



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 15, 2022

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Regional Water Needs Assessment Released



The Estuary Partnership is pleased to announce the release of the Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program's *Regional Water Needs Assessment*. The *Regional Water Needs Assessment* includes the findings of individual needs assessments conducted in 13 communities and five tribes and tribal organizations throughout the Bay Area, as well as in several locations where people are experiencing homelessness. The findings identify similar and pervasive problems shared by communities around the Bay Area. These problems fall under five intersecting categories: drinking water quality and affordability; flooding; industrial pollution and contamination; trash; and a lack of green space.

The Regional Water Needs Assessment is intended to be a first step toward understanding and elevating water-related issues from the perspective of the Bay Area's Tribes and disadvantaged communities. Next steps will include following up on specific priorities identified in the Disadvantaged Community and Tribal sections of the report. Public agencies wishing to engage specific disadvantaged communities and Tribes can benefit from a review of the community level needs assessments found within this document. Such familiarity can provide continuity of engagement with these communities and Tribes that can reduce engagement fatigue.

The IC will receive a briefing on the report at the November 15 meeting. For your easy reference, here is a [link to the report](#).

In addition, below are links to some of the press coverage the report received:

<https://localnewsmatters.org/2022/10/25/unhoused-struggle-for-access-to-clean-water-despite-state-law-that-guarantees-the-right/>

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/The-Right-To-Clean-Water-Is-Law-In-California-17525898.php>

<https://www.marinij.com/2022/10/18/marin-water-flooding-fears-flagged-in-new-report/>

<https://www.kqed.org/science/1980525/it-comes-to-race-marin-city-residents-demand-flood-protections>

## Integrated Regional Water Management Program: Proposition 1 Round 2 Underway

The IRWM program team is currently facilitating the review of proposals for the last round of IRWM funding through the Department of Water Resources, with \$32,214,479. Applications were due in October and 17 projects were submitted for consideration for a total funding ask of over \$41 million. This final round of funding is prioritizing projects that provide benefits to disadvantaged communities by setting aside \$6.5 million of the total exclusively for such projects, and by utilizing evaluation criteria that make these projects more competitive in the scoring process. Projects recommended for funding will be announced December 05, 2022 at the last Bay Area IRWM Coordinating Committee meeting of the year. SFEP staff will submit the final grant package to DWR in February and will serve as the grantee, similar to previous rounds of IRWM funding. Please contact James Muller if you would like more information about the December meeting.

## NEW FUNDING

### State of the Estuary Platform – State Revolving Fund (\$1,000,000)

We are currently finalizing an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board for a new Clean Water State Revolving Fund “forgivable loan” to support the State of the Estuary Platform. The funding will be used design and launch a centralized, integrated, dynamic, accessible web-based platform for reporting on the health of the Estuary in 2024. SFEP and SFEI will work together to select key indicators from previous



versions of the State of the Estuary Report to update, as well as develop new indicators for inclusion, and will also identify indicators from other regional efforts to include on the platform.

### Clean Vessel Act Outreach and Education Grant (\$309,000)

The Clean Vessel Act Program is one of SFEP’s longest-running grant funded programs through the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways, focusing on education and outreach promoting public awareness about recreational boat sewage and its proper disposal. SFEP has been awarded a one-year grant beginning in January 2023 to continue boater and

marina outreach within the region. Project work will include giving clean boating presentations, monitoring marina pumpouts within the region, continued development of the award-winning Pumpout Nav app, and the continuation of the team's new podcast, *Dockside*.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Knee Deep Times

Visit <https://www.kneedeepetimes.org/> for lots of new stories ranging from experimental textured sea wall construction in San Francisco, mapping disaster risk and vulnerability, mental health burdens posed by climate anxiety, and the transition to regenerative cannabis farming.

KneeDeep Times is now able to accept donations! Please consider supporting journalism at the frontiers of climate resilience through a [tax-deductible donation](#).

### Estuary News



The [October issue](#) of Estuary News Magazine takes a deep dive into rivers, exploring promising restoration programs on two of them, as well as an effort to increase flows for fish in South Bay creeks. Readers also tag along on a first-of-its-kind species survey and examine the challenges climate change is creating for monitoring.

### Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program Summer Newsletter

Check out what the WRMP has been working on in 2021 in the [WRMP Summer Newsletter](#). Meet the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee and read about progress on the Science Framework, Program and Funding Development, and Communications.



## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### New Climate Resilience Program Under Development

In response to the increasing number of projects and programs SFEP is engaged in that address climate resilience, we are developing a new internal Climate Resilience Program. The Climate Resilience Program will be managed by Heidi Nutters as she shifts some of her current portfolio of responsibilities (including management of the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program) to existing and incoming staff. The Climate Resilience Program will serve to strategize, prioritize,



and track SFEP's work at the programmatic level, and will assure we have dedicated resources to engage in critical regional efforts.

A new SFEP staff position, the Priority Conservation Area Grant Coordinator, has been created to collaboratively manage the PCA grant program within ABAG/MTC and in close coordination with the State Coastal Conservancy. Once hired, the PCA Grant Coordinator will reside within SFEP's Climate Resilience Program.

## CWA 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



2022 marks 50 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972. To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act, US EPA has been touring various sites around the nation, working with local partners to highlight clean water projects and investments in communities.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, SFEP staff (Darcie Luce, Liz Juvera, and I) had the pleasure of accompanying US EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox, US EPA Region 9 Administrator Martha Guzman, US EPA Region 9 SF Bay Program Lead Luisa Valiela, California Secretary for Environmental Protection Yana Garcia, SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board Executive Officer Eileen White, Contra Costa Supervisor



John Gioia, and other state and local leaders on a tour of three North Richmond sites. Tour stops included a visit to Urban Tilth and the North Richmond Living Levee Project. The tour culminated in a well-attended press event at the East Bay Regional Park District's Dotson Family Marsh.

## Staff Changes



Please join me in welcoming our newest staff member, Lead Environmental Scientist Sasha Harris-Lovett. Sasha comes to us most recently from the Berkeley Water Center at UC Berkeley. As part of her work there she co- led a consortium (called COVID-WEB) to implement a regional monitoring program for tracking COVID in wastewater. She also developed and led the Bay Area One Water Network and conducted research on equity implication and impacts of municipal water reuse, use of

data for public health decision-making, and effective data visualizations for decision-making. Sasha also has experience as a science writer and curriculum designer and as a graduate student instructor. Sasha received a BA in the History of Science from Harvard, and MS and PhD degrees from UC Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group. Sasha will be primarily working on the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program and the State of the Estuary Report/Platform.

It is sadly time to say goodbye to our 2022 Sea Grant Fellow, Carmen Zamora, whose Fellowship will end at the end of November. Carmen has been instrumental this past year in supporting the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program, with a particular focus on communications. We will miss Carmen and wish her all the best on her next endeavor. Thank you, Carmen!

