such as the Humboldt Bay wallflower and beach layia.

## Priorities

*The Humboldt Bay Ecosystem-based Management Project:*
The Coastal Program is working with the Eureka Sea-Grant office and other partners in implementing the Humboldt Bay Ecosystem-based Management Program. The program will build an ecosystem-based management framework, prepare two to six proposals on high priority issues, and develop recommendations for establishment and maintenance of a Humboldt Bay Ecosystem database. Ecosystem-based management is a comprehensive process

of integrated resource management that considers the entire ecosystem, including humans.

*Stream, Tidal and Estuary Restoration*:
The Coastal Program provides technical and financial assistance through voluntary partnerships to support stream and estuarine restoration activities. These projects are focused on improving habitat for multiple species including Federally listed anadromous fish species, migratory birds, amphibians and other sensitive terrestrial and aquatic species.

*Coastal Dune Habitat Restoration:*
The Coastal Program also provides technical and financial assistance to support dune habitat restoration activities. These activities often include removal of invasive plant species to restore natural dune system processes and native plant and animal communities.

*Habitat Assessment Activities:*
The Coastal Program provides technical and financial assistance with projects focused on determining habitat conditions and gathering critical information for implementation of the appropriate restoration activities.

## For More Information

For more information contact Paula Golightly, Program Coordinator at the Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office, 707-822-7201 or visit our website at http://www.fws.gov/arcata/restoration/default.htm.