

Attachment B - San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Coordinator's Report

TO: San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Management Board Members and Alternates

FROM: Sandra Scoggin, Coordinator

DATE: November 22, 2022

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This report is an overview of Joint Venture activities and significant developments since the August 30, 2022 Coordinator's report and is compiled by the SFBJV Coordinator with contributions from JV staff and partners.

A. News of Note from the Joint Venture

1. SFBJV Management Board Meeting - Tuesday, November 29, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. via [ZOOM](#)

We look forward to virtually gathering with you to address JV business, issues, and news.

This meeting includes requested actions, updates, and opportunities for input. We will ask you to approve the notes from our last meeting [Attachment A] and will present updates on: what your new SFBJV staff are working on [Attachments B, C, D]; the State's 30 by 30 effort; science committee priorities; the State of the Birds Framework for San Francisco Bay; proposed funding models for the Estuary and Ocean Science (EOS) Center [Attachment E]; and the North Bay Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) [Attachment F]. You will have the opportunity to share announcements from your agency or organization.

2. SFBJV Implementation Strategy Update Released!

Since the last meeting, the Implementation Strategy (Strategy) final design was completed and it is [now available](#) as a viewable file and for download and printing (high resolution).

We celebrated the [release of the new Strategy](#) with an event (and photo contest!) at the Richardson's Bay Audubon Lyford House on October 14, 2022 with over 30 partners in attendance. We thanked key contributors, including Renee Spent, Julian Wood, Kate Freeman and Liz Duffy, and [honored Jeff McCreary \(Ducks Unlimited\) with the Bruce Wolfe Spirit of Conservation Award](#). We also thanked the Implementation Plan Team, work teams, authors, contributors, reviewers, SFBJV staff, and many others who dedicated significant time and passion to producing this exciting and ambitious update to our Implementation Strategy that will guide our next decade-plus of urgent action.

Now that the Strategy has been released, we will focus on sharing it with partners and relevant stakeholders. In 2019 Caroline Warner led a stakeholder analysis to examine which were the best mechanisms and contacts for sharing the Strategy and engaging partners in its implementation. Based on this analysis and conversations between joint venture staff and Caroline Warner, Nikki will be working on generating materials for our sharing strategy which include: presentation slide deck (for partner organizations and the management board), a two-page summary of the key messages and action steps derived from the implementation strategy and operational plan, and a brief 1 page (or less) policy document identifying key priorities as they relate to funding and climate adaptation needs. We hope that members of the management board will share these documents with staff and their organizations accordingly and seek out presentations from the SFBJV team if desired. We also aim to identify point people across our partnership organizations to distribute our key messages from the Implementation Strategy (if these folks do not sit on our management board already).

Operational Plan [Attachment C]

At our August meeting, the board voted to approve a two year Operational Plan (OP) with one minor correction (noted in Attachment A). The final version of the OP is included in your packet as Attachment C. This plan accompanies our [2022 Restoring the Estuary Implementation Strategy](#) and outlines our key focus areas for implementation action.

3. Migratory Bird Joint Venture Coordinators Meeting

All Joint Venture Coordinators (JVC) will be meeting in person for the first time since 2019. The JVC annual meeting takes place the first full week of December at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. This meeting will provide an excellent opportunity for JVCs to learn from each other and strengthen our strategies and impact across the continent.

4. California's 30 by 30

Jennifer Norris of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) will update the board about the state's effort to conserve 30 percent of its land and waters by 2030. Jennifer is one of our newest Management Board members and serves as Deputy Secretary for Biodiversity and Habitat and leads the state's 30x30 "Cutting Green Tape" initiative in support of landscape scale habitat restoration. She has extensive experience in conservation policy, endangered species protection, and ecosystem management. We look forward to hearing from her at our meeting.

