



**Wilma Chan** ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIXTEENTH DISTRICT

CHAIRWOMAN, ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

California Legislature

August 2, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chairman, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Attn: Maxene Spellman

RE: Lake Merritt Channel Project and Lake Merritt Bird Island Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:

We write in support of the City of Oakland's grant application for Proposition 50 funding for their proposed Lake Merritt Channel Project and the Lake Merritt Bird Island Project. As state representatives of this district, we understand the value and importance of these projects for City of Oakland residents.

The Lake Merritt Channel Project is dedicated to improving habitat through the creation of a new tidal, upland, and open water habitats. By opening the Lake Merritt Channel the water quality will significantly increase due to improved water circulation at the creation of new inter-tidal habitats.

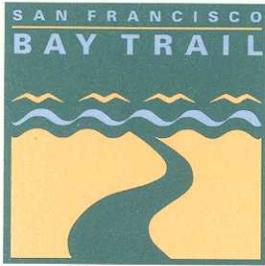
The Lake Merritt Bird Island Project focuses on improving and revitalizing the five bird islands at Lake Merritt. There is need for a new vegetation management plan, enhancement of the fresh water system, and construction and repairs of the shoreline wetlands. These improvements will provide future nesting and roosting sites for many bird species and enhance the Lake Merritt environment.

We enthusiastically support the City of Oakland's request to receive funding from Prop 50 for the Lake Merritt Channel Project and the Lake Merritt Bird Island Project. The development of these projects will greatly benefit our communities. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices if we can be of any assistance. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wilma Chan  
Assemblywoman  
16<sup>th</sup> District, California

Don Perata  
Senate President Pro Tem  
9<sup>th</sup> District, California



August 25, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chair, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

**RE: Letter of Support for the City of Oakland's Funding Application for the Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project**

Dear Mr. Bosco:

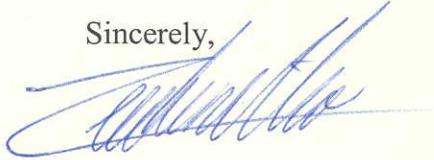
On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, I am writing in support of the City of Oakland's application for \$1 million in Proposition 50 funds for the Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project (Bird Islands Project). The proposed project will design and implement a three-year vegetation management plan, amend soils to address excessive guano build-up, improve fresh water systems, construct a shoreline demonstration wetland, repair shoreline projection, and provide educational resources such as view scopes and signage.

The San Francisco Bay Trail Project is an organization administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) that coordinates implementation of the San Francisco Bay Trail. When complete, the Bay Trail will be a continuous 500-mile network of bicycling and hiking paths that will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo bays in their entirety. The Bay Trail also provides access to regionally significant parks and recreational opportunities such as Lake Merritt.

Lake Merritt is the nation's oldest wildlife refuge and is an important part of the Pacific Flyway. A wide variety of birds nest and roost at the five bird islands located within Lake Merritt. The Bird Islands Project will improve the habitat on these islands for nesting and roosting birds. As a result, the proposed project would preserve and enhance the opportunities for nearby urban communities to view and learn about wildlife while traveling along the Bay Trail at Lake Merritt.

The Bay Trail Project asks for your support of this important project and thanks you for your positive consideration of the City of Oakland's request. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (510) 464-7915 if you have any questions regarding this or other aspects of the Bay Trail.

Sincerely,



Lee Chien Huo  
Bay Trail Planner

Cc: Nadine Hitchcock, Coastal Conservancy  
Lesley Estes, City of Oakland  
Markley Bavinger, City of Oakland



## *Golden Gate Audubon Society*

2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G • Berkeley, California 94702

Phone: (510) 843-2222 • Fax: (510) 843-5351 • Email: ggas@compuserve.com

Americans Committed to Conservation • A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

---

August 8, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chairman, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Attn: Maxene Spellman

### **Re: Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project**

Dear Mr. Bosco:

On behalf of the Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS), I write in support of the Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project (hereinafter the "Bird Islands Project") for which the City of Oakland is seeking a grant from the Coastal Conservancy. The Project is consistent with the goals of my organization and provides multiple benefits for the Bay Area as a whole.

