

Girl Scouts Save the Bay

a new green in Girl Scouting

by Kimery Wiltshire



DISCOVERING the need

This project will teach these young women that their actions can make a difference.

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator, California



CONNECTING with each other



Girls Scouts Save the Bay (GSSTB) is the Girl Scouts of San Francisco Bay Area's new "bold audacious project"—28,000 girls, their families, neighbors and adult leaders working to protect and restore the San Francisco Bay. Developed over the past few years by girls and leaders, GSSTB supports girls in learning about critical issues that affect their home, their families and the future—and how they can make a difference now and over their lifetime.

With a recent \$500,000 lead gift from the internationally renowned Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Girl Scouts of San Francisco Bay Area is moving forward to fully implement this historic and ground breaking initiative.

The San Francisco Bay

The San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary is the largest estuary system on the west coasts of both North and South America, encompassing 1,600 square miles, ranging from the salty waters of San Francisco Bay to the brackish waters of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The Estuary's vast upstream watershed drains more than forty-percent of California's land-mass, including the freshwater streams of the Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges.

The San Francisco Bay covers 400 square miles with an average depth of fourteen feet, with depths of 360 feet at the Golden Gate. Even though the Bay has shrunk by a third in the last 150 years, and only about 25 percent of its original wetland, riparian, and tidal mudflat habitat remain, the Bay still supports the only urban commercial fisheries in the nation. The Bay is also the largest harbor on the U.S. Pacific Coast, with more than 67,000,000 tons of cargo passing annually through the Golden Gate.

More than one million shorebirds and waterfowl make their home on bay marshes while millions of others use it as a migratory destination or a rest and food stop. The Delta is a major nursery for fish and invertebrates as well as a highway for migrating salmon and steelhead. The ecosystem supports some 750 species of fish, animals and birds, many of which are endangered.

One hundred and fifty years of pollution, over fishing, fill and shoreline development, and upstream water diversions have severely impaired the health of the Bay. Wetland habitat and freshwater inflow to the Bay have decreased dramatically, along with the once abundant fish and wildlife populations that depended on them. The fish that remain are not safe to eat, and their habitat is being overrun by destructive alien plant and invertebrate species.

Girl Scouts Save the Bay Advisory Board
Co-chaired by Senator Dianne Feinstein and Dr. Sylvia Earle, the Advisory Council includes distinguished leaders in the areas of the environment, technology, science, government, non-profits and businesses.

Girls care about the environment—and they are especially worried about the health of our rivers, oceans and bays. Girls told us they wanted a bold new project—one focused on environmental action, advocacy, and the health of the San Francisco Bay. They reminded us that the actions and choices of girls everywhere make a difference—and that they wanted to take on a new challenge.

Thanks to this grant—and the vote of confidence—from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Girl Scouting in this country and around the world has taken a historic leap forward. Girls will discover, connect and take action to protect and restore the San Francisco Bay—our beautiful home.

Joyce Richards
CEO, Girl Scouts of San Francisco Bay Area

Girl Scouts Save the Bay combines two areas of interest for me—San Francisco Bay and scouting. Scouting was important to my upbringing as it was to my late wife Rhoda. This gift shows how even our youngest citizens can be involved and make a difference.

Mr. Richard Goldman
Chairman, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund



TAKING ACTION

Girl Scouts Save the Bay: Program Components

1. Discover—Connect—Take action!

Girl Scouts Save the Bay program development follows the new national Girl Scout framework: Discover—Connect—Take Action! Using age-appropriate activities, girls first discover and learn about the San Francisco Bay. Girls begin to connect with their community—for example, telling friends and family members about what they've learned. Girls then start to take action—advocating for personal responsibility such as water conservation or preventing pollution. For older girls that can also mean learning about a specific policy issue and advocating on a local, state or national level for change.

2. Projects

Discover Your Watershed: Girls, adult leaders and family members have adopted local watersheds and, with partner organizations, work to protect and restore the watershed over the long-term. The baseline data (such as water quality) the girls are collecting is being incorporated into region-wide data-sets used by scientists and policy makers. To date, twenty-nine watersheds have been adopted in the Bay Area.