On Sept 28, 2022, Nikki Roach and Jemma Williams attended the in-person 30x30 event

hosted by CNRA. The meeting was a great opportunity to connect with partners such as TOGETHER Bay Area, Point Blue Conservation Science, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited, the State Coastal Conservancy, and others. As Nikki and Jemma's first work event, they were able to meet and network while they learned about California's 30 by 30 effort. There was a large focus on engaging tribal partners (both federally recognized and unrecognized tribes) and bolstering diversity and inclusion efforts across agencies. The event also highlighted the large sums of funding that are being allocated in the 2022-2023 state budget for wildlife conservation, habitat restoration, and climate resiliency. These dollars are expected to be a source of funding for our partners and programs.

5. State of the Birds for SF Bay *(from Julian Wood, Point Blue Conservation Science)*

The SFBJV and Point Blue Conservation Science are working on a State of the Birds SF Bay Framework (Framework), to be completed by the end of 2022. The Framework describes an approach to completing a State of the Birds dynamic report for the San Francisco Bay region. Within the Framework, we describe the vision and rationale for the report, an outline of its content, the bird species indicators used, and needed next steps including funding needs.

It has been 10 years since the last SF Bay State of the Birds report, which served the conservation community by providing data-driven conservation recommendations and highlighting threats to at-risk bird species. Since 2011, we have seen a greater need for current information on the status and trends of indicator bird species and a need for greater coordination among entities involved in gathering and disseminating that information. To accomplish conservation goals at the pace and scale that's needed to achieve the 30 by 30 goals while addressing pressing climate change and biodiversity challenges, the State of the Birds report must be cost-effective, easily updated (dynamic), and must complement other estuary-wide monitoring and reporting efforts such as the State of the Estuary Report and the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program.

The State of the Birds dynamic report will enhance conservation in the following ways:

1. Provide more timely guidance for habitat restoration, management, and acquisition,
2. Increase knowledge of the current population status of San Francisco Bay's birds and threats to their habitats, and
3. Influence public policy and awareness of bird and ecosystem conservation needs.

The SFBJV, in partnership with Point Blue Conservation Science, plans to lead the effort of using the Framework to develop the State of the Birds Dynamic Report that will assess

progress towards its newly established habitat goals. The SFBJV goals are acre-based and the State of the Birds report will assess how well those acres and other conservation actions support bird populations. Once the Framework is completed, the SFBJV and its partners will begin fundraising for the State of the Birds Dynamic Report.

6. National State of the Birds

Through a broad, collaborative effort, the 2022 State of the Birds was recently released. You can view the [key findings](#) or the [state of the birds webinar](#) hosted by the National Wildlife Federation. The webinar outlines the purpose and findings of the report and also discusses several pieces of legislation that do (or will) support bird conservation.

The report can be downloaded [here](#). It details declines across nearly all species of birds except wetland-dependent species such as ducks, waterbirds, and geese and swans. The increase in populations of these bird groups can, in part, be attributed to programs like the MBJV and partners which have worked diligently to conserve and restore wetland habitat for wildlife. Takeaway: conservation works when we invest!

The report also highlighted that birds and their conservation can be an environmental justice multiplier. Meaning, restoring bird habitat can also be an investment in underserved communities, such as greening urban areas, and increasing wildlife outreach and education while doing so.

The legislation outlined aims to expand funding for habitat restoration and increased partnerships for those projects, reduce hazards and threats to birds, and expand planning and coordination for bird conservation. Some of those bills include:

- The [Migratory Bird Protections Act](#) which would bolster the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and supports increased funding for bird conservation - if you are able, you can take action [HERE](#).
- [Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#) (RAWA) which would provide funding and support to states, catalyze collaborative, on-the-ground habitat restoration projects, and boost other much needed conservation efforts to match the magnitude of the wildlife crisis - action link: [HERE](#).
- [Federal Bird Safe Buildings Act](#) which would require the General Services Administration (GSA) to develop and implement strategies for [reducing bird fatalities](#) from [collisions](#) with public buildings - action link: [HERE](#).
- [Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act](#) which reauthorizes through FY2027 and revises the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), which provides financial assistance for projects to promote the

conservation of neotropical migratory birds. This would reauthorize the NMBCA for the next 5 years, boost funding, increase accessible to their grant program and allow for smaller entities to apply for funding.

