



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 21, 2025

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### State of the Estuary Conference - Call for Abstracts Released!

The 17<sup>th</sup> Biennial State of the Estuary Conference will be held in Oakland on October 28-19, 2025.

The Call for Abstracts for oral, poster, and creative session presentations has been released!

For more information visit: <https://www.sfestuary.org/2025-abstracts/>.

### Clean Vessel Act Program Lives on Through the Delta Conservancy



SFEP's long-running clean boating program, funded under a Clean Vessel Act grant from California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways, has been successfully transitioned to the Delta Conservancy. Staff supported transition of the program through knowledge transfer, field training and technical assistance.

Check out the Delta Conservancy's new webpage on the program!

<https://deltaconservancy.ca.gov/cvap/>

(SFEP staff training Delta Conservancy staff at Discovery Bay)

# COMPLETED PROJECTS

## Pacheco Marsh

The 122-acre Pacheco Marsh officially opened to the public on May 3, 2025. A ribbon cutting event was held at the site the day before for all the project partners, including SFEP staff. The public access portion of the project, including a kayak launch and 2.4 miles of trail, was led by the John Muir Land Trust and its many partners. The Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and their partners led the earlier portion of the larger Lower Walnut Creek and Pacheco Marsh Restoration Project which restored tidal influence to Pacheco Marsh with a levee breach in October 2021 and established over 30,000 plants.

The larger was funded by many different sources including several funding sources managed by SFEP staff including the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, the Priority Conservation Area Grant Program, and the Integrated Regional Water Management Program.



Ribbon Cutting (Photo by Taylor Samuelson, SCC)



San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Staff (Photo by Taylor Samuelson, SCC)

## COMMUNICATIONS

### First Mile Horizontal Levee project to appear in an upcoming OpenRoad Episode

The Estuary Partnership joined a multi-location filming session with project partners to shoot footage for an upcoming [OpenRoad](#) episode for NBC featuring our First Mile Horizontal Levee Project. The project of focus reimagines a mile of shoreline at the Hayward-San Lorenzo border, increasing public access, enhancing habitat, and providing space for native species to retreat as sea levels rise. The episode is planned to air this summer.

### Estuary Partnership participates in SF Climate Week

In April, the Estuary Partnership participated in one of the Bay Area's most high-profile climate events: [SF Climate Week](#). We co-hosted this series with Bay Area Regional Collaborative in partnership with Bay Area Air District, KneeDeep Times Magazine, and Bay Conservation & Development Commission. Nearly 300 people joined our 5-part series on 'Who is Doing What About Climate Change? The Low Down on Bay Area Innovations' series along with our mixer. This event was part of nearly 300+

independently organized events across San Francisco that worked to connect leaders, scientists, practitioners, entrepreneurs, and students from every walk of life to have key conversations about the environment and climate.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### EPA 5-Year Program Evaluation Underway – August Site Visit Planned

As reported in my last Director's Report, every five years the Estuary Partnership undergoes a Program Evaluation (PE) by the USEPA to assess how the National Estuary Programs are making progress in achieving programmatic and environmental results through implementation of their Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (our Estuary Blueprint).

Our 2025 PE is currently underway, with the required package of required information submitted. The PE Team is evaluating the materials and will be attending the August IC meeting as well as touring various project sites.

**IC members are invited to join the PE Team for a site visit to the Palo Alto Horizontal Levee immediately following the August 13 IC meeting. More information to follow.**

## IC CHANGES

### San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

In late 2024, **Matt Ferner** was appointed the Executive Director of the SF Bay NERR. Matt will now serve as the primary representative for the NERR, with Stuart Siegel as the alternate.

### NOAA Office for Coastal Management

I am sad to report that **Becky Smyth** has joined the growing list of federal employees who have departed from their agencies. After 29 years with NOAA, Becky's last day as the Office for Coastal Management's West Coast Regional Director was April 30. I know you all join me in thanking Becky for everything she has done for ocean and coastal protection over the course of her highly successful and impactful career at NOAA.