



To: South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Team

From: Center for Collaborative Policy

Re: Outcomes from the December 15, 2004 Stakeholder Forum Meeting

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Background: The seventh meeting of the Stakeholder Forum (Forum) was held Wednesday, December 15, 2004 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the NASA Ames Research Center located in Mountain View, with a celebration of the completion of the Forum's first year held from 4:00 to 5:00 pm. The Forum has been convened to provide ongoing input to the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Management Team (PM Team) and its technical consultants on the development the South Bay Salt Pond restoration, flood management, and public access plan.

Meeting Attendance: Attachment 1 lists meeting participants.

Meeting Materials: In advance of the meeting, Forum members were provided a meeting agenda, the meeting outcomes memorandum for the July 29 Forum meeting, and a meeting summary from the pond cluster options workshops.

Substantive Meeting Outcomes:

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Steve Ritchie, Executive Project Manager, welcomed everyone and asked both Forum members and public attendees to introduce themselves. Ritchie continued as facilitator of the meeting, and provided an overview of the meeting's objectives and a review of the agenda. The meeting objectives were:

- Dialogue on preliminary program alternatives and framework for analysis
- Update on South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Science Program
- Update on progress toward integrated South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study
- Celebrate one-year anniversary of Stakeholder Forum

2. Review of Key Outcomes/Feedback From Public Workshops & Local Government Forum

Marge Kolar (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) explained that three workshops were held to provide the public an opportunity to provide input on shaping the initial ideas for restoration alternatives at the pond complex level. The workshops were held on September 29, 2004 in San Leandro (Eden Landing ponds), September 30, 2004 in San Jose (Alviso/Ravenswood ponds), and October 27, 2004 in San Mateo to discuss initial options for restoration for the entire South Bay Salt Pond Project area. The third meeting built on the outcomes from the earlier meetings.

At the workshops themselves, Kolar explained that an overview of the four preliminary options for restoration at the pond cluster level was provided and that three specific questions were asked of workshop participants:

1. Do the options meet the project goals and objectives?
2. Do the options capture the range of possibilities?
3. Is there anything missing, or a fourth option?

In response to these questions, workshop participants provided extensive feedback that is thoroughly summarized in a separate workshop summary document that is available from the project website at:

http://www.southbayrestoration.org/pdf_files/pond_cluster_opts_workshops/Pond_Cluster_Wrks_hp_Summary_10-26-04.pdf and
[http://www.southbayrestoration.org/pdf_files/pond_cluster_opts_workshops/Final_Pond_Cluster_Wrkshp_Summary\(10-27-04\).pdf](http://www.southbayrestoration.org/pdf_files/pond_cluster_opts_workshops/Final_Pond_Cluster_Wrkshp_Summary(10-27-04).pdf).

Kolar summarized the themes of the public input received from the workshops as follows:

- Overall, range of options is comprehensive
- Highlight what's unique in each complex and how different options achieve goals and objectives
- Highlight the different sub-types of tidal habitat
- Provide more information about phasing and role of adaptive management
- Provide wider range of public access options

Kolar went on to explain that the Project hosted its third Local Government Forum for 2004 on Wednesday, November 10, 2004 at the City of Sunnyvale City Council Chambers. The meeting provided the approximately 25 local government representatives in attendance an update on the restoration planning process and the Initial Stewardship Plan; an introduction to the range of preliminary restoration options for the entire project area; an explanation of the process for formulation of draft alternatives for EIS/EIR analysis; a description of the formal NEPA/CEQA scoping process; and an outline of the next steps in planning process.

The themes of the comments received at the meeting were:

- More shoreline access sought
- Where will public access parking be provided?
- More non-motorized boat access desired
- Provide more detail about how mosquitoes and invasives will be controlled
- Continue close coordination with South Bay governments

Kolar explained that in 2005 the Project will continue outreach to local governments by coordinating local government forums with presentations to city councils, and one-on-one meetings with Project staff.

