



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Francisco Estuary Partnership – 11th State of the Estuary Conference

Two-Day Conference Examines 20 Years of Progress in Improving the Bay and Identifies New Challenges, Including New Pollution Concerns

October 29-30, Oakland Marriott City Center

Oakland, CA... This year's Conference, "**20-20 Vision: Past Reflections, Future Directions**," features both progress made and new challenges identified for the San Francisco Estuary. New information from the Regional Monitoring Program for Water Quality in San Francisco Bay (RMP) will be released about contaminants of emerging concern (CECs). The good news is that there are no CECs at Tier 4 – high concern – but there are contaminants at Tier 3, of moderate concern. These chemicals are included in common household products such as stain repellants, insecticides, detergents, and flame retardants. Another emerging water quality issue for the Bay relates to a problem that is familiar in other estuaries: excessive growth of algae due to high nutrient concentrations. A growing body of evidence suggests that the historic resilience of the Bay to the harmful effects of nutrient enrichment may be weakening. The RMP publication *The Pulse of the Bay* summarizes this new information. Download the *Pulse* at <http://www.sfei.org/content/pulse-of-the-bay-2013>. Contact Jay Davis with any questions about the report, jay@sfei.org or 530-304-2308.

The 2013 State of the Estuary Conference, at **the Oakland Marriott City Center on October 29th and 30th**, marks 20 years since the Partnership developed the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for San Francisco Bay. "A terrific community of agencies, non-profits and involved individuals has worked to implement our plan and has accomplished much over the past 20 years," said Judy Kelly, Director of the Partnership. "We've designed this year's conference to help everyone understand what is at stake, celebrate what's been achieved so far, and focus on what we must do to be prepared for the future," she continued.

Over 50 presentations and panels during the two-day conference will include noted scientists discussing nutrients, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, and other pollutant levels in the San Francisco Bay region; as well as trends in population levels of birds such as the clapper rail and other endangered species. Resource managers will discuss methods of addressing trash pollution that affect the waters of our rivers, creeks and Bay; describe the progress and challenges of restoring important wetlands around the region; and consider why dolphins may be returning to the Bay in numbers not seen in decades.

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“Together, our partners have restored tens of thousands of acres of invaluable wetlands around the Bay, reduced Bay contamination from copper and nickel, tackled legacy pollutants such as mercury and PCBs, and have made progress in treating stormwater runoff as a resource instead of a waste. But we know that with climate change and inevitable sea level rise threatening our shores, the health of the Estuary is ever more critical to the welfare and economic sustainability of Bay Area communities,” Kelly explained.

Media Invitation

Members of the press are invited to hear the latest findings about the health of San Francisco Bay, the largest estuary on the West Coast, and about wetland restoration, the effects of restored habitat on bird populations and ecosystems, Bay dredging, water quality, and public stewardship of the Bay. Admission to the conference is free with press credentials.

Excellent Interview Opportunities Available

- Jared Blumenthal, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9
- Ellie Cohen, President and CEO, Point Blue Conservation Service (formerly PRBO)
- Carl Guardino, President and CEO, Silicon Valley Leadership Group
- Derek Muir, Senior Research Scientist, Environment Canada
- Tom Mumley, Assistant Executive Officer, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Debbie Raphael, Director, Department of Toxic Substances Control
- Steven Ritchie, Asst. General Manager of Water, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer, State Coastal Conservancy
- Meg Sedlak, RMP Manager, San Francisco Estuary Institute

The conference is co-sponsored by San Francisco Estuary Partnership, a program of the Association of Bay Area Governments and the San Francisco Estuary Institute. For more information about this conference, visit <http://www.sfestuary.org/soe-schedule/>. To arrange attendance or an interview contact Leah Zippert, leahz@abag.ca.gov or 510.464.7995. Contact Jay Davis for advance access to *Pulse of the Bay*, jay@sfei.org or 530.304.2308.

The San Francisco Estuary Partnership (www.sfestuary.org) is a coalition of resource agencies, non-profits, citizens, and scientists working to protect, restore, and enhance water quality and fish and wildlife habitat in and around the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary. Our estuary is one of 28 “estuaries of national significance” recognized in the federal Clean Water Act.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (www.abag.ca.gov) is the Council of Governments and regional planning agency for the nine counties and 101 cities and towns of the San Francisco Bay region, working to meet member needs by offering regional planning and cost-effective support services to local governments. ABAG is the home agency for the Estuary Partnership.

The San Francisco Estuary Institute (www.sfei.org) helps define environmental problems, advance public debate about them through sound science, and support consensus-based solutions that improve environmental planning, management, and policy development.

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