



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August 26, 2021

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Planning for the October 1st State of the Estuary Summit is well underway, and registration will open soon. The free summit will be composed of all plenary sessions to allow for maximum attendance and will focus on timely and important topics including climate adaptation planning, regional restoration and rematriation efforts, and environmental justice and community engagement. In addition to plenary sessions, we will host topic-based networking breakout rooms at lunch and after the final session of the day to allow for informal, interactive conversations.

Featured speakers include:

Chairman Val Lopez, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band & President, Amah Mutsun Land Trust

Corrina Gould, Confederated Villages of Lisjan/Ohlone, Sogorea Te Land Trust

Melissa Jones, Executive Director, Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative

Lil Milagro Henriquez, Executive Director & Founder, Mycelium Youth Network

...and many more, who we are excited to announce in the coming weeks!

Estuary Blueprint 2022 Update

Both the Steering Committee and Working Groups have continued to meet through the spring and summer, discussing and evaluating the 32 Actions from the 2016 CCMP or Estuary Blueprint. Some of the 2016 Actions will be integrated throughout the plan in other ways as Objectives, overarching themes, or Tasks. The proposed list of updated Actions is still taking shape but the final 2022 Blueprint will have closer to 27-30 priority Actions.

In this update, the Blueprint will focus on the urgency of preparing for climate change through nature-based shorelines and ecological health and resilience. This Blueprint will also shine a stronger spotlight on environmental justice and the well-being of the region's human communities as a component of a

healthy Estuary. Several topics new to the Blueprint will have a home in the update as either Tasks or Actions, including groundwater, wildfire, reverse osmosis concentrate, Tribal cultural use of restoration sites, capacity building for frontline and underserved communities, and other priorities still under consideration.

The timeline for completing the Blueprint Update has shifted by a few months due to delays caused by the pandemic. The Final Draft is anticipated to be finished in January 2022, which will likely necessitate an additional IC meeting to review and approve the document in January.

Input on the update is still welcome; for more information contact Darcie Luce, SFEP staff, or visit the webpage <http://www.sfestuary.org/estuary-blueprint-update/>.

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

The Restoration Authority's [Grant Round Five](#) was released on July 8, 2021. Full proposals for the Grant Round are due on October 7, 2021. The Restoration Authority's Community Grants Program, which funds projects led by community-based organizations in economically disadvantaged communities, is accepting applications on a rolling basis.

The Restoration Authority awarded its first Community Grant to Shore Up Marin City in April and awarded six projects from the Measure AA Grant Rounds in June. The Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access project that was previously funded for planning and design, was awarded construction funding. The Terminal Four Wharf Removal project is a construction project that was awarded \$2.3 million, and the other four projects are planning and design projects. The following is the full list of projects that were funded recently:

- [Marin City Urban Wetland Community Visioning Project](#) (Community Grants Program)
- [Coyote Hills Restoration and Public Access](#)
- [Terminal Four Wharf Removal Project](#)
- [Greenwood Gravel Beach Design Project](#)
- [Calabazas/San Tomas Aquino Creek - Marsh Connection Project](#)
- [Colma Creek Restoration and Adaptation Project](#)
- [Burlingame Shoreline Park](#)

The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee finalized their annual conformance review for Fiscal Year 19/20 in May and presented their report to the Governing Board in June. The [Annual Performance Assessment](#) of the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) was also presented to the Governing Board in June. Additional information about the Restoration Authority can be found on the [website](#).

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Integrated Regional Water Management Round 3 Grant Program



Recycled water infrastructure - Napa Valley

SFEP has managed multiple rounds of funding through the Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Program, acting as the grant administrator on behalf of dozens of entities around the Bay. Funded by Proposition 84 (the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006) the 2014 Bay Area Drought Relief Program allocated \$32.9 million from the California Department of Water Resources to local entities for implementation projects addressing the last drought (Round 3).

Round 3 funding was distributed among 11 agencies and included projects for recycled water infrastructure, surface water storage and water use efficiency programs.

The final projects were completed in 2020, and SFEP staff successfully closed out the IRWM Round 3 grant with the final retention checks distributed during the summer of 2021.

