



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

CITATION

PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AWARD
GIACOMINI WETLANDS RESTORATION

In recognition of the partners who planned and implemented the Giacomini Wetlands Restoration, returning tidewater to a 550-acre dairy ranch, restoring more than 50 percent of the vegetated intertidal wetlands to Tomales Bay and gaining in the coastal wetlands along the central California coast.

In October 2008, the Tomales Bay community celebrated the return of tidewater to a 550-acre former dairy ranch. Located at the head of the bay, the ranch was leveed in the 1940s, resulting in the loss of more than half of the tidal wetlands present in Tomales Bay, and a further loss of 12 percent of the wetlands along the outer central California coast. Working together, numerous organizations and individuals initiated the planning and compliance process to restore the dairy site to an integrated floodplain and tidal marsh. Tomales Bay is marine-coastal wetland oriented along a flooded valley formed by the San Andreas Fault. The unique dynamics and habitat supported by this 12-mile long bay and its watershed make it a significant wetland. The project restored a variety of wetland types identified as particularly threatened in California, including tidal marsh and mudflats, freshwater and brackish marsh, and riparian habitat. The restoration will greatly increase the quality and condition of wetlands at the headwaters of Tomales Bay, resulting in discernible benefits including reduced flooding to private properties, improved water quality, and increased habitat for wildlife species. Reestablishing the hydrologic connection between the Bay and Giacomini Ranch has profound effects on the fate and transport of sediment and other pollutants, thereby reducing the delivery of contaminants to Tomales Bay. There are 27 federally threatened and endangered species in the Point Reyes Tomales Bay area. Many of these will use, or are already using the restoration area. In addition, the restoration will improve habitat for a number of formerly listed species of concern such as river otters, saltmarsh common yellowthroat, and other resident or long term species. For fulfilling the vision of a restored and functional tidal wetland through successful collaboration and communication among numerous organizations, agencies, companies, and individuals, the Giacomini Wetland Restoration is granted the Department of the Interior's Partners in Conservation Award.