

# *Bay Area Watershed Network*

**Annual Meeting, February 10, 2012**

## **Summary**

### **Introduction**

Harry Seraydarian, North Bay Watershed Association, reviewed the meeting purpose and objectives and introduced Caitlin Sweeney, the new Watershed Program Manager for the San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP). SFEP will be taking over coordination and support of the BAWN, with Caitlin as the primary contact. (Contact Caitlin Sweeney at [csweeney@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:csweeney@waterboards.ca.gov) for more information)

### **Education and Outreach Working Group Update**

Teresa Eade, StopWaste.Org, gave a presentation on Bay-Friendly Landscaping and available educational resources for professionals and home gardeners. ... (Visit <http://www.BayFriendly.org> or contact Teresa Eade at [TEade@stopwaste.org](mailto:TEade@stopwaste.org) for more information)

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Restoration Tools Working Group Updates**

Eric Bernsten, State Water Board, provided an update on the status of the Phase II Storm Water Permit process. (Contact Eric Bernsten at [eberntsen@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:eberntsen@waterboards.ca.gov) for more information)

Christina Sloop, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, provided information on the Joint Venture and their efforts to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to measure the effectiveness of conservation delivery actions. She focused specifically on their efforts regarding riparian creek and stream projects. (More information can be found at: <http://www.sfbayjv.org/monitoring-evaluation.php>, or by contacting Christina at [csloop@sfbayjv.org](mailto:csloop@sfbayjv.org))

A.L. Riley, SF Regional Water Quality Control Board, reported on the Assessment, Monitoring and Restoration Tools Working Group's 2012 objectives, including organizing and hosting a spring workshop on watershed and stream assessments. The target date for the workshop is June, 2012, and it will be held in the State Building in Oakland. Future information about the workshop will be distributed through the BAWN mailing list and through the State Water Boards communication systems.

Robin Grossinger, San Francisco Estuary Institute, gave a presentation on SFEI's work on historical ecology and how the results can help inform the design of more resilient watersheds. (More information can be found at <http://www.sfei.org/HE> or by contacting Robin at [Robin@sfei.org](mailto:Robin@sfei.org))

Elizabeth Patterson, CA Department of Water Resources and Mayor of Benecia, provided a presentation on Land Use and Water Supply Benefits, specifically focusing on DWR's Water Plan update for 2013 and the Water Management Decision Tool. (More information can be found at <http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/>)

### **Policy Working Group Updates**

Mitch Avalon, Contra Costa Flood Control, provided an update on the Army Corps of Engineers proposed policy on levee vegetation management. The Corps is expected to issue its new guidelines on levee management in 2012.

Ariana Katovich, Earth Island Institute, reported on an upcoming Conservation Finance Roundtable to be held on February 17, 2012 in Sonoma. The Roundtable will be structured on a recent report from the Presidio Graduate School on municipal investments in Natural Infrastructure. (Contact Ariana at [ariana@earthisland.org](mailto:ariana@earthisland.org) for more information)

Claudia Villacorta, SF Regional Water Quality Control Board, reported on the Regional Board's new NPDES permit requirement for potable water discharges. (Contact Claudia at [Cvillacorta@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Cvillacorta@waterboards.ca.gov) for more information)

### **Watershed Funding**

Tina Leahy, Principle Consultant to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, discussed the current and possible futures states of funding for watersheds.

Athena Honore, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, provided an overview of the Supplemental Environmental Projects Program of the Regional Water Quality Control Board under which dischargers may fund environmental projects to satisfy part of a monetary penalty. Eligible projects must be on a list to qualify. The current potential projects list can be found at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board\\_decisions/enforcement.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_decisions/enforcement.shtml), under the Supplemental Environmental Projects heading. The Water Board enforcement page lists open enforcement actions at [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/public\\_notices/pending\\_enforcement.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/public_notices/pending_enforcement.shtml). This is a good place to see if there is an action that may generate SEPs that could be a match for your project. (To get on the eligible project list or for more information contact Athena at [ahonore@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:ahonore@waterboards.ca.gov))

Luisa Valiela, US Environmental Protection Agency, announced a solicitation of proposals under the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund. Initial Proposals are due on March 16, 2012. Please note there are two RFIPs, with differing project costs and required match. The RFIPs are at: <http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/watershed/sfbaywqfund/index.html>

Harry Seraydarian, North Bay Watershed Association, provided an overview of the Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the next round of grant opportunities. Please visit the Bay Area IRWMP website for information at: <http://www.bairwmp.org>. In addition, the following is a link to an overview of the process and how to get involved: [http://bairwmp.org/bairwm-2013-plan-update/BAIRWMP%20Flyer%231v2\\_2012-2-9\\_WHITE%20BG\\_no-email\\_2.pdf](http://bairwmp.org/bairwm-2013-plan-update/BAIRWMP%20Flyer%231v2_2012-2-9_WHITE%20BG_no-email_2.pdf).