7. Update on the Section 1122 Beneficial Use Program

Many SFBJV partners were involved in the application, creation, and continued advocacy to support implementation of the full Section 1122 Beneficial Use Pilot Program. The US Army Corps of Engineers has been working on the “strategic placement” element of the program, while partners have continued to advocate for implementation of the full project, including the “direct placement” element. Thanks to continued efforts by the California State Coastal Conservancy, BCDC, and others, the US Army Corps of Engineers recently committed to moving forward with the full project, using \$19 million in the latest Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) workplan. We will share more information on this exciting development once it is available.

8. Restoring America’s Estuary Conference [Attachment D]

From December 4 - 8th, both Nikki (SFBJV Policy & Communications Coordinator) and Jemma (Conservation Coordinator) will be attending the Restoring America’s Estuaries (RAE) conference in New Orleans, LA. The SFBJV will present a poster (Looking Forward: Conservation Goals for the San Francisco Estuary for 2035), highlighting our priorities from our Implementation Strategy, ongoing restoration projects, and our goals moving forward.

9. Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP)

The SFBJV is a funded partner for phase 2 work which includes outreach and testing/user input of the WRMP geospatial data management system. On November 1, the SFBJV, in partnership with the SF Bay NERR, SFEI, and WRMP staff, held a beta testing input session with approximately 20 partners from a range of agencies, organizations, and institutions to gather feedback on the GeoBlacklight Data Catalog. On November 3, members of the beta testing team met with two tribal partners engaged in the WRMP program development to gather their feedback on the data catalog. Additional interested partners were contacted to provide feedback via individual testing. After feedback is incorporated, the data catalog will be publicly released at the end of 2022. This milestone will also mark the end of SFBJV funded work for phase 2.

Other elements of the program continue to advance work on fisheries and fish habitat indicators, monitoring and reference site selection, and communication needs.

Sandra currently serves as Steering Committee Chair and SFBJV Management Board member Erika Castillo serves as Vice Chair. More information about the WRMP development process is available on their [website](#) where you can also subscribe to their newsletter at the bottom of the page.

10. State Route (SR) 37 Baylands Group *(from Ariana Rickard, Sonoma Land Trust)*

The SR 37-Baylands Group is made up of North Bay wetland land managers, ecological restoration practitioners, and other stakeholders with a long-term interest in the conservation and restoration of the San Pablo Baylands, including SFBJV staff and several partners. The group formed in 2017 with the goals of creating and promoting adoption of guiding principles, developing an ecological landscape vision, and exploring funding and policy options. Background on the Baylands Group and accomplishments [here](#).

Every day, commuters sit in traffic on State Route 37 (SR 37), alongside the Baylands that represent a key part of the planet's ecosystem. The marshes and ponds of the Baylands support waterfowl who stop to rest and forage before they continue their journey on the Pacific Flyway. The Sonoma Land Trust and our partners have prioritized the San Pablo Baylands for acquisition, protection, and restoration.

In September, Caltrans announced the results of the [SR 37 Planning and Environmental Linkages Study](#) (PEL Study). This integrated planning study encompasses the entire SR 37 corridor and incorporates environmental considerations early in the transportation planning process. The study builds upon past studies and alternatives assessments and solicited input from environmental organizations, such as the San Pablo Baylands group, as part of its three technical working groups (design, traffic, and environmental), through numerous meetings and requests for written feedback.

The PEL Study resulted in an agreement between Caltrans and other transportation authorities that the best solution to fix SR 37 is to construct an elevated causeway, with limited embankments, along the current SR 37 corridor.

While Caltrans and partners have agreed on an ultimate project for SR 37, there is still no clear pathway to fund the planning and construction of the elevated causeway. Caltrans, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and the county congestion management agencies are planning to implement interim projects to address congestion and flooding issues until the ultimate project can be built. For the Baylands Group's recommendations on the interim and ultimate projects, please see our July 2022 Position Paper [here](#). (The SFBJV signed on to this position paper).

