Culture and nature have been linked here for over 150 years.

Photos courtesy of Laura Watt

Ellen Joslin Johnck

South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project
Phenomenon of the salt pond landscape: a metaphor for the history of the Bay itself

Photos courtesy of Laura Watt

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Beginning with small scale salt farming in 1850...
…evolving into a major industrial complex by 1940
Cultural and historic resources: archaeological sites, buildings, structures, objects + natural resources = cultural landscape
Cultural landscape analysis

- A tool for critical thinking about peoples’ lives, values and ideas
- Identify sites of historical events
- Understand national, social and economic forces shaping the landscape
- Cultural heritage, environmental tourism, and public interpretation
Cultural landscape analysis

Involves:

• Historic context
• Resources inventory
• Cultural assessment
Historic context
Cultural resources:
Pilings, Archimedes Screw
Cultural resources:
Pilings, bricks, building foundations
Cultural resources:
Archimedes Screw
Cultural and natural resources:
Drawbridge ghost shacks in marshes
Cultural and natural resources:
Levees, plants
Cultural resources:
Archaeological sites; discovering the tusk of a Columbian mammoth 2006 dated 10,000 BCE
Prior to European arrival, south bay salt pond landscape was combination of natural processes: tides and currents, rainfall and weather, erosion and sedimentation, tidal mudflats, tidal marshlands, sloughs and pannes interspersed marshlands. Marshes elongated at landward edge of marsh--salinas. Late summer, salinas had dried out—residue was salt. Ohlones scraped, cooked and traded it. First salt farmers adapted this technique.
20th century, salinas were transformed from marsh to ponds
1930: ponds became the world’s largest industrial salt evaporation system
The Landing

Landing as a natural landform became grid for salt industry and other agriculture industry, and future local marine and landward transportation routes.
The Landing

Bayward endings and beginnings of roads are present-day regional street and highway system reflecting the cultural adaptation of the Bay and the public’s inheritance.
What are the outcomes of a cultural landscape analysis?
Outcomes:

1. Help understand engineering basics for restoration design
2. Richer, more meaningful understanding of the historical process
3. Increased knowledge about valuable and disappearing resources—the last frontier
4. Public interpretation on S. F. Bay Trail
5. Inclusive approach to public land management for sustained use by people and wildlife.
A sense of wonder and awe....
Questions?

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