Meeting Summary
South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Stakeholder Forum
Flood Management Work Group
March 29, 2004 Meeting

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Meeting Objectives

Austin McInerny (Center for Collaborative Policy) welcomed meeting participants, provided an overview of the meeting agenda and meeting objectives, and asked attendees to introduce themselves (Attachment 1 provides a list of who attended the meeting). The meeting objectives were:

- Overview of Salt Pond Restoration Project effort and opportunities for public input
- Education on geographic and institutional framework for flood management
- Briefing on approach to flood management planning for restoration project
- Presentation on Lower Alameda Creek Stewardship Committee's efforts
- Briefing and feedback on data collection efforts to date
- Briefing and dialogue on emerging project flood management objectives

2. Salt Pond Restoration Project Overview

Steve Ritchie, Executive Project Manager for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, utilized a PowerPoint presentation to present an overview of the restoration planning process. Specifically, Ritchie explained the geographic location of the salt ponds being restored; the organizational structure of the planning process; the anticipated project schedule and milestones; and a detailed explanation of the pending opportunities for public input on developing the alternatives planning framework and identifying overall project opportunities and constraints.

The following upcoming meetings were announced:

- Public Access/Recreation: April 1, 2-5 p.m. - Auditorium of the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, Newark

- Stakeholder Forum & Work Groups: April 15 (Forum 10 a.m. – 12:15, Work Groups 1 - 3:30 p.m.) - NASA Ames Research, Moffett Field, Mountain View

- National Science Panel: April 20-21, 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, 50 California Street, Suite 2600, San Francisco, McAteer-Petris Conference Room

- Work Groups: May 25, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Location to be determined – please check project website

3. Geographic/Institutional Framework for Flood Management

Steve Ritchie provided an overview of the three organizations that provide oversight and flood management activities in the planning area (presentation is available on the Project website (http://www.southbayrestoration.org/Documents.html). The three organizations and the salt ponds that they respectively have oversight for are: 1) Santa Clara Valley Water District (Alviso Ponds), 2) Alameda County Flood Control District (Baumberg Ponds), and 3) San Mateo County Flood Control District (Eden Landing Ponds). Ritchie emphasized that the Project Team is working very closely with all three agencies and that both Santa Clara and Alameda Counties had members on the Stakeholder Forum and Project Management Team. The following questions were raised during the presentation:

- *Will the US Army Corps of Engineers be able to assist with any flood control work?*
  Response: By partnering with one of the flood management agencies involved, the Project Team hopes that the Corps will be able to assist in funding and implementing any necessary flood management construction work.

- *What is the 100-year flood and is this the same as what the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires insurance to protect against?*
  Response: A 100-year flood is a flood that has a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. A base flood may also be referred to as a 100-year storm and the area inundated during the base flood is sometimes called the 100-year floodplain.

  The term "100-year flood" is misleading. It is not the flood that will occur once every 100 years. Rather, it is the flood elevation that has a 1- percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. Thus, the 100-year flood could occur more than once in a relatively short period of time. The 100-year flood, which is the standard used by most Federal and state agencies, is used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the standard for floodplain management and to determine the need for flood insurance.

- *Who will be responsible for maintaining the levees after the restoration project is complete?*
  Response: It is not know exactly which organization will be responsible for which pond at this time, but agreements will be developed that assign specific geographic areas to certain organizations. Santa Clara Valley Water District might maintain levees within Santa Clara County while Department of Fish & Game might maintain the ponds they are managing.

4. Flood Management Planning Overview

Bob Battalio, P.E. from Phil Williams and Associates, provided a very detailed overview of various strategies for addressing flood management issues for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project (PowerPoint presentation is available from the project website). He also began discussing the various deliverables that his team will be producing to support the development of feasible project alternatives. In particular, Battalio described the Draft Project Objectives that will be produced by this coming summer. This plan will identify concepts and criteria necessary for alternatives development.

Battalio further explained that they would undertake a GIS based evaluation of the alternatives and will look at three spatial scales (individual pond, pond complex, and regional). Battalio referred to a number of diagrams to show how conceptual modeling will help define areas in need of stronger levees.

The following questions were raised during the presentation:

- *What is the difference between the Work Group and focused technical meetings that the Project Team will be holding?*
  Response: The Focused Technical Meetings will be held with the various flood management agencies' staff to gain a better understanding of any conceptual models that are being used and to share more detailed data. The Work Group meetings will be an opportunity to share the work and findings from the technical meetings with the broader public.

