



**San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Joint Conservation Delivery/Science Steering Committee Meeting
June 2, 2017 10:00 - 2:30 pm
SFEI - 4911 Central Ave, Richmond, CA**

In attendance: Marc Holmes, Chair (Chair, The Bay Institute), Joy Albertson (USFWS), Giselle Block (USFWS-I&M), Justin Bodell (Sonoma Resource Conservation District), Warner Chabot (SFEI), Winnie Chan (USFWS), Heidi Nutters (San Francisco Estuary Partnership, via phone), Colin Grant (USFWS - Tidal Marsh Recovery Program), Cristina Grosso (SFEI), Rachel Kamman (Kamman Hydrology), Marilyn Latta (State Coastal Conservancy), Anne Morkill (USFWS), Cory Overton (USGS), Tom Robinson (Bay Area Open Space Council), Barbara Salzman (Marin Audubon), Jeff Schreiber (Sonoma RCD), Renee Spenst (Ducks Unlimited), Rachel Tertes (US Fish and Wildlife Service), David Thomson (San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory), Karine Tokatljan (SFBBO), Natalie Washburn (Ducks Unlimited), Sam Veloz (Point Blue Conservation Science), Isa Woo (USGS), Julian Wood (Point Blue).

JV Staff: Beth Huning, Brenna Mahoney, Sandra Scoggin, Caroline Warner

1. Welcome and Introductions

Marc and Renee welcomed the group and thanked SFEI for hosting the meeting. Renee and Caroline shared the newest Wetlands Is Working video on Eden Landing Restoration Project. Committee members were asked to share this new video and the full series on websites and social media.

2. Coordinator's Report - Beth Huning, SFBJV

Resilient by Design Bay Area Challenge: SSC members may be contacted by design teams, which will form this summer and develop proposals this fall. Beth encouraged engagement with these teams to promote designs that consider regional planning and goals promoted by SFBJV and partners and that avoid designs leaning towards hard engineering. Design teams will be judged partly by how well their proposed strategy involves working with and partnering with local communities and there will be a strong emphasis on practical, implementable designs. In December, teams will be selected and matched to 10 Bay Area sites with one project in each of the 9 counties and with a range of project types.

Warner Chabot and Amy Hutzler are on the steering committee. SFEI will provide scientific and technical support to teams and will hold briefs to teams when they are selected. The website, which includes a design brief that provides guidance for the teams, is available at

www.resilientbayarea.org

Federal audit: The Government Accountability Office is reviewing expenditures and accomplishments of funding that has gone to SF Bay restoration projects. The SFBJV met with members of the audit team as have some JV partners. This audit may reach out to additional SFBJV partners.

3. SFBJV Implementation Plan Revision (IPR) overview - *Renee Spenst and Marc Holmes*

Renee [presented](#) an overview of the organization and timing of the Implementation Plan Revision to introduce CD committee members to the revision.

4. [Setting Quantitative Habitat Goals](#) - Marc Holmes and Sandra Scoggin

Marc set the stage regarding the need for a revision of habitat goals and Sandra provided more detail on the development of an approach for this revision. Key factors influencing and informing the update include an expansion in geographic scope and habitat categories, as well as the need to be responsive to the accelerating challenges posed by climate change. In addition, numerous recent planning efforts and new information need to be incorporated formally into JV strategies for implementation. This work on [habitat goals setting guidance](#) development was distributed and CDC members were also asked think about if habitat quality and subregional goals should be considered.

The following points were discussed:

- Habitat quality
 - The Implementation Plan could take a broader ecosystem-level approach and discuss what aspects of habitat are providing other benefits (e.g. macroinvertebrates).
 - Can we incorporate functional features of habitat that species need?
 - Habitat carrying capacity - incorporate current and future (estimated after SLR).
 - Determine what targets and nested targets the SFBJV wants to measure, what habitats support these targets, and how much acreage of habitats are needed to achieve these goals.
 - Species detection isn't perfect, so need to determine habitat quality measures beyond actual detections.
 - Habitat has other benefits that the SFBJV considers important in addition to species - should consider blue carbon.
 - Open bay waterfowl use.
- Subtidal habitats:
 - consider intertidal and subtidal habitat separation and goals
 - Consider rocky shorelines, seaweed beds on shorelines etc.
- Degraded urbanized shorelines/artificial rip rap - how do these relate to goals?
- Upland transition zone - connectivity and SLR concerns.
- Freshwater - preservation of surface and groundwater sources
- Headwaters - there is currently no language to protect these lands.
- Urban corridors, wild lands and park lands.
 - Habitat is moving up riparian corridors, creeks are becoming more set back and hardened. Creek corridors could be a good place for acquisition projects.

- Goals should perhaps be broad and lofty.
 - Not just link to recovery plans, keep common species common
 - Link to wildlife but there should be multiple benefits (blue carbon, recreation)
- Needs to link to project tracking and reporting.
- Subregional goals
 - North and South Bay ecosystems are becoming more disjunct with greater genetic drift and bottlenecking. This may argue for sub regional goal creation.
 - The type of marsh in the middle of the bay may not be the same that would be good to create at either end of the bay, the marshes may have different qualities.

Some input was gathered specific to the outline of numeric habitat goals development proposed in the habitat goals setting guidance document, but the majority of the discussion focused on elements related to describing and measuring habitat quality.

