

Education, Restoration, and Recreation at the Muwekma Ohlone Sanctuary

Submitted to David Erickson

By

Kellyx Nelson and Jack Laws

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Background

History of Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park

Standing on the paved surface of Illinois Street at the west end of the Pier 80 cargo dock in San Francisco, it is easy to overlook the possibilities inherent to a small parcel (about an acre) of open space nestled in among the industrial developments on the northern shore of Islais Creek. It is difficult to believe that 1,000 years ago this same spot was a marsh teeming with abundant wildlife that sustained the Muwekma Ohlone people.

Before Europeans arrived, the forks of Islais Creek, as well as other tributaries and springs, brought freshwater through large expanses of marshland in this very area. The Muwekma Ohlone people thrived on the variety of vegetation and wildlife. The shell mounds still exist in some parts of the City as testament to their plentiful food source. Islais Creek provided 85% of the drinking water for the city of San Francisco until the late 1800's. Herring and other fish migrated up the creek, and still do. Commercial fishing vessels still follow schools of herring up the same waterway the fish have been swimming for thousands of years.

However, human activities in the area have had their toll. Highways, roads, and other construction have blocked all but one tributary to the area now known as Islais Creek. Three-quarters of the waterway have been filled. At times, discarded animal blood and organs from the rendering industry, "Butcher Town," made the creek run notoriously red. Until recently, raw sewage ran directly into the creek. Industry lining the shores of the creek has included, among other things, automobile battery manufacture, auto wrecking, shipping, bus storage and repair, aluminum manufacturing, toxic waste soil treatment, and a scrap metal yard.

Looking a bit closer at the small area of precious open space, and the additional 1.5 acres that may be exposed by low tides, today we still find a persistent biological diversity in the unseemly preserve, as well as the potential for educational and recreational opportunities to connect today's humans with the natural and cultural history of the area. We also find adjacencies and linkages to other small parks and bits of open spaces preserved by the efforts of local San Franciscans, creating an unexpected string of pearls in this region of the City.

Description of Project

After 70 years of no use and little attention, local neighborhood activists, calling themselves the "Islais

Creek Guerrilla Gardeners," began to consider what could be done with the intertidal lot. Their efforts to preserve open space in the rapidly developing neighborhood have met widespread support from local community members, politicians, and industry.

It is my belief that this project is a strong asset to our community here in Bayview as a habitat sanctuary and an environmental education tool.

- Sopenia Maxwell, District 10 Supervisor

We ... admire the grass-roots efforts to enhance the natural environmental value of this strip of shoreline.

- RMC Pacific Materials, in a letter pledging ongoing stewardship, environmental expertise, construction materials, and financial support

... a wonderful addition to the growing chain of public access sites on San Francisco's south-central waterfront.

- Julia Viera, Director of Friends of Islais Creek

Due to their work, most notably that of David Erickson, the newly named Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park received a San Francisco Urban Resources Partnership grant to develop a master plan to restore and manage the open space. As part of that effort, we agreed to develop a plan for integrating the natural area into the community by conducting a preliminary biological inventory of the natural area, assessing the needs and resources of interested organizations and individuals, proposing potential partnerships with other organizations, and proposing appropriate educational programming. As it became clear to us that community needs, interests, and resources went beyond educational programming, we have included habitat restoration and recreational uses of the location as well, to more fully integrate the Park into the community. When appropriate, to provide a more complete overview of possible programming and partnerships, we have included efforts and partnerships that have already begun due to the ceaseless energy of the park stewards. They have established many relationships and piloted a few educational, recreational, and restoration activities.

Biological Inventory

In order to develop a fuller understanding of the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park and its potential for

habitat restoration and environmental education, we found it necessary to conduct a biological inventory of the location. The inventory is a preliminary survey of the common plants and animals found there from April to May of 2001. Through repeated visits, organisms found from the upland area to the low tide zone and birds in the general vicinity were identified and are listed. The survey boundaries are from the edge of the low tide zone to the fence surrounding the park. While not comprehensive, this inventory represents major taxa and common species found at the site. It is expected that this list may be modified and expanded with further study. The survey does not include plants probably introduced from landscaping efforts on the site. Whenever possible sampling and identification was done on site and without injuring the living organisms. No voucher specimens were collected unless otherwise noted. Although these inventory methods limit the scope and resolution of the survey they are in keeping with the ethical precepts of the park steward (David Erickson) and the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park project. The inventory list can be found in Appendix 1.