Earned Awards: Using age-appropriate curriculum, girls earn badges and patches related to their knowledge of the San Francisco Bay—its ecology, history, culture and geography.

Girl Scouts Amazing Bay Day: On September 30, 2006, girls, their friends and family members from all over Northern California, along with the general public gathered at six festival sites around the Bay for the public launch of Girl Scouts Save the Bay.

Girl Scouts San Francisco Bay Pledge: Girls developed a pledge to protect the Bay and to conserve water, asking friends, family members and the general public to take the pledge.

Girls Water Congress: The Girls Water Congress will develop and implement the Girl Scouts Save the Bay water advocacy agenda.

Field Trips: Girls, family members and adult leaders participate in field trips around the San Francisco Bay.

Day and Resident Camps: Girl Scouts Save the Bay programs are integrated into all five resident and nine summer day camps.

CSI (Crime Scene Investigators)—Girl Scouts Save the Bay: Girls will learn how to investigate clean water violations in the San Francisco Bay.

Working within the Girl Scouts' proven leadership and team-building framework, the Girl Scouts Save the Bay project will build a life-long commitment in girls and their families to ecological literacy and community stewardship. For more information visit GirlScoutsSaveTheBay.org

Kimery Wiltshire, Director, Girl Scouts Save the Bay



Water testing

Being a part of GS Save the Bay has been an amazing experience, teaching me so much about the Bay and helping me gain the leadership skills to organize events and teach girls about the environment. I participated as an Association Champion, including a hands-on day helping clean up part of the Bay; I also work on Girl Scouts Save the Bay activities within our Association, I helped organize our September 30 Girl Scouts Amazing Bay event. Being involved with the program has helped me grow as a person and has taught me how to pass on my knowledge, helping the community learn to Save the Bay.

Hannah S.—Senior Girl Scout

We joined the Girl Scouts Save the Bay Group this year because, as we learned about the San Francisco Bay we found out that everything goes into the Bay—garbage, pollution, junk, everything! So for our Gold Award, we developed and ran the first Girl Scouts Save the Bay summer camp. We were able to teach the younger girls about what we can all do to save our beautiful Bay!

Lauren K. & Megan S.—Senior Girl Scouts

Meet Mazu the Leopard Shark!

Over a thousand years ago, there lived a little girl—just an ordinary girl—who, through many adventures became Mazu (“MAT-zu”)—the goddess of the oceans—and protector of all its creatures. Just for fun, Mazu the Leopard Shark is the mascot for Girl Scouts Save the Bay—as a symbol of helping protect and restore our San Francisco Bay—our home!



Girl Scouts Amazing Bay Pledge!

On my honor, I will try
To protect and restore
Our San Francisco Bay
My home
I will do my best to:
Use water wisely
Recycle everything I can
Appreciate the beauty of
the Bay and,
Make the world a
better place

I became involved at first because my daughter was interested in the project. She believes we need to be more involved in our community in many ways. Since the first meeting, it became obvious that this was a plan that would work to get girls involved in a new way in Girl Scouting. The big thing is the environment and the San Francisco Bay is a huge part of ours.

Nancy Deras
Adult Leader Dos Pueblos Association

Engaging Girl Scouts and their families will help Save The Bay protect and restore San Francisco Bay. We believe this partnership can make the Bay healthier and build a new generation of residents who understand and care for the Bay.

David Lewis
Executive Director, Save The Bay



Checking the results

Oceans of Goodness!

Want to learn the Girl Scouts Save the Bay theme song, **Oceans of Goodness**, and the official hand motions? Go to GirlScoutsSavetheBay.org and download the video.

Project Partners

Girl Scouts work with many community partners including lead partner Save the Bay; National Audubon Society; The Bay Institute; River of Words; The Watershed Project; East Bay Regional Parks District; Marin Open Space District; Friends of the Creeks; Aquarium of the Bay; East Bay Municipal Water District; and the City of Oakland.