

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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INTERIOR NEGOTIATING FOR NEW REFUGE IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

About 12,000 acres of some of the best remaining waterfowl habitat in the San Francisco Bay area have been proposed for inclusion in a new Federal wildlife preserve--the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge-- Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel announced today.

The Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, which administers the far-flung national wildlife refuge system, is presently negotiating with California agencies and private owners in Solano County for acquisition of the refuge.

Money to purchase 1,100 acres of privately owned land would come from the sale of Federal duck stamps. The rest of the refuge would be water and tidelands to be acquired by lease or agreement with the State and the City of Vallejo. Establishment of the refuge will help accomplish the objectives outlined in the San Francisco Bay Plan by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Secretary Hickel observed.

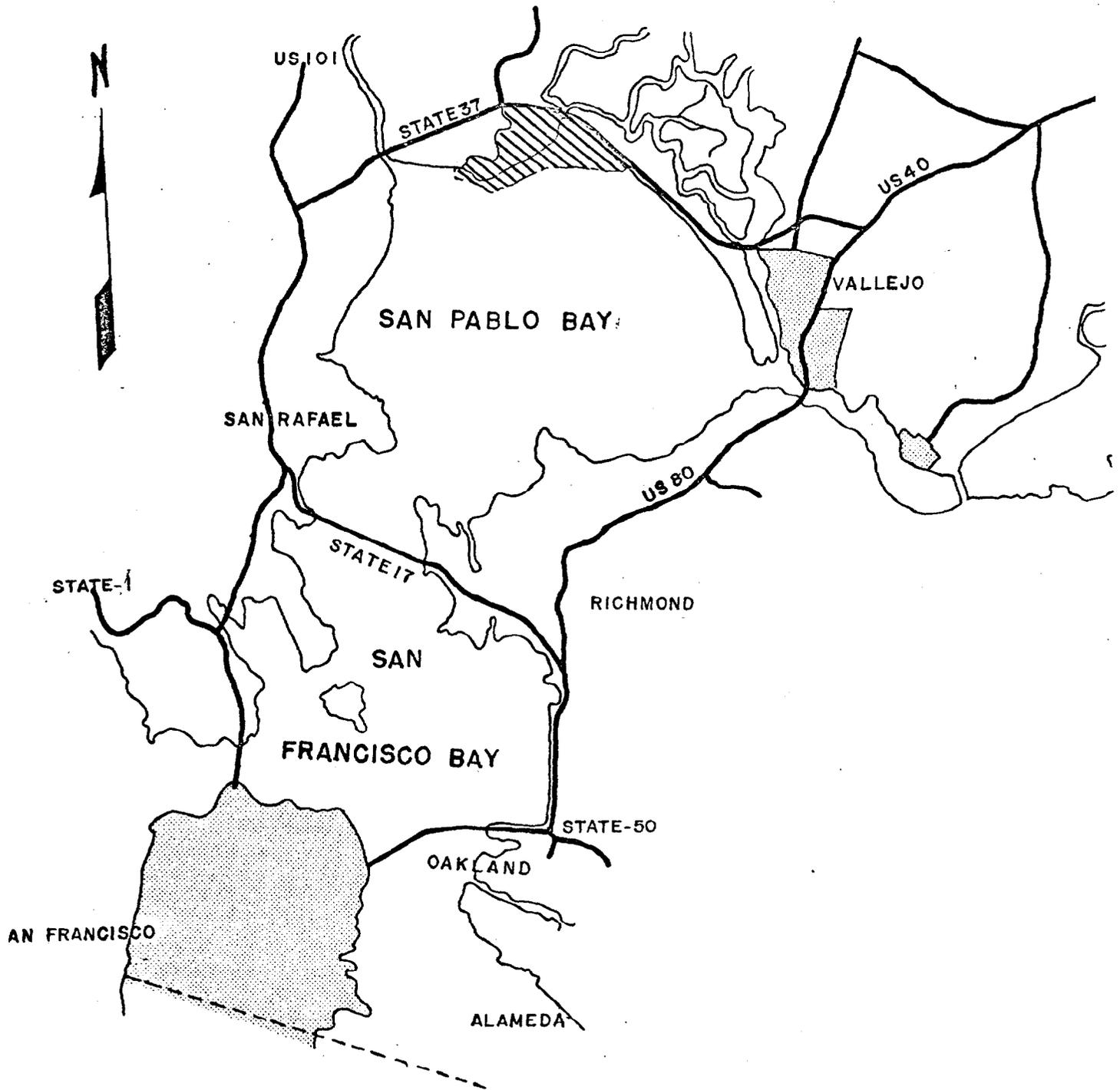
"This is a significant step forward for West Coast wildlife and one of America's great urban complexes," Secretary Hickel said.

"About 75 percent of the San Francisco-San Pablo Bay area has been taken over for urban and industrial uses," said Secretary Hickel, "and much of the delta land nearby is in agriculture and military uses. Relatively little is left for wildlife, and we must act now to acquire and protect the shoreline of the Bay in cooperation with the Bay Commission wherever areas useful to wildlife can be preserved."

Located in the Pacific flyway migration route of waterfowl, the salt marshes, tidal flats and open water of the tract are excellent wintering habitat for canvasback ducks and other waterfowl. The site is also home for many thousands of shore and song birds, plus mammals, including seals. It also provides protection for the California clapper rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse, which are proposed for inclusion on the United States List of Endangered Species, and two subspecies of song sparrow. Populations of all these species are depleted due to habitat loss. Little additional development is required to upgrade the area for wildlife.

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PROPOSED SAN PABLO BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



 PROPOSED SITE

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SCALE IN MILES