

**San Francisco Bay Joint Venture  
Restoration Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, December 15, 2010, 12:30-4 pm  
State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Meeting Notes**

**Participants**

Marc Holmes, Chair (The Bay Institute), Chris Barton (East Bay Regional Parks District), Betsy Bikle (Marin Conservation League and Mill Valley Streamkeepers), Kathi Borgmann (Audubon California), John Bourgeois (SCC -South Bay Salt Pond Project) Ariana Brand (US Geological Survey), Darcie Collins (Save the Bay), Kelly Davidson (Mt View Sanitary District), Tom Gandesbery (State Coastal Conservancy), John Krause (Department of Fish and Game), Peter LaCivita (US Army Corps), Rebecca Lawton (Sonoma Ecology Center), Eric Mruz (US Fish and Wildlife Service), Jennifer Natali (UC Berkeley), Mike Perlmutter (Bay Area Early Detection Network), Kevin Petrik (Ducks Unlimited), Kent Reeves (Alameda Co RCD), Diane Ross Leech (PG&E Co), Barbara Salzman (Bay Area Audubon Council), Renee Spenst (Ducks Unlimited), Kate Tollefson (WRA Inc), Laura Valoppi (USGS), Laurie Williams (Marin County), Julian Wood (PRBO Conservation Science)

*SFBJV Staff:* Beth Huning (Coordinator), Christina Sloop (Science Coordinator), Caroline Warner (Outreach Coordinator), Sandra Scoggin (Assistant Coordinator)

**1. Welcome and Introductions.** Since there were a number of participants who had not previously attended a Restoration Committee meeting, Marc Holmes gave brief background of the SFBJV and Committee.

**2. Seasonal Wetland Goals Revision Update and Next Steps**

Kevin Petrik of Ducks Unlimited summarized the work to date on the SFBJV seasonal wetland goals revision and discussed next steps with the committee. After reviewing changes in JV boundaries, existing projects, accomplishments and other factors that have affected the seasonal wetland goals as outlined in the SFBJV Implementation Strategy, he reviewed outcomes of the regional meetings/mapping sessions held to gather information on potential seasonal wetland acquisition and restorations.

Next steps include compilation of a final report on these findings, compilation of existing resources into a bibliography, potentially checking with regional meeting/mapping session participants to check on data sensitivity issues and whether some data can be included in the Upland Goals efforts or the SFBJV Project Tracking database.

**3. South Bay Salt Pond Project: Summary of Phase 1 Actions, Assessment Studies and Phase 2 Proposed Actions**

John Bourgeois, Project Manager for the South Bay Salt Pond project gave an overview of the project's phase one and science program activities and then outlined options for phase two.

**Phase 1 actions completed or nearing completion include:**

• **Ravenswood**

Pond SF2 - Managed pond reconfiguration with nesting islands (and bay trail linkage)

Bedwell Bayfront Park: interpretive signage installed summer 2010

• **Eden Landing:**

Ponds E8A/E9/E8X - Tidal Marsh (630 acres) *Status:* Under construction, completion expected Fall 2011

Pond E12 *Proposed*: Reconfigured Managed Pond (230 Acres) *Status*: Final design underway, 60% plans by March 2011. *Proposed*: 3.8 mile trail, Viewing platforms, Kayak launch. *Status*: Final designs complete

- **Alviso:**

Ponds A19, 20, 21 - (the Island Ponds) *Proposed*: Tidal marsh restoration *Status*: Restored in 2006

Ponds A8, A5, A7 - *Proposed*: shallow tidal habitat with new marsh (1400 acres) *Status*: Complete. Gates to be opened in June 2011

Pond A6 - *Proposed*: Tidal Marsh (330 acres) *Status*: Complete. Breached on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2010

2.4 Mile Moffett Bay Trail Segment - *Status*: Trail Opened on Monday September 20, 2010

Pond A16 - *Proposed*: Reconfigured Ponds with nesting islands (243 acres). *Status*: Design modifications underway, 30% plans by February 2011

Pond A16 Public Access - Interpretive Signs in fabrication.

### **Phase 1 study updates**

Key uncertainties include wildlife use of changing habitats, habitat evolution and sediment dynamics, mercury methylation, water quality, invasive species, public access, infrastructure support, fisheries response, sea level rise, and climate change. Studies will focus on addressing these uncertainties.

- **Project-wide studies will assess the following:**

Habitat evolution - Several studies are using satellite imagery over the entire project area, looking at sediment dynamics, and it appears that there is sufficient sediment in the far South Bay to support marsh restoration, which will be closely monitored.