The GGAS has a broad constituency comprised of concerned citizens throughout the Bay Area. This constituency includes persons from all walks of life who value and seek out for recreational observation and enjoyment natural environments that support viable populations of wildlife, particularly water and land-based avian species. We sponsor an extensive series of field trips to enable our members to see wild birds in their native habitats. A casual perusal of our field trip schedules reveals that Lake Merritt is one of the most frequently visited sites for observing migratory waterfowl. One of our members, Hilary Powers, publishes a monthly report of bird observations in Lake Merritt in "Tidings," the monthly newsletter of the Lake Merritt Institute, our sister organization. The focus of attention for most of these activities is the area of the lake that is most heavily used by ducks and other waterbirds that inhabit the lake, namely the lake's five "islands" and the water areas in the immediate vicinity of the islands that are collectively and commonly referred to as the "Lake Merritt Bird Refuge." Thus any undertaking that has the potential to affect, for better or worse, the quality of the wildlife habitat that Lake Merritt in general and the "Lake Merritt Bird Refuge" in particular, support, is of great interest to us.

In the light of the well-known fact that over 90% of the historic wetlands that used to surround San Francisco Bay have been converted to upland uses or otherwise destroyed, one of the principal conservation/advocacy goals of the GGAS is the creation of new wetland habitat and the preservation and enhancement of the value of the remnant areas of such habitat that remain.

We are pleased to report that after carefully examining the Bird Islands Project we have concluded that it is fully consistent with the above-stated goal and therefore we give it our unqualified endorsement.

We have many reasons for our support of the Bird Islands Project. First, the project will enhance the quality of roosting and nesting habitat that the islands themselves provide for the species that make Lake Merritt a regionally significant attraction for bird watchers, namely, black-crowned night and great blue herons, snowy and great egrets, and double crested cormorants (a specie of special concern under the CESA).

Second, the project will generate wildlife habitat benefits through the creation of up to an acre of new intertidal habitat. These new intertidal habitat areas include an area along the shoreline of the lake adjacent to the Bird Refuge, as well as, in what is planned as a second phase of the project, an area within a perimeter formed by the islands themselves. These new areas of intertidal habitat are a type of habitat that before the damming of the lake and the construction of artificial bulkheads used to exist in this setting in great abundance, but that barely exists at all today. We have high hopes that the re-creation of this historic habitat will attract species of shorebirds, such as stilts and yellowlegs, that have not been seen in the setting of the lake except for isolated sightings for over a century.

Finally, we also believe that with the interpretive signage and other educational materials that we understand will be produced in connection with the project, the project will generate significant educational opportunities for Bay Area residents, including schoolchildren, and visitors. It is also our opinion that the habitat and water quality benefits generated by the Bird Islands Project will positively affect other proposed projects at Lake Merritt such as the Lake Merritt Channel Project.

Thank you in advance for considering this application for funding. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at 415-904-5229.

Sincerely,



John Bowers  
Member, East Bay Conservation Committee

CC: Nadine Hitchcock, Coastal Conservancy  
Lesley Estes, City of Oakland  
Markley Bavinger, City of Oakland

# Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt

C/O OAKLAND HERITAGE ALLIANCE • 446 17TH ST. #301, OAKLAND, CA 94612 • 510-763-9218

8 August 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chairman, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Attn: Maxene Spellman

**Subject: Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project**

Dear Mr. Bosco,

I write, as representative of the Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt, in strong support of the Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project. This project provides multiple benefits for the Bay Area as a whole, and is consistent with the goals of my organization.

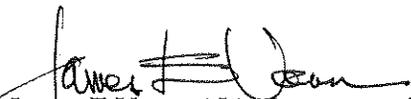
CALM has a broad constituency comprised of concerned citizens through the Bay Area, including architects, planners, landscape architects, preservationists, designers, tenants and homeowners, and a host of neighborhood and organizational interests. The enduring focus of CALM is preserving, maintaining, and enhancing the beauty of Lake Merritt and its environs.

The Bird Islands Project will add significant improvements to the quality of habitat at the bird islands of Lake Merritt. These improvements will augment the islands' future capacity to provide nesting and roosting sites for many bird species.

In addition, the Bird Islands Project's demonstration wetlands, view scopes, and signage will offer rewarding educational resources to visitors of Lake Merritt. As the Nation's first wildlife refuge, and located within the Pacific Flyway, the bird islands serve an important role in the region's cultural and natural history.

Thank you in advance for considering this application for funding. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at 510.465.7010, or [jvann@pyatok.com](mailto:jvann@pyatok.com).