Kolar then proceeded to outline what the next steps through mid-2005 are for the Project:

- Complete landscape assessment of habitat evolution and bird use
- Integrate landscape assessment with formulation of detailed alternatives.
- Conduct science charette
 - Stakeholder Forum ranking/weighting
 - Begin assessment of phasing

Kolar referenced a diagram to explain the full range of key milestones for stakeholder input and consensus-seeking in the future. The key milestones are as follows:

- December 2004: Review Preliminary Project Alternatives
- Feb/March 2005: Review Landscape Assessment, Technical Groups' Work, Adaptive Management Plan, and Project Phasing
- April/May 2005: Perform Weighting and Ranking of Alternatives
- June/July 2005: Seek Consensus on Final NEPA/CEQA Alternatives and Phase I Project
- Oct/Nov 2005: Progress Report on Adaptive Management Plan, Project Phasing and Shoreline Study

In response to this schedule, a Forum member asked that more detailed information on the alternatives be provided prior to the weighting and ranking activities.

3. Dialogue on Preliminary Alternatives Development and Analysis

Steve Ritchie, the Project's Executive Project Manager, initiated a discussion on the preliminary alternatives development process, by providing a presentation on the following topics:

- Alternatives Development Framework
- What is a Program Alternative?
- Preliminary Program Alternatives
- Phasing and Evolution
- Adaptive Management
- Next Steps

Ritchie explained that the key features of the Alternatives Development Framework include:

- Project objectives
- Opportunities and constraints
- Evaluation criteria
- Pond and landscape level analyses
- Other evaluation factors

He then provided an example of a project objective concerning infrastructure, such as protecting the services provided by existing infrastructure (e.g., power lines, railroads, wastewater treatment plants). This objective, along with the others the Forum adopted, must be reviewed and analyzed for each alternative that is developed. The program alternatives will include the following:

1. An Integrated Plan for Habitat Restoration, Flood Protection, & Public Access
2. Phase 1 Actions, Monitoring, and Applied Studies
3. Adaptive Management Methodology
 - Conceptual Models

- Uncertainties and Assumptions
- What We Know and What We Don't
- Continuing Initial Stewardship Plan Studies and Other Applied Studies
- Institutional Arrangements

The Plan will be implemented in a series of phases (management actions, capital improvements, and applied studies) over many years and each phase will have its own project-level NEPA/CEQA analysis. Evolution will be how the landscape responds over time to the implementation of the plan.

Ritchie further explained that the level of detail for habitat restoration, flood management, and public access and recreation components between a program alternative and a project alternative would differ. Ritchie provide examples of what features for habitat restoration, flood management, and public access and recreation might be and then provided an overview of what the preliminary program alternatives are:

- **No Action Alternative**
 - Initial Stewardship Plan configuration and operation
 - Was intended to be only an interim plan
 - No identified funding to sustain complete ISP operations
 - Evolution over time
 - Change in ponds
 - Gradual erosion of levees
 - Catastrophic failures
 - Other ongoing natural processes
- **Alternative 1. Managed Pond Emphasis**
 - 50:50 mix of ponds and tidal habitats
 - Varying degrees of pond management
 - Phasing and evolution over time
- **Alternative 2. Mix of Managed Pond and Tidal Habitat**
 - 25:75 mix of ponds and tidal habitats
 - Varying degrees of pond management
 - Phasing and evolution over time
- **Alternative 3. Tidal Habitat Emphasis**
 - 10:90 mix of ponds and tidal habitats
 - Varying degrees of pond management
 - Phasing and evolution over time

Based on work completed, a number of alternatives are not recommended for further analysis. This alternatives include: 1) All tidal restoration alternative, 2) All or majority of managed pond alternative, and 3) Large-scale sediment import alternative.

Final program alternatives will characterize the level of certainty in meeting the objectives. The end result of plan implementation will likely look different from the map, but the objectives will be achieved.