For a historical and regional perspective, the California Academy of Sciences generously offered their database of collections from Islais Creek. Although these data are from a broader region than the area that is now the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, they do give information about the creek generally and its biological diversity. For a summary of those data, please see Appendix 2. The first Academy record of the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park appears here, as one of the organisms found in our recent biological inventory was not previously known by Academy scientists to be found in San Francisco Bay. When brought to the Department of Invertebrate Zoology and Geology for help with identification, we offered it to be accessioned into the Academy's collection.

Resource and Needs Assessment

While an understanding of the organisms found at the location is essential to developing a plan for managing it, an assessment of community needs and resources is similarly critical to developing a master plan for integrating the park into the community. In order to identify community needs, desires, and resources, as well as potential partnerships to achieve common goals, we conducted formal and informal conversations with a sampling of local schools, community organizations, and individuals active in District 10 as potential community resources and partners in the project. By no means is this an exhaustive list. We encourage the park stewards to continue ongoing needs and resource assessment in the local and regional community. Following is a summary of some of our findings.

Potential Partners

Crissy Field Center

Contact: Christy Rocca

The Crissy Field Center links people and parklands through multicultural environmental programs,

community outreach, and education. While they are physically located in the Presidio and focus on national parklands, they have a tremendous commitment to programming for a variety of communities and are willing to deliver educational programs off-site. Outreach is a major goal of the Center, aligned with efforts at the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park. They have community project expertise as well as specialists to assist and empower people in various communities to take control and create stewardship of their environments. The Center has a laboratory for research and testing, and can help with monitoring of a site. They would be able to lend soil and water testing kits that could be used at the Pocket Park, as well as their Media Lab on site. While Crissy Field is in a different neighborhood of the City from the Pocket Park, they are “committed to not letting that be a factor” as long as they have a clear role in any given project. They also offer physical space for visitors, scientific expertise, and will soon be hiring a staff member responsible for science content in their programming, and an art specialist. They also offer experience in awareness building in communities. They could help with getting the word out, such as organizing a fair or something in the community. They could introduce Park organizers to people with expertise in art, architecture, and landscape design. They would be willing to offer family activities on site or off site, and would be able to include information about Park activities in their newsletter, with a distribution of 26,000. In fact, programming recently sponsored by the Crissy Field Center and listed in their newsletter includes bicycle tours of the Islais Creek area.

Save the Bay: Canoes in Sloughs

Contact: Jason Morris, Director of Education

Save The Bay (Save San Francisco Bay Association) "seeks to preserve, restore and protect the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta Estuary as a healthy and biologically diverse ecosystem essential to the well-being of the human and natural communities it sustains."

The organization offers an educational program, Canoes in Sloughs, for 6th to 12th graders to explore the estuary ecosystem up close in canoes. Students test water quality and use maps and field guides. One of the current locations for the Canoes in Sloughs program is on Islais Creek, launching from Islais Landing and going as far east as the approximate location of what is now the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park.

They would value a location where they can run the canoes up into the mud and disembark to be able to look at native plants and trees. If they had such access to pull out the canoes other than Islais Landing, with dirt all the way to the water, they could and would do some science programming at the site. Jason sees no obstacles to the Canoes In Sloughs program's involvement with the Park. In fact, they would love to incorporate a service learning component into their program, in which participants would lend support to work days at the Park. A goal and challenge they face is getting more inner city children out on the creeks. They have found that these children are often afraid of canoeing. If the Park attracted students through local school involvement or in other ways, Save the Bay would be happy to take the

children canoeing. To facilitate those opportunities for local neighborhood children, they have scholarships available for lower income groups that they are eager to distribute.

They have been increasingly focusing on cultural history in the area because it is hard to teach about marshes when there aren't any left. Interpretive signage and plaques at the Park regarding cultural and/or natural history of the area would be useful for programming at the site. Regarding needs or goals for other members of the community, Jason spoke of general use. He knows that other people launch canoes and kayaks where they do. He suggests getting publicity when the area is beautified because it encourages people to use the site. He mentioned a plan in 1905 to make both banks of Islais Creek a park, but the plan was dropped after the earthquake. He would like to see that plan revived.

