

**San Francisco Estuary Partnership
Implementation Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, August 22, 2018
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, San Francisco

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Welcome and Introduction: *Carol Mahoney, Chair*

Carol called the meeting to order and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approve 5/23/18 Meeting Summary (Action)

The May 23, 2018 Meeting Summary was approved. Motion to approve by Pat Eklund, seconded by Adrian Covert. Motion carried.

4. Director's Report: *Caitlin Sweeney, SFEP*

Caitlin Sweeney highlighted several items from the Director's Report.

National Estuary Program Tech Transfer Meeting

SFEP is hosting the National Estuary Program Tech Transfer Meeting at the Bay Area Metro Center from October 3-6. All IC members are invited to attend the meeting. As part of the meeting, there is a harbor cruise on the afternoon of Thursday the 4th that all IC members will receive an invitation to.

Bay Delta Science Conference registration is open

The conference is Sept 10-12 in Sacramento. Early bird registration ends August 17.

Wetlands Regional Monitor Program

The Steering Committee of the WRMP has approved 5 guiding questions and is in the process of approving management questions. They are hosting a workshop on tidal marsh physical processes on August 23, with workshops on vegetation, wildlife, and vector control to follow in the coming months.

Climate Ready Estuaries

The EPA's Climate Ready Estuaries Program is providing \$85,000 for the planning of a nature-based shoreline project at the Palo Alto Water Quality Control Plant. The project will focus on sea level rise adaptation, public access improvements, and the use of recycled water.

IRWM Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Round

SFEP staff met with The Watershed Project (project lead) and the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (grant manager), to further refine the collective scope of work for IRWM Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACI) in Richmond. The overall grant award is \$80K, with SFEP budgeted for \$21K, to develop and implement community and stakeholder-based water-related needs assessments, capacity building, and technical assistance

5. Estuary Blueprint Progress Report: *Caitlin Sweeney, SFEP*

There are three additional completed actions from 2017, two for 2018, and we are now tracking 2019 actions as well.

There was an extended discussion about the possibility of either SFEP or Friends of the Estuary drafting an op-ed about the importance of freshwater flows to the estuary. It was determined that individual partners may submit op-eds, and a discussion followed regarding sending a letter from the IC. The IC directed SFEP staff to draft a letter from the IC to the Secretary of Natural Resources regarding supporting the State Board's process to update flow standards.

6. SFEP Communications Plan: *Darcie Luce and Yeymi Rivas, SFEP*

The communications plan was presented as a draft in May. Comments from the IC were incorporated, and the plan was presented for approval, with the acknowledgement that it will be a living document.

The goal of the SFEP Strategic Communications Plan is to facilitate a wider distribution of clear, shared, messages about the Estuary, more and deeper partnerships, more coordinated communication of the successes of SFEP and its partners, and a broader awareness of the Estuary Blueprint. The plan includes a process for developing and sharing messages, and a suite of actions and performance measures to guide the implementation of the plan.

Yeymi Rivas presented the results of an IC partner survey and analysis of partner websites. The study concluded that there are some simple steps partners could take to increase the online presence of SFEP. These include mentioning SFEP/the Estuary Blueprint on their websites and social media.

Arthur Feinstein made a motion to approve the plan. Steve Goldbeck seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Blueprint Updates

a. **Seasonal Wetlands (Action 8): Alyson Aquino, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has been working to enhance the value of stock ponds for wildlife in Alameda and Contra Costa County. When managed correctly, these ponds can support breeding habitat for red legged frogs and California tiger salamanders. So far, the project has helped restore 25 ponds in 15 years by removing accumulated sediment and removing predators. The NRCS, along with Resource Conservation Districts, has been able to build a network of trust in the community, and many landowners are enthusiastic about having the work done. The NRCS is looking to expand the program to other counties, and has received biological opinions for Napa, Marin, and Sonoma Counties.

b. **Regulatory Improvements (Action 17)**

i. **Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team: Luisa Valiela, EPA Region 9**

The Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) is made up of senior permit analysts from BCDC, SFBRWQCB, CDFW, USFWS, NMFS, and USACE. The members will work 2-3 days/week at the Army Corps office to review permit applications for restoration projects. The BRRIT is partially funded by the Restoration Authority.

ii. **Basin Plan Review: Naomi Feger, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board**

The SFBRWCB is revising its policies relating to fill and creation of wetlands, along with other multi-benefit projects. Issues to resolve include the use of nature-based shoreline protection in projects, the conversion of open water to tidal wetlands, the use of wastewater in projects, and the beneficial reuse of sediment. The Board has completed several white papers, will hold workshops this year, and hold hearings in 2019-20.

iii. **Fill for Habitat Bay Plan Amendment: Megan Hall, Bay Conservation and Development Commission**

BCDC is preparing an amendment to the Bay Plan to allow for the use of “minor amounts of fill” in wetland restoration projects. The Bay Fill Team meets on the third Thursday of the month, people can join the “interested parties list” to join the meetings and give feedback.

8. IC Member Announcements

a. **Pat Eklund (Association of Bay Area Governments):** Thanks for everyone’s work on Highway 37. There was an excellent article in the *Estuary News* and severable viable alternatives have been identified.

b. **Rainer Hoenicke (Delta Stewardship Council):** Delta Science Plan Update draft is public and now available for comment.

- c. **Anne Morkill (USFWS):** Phase 2 of the South Bay Salt Ponds Project is permitted with the exception of the Army Corps of Engineers. Army Corps receive \$117 million for the South Bay Shoreline Project, and of that, the Wildlife refuge will receive \$20 million to address maintenance backlog on levees.
- d. **Brian Meux (NMFS):** NMFS has engaged a professor and graduate student at UCSC to develop a fish monitoring plan similar to the IEP for the San Francisco Bay. Hopefully this will lead to a better understanding of how fish respond to marsh restoration.
- e. **Arthur Feinstein (Citizen's Committee to Complete the Refuge):** The San Francisco Climate March starts at 10am at the Embarcadero on September 8.
- f. **Chris Potter (CNRA):** The OPC has released the California Ocean Acidification Action Plan for comment.

9. Concluding Business/Meeting Road Map: Carol Mahoney, Chair

The next IC meeting is Wednesday, November 7, 2018 from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm at 1515 Clay Street, Oakland. There will be an all-day strategic planning session scheduled in November 2019.

10. Adjourn

Attendees

IC Members: Carol Mahoney, Pat Eklund, Brad Paul, Luisa Valiela, Nahal Ghoghaie, Greg Martinelli, Arthur Feinstein, Brian Meux, Paula Trigueros, Tom Mumley, Melody Tovar, Adrian Covert, Amanda Bohl, Alyson Aquino, Matt Fabry, Barbara Salzman, Warner Chabot, David Williams, John Andrew, Jane Lavelle, Beth Campbell, Naomi Feger, Anna Wearn, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Chris Potter, Andy Fremier, Steve Goldbeck, Mike Vasey, Donna Ball, Melanie Stern, Rainer Hoenicke, John Klochak, Campbell Ingram

SFEP Staff: Caitlin Sweeney, Athena Honore, Josh Bradt, Adrien Baudrimont, Darcie Luce, Natasha Dunn, Ian Kelmartin, Heidi Nutters, Yeymi Rivas, James Muller

Presenters: Megan Hall, BCDC