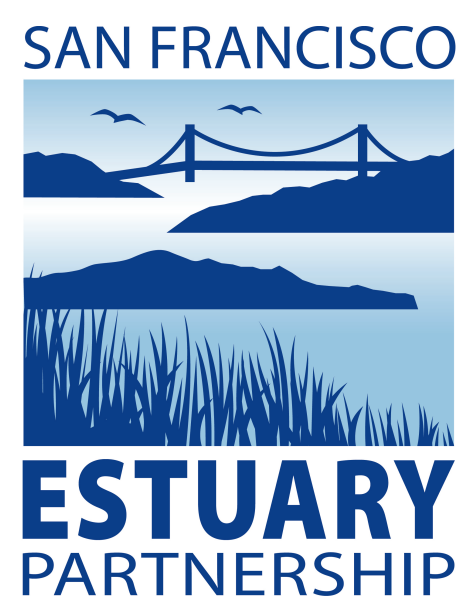


October 10–11, 2017



State of the 13th Biennial *San Francisco Estuary Conference*



Jean Auer Environmental Award

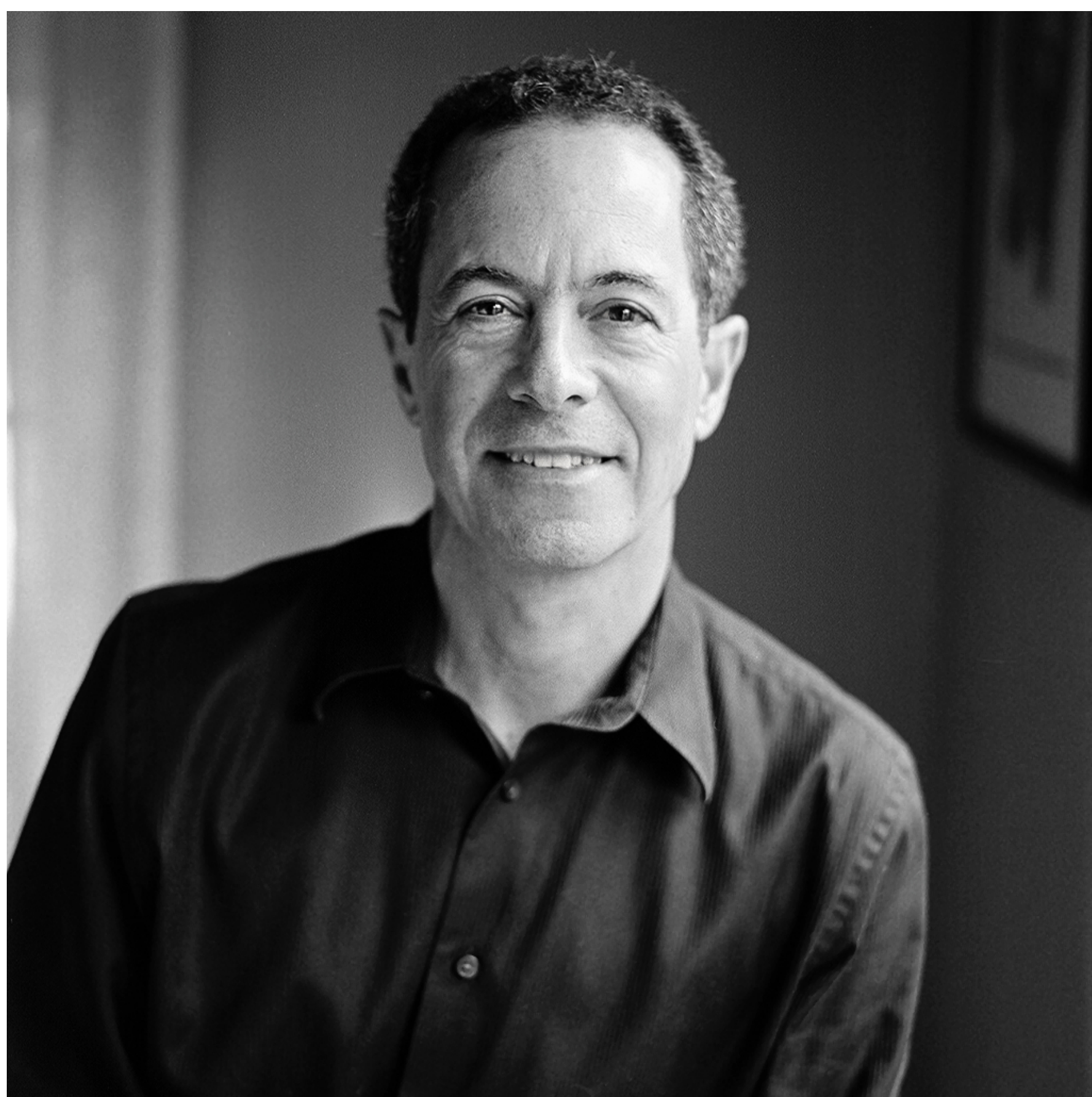


Jean Auer, born in Youngstown, Ohio, played a prominent role in California's water issues for over thirty years. She first learned about water issues with the League of Women Voters and was appointed to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. When Jean's family moved to San Francisco she was appointed to the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Auers moved to Hillsborough in 1973, where she was elected to the Town Council and as mayor.

From 1972 to 1977, Jean served as a public member of the State Water Resources Control Board, voting on regulations to control pollution and establish water rights. Judge Ron Robie, associate justice of the State Court of Appeal in Sacramento who served with Jean on the board, called her "a marvelous person of great spirit, enthusiasm and intelligence...She was really courageous and not at all timid."

Starting in 1987, Jean worked on the management committee of the San Francisco Estuary Project (now Partnership). In 1991, Jean became the second female president of the Commonwealth Club, and for the next decade ran a fellowship program for young professionals at the nonprofit Water Education Foundation. Jean is survived by her three beloved sons, Lance, Grant and Brad.

2017 Awardee: Andrew J. Gunther



By 1986 Andy Gunther was already drawn to service for the Bay. He eagerly finished his doctoral dissertation at UC Berkeley while becoming the first scientific staff member at what is now the San Francisco Estuary Institute. There he plunged into authoring innovative technical reports vital to creating the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

Five years later, he took the leap to co-found Applied Marine Sciences, where he worked for many years with the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Restoration Program. Alaska was familiar territory to Andy, having done his doctoral research at Katmai National Park, but he did not stop working in the Estuary.

