



South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project

Restoring the Wild Heart of the South Bay

Charter:

South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Science Technical Advisory Committee

(Updated July 2017)

Overall Project Goal

The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project (Project) encompasses approximately 15,100 acres of former salt ponds located around the edge of South San Francisco Bay, and is the largest wetlands restoration project on the U.S. West Coast. Over approximately fifty years, the Project is intending to restore and enhance wetlands in South San Francisco Bay while providing for flood management and wildlife-oriented public access and recreation.

Purpose

The purpose of the Project's Science Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to provide guidance to the Project Science Program, management team, and land managers; to assess progress of Project restoration; and to advise on adaptive management. The formation of a TAC also fulfills the water quality certification requirements for Project restorations.

TAC Composition: The Project's Lead Scientist¹, who chairs the TAC, selects TAC members with input from the Project Management Team. TAC members are selected from locally-recognized experts familiar with large-scale wetland restoration efforts and knowledgeable about application of adaptive management protocols, regulatory requirements and long-term monitoring. TAC membership will encompass a broad knowledge base and multiple scientific, academic, and technical disciplines that are related to restoration projects. The TAC can include members of the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the National Marine Fisheries Service, as well as others involved in bay restoration.

Role/Responsibilities: The TAC will provide broad scientific advice and perspective, with occasional direct technical support, to the Project Science Program and the Lead Scientist. The TAC will review the progress of the Project Science Program, and, as needed, provide advice on restoration/engineering design, research, and applied studies.

The TAC may work with regulatory partners to assess consistency of the Project Science Program with other Bay Area efforts underway. The TAC may assist the Lead Scientist in

¹ If the Project Lead Scientist post is empty, by the Executive Project Manager or other PMT designee.

identifying emerging key uncertainties, needed research, and/or emergent management decisions required to keep the project headed on a trajectory toward its restoration objectives. As stated in the Project's Adaptive Management Plan, “[I]t is absolutely critical, throughout the life of the Project, that the Project Managers and scientists continue to carefully select a targeted, short list of key applied studies for funding that are specifically linked to management needs and achieving the Project Objectives (p.11).”

The Lead Scientist will identify specific questions for the TAC to address, and provide materials for TAC members to review a few weeks prior to the meeting. The Lead Scientist may identify individual TAC members to preside over meeting breakout sessions, or to preside over ad hoc committees that meet outside the regular TAC meeting to address a specific topic. As the TAC meets infrequently, the Project may solicit TAC input via email or other electronic means as needed.

Decision-making: Advisory only. Ideally, the TAC would reach consensus on its advice; however, differing viewpoints are also acceptable.

Reporting: The TAC will have a direct reporting relationship to the Lead Scientist, and will also provide recommendations to the Project Management Team and the appropriate Project land manager (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife). The work of the TAC may also inform the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or other public agencies involved in restoration work. A written report summarizing TAC collective recommendations will be produced by the Lead Scientist and a draft circulated to the TAC. Once finalized, the summary report will be posted to the Project website.

Meeting Type and Frequency: The TAC will meet periodically, at points when independent scientific advice on the Science Program, regulatory issues, or implementation designs is timely. Ad hoc groups to address a specific technical issue may also meet at the request of the Lead Scientist. When appropriate, TAC recommendations will be presented at the biennial South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Science Symposium, at the State of the Estuary Conference, or similar conferences.

Conflict of Interest: TAC members are chosen to represent the expert perspective of scientists independent of the Project, who are not and do not expect to undertake paid work on Project science topics they are advising on – as this might result in the appearance of a potential financial conflict of interest influencing the advice given. TAC members are asked to refrain from participating in a decision on a specific scientific topic, if they plan to apply to undertake Project scientific work related to that topic. TAC members are asked to clearly state any potential conflicts of interest prior to any discussion on the agenda item with which the member may be in conflict. Following disclosure of real or potential conflicts, the Lead Scientist or Executive Project Manager will decide whether the TAC member should recuse him or herself from discussion or decision regarding the agenda item in question.