Trails: Studies on trail use impacts on waterbirds is occurring at all 3 complexes. Studies on trail use impacts on feeding waterbirds found no reduction in bird numbers, species richness, or proportion foraging at trail versus non-trail sites. The numbers of birds has declined on weekend days (high trail use) versus weekdays (low trail use). Preliminary results indicate the average flush distance is about 145 yards (about 1 – ½ football fields). This information will guide design and location of trails to protect sensitive wildlife.

[NOTE: The SFBJV is analyzing these and other regional studies to develop recommendations for trail design and access locations.]

- **Site-specific studies include:**

Ravenswood Complex, Pond SF2 and adjacent mudflats – Studies will determine whether the reconfiguration increases bird use and response, how birds react to the presence of people using the trail. Studies on adjacent mudflats will assess physical changes and flows in and out of the pond as a result of reconfiguration and invertebrates and bird foraging.

Alviso Complex: Ponds A19, 20, 21: tidal marsh restoration - The island ponds were breached in March of 2006. The ponds filled in much quicker than had been expected, 4 years vs. 5 to 10 years with rapid sediment accumulation and vegetation starting to come in within about 1 year.

Alviso Complex: Pond A6: tidal marsh restoration - This pond will be fully restored to tidal action in January, 2011 with 4 breaches coinciding with the historic channels. Studies will measure sediment accretion. This pond is at a slightly lower elevation; so it is expected that sediment will accrete at least as quickly in the island ponds. In prior years, this pond has supported large numbers of breeding California Gulls, which are preying on other nesting birds in the area and eating chicks and eggs, including depredation of Snowy Plover nests. Gull chicks have been banded and will be monitored where they go once Pond A6 is flooded. Monitoring will continue on depredation by gulls on shorebirds.

Alviso Complex: Ponds A8, A5, A7 - Information so far indicates that opening Pond A8 to tidal flows will not increase mercury (Hg) levels in wildlife, and may actually result in lower Hg uptake into wildlife. As verification, extensive mercury studies will assess levels of Hg in sediment, water, fish, and waterbird eggs throughout this complex including Alviso Shoals and Pond A8.

Alviso Slough and Shoals: The opening of Pond A6 to tidal action and Pond A8 to muted tidal is expected to increase the tidal prism in Alviso Slough. Monitoring the bathymetry of the slough and the mudflats near Pond A6 (basically mapping the bottom of the slough channel, the mudflat area, and Coyote Creek channel) will show how scour of the area occurs in response to the increased tidal flows.

Eden Landing Complex: Pond E8A - This complex supports many nesting Snowy Plovers, which are being monitored for predation and impacts of trial use, as well as Ravenswood and Warm Springs complexes.

### ***Phase 2 Proposed Alternatives***

Planning for Phase 2 restoration is beginning. Guiding principles and primary evaluation criteria for actions have been developed. JV partners are encouraged to comment and actively participate in the planning process. For specific detail on planned actions in each pond complex for Phase 2 and to submit comments, see <http://www.southbayrestoration.org/planning/phase2/>

- **Guiding Principles**

- “Do no harm”: no actions that will increase flood risk
- Progress toward the 50-50 EIR/S alternative

- **Evaluation Criteria**

- Likelihood of progress toward project objectives
- Opportunities for adaptive management studies
- Value in building project support
- Readiness to proceed
- Not dependent on precedent actions (e.g., construction of a flood levee)

- **Project-wide actions will include:**

- Beneficial re-use of dredge materials
- Subtidal Habitat Goals pilot project
- Public access and recreation study

*For specific detail on planned actions in each pond complex for Phase 2 and to submit comments, see <http://www.southbayrestoration.org/planning/phase2/>*

#### **4. New Project Adoption Presentation -*Jack London Lake***

Becca Lawton of the Sonoma Ecology Center presented information about a project involving 5 acre Jack London Lake in Sonoma County. After a discussion of the project, it was determined that additional information is needed regarding the biological merits of the project, so adoption was not considered at this meeting. Becca will bring additional information to the committee.

#### **5. SFBJV 2011 Work Plan and Potential Renaming of the Committee**

Beth Huning summarized in detail the recommendations submitted by the committee to the Management Board and the outcomes of Management Board Retreat. See the attachments distributed prior to the meeting for detail on both. Marc suggests that everyone review these documents and give suggestions as to items that maybe are out of our purview or suggestions to cut from our current year’s work plan as there is likely more there than we can accomplish. JV staff will be incorporating final revisions to the work plan in January and submitting to the Management Board for final approval at their January 25 meeting.