- *At what point will the decision be made as to which levees will be removed?*
  Response: At this point in the overall planning process, no specific levees have been identified for removal. The various alternatives have to be developed and evaluated before any specific course of action is selected.

- *When will modeling be publicly available?*
  Response: "Conceptual Options" will be publicly available in July 2004. These options will be rather general, but will enable discussions. In addition, the Project Science Team will be presenting an overview of the science strategy for the South San Francisco Bay at the next Stakeholder Forum meeting.

- *What are the ideal conditions for mosquito breeding and how will the restoration project address the risk of increasing mosquito populations?*
  Response: Presently, areas like New Chicago Marsh and the Palo Alto Ponds present conditions suitable for mosquito breeding. Anywhere that has muted tidal conditions may provide mosquito habitat. The project will very closely with the vector control districts to make sure that the restoration design is not promoting mosquito breeding.

- *To what specification will new outer levees be built?*
  Response: All new levees will be constructed using the latest design technology and designed to ensure protection against anticipated conditions. Levee maintenance will also

be considered and planned for. As part of this process, a sediment demand analysis will be undertaken to better understand sediment budgets and effects within the planning area.

- *How will anticipated sea level rise be incorporated into the design process?*
  Response: Anticipated sea level rise is a very important factor that will be incorporated into the conceptual model.

- *How will low-lying areas that may be subject to tidal flooding and are located outside of the immediate vicinity of the restoration project area be addressed?*
  Response: The resolution to this question needs to be addressed by the restoration project because of the need to provide flood protection to all areas in the South Bay and in order to garner widespread public support for the project. Battalio explained that while the draft detailed project objectives and criteria for flood control are expected to operate on the pond and pond-complex scales, and not on the regional scale, there is a need to evaluate the implications of potential flooding on all areas.

5. Lower Alameda Creek Stewardship Committee's Restoration Project

Ralph Johnson provided an overview of the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel Flood Mitigation & Wetland Restoration Feasibility Study that is underway. As part of this project, a stewardship committee has been convened to assist in project development and implementation. The project was necessary as the bottom four (4) miles of Alameda Creek had become filled with sediment and, thus, was no longer able to convey floodwaters out to the SF Bay. Under the current condition, the channel would not convey the 50-year flood and, as a result, would overtop the channel in the bottom half mile. LIDAR surveying was undertaken for areas south of the Dumbarton Bridge and the mapping showed that the salt ponds could serve as flood retention areas.

Johnson introduced Francesca Demgen and Stephan Asselin from URS Corporation who provided a detailed explanation of how biological mapping and geotechnical investigations were undertaken to support the planning process.

6. Status of Data Acquisition Plan

The information gathering task is underway and the complete Data Acquisition Plan is available for download from the project website. Meeting attendees are encouraged to review the plan, which provides a listing of identified data sources, and provide feedback and suggestions for additional data sources that should be consulted. The data information database is being updated periodically and is available for review at the project website. Presently there almost 270 different documents referenced in the database.

7. Detailed Project Objectives

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation (available from the project website), Battalio reviewed the two (2) flood management-related project objectives that the Stakeholder Forum has adopted:

- Objective 2: Maintain or improve existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay area.

- Objective 6: Protect the services provided by existing infrastructure (e.g., power lines, railroads).

For each of the objectives, the Project Team has developed preliminary detailed objectives and preliminary evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria may be evaluated at three different scales (L = Landscape, PC = Pond Complex, and P = Individual Pond). Some of the criteria are identified as exclusion criterion "*" (i.e. must be met by alternative to carry forward and receive further consideration). The specific detailed objectives, their respective evaluation criteria, and the scale at which they would be reviewed are presented below.

Objective 2: Maintain or improve existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay area.

2. Maintain or improve existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay area.		
Detailed Objectives	**Evaluation Criteria**	**Scale**
Maintain existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay area.	**Must not exceed existing potential water inundation frequency, depth, and duration of flood-protected areas. ***	**PC** **P**
Improve existing levels of flood protection in the South Bay area.	**Decrease in potential water inundation frequency, depth, and duration within flood protected areas.**	**PC** **P**

Objective 6: Protect the services provided by existing infrastructure (e.g., power lines, railroads).

6. Protect the services provided by existing infrastructure (e.g. power lines, railroads).		
Detailed Objectives	**Evaluation Criteria**	**Scale**
Maintain the services provided by existing infrastructure.	**Must not increase risk of failure or service degradation due to physical changes (for example, from scour or sedimentation, water inundation, increased environmental loads, direct construction impacts, etc.) ***	**PC** **P**

Battalio also presented a preliminary additional evaluation criterion for costs of implementation, management, and monitoring that is summarized below.