City College of San Francisco: Center for Habitat Restoration

Contact: Edmund Bedecarrax

The Center for Habitat Restoration provides students from City College of San Francisco and other local colleges and universities academic credit and/or pay for participation in service learning restoration based projects. At Heron's Head Park, students from the Center for Habitat Restoration developed a restoration and management plan as well as participated in intensive inventories and monitoring of the site. They are interested in building links with their work at Heron's Head Park. Ed sees opportunities for working with the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, starting small and seeing where the relationship might grow. Ed envisioned two possible approaches to working with the Park, a smaller investment and a larger one: students could either get academic credit for assigned tasks, such as collecting research on the cultural and natural history of the area; or, he could put together a "management team" of honors students at City College for the Park. Ed feels that the work at Heron's Head could be used as a model, where teams came in and developed a plan with the community. They would be more successful if they had a contact person in the community, such as David Erickson, with whom to work on the project.

Literacy for Environmental Justice: Heron's Head Education

Contact: Patrick Rump

LEJ is an environmental justice, education and youth empowerment organization based in Hunter's Point. Its mission is to foster an understanding of the principles of urban sustainability and environmental justice in young people in order to promote the long-term health of the community. They offer school programs for kindergarten through high school at Heron's Head Park ranging from one to multiple visits. These programs include classroom presentations as well as involvement in restoration activities. LEJ would like to get sediment testing done for Heron's Head, to find out about exposure of visitors to toxins. They feel that it would be beneficial to do sediment testing for the area generally, including the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park. Patrick felt that it would be advantageous to the community if the different groups involved in the region would find more ways to coordinate efforts and

work together. For example, LEJ, Crissy Field Center, and the San Francisco Bike Coalition are working together to offer programs that take shoreline trips to restoration sites in the area, as in the bicycle trip mentioned in the Crissy Field newsletter. He also proposed the creation of a single community resource flyer listing all of the conservation, education, and environmental justice related organizations that are doing similar work in the area as well as the resources they offer for people in the community.

Programming that he suggested would include shoreline interpretation that starts from Glen Canyon to the Bay, using old maps to compare to the present site. He thinks the Park might be a good location for a community arts center, and a natural fit with project based learning efforts relevant to the local area (watershed, industrial history, etcetera). Other programming possibilities include linking up summer programs with the Natural Areas Program, India Basin, Herons Head, and local meetings. LEJ would consider including the Park on their tour of natural areas of Bayview. Since the Park is small, he would recommend for smaller groups. He noted that Bayview residents are often not involved in conservation and restoration projects. He feels that, if the community residents are more involved in the beautification of an area, they will respect the area more and reduce some of the difficulties natural spaces otherwise encounter.

San Francisco Unified School District: Conservation Connection

Contact: Chanel Dilal

Conservation Connection is the part of SFUSD concerned with education regarding water quality, pollution prevention, and habitat and energy conservation. With a small staff, they lead walks in San Francisco parks for school groups and provide teacher training. Some of the programs they lead are in Glen Canyon, the remaining headwaters of Islais Creek. While their goals are certainly aligned with the efforts of the Park, public transportation to the site is limited, making it less user friendly. Also, some concerns were expressed regarding whether or not any of the industrial use of the area has contributed toxins that would be dangerous to visitors. Restoration activities at the Park, she thought, would definitely be of value.

Buena Vista Elementary School

Contact: Brad Stan

Buena Vista Elementary School is interested in opportunities for their students to participate in labs led by docents at the Park. The school supports a science learning environment in which students may touch, investigate, measure, and analyze. They also expressed interest in service learning opportunities such as those that might be afforded at the Park in its restoration efforts. They would like to become involved with projects such as those in which students “adopt” a local creek. Before they could participate in a project like this, however, they would need to know about toxicity in the area, due to its heavy industrial use. Were they to become involved on some level, resources they could bring to the

Park include children, parents, and teachers. The cultural history of the site is particularly relevant to the third and fourth grade curriculum. He thought that parents of the students would also be interested in the general history of the local area.

Friends of the Urban Forest

Contact: Alexis Harte

Friends of the Urban Forest is a non-profit organization that offers financial, technical, and practical assistance to individuals and neighborhood groups who want to plant and care for trees. Their interest in serving this area in the City, traditionally unlikely to plant street trees, is evident in the efforts they have made to plant at Islais Landing and along Third Street by the railroad tracks immediately south of Islais Creek. Their arborists are highly regarded, and the organization's commitment to creating community via the planting of trees is consistent with the grassroots philosophy of the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park stewards. In addition to tree planting expertise and extensive experience mobilizing communities, FUF provides trees at a very low cost, offers follow-up visits and tree health monitoring, and is always available to answer questions.