The Management Board proposed renaming of the Restoration Committee to make it more descriptive of the full purpose of the committee because the work of the committee is broader than just restoration. Some suggestions have been the original name of the “Implementation Committee”, Conservation Delivery Committee, and Restoration Planning and Science Committee. Members were invited to submit additional suggestions by mid-January.

## 6. SFBJV Science Program Update

Christina Sloop, SFBJV Science Coordinator, provided an overview of progress made within the JV Science Program since the last meeting:

### Monitoring & Evaluation plan development:

- **Plan outline**
  - Sub-committee team formed (Renee Spent, Tom Gardali, Letitia Grenier, Kathi Borgman & Susan de la Cruz) and met last Monday
  - Made progress in refining latest outline draft
  - Members are again reviewing remaining outline sections
  - Next meeting first week of Jan 2011
  - Final outline deadline Jan 15, 2011
- **Net landscape change focus team**
  - Short-term subcommittee team established to address this topic (Letitia Grenier, Kristen Cayce, Meredith Williams, Kevin Petrik, Brian Fulfroost, John Klochack, Laura Valoppi) – met this Tue
  - New SFEI wetland assessment tool available in Spring 2011
- **Other focus teams** to be coordinated for M&E plan contribution in Jan 2011
  - Waterfowl, Shorebirds/waterbirds, Riparian birds, Special Status Taxa, Climate Change, Invasive Species, Pollution & Contaminants

### Monitoring Inventory

- In development

### JV Online Science Network – Beta testing phase

- Tool to easily disseminate information to JV science community, restoration committee and management board

## 7. NAWCA Small Grant Proposal Ranking

After a brief discussion, the committee decided to task a subcommittee with the ranking of the three NAWCA Small Grant applications that were submitted from the SFBJV Administrative Region. The recommendations will be confirmed via e-mail and submitted to the JV Management Board for approval prior to the end of the first week in January.

## 8. Project Updates and Announcements

Laura Valoppi: The South Bay Science Symposium will take place February 3, 2011. They are accepting abstracts for posters by January 4. It is free, but you need to register on the website:

<http://southbaysciencsymposium2011.eventbrite.com/>. More information is on the south bay website <http://www.southbayrestoration.org/science/2011symposium/>.

Chris Barton: Albany Beach and Bruener Marsh are highly active projects for the East Bay Regional Parks District. He manages Albany Beach, which is in the feasibility stage and will be developing alternatives by February and releasing an ER. Will be reviewed through 2011 for construction in 2012. Will have a workshop for Bruener Marsh early next year. They are looking at the possibility of expanding the dunes and looking at how to keep the beach – currently has an actively eroding shoreline. They want to incorporate living shoreline concepts there.

Byron Vernal Pools were acquired in partnership with the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). There was a restoration project creating vernal pools – don't know if they were successful for fairy shrimp. Much of the work involved fixing a deeply incised channel. There will be more East Contra Costa County work happening in 2011.

Barbara Salzman: Marin Audubon completed marsh restoration at Simmons Slough in Novato., which will likely be transferred to the Marin County Open Space District. They are pursuing acquisition of the old marina, the Mira Monte property. The Coastal Conservancy has been asked for half of the acquisition amount. This is part of Petaluma Marsh at mouth of San Antonio Creek.  
Eco reserve in Corte Madera is being abused – needs work to get public access out of marsh

Sandra Scoggin: Contra Costa Community Watershed Stewardship Grants are due December 22.

Subtidal Goals (for Marilyn Latta):

- The report, website, and Google Maps tool will be released in mid-late January. Website will be [www.sfbaysubtidal.org](http://www.sfbaysubtidal.org)
- The regional 50-year vision that includes science-based protection and bold restoration goals. Developed by an interagency group of BCDC, State Coastal Conservancy, NOAA, and the San Francisco Estuary Partnership; as well as more than 75 contributors to the plan.
- The report addresses 6 habitat types: soft substrate (mud and sand), rocky areas, artificial substrates (pier pilings, etc.), shellfish beds, eelgrass beds, and seaweed beds.
- Cross-habitat goals focus on recommendations to better deal with climate change impacts, invasive species, marine debris, oil spill response, and public awareness and involvement with subtidal areas.
- Habitat integration goals focus on ideas for better improving design connectivity between tidal wetland sites and offshore subtidal areas, and piloting multi-habitat “Living Shoreline” designs- to scale up current subtidal restoration techniques, and test the ability of treatments like oyster reefs and sea grass beds to stabilize sediments, reduce wave action, and buffer and protect SF Bay shorelines and wetlands.

