



San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Meeting of the Conservation Delivery Committee
August 13, 2015 10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Sonoma Land Trust Baylands Center
2100 Hwy 37

Participants: Marc Holmes, Committee Chair, (The Bay Institute), Ben Becker (NPS), Preston Brown (SPAWN), Hattie Brown (Laguna Foundation), Helen Dickson (SPAWNERS), Craig Garner (Ducks Unlimited), Kevin Munroe (Laguna Foundation), Rachel Kamman (KHE/WC), Joe Kahrnoff (USFWS), John Klochak (USFWS Coastal Program), Marilyn Latta (State Coastal Conservancy), Liz Lewis (Marin Co Flood Control), Meg Marriott (USFWS), Julian Meisler (Sonoma Land Trust), Ruth Ostroff (CVJV), Barbara Salzman (Marin Audubon), Rachel Spadafore (Audubon California), Stuart Siegel (SF Bay NERR), Sue Wickham (Solano Land Trust), Julian Wood (Point Blue), Greg Yarris (CVJV)
JV Staff: Beth Huning (Coordinator), Sandra Scoggin (Assistant Coordinator), Jessica Robbins (JV Intern)

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Announcements or Project Updates – All Participants

Barbara Salzman – Marin Audubon will be closing soon on the purchase of the property that will expand the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

Chris Barton - Breuner Marsh restoration construction is complete, and they are breaking ground on the public access. The RFP is circulating for engineering and design of phase 2 and 3 of the Albany Beach project. Proposals are due at the end of the month.

Laura Valoppi - South Bay Salts Ponds Restoration Project - The biennial South Bay Science Symposium will take place October 22. There will be a call for posters and registration information distributed soon. The restoration of pond A21 is developing well with a handful of Ridgway's Rails detected at the site.

Rachel Spadafore, Audubon California – Ground has been broken on the Sonoma Creek Enhancement Project. The Conservation Delivery Committee will be visiting the site after the meeting.

Ben Becker, National Park Service, Point Reyes National Seashore - The NPS is getting their final permits for restoration at Drakes Estero, the site of the former oyster farm. They will be removing several miles of oyster racks and other marine debris and invasive species. They have half the funding from the NPS and are seeking matching funds (\$2 million) from other sources.

3. JV and Partner Program Updates

Prop 1 - The SFBJV has focused their energy on Chapter 6 programs. All grants are competitive. Each agency managing the grant money is doing it slightly differently according to their internal processes and requirements in the ballot language.

- The SFBJV Government Affairs Committee has led the JV effort to help ensure that guidelines proposal solicitations are drafted in a way that can support SFBJV priority projects. They have met with agency directors to discuss processes and have provided comments on draft program and solicitation guidelines. The efforts have paid off, and most of the JV suggestions have been incorporated.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife has two funding programs under Prop. 1, the Delta Program and the Watershed Restoration Program. The JV asked for clarification on their definition of large and small-scale projects and also requested that acquisition be specified in the Watershed Restoration Program guidelines as it is in the Delta Program. While these changes were not clarified, they seem to be open to interpretation.

The Ocean Protection Council also supports wetland restoration. The draft guidelines are currently out for public review and comment, and the JV will be submitting a letter requesting that projects that meet regional plans such as the JV Implementation Plans be given priority or at least awarded extra points.

General notes:

- Prop. 1 funds can pay for planning and background research, depending on the funder. Typically, about 10% of funding is allowed for these uses.
- Acquisitions are not specified in the Department of Fish and Wildlife guidelines, except in the Delta. Acquisitions are not precluded, but must contribute to water quality and enhancement.
- Some funders are going to be distributing their Prop 1 funds over the course of 10 years, which may cause an issue if there are several shovel-ready projects right now that are not able to acquire funding.
- The Coastal Conservancy will be issuing multiple RFPs over the course of the year. There is some flexibility in terms of how much money is given each year. If it appears that a lot of appropriate projects to fund are available now, the funds will be distributed to reflect that. This is not the only funding source within the Conservancy. There might be different themes for each round, but at the moment we cannot say what those themes will be far into the future. It is advised that interested parties contact regional managers and review the Conservancy's strategic plan for more information.
- Wildlife Conservation Board is focused on riparian work and enhancing stream flow.