Neighborhood Parks Council

Contact: Linda Hunter

The Neighborhood Parks Council, providing a citywide forum for advocates for parks and recreation in San Francisco, shares with the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park the goals of advancement of open space and community development. They work with all groups interested in parks or neighborhood green space. They support parks in public meetings and have particular expertise in lobbying, which they would offer as a resource for the Park, as well as a pool of volunteers through their relationship with the GAP Corporation. In the community around Islais Creek, the Neighborhood Parks Council sponsored Native American Arts in Parks, including the film festival this past spring at the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, and GAP Corporation sponsored park cleanups. She would be interested in seeing a native habitat area with waterfront vegetation.

Potential Models and Ideas

Visitation Valley Greenway Project

Contact: Fran Martin

The Visitation Valley Greenway Project is organizing efforts to convert a chain of vacant lots in Visitation Valley into a greenbelt of community parks. Like the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, their project is funded by an Urban Resource Partnership grant. They are interested in developing the greenway as a resource for the community. The Visitation Valley Greenway Project may offer a model for other sites, including the Park, in terms of establishing a network of contacts and encouraging collaboration of interested organizations. They would be interested in bringing children from Visitation Valley, nearby, to the Park to learn about watersheds and have a hands-on experience with San

Francisco Bay life. They could do programming upland with Bayview students. Fran knows of local day care organizations that are looking for things to do with their charges. The biggest obstacle she could see to participation of her organization in the Park is apathy of some community members, although she feels that schools would be interested.

Friends of India Basin

Contact: Jill Fox

India Basin Shoreline Park has been working on an expansion of their park in three phases. They are now in Phase Two, expanding and putting in amenities. They are also getting funding to be part of the Bay Trail (described further below). They have airport mitigation funds to develop a wetland with a private contractor and will eventually work with the Trust for Public Land to purchase private property and turn it over to the park so they can have a ring of open space around India Basin. She feels that Heron's Head interpretive signage is more about the animals of the area, and theirs is more about the history and geography. In their efforts to push India Basin as a Bay Trail destination, they've included water fountains, barbeques, a basketball court, signage, and bathrooms. As possible links with the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, she proposed a bicycling event from one park to another that highlights places along the stretch, as it is not that far, with coffee at one end. People could easily walk it. Another possibility is a mini-triathlon, in which people bike, walk, and boat. She sees people in India Basin in canoes who most likely put their boats in at Islais Landing, indicating that recreational users of the waterways have already discovered the natural relationship between the two areas.

Jill urged the necessity of groups involved in the area seeing the big picture and coordinating more efforts, avoiding political silos. She sees a recreation focus to use of the parks. She would like to keep lines of communication open so that the two parks can do things together. The signage at India Basin has been designed to match Heron's Head, to some extent, and she suggested the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park consider doing the same. Among the challenges they have faced in their efforts to improve the park are having volunteers interface with people who are employees, lack of funding for their efforts, and the difficulty of preserving open space in the southeastern section of the city with development pressure.

India Basin Neighborhood Association

Contact: Wendy Brummer-Kocks

Wendy feels that, while people in India Basin are unlikely to visit the stretch of land that is the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, as it is relatively small and they have some "great local stuff," an attraction would be in boating. She noted that the Park is on a waterway and could be a good landing. It would draw people to the area if you could rent boats to go on Islais Creek. She expressed concern about what would happen to the Park and programming there when the Illinois Street Bridge is built, as it will be a large truck thoroughfare with a railway and money has already been secured to build it.

Additional ContactsFriends of Starr King Open Space.

Contact: Fred Rinne

This neighborhood group, dedicated to enhancing the quality of their local open space preserve through community involvement, is just starting to get organized. He felt that the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park might support a sense of stewardship in the region that would be advantageous to their group as well. He felt that the Heron's Head project might be a good model, as it accommodates both wildlife habitat and human recreation. Regarding how they might participate in this project or utilize this space, he noted that their Board is currently still divided about what to do at their own site. However, there are many photographers in their group who might be interested in the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, and they have expertise in their group to consult with the Park regarding native plantings on the site.