### **BAWN in 2012**

Harry Seraydarian led a group discussion on priorities for BAWN in 2012. The following is a summarized list of generated ideas:

- More collaboration opportunities (example – information exchange with BASMA). Phase 2 stormwater permitting could lead to partnerships with newly regulated entities, facilitate cross pollination
- Best Practices document - using water in thoughtful way/local way (and to save \$). Encourage incentives (i.e., raingardens, etc.)
- Increased communication within BAWN is a high priority. Way to share information, pose questions, a user-generated interface – wiki (examples were provided)
- Information distribution on climate change, opportunities to get involved (land use/climate change/restoration)
- More education efforts – specifically on multiple benefits (including economic) of watersheds. Get info on benefits to decisionmakers.
- Quantify resource projects. Collaborate with others working on environmental services valuation
- Focus on funding. Economic benefits as PR campaign – opportunities for funding. Stormwater as a utility/as a resource. Stress avoided costs.
- -Need metrics we agree on re: success (economically, engineering, ecologically)
- Represent community to outside world to bring new resources in. What are opportunities? What can we learn from campaigns and lobbyists? Need a brand?

Caitlin Sweeney, SFEP, reiterated her role in supporting and growing BAWN as part of SFEP's new Watershed Program and announced the creation of an online website/information hub for BAWN as a key priority for 2012. Anyone who is interested in helping direct the content and function of the website is welcome to participate. Please contact Caitlin at [csweeney@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:csweeney@waterboards.ca.gov).

## List of Participants

Kimra McAfee, Friends of Sausal Creek  
Eric Bernsten, State Water Board  
Dale Hopkins, watershed citizen at large  
Christina Sloop, SF Bay Joint Venture  
Sandy Mathews, LWA  
Alice A. Rich, A.A. Rich and Associates  
Femke Oldham, SPAWNERS( San Pablo Creek Watershed), The Watershed Project  
Jim McGrath, SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Arnie Thompson, San Francisquito Watershed, Acterra  
Teresa Eade, Stop Waste.Org  
Christian Nilsen, ESA-PWA  
Mark Spencer, Stop Waste.Org  
Jim Chayka, Sonoma Ecology Center  
Matt Gerhart, State Coastal Conservancy  
Kevin Lunde, SF Bay Water Board  
Lisa Owens-Viani, Golden Gate Audubon Society  
Elizabeth Patterson, CA Department of Water Resources  
Josh Bradt, San Francisco Estuary Partnership  
Steven Cochrane, LSA Associates  
Linda Hunter, The Watershed Project  
Ariana Katovich, Earth Island Institute  
Gretchen Hayes, Napa River Rutherford Dust Soc.  
Julianna Gonzales, The Watershed Project  
Ben Livsey, SF Estuary Partnership  
Chiara Swartout, Earth Team youth program  
Claudia Villacorta, SF Bay Water Board  
Caitlin Cornwall, Sonoma Ecology Center  
Luisa Valiela, US Environmental Protection Agency  
Athena Honore, SF Estuary Partnership  
Steve Bowes, National Park Service  
A.L. Riley, SF Bay Water Board  
Caitlin Sweeney, S.F. Estuary Partnership  
Mitch Avalon, Contra Costa Co. Public Works  
Harry Seraydarian North Bay Watershed Association  
Tina Cannon Leahy, Principle Consultant Assembly Water Parks and Wildlife Committee  
Sandra Scoggin, SF Bay Joint Venture

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## **Summary of 2011 Working Group Activities**