The SFBJV requested that JV partners let the JV know who will be applying this first round, which funding source they will be applying to, and for which project. Many in attendance at the meeting are planning to apply for the first round. Therefore, in order to help get as many projects as possible funded, the SFBJV requested the following: The applicant draft SFBJV letters of support, The JV will provide supporting language to the applicant, 2 weeks' notice. Partners must explain how the project meets JV goals in both the letter and in the proposal.

Questions and concerns brought up during the meeting include: Might some smaller projects have a better chance if they partner with others to become larger, similar to NAWCA, by combining several projects into one proposal? The caveat is that one CEQA document needs to cover all the project sites; and can a project apply for funding from more than one source? The Wildlife Conservation Board says it is a good idea to

apply to multiple sources. Different agencies may have different priorities. They may be able to provide feedback to the people who turn in proposals.

Project Lists Review – The Committee reviewed the current project lists to ensure that they are up to date. These will be submitted to each of the agencies distributing Prop. 1 funds. The tiers were reviewed. Tier 1 projects are completely ready to go, tier 2 projects need a bit more work to be done before they are ready. Tier 2 projects are not considered to be less important than tier 1 projects. Other active projects do not necessarily represent lower priority; in fact they often require more work than the other tiers to enhance their readiness. Tiers are not the same as ranks, and may not reflect the priorities of the funding agency.

Proposed Changes to the Project Evaluation Process - The JV is in the process of updating our project prioritization criteria. New criteria will include ranking for stream projects. The JV aims to focus resources on projects that have the highest chance of success and with strong biological foundations. The new criteria will also help determine which projects are best for which project sources. Because so many new projects were submitted to the JV when Prop. 1 funds were announced, the new projects have yet to be evaluated. The Committee agreed in the interim to consider a streamlined evaluation process for some types of projects to enable the JV to support the new projects for this Prop. 1 funding cycle.

The Committee agreed that in the interim, the JV would support the following types of projects:

- A streamlined project that meets the JV criteria
- A project that is part of an already adopted larger project
- In the case of stream/riparian projects, projects on a stream that is adopted and has had previous activity (ex. Napa River, Sonoma Creek) and,
- A project with programmatic activities consistent with previously adopted projects (ex. fish passages).

There was some uncertainty from participants about whether their projects have been endorsed or not. Some people aren't completely sure how the formal vetting process works. People who have new projects that they want to put on the project list should submit the appropriate information in before September, providing at least the information that is outlined on the project list provided during the meeting.

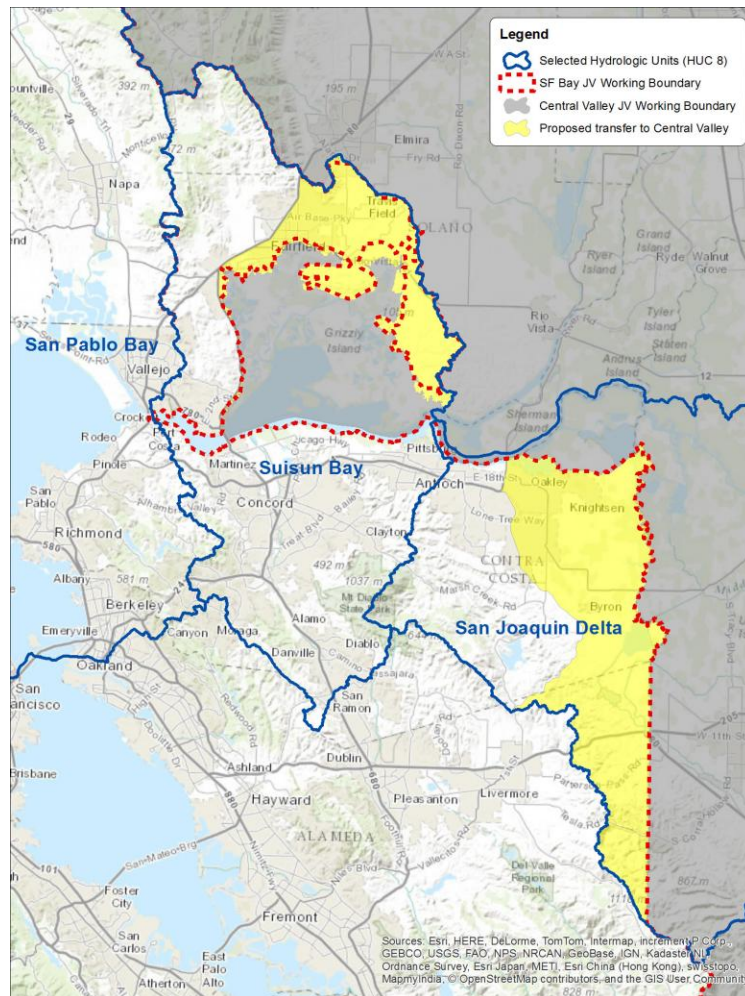
South Bay Salt Pond Phase 2 – The Draft EIR focusing on Phase 2 actions at Ravenswood and Alviso is out for review and public comment. Comments are due September 24. Committee members were encouraged to review the documents and provide input. There is no identified preferred alternative. The preferred alternative will be developed after this round of comments. Of most concern are plans for the pond that supports a large population of Ruddy Duck and the public access components. As with the Phase 1 DERI/S, some partners would like to be able to talk through the options before they submit their comments. The JV will host and facilitate a webinar.

