



**San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Management Board Meeting**  
San Francisco Estuary Institute, 4911 Central Ave. Richmond, CA  
Tuesday, July 25, 2017 11am-2pm  
**MEETING NOTES**

**In attendance:**

*Donna Ball (Save The Bay), Rick Bottoms (US Army Corps of Engineers), Arthur Feinstein (Citizens' Committee to Complete the Refuge), Matt Gerhart (State Coastal Conservancy), Marc Holmes (The Bay Institute), Betty Kwan (Bay Planning Coalition), Greg Martinelli (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), Jeff McCreary (Ducks Unlimited), Lt. Col. Travis Rayfield (US Army Corps of Engineers), Peter Perrine (Wildlife Conservation Board), Diane Ross-Leech (PG&E Company), Barbara Salzman (Marin Audubon Society), Korie Schaeffer, Chair (NOAA Fisheries), Casey Stevenson (San Mateo County MVCD), Caitlin Sweeney (SFEP), John Takekawa (Audubon California), Julian Wood (Point Blue Conservation Science).*

**SFBJV Staff:** *Beth Huning, Brenna Mahoney, Sandra Scoggin, Caroline Warner*

**Guests:** *Julian Meisler (Sonoma Land Trust), Jessica Davenport (Coastal Conservancy)*

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Korie Schaeffer welcomed the group, thanked SFEI for hosting, and introductions were made. She announced that for the next few minutes until the election, she would be substituting for Anne Morkill, who was unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Chair's Report and Approval of April 25, 2017 meeting notes - Korie Schaeffer NOAA Fisheries**

• **Department of Interior Directive:** Korie explained a directive from the Department of Interior (DOI) secretary cancelling board and commission meetings convened by DOI, pending review. DOI staff will not be participating in the meetings of such governing boards, even if convened by others, until further notice. This directive will impact the SFBJV in that we will not have participation on the Management Board from either US Fish and Wildlife Service or USGS until until the directive is lifted in September or possibly longer. SFBJV Management Board meetings meetings will be convened by Korie of NOAA Fisheries. Committee meetings are not affected by the directive.

• **Meeting notes from April 25, 2017**

*Action: The meeting notes from the April 25, 2017 Management Board meeting were approved.*

• **Management Board Chair and Election of Vice Chair:** Jeff McCreary was nominated by the Executive Committee to serve as Vice-chair.

*Action: Upon a vote of the Management Board, Jeff was confirmed as the new SFBJV Vice Chair, and Korie Schaeffer officially assumed her new role as JV Management Board Chair, replacing Anne Morkill (USFWS).*

### **3. Coordinator's Report - Beth Huning, SFBJV**

Beth gave the following updates:

- The Management Board new webpage is still a work in progress. When asked for feedback, Management Board members reported ease and convenience of use. She explained the benefits vs. the efficiency challenges with combining the packet into a single document. Glitches in the links will be addressed before the next meeting.
- On Thursday, July 20th 2017, BCDC held a hearing to consider the “Adapting to Rising Tides” recommendations to amend the Bay Plan and possibly the McAteer-Petris Act to allow for fill for habitat and restoration projects and address public access and social justice issues. BCDC voted to pursue amendments with draft language. The timeline is for the first hearing in May 2018 and policy changes adopted by BCDC in August 2018. BCDC staff would like to work with JV staff and JV Government Affairs Committee on the language of these amendments. Beth recommended that Management Board members to be engaged in the BCDC process, as appropriate. The Government Affairs Committee will focus on these amendments.
- Contracts and grants with the USFWS have been frozen due to a federal-level review. The JV received word that the review process has been completed for the 8 JV's with cooperatives agreements, including the SFBJV. The JV contract between the USFWS and our fiscal agent, Point Blue Conservation Science, is being prepared, and the JV should receive the FY17 contract before our existing funds are expended..
- Beth reported that there is no new news on the GAO review/audit. The last correspondence from GAO indicated that they are regrouping and assessing the extent of the review, whether it will include the Delta and entire watershed, or remain focused on SF Bay restoration.

### **4. SFBJV Implementation Plan - Sandra Scoggin, SFBJV**

There has been significant work accomplished on the revision of the Implementation Plan in the past 6 months. Sandra noted that each of working committee reports will focus on committee actions toward the Implementation Plan. Sandra's presentation provided an overview of the Implementation Plan structure, described team roles, timeline, and described some key accomplishments, discussions, challenges, and overarching lessons. As a result of the various discussions, she is coordinating with team leads and IPT members to determine at what level specific decisions should be made (Implementation Plan work groups, SFBJV working committees, IPT, Management Board).

An example of a current, high-level decision is whether to set bird population objectives (the Bird and Wildlife Team) and to what level other wildlife is included in the Plan. The Implementation Plan may have numeric objectives for some species but how these will be attached to habitat goals (especially quality metrics) is a focus of current discussion.