Ritchie then provided examples of what adaptive management decisions would be made. He highlighted and provided examples of the following three categories of decisions:

- “Irreversible” decisions, once implemented
- “Past” decisions subject to adaptive management
- “Future” decisions subject to adaptive management

Ritchie completed his presentation by outlining the next steps through mid-2005:

- Complete landscape assessment
- Detailed alternatives evaluation
- Workshops on ranking/weighting
- Begin assessment of phasing and adaptive management
- Final program alternatives by July
- Begin preparing EIS/EIR

4. Forum Discussion Regarding Preliminary Alternatives Development and Analysis

Following Ritchie’s presentation, Forum members raised a number of questions and observations. Unless otherwise noted, the following questions were responded to by Ritchie:

- What is the difference between the program and project level of analysis?
Response: Program level will be undertaken for the entire restoration project while project level of analysis and design will only be undertaken for Phase I actions.
- How many sets of Phase I actions are being considered?
Response: One set of actions is being considered. The Project needs to develop criteria for determining what should be included in Phase I.
- What will be undertaken to further study and discuss the “Island Ponds” (A19, A20, A21)?
Response: A Working Group will be formed and notifications will be sent out announcing a time and location to meet in February to address this topic.
- Will outer levees be included in Phase I actions?
Response: While we do not know which exact items will be included in the Phase I actions at this time, it is anticipated that many flood control elements will be included. More study and a determination of what funding is available are necessary before specific actions can be identified. In particular, we need to identify which levees will cause significant impacts to facilities if they are left to disrepair.
- What is the status of the Funding Work Group?
Response: This Work Group will be reconvened in 2005 to continue its important work.
- Why is a 10:90 mix proposed for the tidal ponds? We need to be assured that the shorebird populations will not suffer with this habitat mix.
Response: Michelle Orr, of Phil Williams and Associates, explained that preliminary bird studies show that a 10:90 habitat mix provides adequate shorebird habitat. However, this topic will continue to be analyzed and more information will be generated through the

landscape analysis to describe what different habitat mixes will mean on the ground to differing species.

Forum members requested to know who was involved in developing the proposed habitat mixes and what the implications are for increased bird populations living in the various areas within the Project area.

- How will Cargill be managing existing ponds in the future and how will their operations be included in the analysis of the proposed Phase 1 Actions?
Response: Cargill will continue to manage their ponds that are currently in the Refuge. The assumption in the long-term planning is that these ponds will remain in salt production throughout the duration of the project planning horizon.
- Will fisheries be studied in the analysis?
Response: Yes.
- Will the project be able to fix/modify actions that required earth-moving in the future?
Response: Actions that entail earth moving will be more difficult to alter in the future.
- Comment: There needs to be a very clear explanation of what actions will be included in the Adaptive Management Plan.

5. Update on Science Program

Dr. Lynne Trulio, Science Team Leader, provided an update on the Project Science Program. Her talk covered the following topics:

- Science Program Development
- Science Syntheses and Products
- Role of the Science Team
- Working Groups
- Moving Forward

Trulio explained that the Science Program includes the following components:

- Science Advice to the Project Management Team, Stakeholder Forum and Consultant Team;
- Science Plan that describes the Science Program, grounds the Project Objectives in science, and describes the integration of science into decision-making;
- Science Structure that implements the Science Program;
- Adaptive Management Plan for monitoring restoration progress and conducting targeted experiments; and
- Competitive Proposal Process for implementing a portion of the Adaptive Management Plan and generating information on Key Uncertainties.

She explained that the Science Plan is currently undergoing peer review and then when the review is completed the plan will be made publicly available. The plan includes discussion on nine key issues. For each of these issues, a “Science Syntheses” will be prepared that:

- Provides scientific grounding for Project Objectives;
- Identifies key questions/uncertainties;

- Develops performance standards and measures;
- Provides recommendations for planning, design and beyond; and
- Explains all relevant conceptual models.

The nine key science issues are:

- | | |
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| 1. Maintain/Improve Ecosystem Function | 5. Manage Ponds for Migratory Birds |
| 2. Understand Sediment Budget/Dynamics | 6. Effects of Hydrological Modifications |
| 3. Restore Tidal Marsh/Associated Habitats | 7. Pollutant Effects |
| 4. Recover Special Status/Indicator Species | 8. Impact of Invasive and Nuisance Species |
| | 9. Effects of Human-related Activities and Infrastructure |

Syntheses of these issues have been drafted and are undergoing review now. Revised versions should be made publicly available in February 2005.