The Bayland Group hopes that a significant amount of funding from the federal and state government will be allocated to begin planning and implementing the elevated causeway. A new elevated causeway will provide protection from floods and sea level rise and create opportunities for wetland restoration and reestablished hydrologic connection to the Bay.

Other SR 37 activity included a meeting of the SR 37 Policy Committee on Sept. 1

- The agenda and materials are [here](#).
- The packet includes updates on:
 - SR 37 Sears Point to Mare Island Improvement Project (Interim Project/Congestion Relief)
 - SMART Integration
 - Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL)

For more information, visit Caltrans' [website for SR 37 projects](#), and the Sonoma County Transportation Authority's public engagement [website for Resilient SR 37 planning](#).

11. SF Bay Restoration Authority (*from Jessica Davenport, State Coastal Conservancy*)

The Measure AA 2022 Grant Round and Community Grants Program: The Restoration Authority's preliminary list of recommended projects for Grant Round 6 (2022) was announced at the October 14 board meeting:

- Strategy to Advance Flood Protection, Ecosystems and Recreation along San Francisco Bay - SAFER Bay Project
- Incremental Cost of Beneficial Reuse of Dredge Sediments at the Montezuma Wetlands Restoration Project
- Suisun Marsh Fish Screen Rehabilitation Project: Phase 2
- Newark Baylands Acquisition, Interim Management and Restoration Planning (partial funding)
- Goat Island Tidal Marsh Restoration and Public Access Project
- Berkeley North Basin Project

For details on Grant Round 6, see the [memo](#) and [summary table](#). The Restoration Authority's Community Grants Program, which funds projects led by community-based organizations in economically disadvantaged communities, is accepting applications on a rolling basis. See the [Community Grants Page](#) for more information.

SFBRA Projects: The Restoration Authority board authorized funding for [Heron's Head Park Shoreline Resilience Project, Phase Two](#), Port of San Francisco, in October.

SFBRA Other Updates: The Authority released its [draft Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Annual Report Summary](#) in October, highlighting five years of shoreline restoration, and its [Yearly Update on Implementation of Equity Recommendations](#).

More information about the Restoration Authority can be found [on their website](#).

12. 2023-2027 State Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan Development Process

The Conservancy is updating its Strategic Plan for 2023-2027. A draft is available for public review [here](#). They intend to bring a final version of the plan to their Board on December 1. Visit their [website](#) for additional updates.

13. Applying for a Coastal Conservancy Grant

A webinar was held on November 9, 2022 on Conservancy funding and how to apply for their grants. The slides used in the webinar [can be found here](#). A recording of the webinar [can be found here](#), and the application and guidance are available on the [Grants page](#) of the website. Applications are rolling and open.

14. SFBJV Letters of Support and Comment

The SFBJV sent the following letters which are available upon request.

- Letter to the Water Quality Improvement Fund in support of SFEI's Sediment Solutions proposal to the SF Bay Area. Letter dated September 2, 2022.
- Letter to the Water Quality Improvement Fund in support of State Coastal Conservancy proposal "Southern Eden Landing Restoration Project" in Hayward (Alameda County). Letter dated August 8, 2022.
- Letter to the NOAA Restoration Center in support of Ducks Unlimited's application for the Reis River Ranch Restoration Project. Letter dated August 26, 2022.

B. Joint Venture Working Committee Summaries

1. Conservation Committee (CC) – Julian Wood, Chair

We are working on a re-launch for the CC. This might include finalizing and introducing the Committee Charter to the group to confirm the Committees mission and goals. We are also crafting a survey to distribute to members asking them a series of questions ranging from "what do you get out of these meetings, and would like to see more of?" to a DEI focused question asking if they have suggestions on how the CC can better diversify it's membership. We expect to consider a few projects for adoption and plan to bring in SCC staff to present

on newly available funding opportunities and how to apply for them.