5. [Monitoring and Evaluation Framework](#) - Joy Albertson

Joy reviewed the process and status of developing a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for the Implementation Plan Revision. The work team is currently reviewing and refining targets and threats. The targets of the monitoring may be habitats, species, or groups of species - SFBJV needs to decide what the targets are before a framework can be developed.

The following points were discussed:

- Documentation of habitat loss due to urban impact or other disturbance
- Development of a baseline and goal of population numbers to monitor
- Scale and effort of monitoring

6. [Setting Population Objectives](#) - Julian Wood

Having population objectives can demonstrate the current and future value of JV actions and establish clear criteria for success. Managers can evaluate outcomes, learn and improve actions and strategies, and communicate successes to different audiences. A team has been meeting to determine for which species and habitats it may be feasible to set population objectives and expect to bring recommendations for development of these objectives at a future meeting.

7. [Climate Adaptation Decision Support, Phase 1 Regional Findings/ Phase 2-San Pablo Bay](#) - Beth Huning and Giselle Block

Beth presented on this structured decision making process that evaluated short term and long term strategies from the Bayland Goals Science Update for various habitat types in the Bay in order to best allocate resources. One purpose of CADS is to help Refuges incorporate climate change into decision-making.

Giselle presented on a second phase of CADS, which used the same process for San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge (SPBNWR) and aimed to identify optimal strategies to reduce stress to the SPBNWR conservation targets from climate change and other threats in the near and

long-term. The next steps for this project is to refine management goals and work on data management.

8. [San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex 5-year Work Plan](#) - Giselle Block

Giselle presented on how limited SFBNWR Complex resources could be allocated for the greatest project feasibility and conservation impact. Using an Open Standards approach, the Complex intends to focus on highest priority threats and targets.

9. Tidal Marsh Recovery Plan Recommendations - Cory Overton, Isa Woo, Colin Grant

Colin presented an overview of the Recovery Plan, the geographic scope, teams (Rail, SMHM, Plants), goals, and timeline. If any Committee members have projects that should be on the Recovery Plan list, email Colin. The Recovery Plan will be integrated into the Implementation Plan.

Plant Team: The plant team is currently organizing basic data such as distribution and developing a priority project list. If any CDC members have questions about how plants may fit into projects, contact a member of the plant team.

Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse Team: Isa Woo presented on the work to date of the SMHM Team. They are working to compile recommendations from existing plans and currently have a draft of population estimate protocols available for review. The team is developing a uniform database to house collected field data and is writing a SMHM recovery plan, which includes listing recovery needs for SMHM and identifying priority threats. The team is working to have other partners provide genetic information.

The top research priorities are genetic work and bay-wide population monitoring; there hasn't been a bay-wide mouse population survey so current knowledge of range extent and distribution of species and sub-species is limited. The team plans to compare population estimates and species identification methods from different protocols to help standardize measurements and identifications. It is known that the SMHM are not hybridizing with the Western Harvest Mouse and that the South Bay has a distinct population of SMHM with low diversity.

Rail Team: Cory Overton presented priorities from the rail team. A high priority is to address the lack of data and research needs for example reproductive studies and how to characterize the use of high tide mounds.

Discussion: It was asked that the terminology is defined and consistent across plans - ie, definitions of a 'threat'.

Regional planning and regulatory issues: Additionally, each team will come up with Best Management Practices for restoration projects, things that other partners could do in their projects that would benefit the species. For example, make clear how project managers can

incorporate habitat features into their projects that would benefit the species. However, regulatory permits may not allow for this. The group could create a list of critical questions that regulatory agencies have in relation to additional habitat features. There needs to be greater linkages between regional recommendations (such as from the Tidal Marsh Recovery Program) and actions on the ground and recommendations on how to approach regulatory hurdles.

10. Measure AA and Prop 1 Update - Beth Huning

The granting guidelines have been revised and are expected to be adopted by the RA board in July. The first monies will be collected in December, the first round of proposals will likely be due this fall, and it is expected that sometime next spring the first grant funds will be awarded to projects.

11. SFBJV Tiered Project List Review - Sandra Scoggin

Sandra presented the current Project List and asked project managers to review to see if any projects are missing or need updates. Part of the revision of the Implementation Plan will be to review and revise how SFBJV projects are adopted and prioritized. Note that the SFBJV and RA work closely together to make sure all eligible projects are on one or both lists, as appropriate. While it is important that your eligible projects are added to the Restoration Authority list, adoption to the SFBJV list secures an additional point for your RA grant application.

12. Project Adoption Request - Burdell Unit, Natalie Washburn, Ducks Unlimited

This is a feasibility study for tidal restoration and is in the early stages of scoping with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The ~600 acres is currently managed as seasonal wetland habitat, the feasibility study will examine options to restore to full tidal marsh. Currently two main strategies are full tidal restoration with an interior levee at the airport or partial tidal restoration with levees crossing the area. Constraints include levees and airport infrastructure. Ducks Unlimited could do an alternatives analysis on outcomes if no restoration occurs.

The group discussed how SFBJV adopts projects and if feasibility studies could be adopted.

Action - A recommendation to adopt the project and write a letter of support will be sent to the Executive Committee for approval as a letter of support is needed prior to the next full Management Board meeting.

13. Announcements

A new national coastal resilience project funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is providing funds to examine resilience of the SF bay and outer coast as one of seven coastal watersheds included in this program. This effort will be led by Sam Veloz of Point Blue.