In 1993 no program existed to measure toxic pollution in the waters of the Bay. Andy led the scientific team that initiated the San Francisco Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP), which remains an essential element of water quality management in the Bay Area.

In 2001 wastewater dischargers had appealed over 20 consecutive regional water quality permits to the State Water Board. When a Memorandum of Understanding was signed and the Clean Estuary Partnership was born to address these disagreements, Andy was hired to ensure its success. Compelling scientific analyses conducted over the next five years ushered in a new phase of water quality regulation. A key was the new collaborative atmosphere Andy facilitated, which continued long after the Partnership was completed.

Seeing more needs to fill, Andy founded the nonprofit Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration (aka CEMAR). The group's first project was to design an ecological "report card" for the Bay, which Andy presented at the 2001 State of the Estuary Conference. This concept gathered momentum over ten years, adding multiple collaborators and culminating in the 2011 State of the Estuary report.

Under Andy's guidance CEMAR grew into a respected voice for conservation. CEMAR pored over long-ignored historical records to identify the "anchor watersheds" for steelhead restoration, and then designed projects to bring these magnificent fish back to the Bay Area.

Andy is now helping prepare for our great challenge: climate change. He is the coordinator of the Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium, a respected forum for scientists, natural resource managers and others working for climate action. He was a Lead Author of the 2015 Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Update.

Andy was invited to join the Board of Directors of the Union of Concerned Scientists in 2006. Well-known as an effective public speaker, he has given over sixty presentations about climate change to a wide range of audiences. As a scientist, facilitator, educator and Bay champion, Andy is the well-deserved recipient of the 2017 Jean Auer Environmental Award from the San Francisco Estuary Partnership.