Sincerely,



James E Vann, AIA, Representative  
Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt

CC: Nadine Hitchcock, Coastal Conservancy  
Lesley Estes, City of Oakland  
Markley Bavinger, City of Oakland



***THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE***  
***An Urban Runoff and Watershed Research Center***

**568 Bellevue Avenue Oakland, CA 94610**  
**510/238-2290 Fax 510/238-2290**  
**lmi@netwiz.net www.lakemerrittinstitute.org**

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chairman, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Attn: Maxene Spellman

May 8, 2006

**RE: SUPPORT FOR FUNDING THE LAKE MERRITT BIRD ISLANDS PROJECT**

Dear Mr. Bosco:

For the following reasons, The Lake Merritt Institute encourages your support of a grant request for the Bird Island Project:

- Habitat enhancement for coastal species in an urban area: This project offers a rare opportunity to enhance natural habitat for coastal species in a highly urbanized area. In addition to improving nesting/feeding/shelter habitat along the Pacific flyway, it will do so in a large city where natural landscapes are exceedingly rare.

Lake Merritt is unique because it is a tidal lagoon surrounded by high rise buildings, freeways and thousands of people. Yet it maintains habitat values for 140 species of birds, 30 species of fish and innumerable invertebrates. No where are these habitat values more important at the Lake than at the islands, which are inaccessible to feral cats, vandals and similar forces which often destroy wildlife. This is rare habitat: It deserves your support.

- Educational Benefits: Few projects offer such high visibility to the public as the Bird Islands Project. The interpretive signs, viewing platforms and wetlands will be visited and seen by thousands of people every month, including a population seldom exposed to ecological messages.

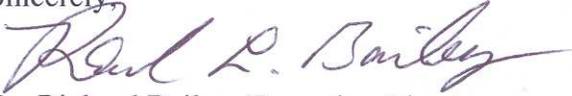
Many people in this inner city do not, or cannot go to other places where wetlands exist. Without Lake Merritt, they might never see a brown pelican diving on a school of topsmelt, or learn that wetlands are important to water quality.

- The nation's oldest wildlife refuge deserves your support: Help Oakland continue the tradition. Your support will allow the City to take a more professional stance in managing this urban refuge, which was created by state law in 1870. Waterfowl have been safe here for 136 years; lets keep it that way.

The Lake Merritt Institute is a non-profit corporation that was founded in 1992. With over 100 members in Oakland and elsewhere, we provide technical support, clean up activities and educational services regarding this unique tidal lagoon that is known as Lake Merritt. We invite you to join us in this support.

Should you have any questions about the Lake or islands, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard L. Bailey". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Dr. Richard Bailey, Executive Director  
The Lakekeeper

Cc: Nadine Hitchcock, Coastal Conservancy  
Lesley Estes, City of Oakland  
Markley Bavinger, City of Oakland



P.O. BOX 11456  
OAKLAND, CA 94611-0456

August 8, 2006

Mr. Douglas Bosco  
Chairman, Coastal Conservancy Board  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Waterfront Action is writing to ask for your support of the City of Oakland's \$1 million request from the California Proposition 50 funds. The \$1 million request will supplement funds from City of Oakland's Clean Water, Safe Parks and Open Space Trust Fund for our Lake Merritt Bird Islands Project.

Waterfront Action is a citizen-based non-profit organization. Our mission is to promote full implementation of the Estuary Policy Plan and the Lake Merritt Park Master Plan; to protect the public trust; and to educate the citizens about the region's watershed.

Lake Merritt was the first federal bird sanctuary in the country. The Lake is a critical element for the Pacific Flyway. It is critical that we improve these islands to provide nesting and roosting sites for the numerous bird species that stop here. The best educational tool is seeing nature work, and, as part of this project, there will be demonstration wetlands, view scopes and signage for the human visitors.

Waterfront Action office can be reached at (510) 336-1824, if you wish to speak with me personally. We appreciate your consideration and support for this project.

Sincerely,

Sandra Threlfall  
Executive Director

cc: Nadine Hitchcock, Coastal conservancy  
Lesley Estes, City of Oakland  
Markley Bavinger, City of Oakland



voice & fax (510) 336-1824



web [www.waterfrontaction.org](http://www.waterfrontaction.org)



email [info@waterfrontaction.org](mailto:info@waterfrontaction.org)