



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 17, 2023

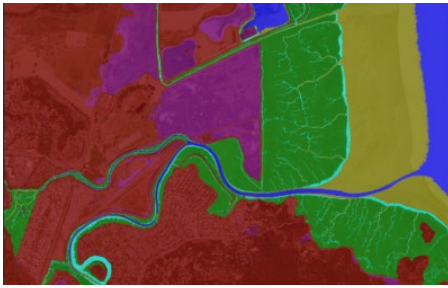
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Estuary Youth Council

SFEP gathered three community-based organizations Nuestra Casa, Mycelium Youth Network, and Restore the Delta to kick off the Estuary Youth Council. These three organizations will work with SFEP to co-develop and co-implement the program, and have begun meeting regularly to develop the structure, programming, and goals of the first Estuary Youth Council. We'd like to thank our funders – anonymous donors from the Honey Hive Fund, and Friends of the Estuary, for their support of this effort.



Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program



The WRMP [Spring 2023 Newsletter](#) was released in March. This newsletter edition highlights key accomplishments during the first quarter of 2023, including identification of priority monitoring sites, new staff, workgroup progress, and upcoming work.

Estuary Blueprint

The Blueprint Steering Committee met on April 6 to continue its work to advance implementation of the Estuary Blueprint. Committee members discussed the reporting tools developed to communicate Blueprint progress and explored options for more nuanced storytelling of Blueprint work. The Committee continued a deep dive into the list of Estuary Partnership (Coordinator) tasks identified as needing the most support, with a focus on the Creeks action (Action 14) and the use of EcoAtlas as a tracking tool for riparian restoration projects. San Francisco Bay Joint Venture staff led a robust discussion of EcoAtlas, indicating the potential for a larger regional conversation in the future.



In addition, the Estuary Blueprint Social Science Advisory Team members have been selected and have been announced on social media and on the Estuary Partnership's website. The Social Science Advisory Team will be reviewing the 2022 Estuary Blueprint for integration of social science in the plan and will be delivering recommendations to the IC in the future. A kickoff meeting is being planned for the summer.

The Advisory Team members are:

Michael Mascarenhas, UC Berkeley (chair)
 Mike Antos, Stantec
 Rachel Gregg, ESA
 Leah Kintner, independent consultant
 Alejo Kraus-Polk, ESA
 Pam Rittelmeyer, UC Davis
 Olivia Won, UC Santa Cruz

Transforming Shorelines Collaborative on Nature-based Adaptation and Mitigation

The fifth meeting of the Transforming Shorelines Collaborative centered on: (a) understanding the suite of mitigation requirements associated with nature-based shorelines adaptation; (b) learning about creative strategies for funding mitigation banking statewide; and (c) brainstorming opportunities and challenges for the SF Bay. The first three presentations covered the regulatory mitigation processes applicable for nature-based solutions (NbS), with specific attention paid to CWA Section 404 Permits. The second two presentations covered a suite of mitigation options potentially applicable for NbS, including the in-lieu fee program and mitigation credit agreement program proposed in the SF Bay and Delta regions. Breakout groups largely focused on the challenges associated with mitigation, ultimately concluding that increased communication and collaboration across agencies and organizations will be necessary to promote the adoption of NbS.

More information about the [Transforming Shorelines Collaborative](#) can be found on the project website and the Workshop Summary Report can be found [here](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

EPA's SF Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund - BIL Request for Applications

EPA is soliciting applications under the BIL funded [SFBWQIF Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) to fund projects that have measurable positive impacts in underserved communities of the San Francisco Bay Area, including improving the land and water of communities with environmental justice concerns and addressing climate change. \$5 million is available in this round with applications due June 29th.

Also note that the base Water Quality Improvement Fund RFA is also coming soon with close to \$30 million expected to be available.

COMMUNICATIONS

Estuary News Magazine

The [last issue](#) of Estuary News Magazine was released in March. In this special Almanac of Restoration, Estuary News celebrates 30 years of restoration in all its forms and samples projects of every kind. Starting high up in the watersheds with rivers, lakes and creeks, moving into the Delta, and then exploring San Francisco Bay. The issue looks for results: did the birds and fish come back? And it delves deep into some of the latest iterations of restoration: centering equity in access to open space; combining flood control with habitat creation in multi-benefit projects; responding to sea level rise with nature-based solutions.



Explore stories covering specific restoration projects throughout the Estuary that many IC members have been personally engaged with. Ride the waves of restoration through the [personal journey](#) of Jessica Davenport of the State Coastal Conservancy. Read reflections from long time editor Ariel Rubissow Okamoto, learn what got Liz Juvera of SFEP and others into the restoration field, hear about the restoration “aha” moments of myself and partners from BCDC and SFEI, listen to what keeps IC members Campbell Ingram and David Lewis up at night, and many more “[Restoration Reflections.](#)”

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

IC Changes



As many of you have heard, Sandra Scoggin is leaving her position as the Coordinator of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture. Sandra joined the Joint Venture in 2003, shortly after the program was established. Over the next 20 years, Sandra helped grow and form the Joint Venture, taking over as the Coordinator in 2018. Sandra has provided invaluable advice, insight, and expertise to the Implementation Committee and worked particularly hard during the updates of the Estuary Blueprint and the Joint Venture’s Implementation Strategy to coordinate and align the two regional efforts. Sandra’s departure is a loss to the Implementation Committee and the region, but I’m sure we all wish her the best on her next adventure!

NEP Meeting in DC

Estuary Partnership Director Caitlin Sweeney and staff Darcie Luce traveled to Washington, D.C. recently to meet with colleagues from around the country on the latest developments in coastal and estuarine restoration and resilience. National Estuary Program and Environmental Protection Agency staff everywhere are enthusiastic about the opportunities the recent boost in federal funding offers, while emphasizing the need for these “once-in-a-generation” funds to become a “new normal” to tackle the threat of climate change.

Caitlin and Darcie also took the opportunity to meet with Congressional staff and even enjoyed peak cherry blossom season.