Kathi Borgman: Audubon is finishing the permitting for the Aramburu Island Restoration. They plan to do pre-enhancement monitoring prior to start of construction mid June. Audubon is also conducting post-enhancement monitoring at Tubbs Island. Audubon is working on a tidal enhancement project on the San Pablo Bay NWR at Sonoma Creek. An enhancement plan has been completed, but they are looking for phase 1 funding for permitting, assessment, etc.

Kent Reeves: The Alameda County RCD is working with City of Fremont on Saber Cat Creek.

They are managing \$4 million to do restoration in the arroyos – including opportunities for monitoring.

Of the major projects in their stock pond program, some have come to a halt due to listing of tiger salamander. They are working on mechanisms to restore ponds that benefit tiger salamanders.

Kent invited committee members to come visit the RCD. He also spoke of biological entrepreneur endeavors, including one working with the SFPUC that is helping to leverage grant money. Contact Kent with questions. He also encouraged people to utilize the wetland reserve program and offered to provide information to anyone interested.

Darci Collins: Save the Bay is working on ecotone restoration through their Community-based Restoration project at Pond SF2. They have recently begun planting east of the ponds adjacent to the bay. They will be bringing volunteer groups out there for 2-3 years to do long term planting around the edge of the restoration. They are also hoping to start planting around the Dumbarton bridge site soon.

They are working with the Invasive Spartina Project to coordinate re planting of native plants immediately after spartina eradication. They just launched their first site at Martin Luther King Jr Marsh,

planting as much vegetation as possible with 6 different organizations. They have also been planting the floating islands around arrowhead marsh and will continue monitoring at all sites.

Julian Wood: In November the San Francisco bay-wide shorebird survey was completed. Julian thanked everyone who helped. The survey is transitioning to a larger Pacific Flyway survey. They hope to have a poster for the South Bay Salt Pond Symposium on changes in numbers from the 1990s to today.

In 2007 clapper rails started declining. PRBO will be coordinating bay-wide clapper rail monitoring in July that will continue for at least a year. Funding beyond that is uncertain. The monitoring will relate to vegetation and habitat features for clapper rails.

Ariana Brand: Ariana introduced herself as a USGS biologist who works on San Francisco Estuary projects for USGS. She is specifically involved in salt pond birds and water quality.

Mike Perlmutter: BAEDN released their species list a few months back. They have since been talking to partners on where the species occur and if they are being treated. They are concerned about the spread of Algerian sea lavender and want to find out where it is and encourage everyone to eradicate it. It was noted that it can be confused with a native species.

*Action: Mike will provide pictures and information to the JV for distribution to the committee.*

Renee Spenst: There was a breach last week at A6. She will hopefully soon have some time-lapse photography and will forward it to the committee. There is a Regional Biologist opening with Ducks Unlimited. They will review applications after January 1. The person would work with Renee on SF Bay projects.

Peter LaCivita: The Corps expects to be moving more dredge material to Hamilton to complete the runway restoration. Bel Marin Keyes is "on hold" for now. The Corps has been operating captive breeding program for Coho Salmon at the Russian River. 350 returning Coho have been confirmed.

Alternatives are being screened for the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP).

*Action: The JV will arrange to get a presentation from the DMMP at an upcoming Restoration Committee meeting.*

Christina Sloop:- NOAA staff have indicated a desire to make a presentation at an upcoming Restoration Committee meeting about coho and how the (much impacted) Laguna may be a place for effective habitat restoration. The Laguna de Santa Rosa was designated as a Ramsar site of international significance. See the recent JV bulletin for more information.

The Invasive Spartina Forum is March 10-11, 2011. It will provide in-depth and current information on control of invasive Spartina in the San Francisco Estuary, the hybridization of native Spartina with the Atlantic Coast invader, and the status of identifying and removing remnant hybrids from the Estuary.

Caroline Warner: On Saturday, January 8 the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge will be holding a kite photography workshop from 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Environmental Education Center in Alviso. Call (408) 262-5513 x 106 for more information. [www.fws.gov/desfbay/](http://www.fws.gov/desfbay/)

Beth Huning: Giselle Block has been hired into a new position with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in which her responsibilities will be coordinating monitoring programs for refuges. She has moved into the JV office in Fairfax part time.

The Tomales Dunes project is waiting a decision on Caltrans money. They also still need a Coastal Commission permit.

Marc Holmes: An article will be coming out on the Arrowhead Marsh clapper rails.

The omnibus appropriations bill contains a measure to establish an EPA program that would bring \$300 million for the next 10 years for San Francisco Bay projects.

**9. The December 15, 2010 meeting of the Restoration Committee was adjourned**