Referring to an overhead diagram, Trulio explained the science support structure (all diagrams used in her presentation are available from the Project website). The Science Program support structure is configured to provide science direction, synthesis reports, science guidance, and peer review. The Science Program will also be instrumental in developing the adaptive management plan, which will be a methodology for acting on the information gained through monitoring and applied Studies during planning, Phase 1, and future phases, too. The adaptive management plan will be structured to: 1) modify Phase 1 actions, 2) revise future phases of actions and applied studies, and 3) revise the assumptions and knowledge base.

Trulio further explained that the Science Team will periodically provide review of selected documents or sections thereof, as appropriate, following one of two procedures:

1. Science Team-Consultant Team Loop (equates to peer review by involved Science Team members)
2. Public Comment Procedure (does not equate to peer review)

In addition, individual Science Team members can provide ad hoc advice to the Consultant Team through formal or informal collaboration. If doing so, the following guidelines apply:

- Consultant Team documents must clearly state who advised;
- Science Team individuals who advise cannot peer review document; and
- Does not equate to peer review by the Science Team.

A number of working groups are being convened to investigate uncertainties and identify opportunities to link planning and science. Topics for these groups include:

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|------------------------------|----------------|
| • Sediment Dynamics | • Pond A8 |
| • Birds and Habitats | • Island Ponds |
| • Subtidal Habitats and Fish | |

The National Science Panel is also planning on conducting a “Landscape Vision Charette” in late February 2005 to:

- Bring in other scientific expertise;
- Develop a landscape vision based on scientific information; and
- Assist in alternatives development process.

To summarize, the Science Team is:

- Completing the Science Plan
- Developing Adaptive Management Plan
- Continuing Conceptual Model Development
- Implementing Competitive Proposal Process

The schedule for the Science Team’s activities includes the following milestones:

- Science Plan development - Synthesis reports completed 10/15/04 and Plan complete by 3/15/05
- Adaptive Management Plan development - Draft by 5/01/05 and revised for ROD
- Proposal process - Timing for 2005 to be determined

6. Forum Discussion Regarding Update on Science Program

Following Trulio’s presentation, Forum members raised a number of questions and observations. Unless noted otherwise, Dr. Trulio responded to questions including:

- What constitutes “peer review”?
Response: Review of a document by experts in the field that are not involved in the Project. All peer review will include a review of the product with a description of what the level of risks to overall project success are by taking the proposed action described in the product.
- How many sets of Phase I actions are being considered?
Response: One set of actions is being considered. The Project needs to develop criteria for determining what should be included in Phase I.
- Comment: Don’t undersell the value of the Science Team’s advice; the best in the Bay Area are involved.
- Will the National Science Panel’s “Landscape Vision Charette” be open to the public?
Response: The charette will be held in West Marin County and may accommodate limited participation by representatives of the Stakeholder Forum. More information regarding this event will be made closer to the actual charette.
- How can the ISP help provide information for current planning efforts?
Response: USGS is currently under contract to collect baseline data on conditions of the ponds and the sloughs. Are there any fish studies that are greater than 30 years old?

Response: Marine Science Institute and Department of Fish and Game both collect fish data in the South Bay. According to Carl Wilcox (DFG), the Marine Science data is not very useful for long-term trend analysis.

7. Integration of South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Bay Shoreline Study

Steve Ritchie provided a briefing and update on the integration of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study. His presentation focused on:

- Overview of Shoreline Study and Corps process
- Purpose of integration
- Integrated challenges and
- Integration schedule

Overview of Shoreline Study and Corps Process: A 1992 study by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) about flooding in South San Francisco Bay concluded that the Cargill levees were sufficient for flood control. The acquisition of the ponds from Cargill has brought about a need to revisit the adequacy of the existing levees and to address how the flood control portions of this project will ultimately be developed and funded over the long-term. There is a lot of work that needs to go into developing a project that can be funded. Earlier this year, authorization was provided by the U.S. House Resources Committee to re-visit the last of the Corps studies concluded in 1992.