7. Consider costs of implementation, management, and monitoring so that planned activities can be effectively executed with available funding. Form partnerships and alliances to develop and institute a long-term viable funding strategy.		
Detailed Objectives	**Evaluation Criteria**	**Scale**
Manage construction costs to achieve project goals and objectives with available funding.	Dollars	PC P
Manage long-term operations and maintenance costs.	Dollars, 50-year time frame	PC P
Manage monitoring costs to support project goals and objectives.	Dollars, 10-year time frame	PC P
Increase partnerships and alliances to institute a long-term funding strategy.	Participation by multiple entities (e.g., Corps, SCVWD, and others) in long-term funding	PC
Achieve a favorable benefit/cost ratio.	Calculation of b/c ratio, using Corps procedures	L PC
Limit costs of delay.	Assessment of institutional and legal complexity/controversy	PC

Following the presentation, a number of questions and suggestions for clarifying the detailed project objectives and evaluation criteria were raised, including:

- *The wastewater treatment plants should be specifically identified as an existing infrastructure that needs protection from flooding.*
  Response: This recommendation will be presented to the Stakeholder Forum.

- *PG&E has over 60 transmission towers in the project area and, thus, would like to know when and exactly which ponds will be restored.*
  Response: At this time, a broad conceptual design is anticipated for completion by the end of 2004. At that time, we will have a better idea of which PG&E towers are in question.

- *Does PG&E have an idea as to which of its towers are sinking and which towers are currently below sea level?*
  Response: No. However, PG&E is committed to working with the Project Team, but is constrained by the very short period (Sept. 1 – Jan 31) that they are permitted to work in sensitive habitat areas. Thus, PG&E needs as much planning and preparation time as possible.

- *Who will cover the costs associated with impacts to PG&E facilities and, for that matter, any other infrastructure?*
  Response: The potential project impacts and corresponding mitigation will be analyzed and developed through the alternative design process. Potential impacts resulting from the propose restoration project will be avoided to the greatest extent possible and those impacts that are unavoidable will be mitigated appropriately.

- *Need for integration with other utilities and rail corridors is critical in order to identify creative solutions and potential cost saving opportunities.*
  Response: The Project Team agrees and is Steve Ritchie is working to coordinate efforts with all relevant parties.

- *The term "landscape" as it is being used in the evaluation criteria is confusing?*
  Response: The Project Team will take this into consideration and look at possible other terms to make the scale understandable.

- *Santa Clara Valley Water District representative spoke about the need to improve flood protection levels, especially in the tidal floodplain, and that the detailed project objectives may not be sufficiently strong to achieve the appropriate level of protection (adequate for the 1 percent high tide event). It is important to urban areas adjacent to the restoration project area that this concern be addressed.*
  Response: One suggestion would be to measure success in this area by the number of parcels removed from the tidal floodplain. If the Corps is to be a potential funder of this project, addressing the flood protection issue is critically important throughout the planning stage.

8. Next Steps

Next Meeting of the Flood Management Work Group:
April 15, 1:00 – 3:30 pm, NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field

Draft Agenda:
1. **Review/feedback on PWA progress on detailed project objectives**
2. **Status of PWA data sources/summary plan: feedback from the group**
3. **Envisioning flood management approaches**

Attachment 1: March 29, 2004 Meeting Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Email
Shawkat	Ali	PWA	s.ali@pwa-ltd.com
Stephan	Asselin	URS Corporation	stephane.asselin@urscorp.com
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Jim	Fiedler	Santa Clara Valley Water District	jfiedler@valleywater.org
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Eric	Hansen	PG&E	EGH5@PGE.COM
Amy	Hutzel	Coastal Conservancy	ahutzel@scc.ca.gov
Ralph	Johnson	Alameda County Flood Control District	joh19701@comcast.net
Libby	Lucas	League of Women Voters	jlucas1099@aol.com
Kristy	McCumby	City of Sunnyvale, POTW	kmccumby@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us
Lurdes	Rivera-Murphy	Alviso Water Task Force	lriveram@hotmail.com
Rohin	Saleh	Alameda County Public Works Agency	rohin@acpwa.org
Richard	Santos	Santa Clara Valley Water District	rsantos@valleywater.org
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Joe	Teresi	City of Palo Alto, Public Works Dept.	joe.teresi@cityofpaloalto.org
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