



September 19, 2011  
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**Cosco Busan Oil Spill Settlement Falls Short**

*Most of settlement to pay for recreation, not habitat restoration.*

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*San Francisco, CA* – Today federal, state and local government agencies announced their financial settlement with those responsible for the Cosco Busan oil spill which dumped 53,000 gallons of oil into San Francisco Bay on November 7, 2007. The settlement agreement requires the owners of the ship to pay \$44 million for all the resource damages caused by the oil spill.

Baykeeper is particularly concerned that the Draft Restoration Plan, which will allocate the settlement funds, is too focused on recreation. “Only \$5 million is going to birds, while nearly \$19 million is going to developing recreational uses along our shoreline.” Baykeeper believes the restoration plan should focus on restoring the Bay’s sensitive shorelines, including mud flats and marshes, rocky cliffs, lagoons and sloughs. These mini-ecosystems have unique biological and chemical conditions that are vital to sustain rare plants and animals and are especially important to the healthy functioning of San Francisco Bay. They also took the biggest hit from the Cosco Busan, which like all oil spills, caused the greatest injury once it spread from the site of the spill and washed into shoreline ecosystems, especially marshes, which are impossible to clean.

After completing a Natural Resource Damage Assessment, federal and state agencies calculated a dollar value on all of the water fowl, diving ducks, endangered shoreline creatures, migrating birds and sensitive shoreline habitats that were injured by the oil spill. Baykeeper believes these studies underestimated the impact of the oil spill. A nonprofit pollution watchdog group, Baykeeper was heavily involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the state and federal response, and identified a lack of trained personnel available to search for and collect living oiled birds. “Because the number of affected birds was likely underestimated by the State, the owners of Cosco Busan are getting away with too small a bill,” says Deb Self, Executive Director of San Francisco Baykeeper. She was an author of the Coast Guard’s Incident Specific Preparedness Review, which put forward 191 recommendations for improving oil spill response, including a more robust wildlife rescue program. Baykeeper also helped draft or sponsored eight oil spill bills to improve the capacity of the California Office of Spill Prevention and Response.

The Draft Restoration Plan is available for public comment until October 30, 2011.

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Baykeeper Executive Director Deb Self is a member of the California Office of Spill Response Technical Advisory Committee, the San Francisco Harbor Safety Committee, the Coast Guard’s Area Committee and an advisor on oil spill response technologies to the Gulf of the Farallons National Marine Sanctuary. Baykeeper uses on-the-water patrols of San Francisco Bay, science, advocacy and the courts to stop Bay pollution. For more information visit us at [www.baykeeper.org](http://www.baykeeper.org).