### **Policy Working Group**

The policy working group used well attended conference calls to conduct its business this year. The group used information available from the California Watershed Network (CWN) to get the network engaged in letter writing to support Assemblyman Gordon's AB587 and State Senator Loni Hancock's SB644 to extend the period of time to Jan.1 2017 to protect the ability of volunteers to participate in restoration projects without violating the state labor code. Some people attended the Watershed Day in the Capitol sponsored by the CWN to visit legislators on this issue. This issue first appeared in California in 2004 when the California Department of Industrial Relations determined that using volunteers in stream restoration projects violated the labor code which requires the payment of prevailing wages for "public works" projects. This served as a de facto prohibition on volunteerism in community projects. In 2004 Loni Hancock, then an assembly woman, succeeded in passing a bill exempting volunteers from the labor code in these projects but organized labor required a sunset clause to end the exemption in 2008. Assemblyman Furutani succeeded in getting a bill passed in 2008 to extend the date to 2011. It is our hope that when 2017 arrives that there will be adequate record to establish that there is not inappropriate use of volunteers in restoration projects.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee vegetation management policy was another issue of focus for a number of network entities. In 2010 the Corps announced it was going to enforce stringent levee management regulations that would result in large scale removal of riparian corridors on and along levees. Last year BAWN was involved with assisting a well-attended press conference on this issue. In 2011 the Corps continued to delay issuing its new guidelines for levee maintenance via its policy guidance letter. In the meantime the California Department of Water Resources worked through Senator Boxer's office to propose a new drafting of a vegetation variance program to assist the Corps in revamping their policy to better meet variability in local projects and conditions. In 2011 lawsuits were filed by California's Friends of the River and American Rivers and a Native American tribe from the Seattle area to stop the policy. The California Department of Fish and Game joined the suit in December 2011. The judge ultimately denied the DFG request to intervene in the suit. The Corps has filed a motion with the court to dismiss the suit with the next court date set for Feb 22, 2012. Organizations and agencies in the BAWN and Bay Area Association of Flood Control Agencies collaboratively drafted language to assist representatives to provide more Congressional guidance on how to approach this issue. The California State Association of Counties took the lead to deliver the proposed language to key U.S. House and Senate Committees. Some BAWN policy group members also provided requested assistance to the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *West County Times* which published editorials on the issue in Fall 2011. The policy working group will continue to track this issue in 2012 which reportedly will be the year the Corps releases its new guidance.

## **Land and Water Use Working Group**

BAWN uses and encourages the existing Bay Area Water Forum to provide a venue for staying abreast of land and water use topics. These forum meetings are usually scheduled on the same day as Bay Area IRWMP Coordinating Committee meetings so people can take one trip to downtown Oakland and catch both meetings. A topic of interest introduced through BAWN participants has been the potential for gray water and rainwater catchment systems to support water conservation and even stormwater management. In the past year some networkers have been involved in tracking the drafting of regulations to implement State Senate bill 1258 which passed in 2009 and directed the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop standards for grey water use indoors and outdoors. New regulations have now taken effect that allow simple residential systems such as the reuse of washing machine water on landscapes, and more complicated systems now have regulatory direction which makes their use easier to plan for. A California Rainwater Capture Act of 2011, AB275, was introduced this year in the state legislature (Solorio) and passed the legislature but was vetoed by the Governor. Therefore at this point only local guidelines or regulations apply to rainwater catchment systems.

The California Department of Water Resources Water Plan updating process is another opportunity to help connect land use policy with water use. Elizabeth Patterson, a city mayor and assistant to DWR's Water Plan update process has graciously offered to help keep BAWN informed of water and land use issues and opportunities.

## **IRWMP Working Groups: Now Using a Subregional Organizational Structure**

The watershed community has identified the need to provide an on-going effort or working group to sustain integration of watershed projects in the IRWMP plan and set priorities for IRWMP grants. A formal group has not been formed to date and the watershed portions of the 2011 IRWMP grant proposal were given direction by a few agencies and organizations working with a limited number of watershed organizations who could participate in the IRWMP process. Participation of watershed organizations remains a difficult goal because sparse local government and organization budgets do not allow for this type of activity. Significant progress should be made on this effort to involve more participants in the next year because the 2011 IRWMP grant awarded to the Bay Area does provide some funding for staff time of the SFEP and some disadvantaged community organizations to organize greater participation of watershed groups into the IRWMP.

The IRWMP Coordinating Committee has approved an additional organizational structure which divides the bay into four subregions (North Bay: Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano; East Bay: Alameda, Contra Costa; South Bay: Santa Clara; and West Bay: San Mateo and Marin) to better serve locally based watershed organizations and local agencies that want to meet and collaborate on potential IRWMP projects. These subregional meetings began in 2011 and make it easier to pull in a greater diversity of participants in the IRWMP process. The 2011 Implementation Grant approved by DWR does contain the first start for supporting watershed projects and disadvantaged communities. \$2 million of the \$30

million awarded is allocated to assist watershed projects in four disadvantaged communities and to advance fisheries and stream restoration.

### **Watershed Education and Outreach Working Group**

Meetings held at StopWaste.Org in 2010 highlighted the need to better integrate the federal, state and local conservation corps into the watershed education community. For this reason the Annual BAWN 2011 meeting featured the America Corps fisheries habitat program. To assist some of the prominent watershed education efforts in the Bay Area, the 2011 IRWMP grant package sent to DWR included the STRAW education and hands-on programs with schools in the North Bay; the San Francisquito Creek outreach efforts through the Committee for Green Foothills; and the San Mateo RCD community organizing efforts in the Pescadero watershed. Urban Tilth, a community outreach organization located in Richmond, also to receive IRWMP funding, was a presenting organization at the State of the Estuary Conference (SOE) in Oakland in September 2011. The SOE conference also provided an opportunity for Harry Seraydarian of the North Bay Watershed Association to describe the progress for new partnerships being formed among the Bay Area food Protection Agencies and BAWN.