Friends of Islais Creek

Contact: Julia Viera

An effort to advocate for enhancement and conservation projects around Islais Creek, the Friends organization is able and willing to help the Park obtain any necessary permits. Julia described her involvement with securing funds for the Islais Creek Landing on the south shore. As part of a mitigation plan for the pump station retrofit, they are redesigning the intersection to provide access for pedestrians across Third Street. Working with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), they procured a million dollar grant to obtain landmark status for the Copra Crane at Indiana Street. Two other interests she expressed were the installation of fish sculptures by artist Todd Martinez and the construction of 400 live-work loft units. When asked how she thinks the Park could or should be used, Julia felt that "guerilla gardens" are generally good for communities, and that the area needs "funk on the waterfront." She also expressed interest in programming about local history, and posed that the ILWU might be a resource for historical programs in the area. She also proposed construction of a pedestrian bridge connecting the north and south shores of the creek. One serious consideration she brought up regarding the future of the Park is the current plan to build a bridge across Illinois Street. Additionally, she expressed concern that many of the residents in the area are newcomers and may not have an investment in the neighborhood.

San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks: Natural Areas Program

Contact: Lisa Wayne

A goal of the Natural Areas Program is to have a connected shoreline in the southeast corner of the City, which the Park would help to support. Lisa felt that this is a goal similarly shared by other members of the community, especially critical in light of the pressure to develop natural areas in San Francisco. The Natural Areas Program is helping to construct a wetland in India Basin, helping it become contiguous

with Heron's Head Park. Involvement of the Natural Areas Program in the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park, however, would be necessarily limited by the fact that the Park is not City property. Nonetheless, they would offer their expertise to review landscape designs for the site. She saw opportunities for public involvement in three ways: wetland restoration, upland restoration, and a community garden. Lisa felt that the expertise of the Natural Areas Program would lend itself better to upland and wetland restorations than to community gardening.

San Francisco Estuary Institute

Contact: Andrew Cohen

With its mission to "provide the scientific understanding necessary to manage the complex and biologically rich San Francisco Estuary," the Institute is interested in wetlands restoration, particularly mapping wetlands. They are creating a Global Information System based eco-atlas. While they do not see a way to become involved in this particular project, they can recommend multiple contacts in the Bay Area, and should still be considered a resource.

Bay Interpretive Training: Marine Experience Program

Contact: Patty Donald

This organization could provide a model and materials for educational programming on natural history about San Francisco Bay. They have a strong environmental education program, and would be willing to offer feedback on programs developed for the Park site. They encourage adults to participate in their interpretive training. All participants receive a packet of very high quality educational materials to aid in teaching about the Bay.

Summary of Findings and Next Steps

Our recommendations for the next steps that should be taken to integrate the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park with the needs and resources of the community fall into three basic categories: restoration, education, and recreation. Please note that, before many community members or organizations would comfortable becoming involved, they would need to have questions and/or concerns answered regarding potential toxicity at the site, and the plans for the Illinois Street Bridge. Both of these concerns were expressed multiple times during our needs and resource assessment.

Restoration

Support of and interest in restoration activities at the Park, creating a space that contains and protects more nature and native plants and animals, was ubiquitous in our conversations. Biological data, current as well as archival, describe a rich diversity of species found at the site, from the upland area to the

intertidal zone, as well as flying overhead. This biological diversity can be enhanced and maintained while supporting educational and recreational interests in the area. It is our belief that a rich natural area will in fact draw more participants to educational and recreational programming. Additionally, restoration activities often form the bulk of environmental educational programs. We recommend that, in any restoration efforts, native plants are used, particularly those that best lend themselves to teaching about native California uses of plants.

Regarding potential partnerships in this endeavor, we think that the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park invites a meaningful and rewarding relationship with the Center for Habitat Restoration at City College. Their expertise in restoration projects, knowledge of the area, student and other resources, and willingness to work on the project make them an ideal partner. Their restoration project at Heron's Head Park serves as a model for what could be done in terms of biological restoration at the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park. Friends of the Urban Forest also has knowledge of the area, expertise and resources to bear. They have been involved in tree plantings along Third Street and at Islais Landing. Their ability to obtain trees, arborist expertise, and dedication to creating community through planting trees makes them an ideal partner. Additionally, Friends of the Urban Forest has a commitment to serving communities in San Francisco that have been least likely to plant street trees, including District 10. The California Academy of Sciences has already contributed archival information on the biological diversity documented in Islais Creek, helped identify some of the organisms found in our recent inventory, and has further agreed to include the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park as a location in their project to inventory the benthic organisms of San Francisco Bay. Other potential relationships in restoration efforts include the Crissy Field Center (with laboratories and expertise in biological monitoring and restoration projects), Save the Bay (children in the Canoes In Sloughs program would participate in service learning projects at the site), and Buena Vista Elementary School. Due to their interest in service learning and hands-on science, we propose exploring a pilot school partnership with them. The San Francisco Conservation Corp. and others have already volunteered staff and hours to clean-up efforts at the Pocket Park.