This study, the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study, will dovetail with the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project. The study is looking at flood damage reduction, environmental restoration, and related purposes along the shorelines of San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties. The Corps has completed a Reconnaissance Study, which is very short and states that there is a Federal interest in going forward with this project. There is \$325,000 in the Corps budget allocated for FY 2005 to begin the Feasibility Study Phase. The goal of this planning is to have a restoration and flood management plan that can be submitted to Congress for consideration in the 2008 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). WRDA is legislation that authorizes Corps projects and is only considered by Congress every two years (or not). Projects may be included in WRDA after working through the Corps process.

Purpose of Integration: Ritchie reported that the Conservancy and the Santa Clara Valley Water District have been working with the Corps to try to pull this project together in a way that works for all parties. The shared goal of the project and of the Corps is to provide an integrated plan for environmental restoration of the salt ponds and tidal and fluvial flood protection for the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline from San Francisquito Creek to Highway 92, to achieve a mix of tidal marsh and managed ponds that include wildlife-oriented public access, recreation and system navigation improvements.

According to Ritchie, during the Feasibility Study with Corps, the Coastal Conservancy will be the local partner, but if the project moves forward into construction the local partner may shift. By working with Corps, the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project has the potential to receive substantial federal cost sharing. However, non-Federal contributions will still be necessary from

an assortment of sources, including, but not limited to: State of California contributions (e.g., bond measures, appropriations), local contributions (i.e., benefit assessment districts), and private donations from foundations and other private donations.

Ritchie introduced Yvonne Letellier who is serving as the Corps project manager for the Shoreline Study. Letellier reviewed elements of the Corps mission, their process, and the Shoreline Study itself. The Corps mission includes providing flood damage reduction, ecosystem restoration, navigation, watershed studies, and related purposes (e.g., recreation).

The Corps' process includes the following general process:

- Broad authorization (from House Committee)
- Reconnaissance Study
 - Is there a Federal interest?
 - Is there a local sponsor?
- Feasibility Study
 - What are the objectives?
 - What are the alternatives?
 - Gets to project-level detail
- Chief of Engineers Report
- WRDA authorization by Congress

Ritchie explained the geographic scope of the two planning efforts. Planning Area A is within the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project while Planning Area B is outside the Salt Pond Restoration Project, but within the overall Shoreline Study area. He stated that the approximate limit of the 100-year tide will be analyzed in order to determine the exact project boundaries.

There is a strong need to integrate the two projects and, by doing so:

- Increase overall support for the Project
- Provide assistance to a greater geographic area
- Take advantage of Corps capabilities
- Determine Federal funding eligibility
- Achieve WRDA authorization for all or some of the Project

Ritchie outlined the coordination and integration history and ongoing activities as including the following key milestones:

- Discussions began in summer 2003
- Regular monthly meetings held since April 2004
- FY 2004 Reconnaissance Study funding
- Support for others agreements
- Development of Project Management Plan Development of Integrated Schedule
- Corps as NEPA co-lead Agency

Integration Challenges: Ritchie explained the challenges as including:

- Stakeholder concerns
 - Limited familiarity with the new Corps
 - Will the Corps dictate the results of the Project?
- The Corps prescribed process
- Availability of Federal share of funding
 - FCSA: 50-50
 - MOA: all local

- Vertical integration by all partners
- Regulatory Agency MOU

Scheduling Challenges: Ritchie further provided the following scheduling challenges for integrating the two efforts:

- Requires close coordination
 - Single team
 - Vertical integration
 - Integration checkpoints
- Dependent on funding
- If less funding
 - Focus on Phases 2 and 3?
 - Less detail area-wide?

In conclusion, Ritchie stated the integration effort will requires close coordination to remain transparent to the public and that the Corps will be a valuable partner.