IRWM Round 4 - Coastal San Mateo County Drought Relief Phase II Project

San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (SMRCD) was awarded \$1.4 million in grant funding under the Proposition 84 Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Round 4 funding program through the Department of Water Resources. The project consisted of two elements that repaired leaking water lines in the San Gregorio watershed and implemented farm infrastructure improvements to reduce surface water withdrawals during dry months through off stream storage



Off stream storage pond - San Mateo County

ponds. The project was completed successfully, resulting in 36 acre-feet of water storage built, 20 acre-feet of water conserved annually, and 40 acre-feet of designed storage ready for implementation. Staff completed a final site visit in August and expects final retention to go out any day.

COMMUNICATIONS

New Video: Estuary Blueprint Update: Get Involved!

Darcie Luce and Josh Bradt worked with MTC's videographer Mark Jones to produce a short promotional video for the Estuary Blueprint update. Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/QNyDOh4nh30>

National Estuaries Week

National Estuaries Week 2021 is September 18-25. Check out [Restore America's Estuaries website](#) to find a National Estuaries Week event near you!

ESTUARY News Magazine and Pearls



The [June issue of ESTUARY News](#) explores how Bay fish aren't getting any cleaner despite chemical bans, how Delta fish are still hungry but food may lurk in the shipping channel, and the mechanics of delivering more mud to marshes that need to adapt to sea level rise. Other adaptations to changing conditions covered in this June's stories include moving the Bay Trail inland, building taller ballparks for stormwater retention, thinking like a beaver, and clearing the deadwood in watersheds.

Following the April Bay-Delta Science Conference and the series of "Mega-Pearls" covering the conference, additional [Pearls](#) released in June continue to focus on Delta fish research and monitoring.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Senate Infrastructure Bill (H.R. 3684)

The Senate Infrastructure Bill that was approved on August 10 includes quite a bit of funding for the San Francisco Estuary. Included in the bill is \$24m for EPA Region 9's Water Quality Improvement Fund, as well as funding for NOAA, Coastal Zone Management (BCDC), National Estuarine Research Reserves, and more. In addition, there is \$132m in the bill for the National Estuary Program. From discussions with appropriations staff and the language in the bill, these funds are intended to be in addition to the amounts provided under the normal appropriations process. The language makes it clear that \$26,400,000 shall be made available for each fiscal year 2022 through 2023, with 3% reserved for EPA administration. This would come out to roughly \$900,000 per NEP for the next five years. The bill still requires approval by the House and Presidential signature to become law, which would likely happen sometime in September/October.

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Updates

I am honored to report that I was voted in to serve as the new SF Bay Joint Venture Management Board Chair, for a two-year term beginning in July 2021. My role as the new Chair reflects the long term and expanding partnership between SFEP and the SF Bay Joint Venture. Sandra Scoggin, the Joint Venture Coordinator, of course is an IC member, and she also has been actively participating in the Estuary Blueprint Update process by serving both on the Steering Committee and participating in several Working Groups. Together, we have been working to leverage the capacity, skills, and resources of both organizations to advance our mutual objectives through planning documents such as the Estuary Blueprint and the Joint Venture's Implementation Plan, and collaborative programs such as the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program. In my new role as Management Board Chair, I stepped down from my previous role as Chair of the Conservation Delivery Committee. I am pleased to report that Julian Wood (Point Blue) has agreed to replace me as the Chair, and Karen McDowell will continue to represent SFEP as a Conservation Delivery Committee member.

IC Changes



After more than 15 years, Matthew Fabry is leaving the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County to be the Deputy Public Works Director at the City of San Mateo. As such, he will be relinquishing his seat on the IC as the primary representative for the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association. Matt has brought so much focus and good ideas and tenacity to the stormwater world and to the IC and I'm excited to see what he accomplishes in his new role. I'm sure you all join me in wishing Matt well in his new position and if we are lucky, perhaps we will see him again on the IC wearing a different hat!

Staff Changes

SFEP is thrilled to welcome Diana Fu, who will be working with the Clean Vessel Act team as well as supporting various other SFEP projects and programs including assisting with the Estuary Blueprint update and communications. Diana was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area and attended Northwestern University for her undergraduate studies, majoring in Environmental Science and Asian American Studies. Upon graduation, she moved to New York City to work as an environmental educator, restoration practitioner, and citizen science coordinator with the Bronx River Alliance and Billion Oyster Project. She is currently finishing up her Master of Science in Coastal Science & Policy at UC Santa Cruz. Outside of her professional life, she is also a creative writer and has been the recipient of many awards to pursue her writing.