Science Committee (SC) – Renee Spenst, Chair

The Science Committee did not meet this quarter, but our staff has engaged with the chair to plan for a relaunch of this Committee in the next quarter or two. We will hear an update from the committee chair on current priorities.

2. Outreach & Communications

In October 2022, we launched the new SFBJV [website](#) and re-launched our [LinkedIn](#) account (give us a follow!). The implementation strategy is available for [download](#) on the website. We continue to update our job board and funding page. The funding page will be re-organized by the end of 2022. This quarter we have published three bulletins, including our new staff announcement (September), highlighting our implementation strategy release party and the Bruce Wolfe Spirit of Conservation Award winner Jeff McCreary (October), and our thanksgiving edition mid-November. Nikki also wrote three posts for our website about the [implementation strategy release event](#) and the [Bruce Wolfe Spirit of Conservation Award](#) and the recent honoree [Jeff McCreary](#).

In October, Nikki met with Darcie Luce - chair of the Regional Communications Team - to discuss priorities for this communications committee. From November - December, Nikki will be working with Caroline Warner (subcontracted) to finalize the Implementation Strategy Communications Plan, which will identify key messages and our sharing strategy. Over the coming months we will likely be re-thinking the overall SFBJV program communications sharing strategy.

The week of November 14 - 17, 2022, Nikki and Jemma met with the Joint Venture Communication, Education, and Outreach coordinators from across the country. We used this meeting to discuss communication structure across different JV's with a specific focus on newsletters. We planned to continue quarterly JV CEO meetings going forward. In addition, the Regional Communications Team hosted a meeting to introduce the group to new SFBJV staff as well as facilitate an interview between Mark Prado and environmental journalist Will Houston from the Marin IJ. The group discussed the future of the Regional Communications Team including the possibility of reopening campaign ideas, skill-shares, sharing success stories and so on. This team meets quarterly and will reconvene in February 2023.

Updates on the newsletter: We have decided to switch to a quarterly newsletter format and use e-blasts for important announcements whenever necessary. Jemma will maintain our [job board](#) on the website and the SFBJV LinkedIn page.

3. Policy Committee – Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg, Chair

The SFBJV staff met with Rebecca at SFEI on October 25th, 2022 to review progress and processes of the Policy Committee, including DC fly-in preparations, committee structure and functions, and current committee composition. A Policy Committee meeting is planned for early December, 2022 to initiate fly-in preparations and discuss funding and policy opportunities. The fly in is expected to take place in person this year during the week of March 13.

In addition, Nikki has been familiarizing herself with relevant policy topics and meeting with SFBJV policy partners to discuss future directions of her newly-created role. She attended the CNRA 30x30 event in Sacramento, the Bay Planning Coalition’s Dredging & Beneficial Reuse Workshop in Oakland, and the SR 37 PEL Stakeholder Working Group Meeting from the Department of Transportation via zoom.

4. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee - Casey Arndt, Chair

The EDI Committee met on November 14th, gathering for the first time since the new SFBJV staff hires. Both Nikki and Jemma are participating in the EDI Committee and will spearhead efforts moving forward to integrate our EDI efforts across SFBJV projects and the partnership.

The Committee discussed the Committee Charter and reviewed Committee goals. Next steps include developing a survey for the Management Board in early 2023 designed to gain insight into EDI work at an individual and organizational level. Some immediate goals discussed included integrating EDI into our Project Adoption Criteria and aim to better understand which community-based organizations (CBO) our partners are already working with. In the future, we plan to connect with CBOs to discuss the advantages of being a SFBJV approved or priority project and to bring more awareness to our funding opportunities and partnership at large.

C. Packet Attachments

- A. Meeting notes from the August 30, 2022 Management Board meeting
- B. Coordinator’s Report
- C. Final SFBJV Operational Plan
- D. Restoring America’s Estuaries SFBJV Poster
- E. EOS Center Information Sheet
- F. North Bay Regional Conservation Investment Strategy Summary