[MS-0398.035.012.001]

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

RON ROBERTS
DEPUTY MAYOR

NEWS RELEASE

October 20, 1992
92-32

Mike Abrams
236-6622

MISSION BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE TO BE EXPANDED

Deputy Mayor Ron Roberts and Councilwoman Valerie Stallings today announced that the City has agreed to purchase a 2.6-acre parcel to expand a Mission Bay wildlife refuge.

The parcel had been targeted for 26 condominium units. Instead it will be incorporated into an adjacent wildlife refuge protecting the last remnants of salt marsh in Mission Bay and providing habitat for numerous bird species, some of them which are rare and endangered.

"This purchase provides a wonderful addition to the City's open space system. Right here in the middle of the City our citizens and their children can appreciate nature," said Roberts, who led the effort to preserve the property as natural open space.

Roberts went on to thank the Frost family, pointing out that the family was one of the original benefactors of the Kendall-Frost Reserve. "They have always shown care and concern for this unique San Diego environment and for this all of us are grateful," Roberts said.

Located along the "Pacific Flyway," thousands of migrating birds stop here during the winter. The refuge is the home to several rare and endangered bird species, including the light-footed clapper rail, the Belding's Savannah sparrow and the California least tern, which uses the area for breeding activities. Great blue herons, snowy egrets and dozens of other bird species frequent the site.

The City will be using $1.5 million in Water Utilities Enterprise funds for the purchase. The money must be used to counterbalance the loss of open space due to the continued use of Fiesta Island for sludge-drying beds. The purchase cannot become finalized until the California Coastal Commission approves the use "sludge mitigation funds" for this purpose.

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The 2.66-acre parcel, owned by the Frost family since 1904, will expand a 46-acre refuge that includes the City's Northern Wildlife Preserve and the adjacent Kendall-Frost Marsh Reserve.

The refuge got its start in 1963, when Mrs. Lena Kendall donated her nine-acre property. Afterwards, the Frost family donated an 11-acre portion.

The University of California, San Diego manages the site, as one of 30 in its Natural Reserve System. There is a wetlands study area at the site along with a marsh restoration project.

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