8. Next Steps and One-Year Anniversary Celebration

Mary Selkirk, facilitator with the Center for Collaborative Policy, stated that the Forum would not meet again until April 2005, but that a number of work groups would be convened in the early part of 2005. She asked that interested parties contact her if there are any questions or data needs in the near future. She then adjourned the formal meeting and she and Mr. Ritchie reviewed the Project's major accomplishments of the past year as including:

- Late 2003: Stakeholder Forum Convened
- February 2004: Forum Approves Goals and Objectives
- March, June, and Nov: Local Government Forum Meetings
- April and Oct: National Science Panel Meetings
- June: Forum approves Alternatives Development Framework
- July: Initiation of ISP; Project receives local and national media coverage
- Fall 2004: Public Workshops, Scoping Meetings, Science Team completes syntheses on nine key technical questions, special feature in Bay Nature magazine

In addition, individuals associated with the project had two weddings, three babies, and one promotion -- Marge Kolar was promoted to oversee all USFWS refuges within the western United States. Marge will be leaving her current position and moving to Sacramento. The Forum presented her with a framed photograph of the salt ponds and Steve Ritchie distributed baseball hats with the project name embossed on them.

Attachment 1: December 15, 2004 Meeting Attendance

Stakeholder Forum Members	Organization/Affiliation
Phil Bobel	City of Palo Alto
Margaret Bruce	Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group
Dan Bruinsma	City of San Jose, Environmental Services
Geoff Crockwell	Congressman Mike Honda's Office
Arthur Feinstein	Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge
Lorrie Gervin (Alt.)	City of Sunnyvale
Melissa Hippard	Sierra Club
Tom Laine	Alviso Resident
Jane Lavelle	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Briggs Nisbet	Save the Bay
Sandy Olliges	NASA
Ana Ruiz	Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District
John Rusmisl	Alameda Co. Mosquito Abatement District
Carol Severin	Hayward Area Shoreline Planning Agency
Laura Thompson	ABAG Bay Trail
Richard Santos	Santa Clara Valley Water District Board member, Alviso
Project Management Team	Agency
Ann Draper	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Beth Dyer	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Jim Fiedler	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Amy Hutzel	State Coastal Conservancy
Marge Kolar	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Krause	California Dept. of Fish and Game
Yvonne LeTellier	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Clyde Morris	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Michelle Orr	Philip Williams and Associates (Amy added)
Steve Ritchie	South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Mgr.
Mary Selkirk	Center for Collaborative Policy
Judy Sheen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Lynne Trulio	San Jose State University
Carl Wilcox	California Dept. of Fish and Game
Other Attendees	Affiliation
Greg Bourne	Center for Collaborative Policy
John Bradley	SF Bay NWR Complex
Joan Cardellino	State Coastal Conservancy
Deborah Clark	Center for Collaborative Policy
Doug Cooson	Lockheed Martin
Evelyn Cormier	Wildlife Stewards
Dianne Dryer	City of Menlo Park
Jim Foran	Santa Clara Co. Open Space Authority
Tracy Grubbs	Center for Collaborative Policy

Meredith Hall	U.C. Berkeley
Anne Harrington	Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge
Carin High	Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge
Kran Kilpatrick	NASA
Bart Laine	Resident, Owner of Fish Business
Michele Liapes	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Libby Lucas	California Native Plant Society
Kristy McCumby Hyland	City of Sunnyvale
Austin McInerny	Center for Collaborative Policy
Eileen McLaughlin	Wildlife Stewards
Eric Mruz	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kevin Murray	San Francisco Creek JPA
Antoinette Romeo	Santa Clara Co. ERA
Steve Rotterborn	H.T. Harvey & Associates
Kate Streams	RMS
Dan Strickman	Santa Clara Co. ERA
Caitlin Sweeney	Bay Conservation & Development Commiss.
George Trevino	Alviso Resident
Don Weden	
Kirk Willard	Lockheed Martin
Cheryl Woodworth	Acterra
M. Selim Zeyrek	Alameda Co. Water District