Next steps for the Implementation Plan:

- The IPT plans to meet to address challenging discussions and decisions.
- SFBJV staff will provide more clarity on decision-making pathways.
- It is anticipated that there will be proposals (such as for species objective setting) and a variety of new content drafts for review and discussion at the October Management Board retreat.

## **5. SFBJV Working Committee Reports**

### **A. Conservation Delivery Committee (CDC) /Science Steering Committee (SSC) Combined Report**

*Marc Holmes, Chair, Sandra Scoggin, SFBJV*

• Conservation Delivery Committee Chair transition - Caitlin Sweeney will replace Marc Holmes, who has served for many years as Chair the CDC. The Management Board thanked Marc for his service and looks forward to working with Caitlin to integrate with the CCMP.

• Revising Habitat Goals for the Implementation Plan - The combined presentation from the two committees focused on setting habitat goals for the revised Implementation Plan. Marc described the purpose and overarching framework in revising habitat acreage goals, and Sandra walked through discussions to date regarding the process for setting numeric acreage goals and about the “Habitats Goals Setting Guidance” document that was distributed as part of the Management Board packet. She shared key questions that could inform the goals, specifically how habitat quality metrics could be incorporated in establishing new acreage goals, strategies and/or actions. After a lengthy discussion weighing the pros and cons of establishing numeric acreage goals based explicitly on measures of habitat quality, the SSC decided to incorporate habitat quality goals into strategies and actions but not explicitly into the numeric acreage goals that instead will be based on multiple objectives and opportunities.

Discussion:

- Habitat quality should somehow be acknowledged and incorporated to avoid achieving tidal marsh of very low quality. The recommendation is to incorporate this discussion into a narrative that follows numeric acreage goals.
- A key challenge is that not all tidal marshes are the same, and quality can be measured in different ways. Bird populations can be used as indicators of certain habitat quality metrics but not others.
- Habitat goals may state that there is an overall acreage goal that is of a certain quality.
- The three main categories of goals (protect, restore, enhance) are being pursued, but to calculate the “enhance” category it may be important to know the quality of habitat.
- Variety of habitats (by size, shape, space, and time) is also important regionally. It was noted that small projects may have value, particularly in certain sub-regions, and connectivity can be either physical or biological.
- There should be sensitivity to human needs and quality of habitat. Habitat may not be of highest quality but it still provides benefit.

- Habitat quality discussions will inform the revision of project criteria, as will a discussion on how benefits of a restoration project may change over time. Numeric goals are a snap shot. For example, how can we incorporate guide posts and an understanding of how projects change over time? How do we measure progress?
- A lot of work has been done to address these questions in other planning efforts. It would be helpful to determine whether BEHGU has assumed a level of function for specific habitat types.
- How do we measure success and performance? This should include acreage goals (yes/no/amount) and how well the project functioning as per its intended goals and target species (habitat quality).

*Next steps: Management Board members were invited to provide their input into the [Habitat Goals Setting Guidance](#), if they have not yet done so. Work by staff will begin on gathering data and drafting our numeric acreage goals based on the process and recommendations within this document. Conversations about the process will continue with guidance from the IPT and review at various steps along the way from committees and work teams.*

• **Resilient By Design (RBD)**

Marc provided an update on the RBD contest. There are 53 applications from design teams, and more than 80 project locations were submitted. Ten teams will be selected and matched with selected project sites. A Science Steering Committee will research and conduct outreach while determining the site locations.

**B. Government Affairs Committee - Arthur Feinstein, Chair**

• **Federal Updates** - Arthur noted that things in Washington DC are changing quickly, and there isn't much that the SFBJV can do right now to influence policy at the federal level; so our focus should be on state and regional issues while still tracking federal appropriations and legislation.

- FY18 Federal Appropriations - The FY18 budget is being considered by Congress now. The trend is that Congress is not basing its recommendations on the President's Budget. In the Interior Appropriations mark-up, the JV budget has been kept flat. Congress likes the JV's. OMB is starting preparation of the FY 19 budget now, which will be based on what is approved for FY18.
- Department of Interior Staffing - A few appointments have been made or are pending confirmation. Arthur asked Beth to send out a brief description of the appointments/nominees.

• **Legislation** - A couple of different bills will reauthorize the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) and the Neotropical Migratory Bird Act. Their authorizations have expired and are now funded as a year-by-year appropriation.

• **SFBJV Implementation Plan**

- Climate Change Policy - Arthur described the climate change white paper. Brenna Mahoney of the SFBJV is doing the research. The white paper will address how the JV will engage in planning initiatives and address climate change policy short and long term, with

recommendations to be incorporated into the Implementation Plan. The Government Affairs Committee will interact with the CDC, SSC, and Outreach Committees to ensure that recommended policy strategies consistently implement our conservation goals and that outreach messages support the policy recommendations.