NAWCA Small Grants – Proposals are due in November. Anyone considering applying should be working on their proposals now, and should let the SFBJV know if they plan to apply. The JV can review proposals with enough lead time, and we need to know whether to pull together our team to rank proposals.

4. SFBJV/ Central Valley Joint Venture Boundary Change Proposal and Discussion

The CVJV has been calculating their upland and riparian habitat goals as part of their Implementation Plan revision. They propose re-drawing our mutual boundary to correspond as closely as possible with Jepson vegetative regions or watershed. The boundaries were formalized in 2008 and adopted by the SFBJV but not by the CVJV, which is now proposing alternate options. The CVJV technical committee wants to make new calculations quickly. Chapter authors would appreciate it if the decision process can be expedited. However, the SFBJV has indicated that the proposed changes will be brought to the SFBJV Management Board at the October meeting.

The proposed area that CVJV would like to transfer from the SFBJV to CVJV is highlighted in yellow in the map below:



The CVJV and SFBJV staff and leaders met several times to discuss potential new boundaries. Before considering adopting the proposed changes, the SFBJV wants to be sure that needs and goals of affected partners will still be met. Some outstanding questions and challenges include: whether local partners will be able to participate in two JV's at the same time. It is possible but uncertain whether participation in two JV's would open up new funding opportunities. Another concern is about potentially incompatible goals between the two JVs and the individual project managers.

CVJV doesn't have formal vetting process like the SFBJV, though they do write letters of support. The SFBJV wants to make sure that partners don't experience reductions in service. It may be possible to switch over the geographic region without anyone experiencing major disruptions. If changes are agreed to, some partners want to remain with the same JV to see through the end of their projects. Ideally they would want both JVs to support their projects. It may be that CVJV claims these new regions as part of their formal boundary, but doesn't actually do a lot of work in them/ does not work as actively in these regions. On the positive side, changes with insurances as noted above could give considerable attention to these high-value regions. Overlapping them might be a good option.

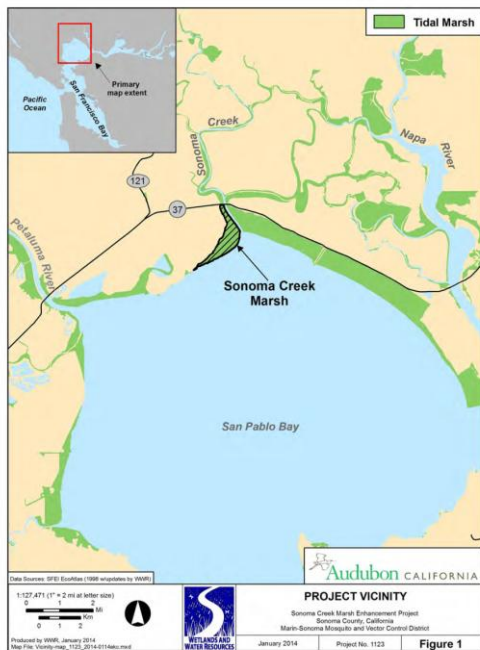
Action: The SFBJV and CVJV will continue the discussions based upon input from the Conservation Delivery Committee and refine the proposal.

