

NAME: Humboldt Bay Spartina Eradication

LOCATION: Humboldt County, California

ACRES: 80 acres of salt marsh



NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR: Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project will restore Humboldt Bay native marsh communities and ecosystem functions by removing invasive dense flowered cord grass (*Spartina densiflora*) (“Spartina”) as part of a regional eradication program. Invasive Spartina is a major threat to the diversity of tidal marshes in Humboldt Bay and other West Coast estuaries. The project will remove Spartina using a combination of methods, primarily mowing and rototilling, as well as manual removal and application of imazapyr. While follow up treatments will be needed for seedling and established plants until Spartina is eradicated from the region, seedling numbers decline significantly within three years as native marsh species establish continuous cover. Proposed methods have been tested and refined in Humboldt Bay over the last ten years. In low density Spartina areas owned by the City of Arcata, volunteers will remove plants manually with shovels and build community support.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

The project will benefit Humboldt Bay wildlife habitat by increasing overall productivity. Removing Spartina will also improve foraging by restoring important invertebrate prey species associated with native plants. Protecting sloughs and enhancing rearing habitat in tidal marsh will benefit federally listed coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, and tidewater goby. In addition, the project protects mudflats that support oyster culture and will benefit migratory birds.

STATUS: Planning and Design