- Non-Climate Change Policy Recommendations - These have been compiled and synthesized from all of the adopted plans and JV-produced documents and studies. Later this summer the Government Affairs Committee /Policy work group will meet to review and analyze the recommend priorities, and develop goals and strategies to address them. These should be developed in time for the October Management Board retreat.
- Implementation Plan writer, John Hart, has completed the introductory section.

#### • State Update

- State Water Board - The State Board has a new, revised policy defining waters of the State and procedures for discharge of dredge and fill material to waters of the State. After several drafts and rounds of public comment, Arthur noted that this draft policy most closely reflects the values and addresses the concerns of the SFBJV than had previous drafts.. Final public comments are due September 7th with several workshops in August and September. [NOTE: The draft policy can be found at [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml).]
- BCDC: Arthur provided more detail on the process of amending the BCDC Bay Plan and potentially the McAteer-Petris Act, for fill for habitat and restoration projects. BCDC wants the amendment process to go quickly and to make restoration work simpler rather than more complicated. (See Coordinator's Report #3, above.) Beth will be in touch with BCDC staff on timing and process.

*Action: The SFBJV will form a team from the Government Affairs Committee to engage with BCDC in the amendment process. This committee will include Arthur Feinstein, Marc Holmes, Caitlin Sweeney, Barbara Salzman, Jeff McCreary, Matt Gerhart, Diane Ross-Leech, Greg Martinelli, and Julian Meisler. Others to be included will be at the discretion of Arthur (Government Affairs Committee), as well as Marc and Caitlin (Conservation Delivery Committee).*

#### • Outreach Committee - Caroline Warner, Outreach Coordinator

- “Restoration Is Working” video shorts - Caroline Warner presented the latest video on Eden Landing, produced by the SFBJV for the 20th anniversary celebration with support from the Wildlife Conservation Board and Ducks Unlimited. These videos are available on the [SFBJV website](http://www.sfbayjv.org), www.sfbayjv.org. Caroline asked Management Board members how they were sharing videos to their constituents, reminded them to place them on their websites and share them on social media, and requested that they make a commitment to do so. She collected commitment notes and will be following up. The videos and an outreach guide can be accessed on the SFBJV website. The last two videos in the series are currently being planned for the SFBJV Suisun and Russian River sub-regions and should be completed by the end of the year.

- Wetland Tours - The staff of Senator Kamala Harris have requested opportunities to visit project sites and have suggested including other elected officials. So the SFBJV will plan one or more tours targeting newly elected and other interested elected officials. Caroline asked the Management Board to e-mail her any suggestions of tour locations.

- Human Dimensions - Caroline briefly explained the term, Human Dimensions (HD). Two HD experts are developing a guidance document for JV's on how to include HD in their Implementation Plans. This document will be available in August for input and review and will be presented to all JVs at the JV national meeting in December. This document will provide the SFBJV with guidance for including HD in the Implementation Plan revision and may be included.

**6. Planning for the Future of Hwy 37 - Julian Meisler, Sonoma Land Trust and Jessica Davenport, State Coastal Conservancy**

Julian M. provided a history of HWY 37, summarized the current issues with traffic and flooding, and described the status of planning efforts being undertaken to widen and elevate the highway. Design alternatives are being prepared. The restoration community has expressed concerns that designs be full-spectrum, resilient to sea level rise, and integrated with wetlands restoration to ensure room for marshes to migrate as sea levels rise. Staff of the Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) have participated in the Highway 37 Policy Committee being led by Solano County, reporting that an integrated plan isn't being discussed.

As a result, in mid-June 2017, the SLT convened 19 SFBJV partner organizations and land management agencies and formed a coalition to address the integration of natural resources to Highway 37 planning. Several subgroups will work on articulating and illustrating various aspects of a vision that implements the Baylands Goals, the 2015 Update, and the SFBJV Implementation Plan. These are: guiding principles, restoration, policy, and funding. Jessica introduced the working group's catch phrase "Integrate, Don't Mitigate." She has been in contact with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which seems to be willing to be inclusive of previous studies and perspectives of the restoration community.

The JV Management Board discussed how to be involved in this process and what to track. The Management Board agreed that the JV vision of restoration and conservation should be incorporated into any plans moving forward, but that the JV not expend staff time to lead this project, but provide information and JV perspectives to the coordinating team.

*Action: The Management Board adopted the following resolution: "The Joint Venture will support a Highway 37 design that is compatible with and advances its ecological restoration and conservation goals for San Pablo Bay."*

**7. Announcements and next meeting on October 31, 2017**

- Jeff McCreary announced that there are two new state water and park bonds being considered for the 2018 ballot.

- Caitlin Sweeney reminded everyone of the upcoming *State of the Estuary Conference* and requested nominations for the Jean Auer Environmental Award and for the Friends of the San Francisco Estuary outstanding environmental project award.
- The next Management Board meeting is an all-day retreat on October 31, 2017, with location TBD.

## **8. Adjorn**