5. Science Steering Committee Priorities Update

The SSC has been in the process of evaluating and ranking priorities. They met yesterday to discuss each of the highest ranked priorities, brainstorm who would lead, identify JV role, and identify whether the priority is short or long term item. The group determined some of the priorities should be addressed together, and at a minimum, developed a plan for which committee member would take the lead on creating an action plan for each grouping.

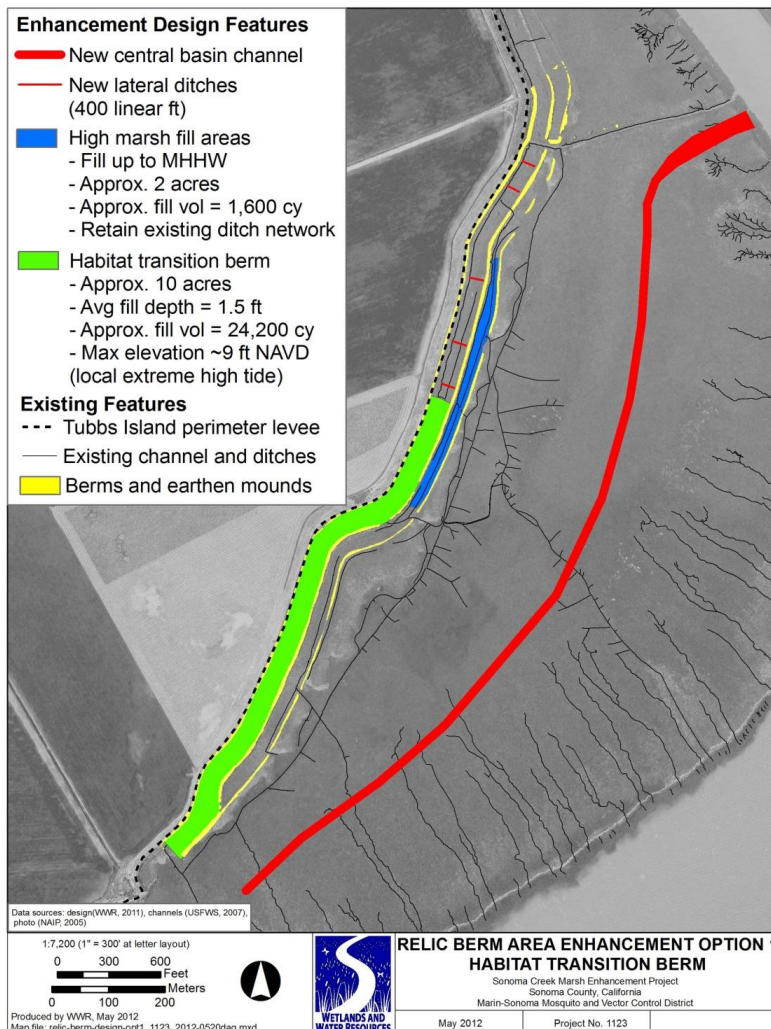
6. Sonoma Creek Tidal Wetland Enhancement

Rachel Spadafore and Meg Marriott described the location of the Sonoma Creek Tidal Marsh and its topography and illustrated changes that have taken place over time.



The project goals are to improve the hydrology of the marsh, eliminate mosquito numbers and reduce the number of chemicals put into bay waters, and create a healthy, functional tidal system for wildlife.

escribed. Starter channels off the main channel will be constructed in order to make secondary and tertiary channels. An image of the proposed channel design is provided below:



The project will also feature marsh mounds on the marsh plain and a transition ramp from the levy down into the marsh. The plan for building the channel was discussed.

7. The meeting of the Conservation Delivery Committee of August 13, 2015, was adjourned and followed by site tours of Sears Point Restoration Project and the Sonoma Creek Tidal Wetland Enhancement.