The San Francisco Estuary Institute and the Natural Areas Program of San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department should be consulted for their expertise as well. The Neighborhood Parks Council's shared vision for restoration, interest in District 10, and variety of resources (volunteers, lobbying, etc.) should be considered as well.

Education

Educational opportunities at the Park were as universally important to those interested in the site as restoration activities. There are many opportunities to overlap these two interests, as various individuals and organizations hoped to teach students through participation in restoration activities. After testing for toxicity, discussions should be pursued with the school regarding involving their students in restoration

or monitoring activities, using the Park as an outdoor laboratory and/ or service-learning opportunity. Before developing rigorous educational programming, thought should be given to providing restroom facilities in the region, if not at the Muwekma Pocket Park itself.

Save the Bay's Canoes in Sloughs program would like to incorporate a stop at the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park in their watershed and Bay education program, providing scholarships and otherwise encouraging participation of local children. Buena Vista Elementary School (seeking outdoor laboratory, cultural history, and service learning experiences), Visitation Valley Greenway Project (already studying watersheds and the upper part of Islais Creek), Canoes in Sloughs (seeking local children and pull-out site with native plants for their canoes), and the Conservation Connection of SFUSD all have students and have expressed some interest in providing children with educational programs at the site. Some of these organizations which offer programming and seek students may be introduced to others which have students and seek programming in this local park. Neighborhood Parks Council sponsored activities, such as naturalist walking tours of the region, could include the Park as a stop.

A relationship should be developed with the Crissy Fields Center, as their demonstrated commitment to programming in the region, willingness to deliver educational programs off-site, and ability to "get the word out" through community project expertise and newsletter that reaches 26,000 people would significantly expand the ability to deliver educational programs for the community surrounding the Park as well as getting others from outside the immediate area to visit. If the Center for Habitat Restoration is partnered with for restoration efforts, they may also be able to develop educational programs relevant to the site.

We strongly encourage collaboration with existing efforts in the area, particularly the work of LEJ in Heron's Head park. We also encourage park stewards and educators for the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park to look into the excellent model, training, and materials offered by the Bay Interpretive Training.

Recreation

Recreational opportunities and needs were expressed most by those who actually live in the area. Interest in a boat landing at the Park was expressed by locals as well as the Canoes in Sloughs program with Save the Bay. Even if the issue of limited parking makes the Park an impossible launch area, recreationists would still take the boats out for a rest, a picnic, or an educational opportunity. Recreational opportunities might also help building relationships between the different parks, open spaces, and invested organizations, breaking down some of the political fragmentation that was expressed by many.

There are additional possibilities for recreational programming if current efforts to make the Muwekma

Ohlone Pocket Park a spur of the Bay Trail are successful. The Bay Trail Project is a non-profit organization that plans and advocates for completion of the Bay trail, described on their website as “a planned recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 400-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails.”

Opportunities for artistic expression were voiced by many as well, from members of the local neighborhood who spoke passionately about art on the waterfront, to Patrick Rump's suggested community arts center. As Julia Viera, of Friends of Islais Creek, described them in her July 12, 2000 letter of support, “The Illinois Street community of artists and crafts persons have cared for this section of waterfront and the open area along their block in an informal way for a number of years. Their work is wonderfully unusual and funky, and very much in character for the locale.” Some efforts have already been made to invite arts into the Park; recognizing the ancestral role of Native Americans on the land, the park stewards collaborated this spring with The Neighborhood Parks Council to host the Native Arts in the Parks Film Festival.

Conclusion

We applaud the efforts of these citizen activists working to preserve and protect nature and open space in their own backyard, fostering stewardship and education about the natural and cultural history of the City and the Bay. We are pleased to play a small role in that effort and excited about the interest in the project expressed by a diverse cadre of non-profit organizations, from Friends groups to the City College of San Francisco. We recommend that the process and progress of the creation, management and programs of the Muwekma Ohlone Pocket Park be thoroughly documented so that aspects of this endeavor may serve as a model of stewardship and community development for others. The Muwekma Ohlone Park, though small in size, provides a potentially immeasurable opportunity to create collaborations between and unite the efforts of many individuals and organizations invested in the region.