For 2012 The StopWaste.Org, The Watershed Project and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Water Board will partner to sponsor a workshop on “Landscaping Programs: Plantings for Different Purposes,” to provide technical information on plant species and designs for green stormwater projects, residential, commercial and institutional environments and stream restoration. The half day workshop will cover the very different planting methods and plant materials for the different purposes and likewise provide information on trash monitoring which organizations or local government may want to integrate into stream protection or restoration projects.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Restoration Tools Working Group**

As a result of discussion at the annual 2011 BAWN meeting, this working group met in the spring of 2011 to address the concerns of the lower population areas of the North Bay for grappling with new State Water Board stormwater management and monitoring regulations undergoing drafting for these “Phase II communities.” A representative from the State Water Board attends these working group meetings which provides for constructive discussions about balancing flexibility, limited resources, water quality needs and management of environmental needs in a watershed context. The spring meeting also addressed the groups’ interest in exploring the diversity of systems being used to communicate the conditions of watersheds over time to the public. The “report card” approach is being used in Sonoma and Napa Counties and other areas of urban and rural California. An example of CRAM being used in this manner was described for the south bay. As a result of this meeting, Professor Fraser Shilling of U.C. Davis was asked to take this topic a step further and present on the topic at the State of the Estuary Conference in September.

Follow up meetings were held by those who are seeking a constructive alternative approaches to conducting Phase II stormwater monitoring programs which can in part be integrated with the larger Phase I communities.

A working group meeting in October featured more discussions on Phase II stormwater program monitoring design. Also featured was the recent work being conducted to develop regional stream restoration curves to help design stream restoration projects based on field data specific to the different subregions of the Bay. The use of assessments to support project designs and regulatory programs and to communicate riparian and wetland values to the public and decision makers is a topic of increasing interest to federal agencies in Washington D.C. The working group decided that because of the large number of assessment and monitoring systems being used for riparian and stream environments (over 40) that this working group would begin collaborating with the SWRCB to sponsor a workshop on the big picture issue of the diversity of assessment systems in use for various purposes. Workshop planning is under way for later spring 2012 and will use prominent experts to survey assessments in use for stream and riparian restoration, regulation, fisheries habitat enhancement, stormwater monitoring and management, and assessments for communicating the status of resources.

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## **California State Watershed Programs Status of Funding and Next Grant Application Schedules 2011**

### **Department of Water Resources**

Integrated Regional Water Management Program: Planning grant proposals due Feb 2012  
Groundwater Management Spring 2012; Stormwater and flood management Summer 2012;  
Implementation Projects: late Fall 2012  
Dollar Amounts available can change by region for either planning or implementation grants  
SF Bay Area  
Planning: \$157,000.  
Implementation: \$108 million.

### **Urban Streams Restoration Program**

Contact: Jerry Snow [glsnow@water.ca.gov](mailto:glsnow@water.ca.gov)  
One grant cycle remaining: Fall 2012  
\$7-8 million remaining

### **Department of Conservation**

Watershed Coordinator Program  
No remaining grant funds for new application cycle for Watershed Coordinator grants

### **Natural Resources Agency**

River Parkway Program  
No remaining grant cycles

### **Urban Greening**

A program of Sustainable Communities, Strategic Growth Council  
[Polly.Escovedo@resources.ca.gov](mailto:Polly.Escovedo@resources.ca.gov)  
One remaining grant cycle  
Last cycle: \$20 million with a June submittal date

### **Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation**

[eemcoordinator@resources.ca.gov](mailto:eemcoordinator@resources.ca.gov)  
Caltrans mitigation fund approx. \$10 million a year for highway landscaping, urban forestry, resource lands and roadside recreation

**Calif Department of Fish and Game**

Fisheries Restoration Grant program

Contact: Patty Forbes Pforbes@dfg.ca.gov

This program uses federal fundin , with occasional state funding

Submittal date: March 30, 2012

**Calif State Water Resources Control Board**

Section 319H Non-point Source Grant Program to restore beneficial uses in impaired waters to support TMDL projects. (EPA funds administered by state)

Last grant cycle in January 2012. \$ 4.5 million available statewide

**OtherFunding Sources**

SF Bay Area Only

San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund

Contact: Luisa Valiela [Valiela.Luisa@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:Valiela.Luisa@epamail.epa.gov)

Approx.. \$6 million

March 16, 2012 for Initial proposal

EPA Targeted Watershed Grants Program administered through River Network

\$600,000 total national amount (each grant: \$30,000-\$70,000.)

Diana Toledo dtoledo@rivernetwork.org