

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT
MEETING DATE: June 9, 2010

ITEM 7

SUBJECT: **San Francisco Estuary Partnership: What It Is and Where It's Headed Construction Program** – Update by Judy Kelly, Director of the Partnership

DISCUSSION: The San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP) is a federal-state-local partnership to promote effective management of the Bay-Delta Estuary and to restore and maintain the Estuary's water quality and natural resources. Originally called the San Francisco Estuary Project, SFEP was established in 1987 under the federal Clean Water Act's Section 320: National Estuary Program. It is one of 28 estuary programs in "estuaries of national significance" around the country.

In 1993, via a collaborative effort by over 100 public, private, and community groups, SFEP produced the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), a road map to restoring the Estuary's health. The CCMP contains over 200 actions in nine program areas: aquatic resources, wildlife, wetlands management, water use, pollution prevention and reduction, dredging and waterway modification, land use and watershed management, public involvement and education, and research and monitoring. The CCMP was updated in 2007 based on successes since 1993 and new challenges facing the Estuary, such as sea level rise and marine debris.

Implementing the CCMP's actions takes targeted effort from all agencies whose work touches the Estuary. Continuing its collaborative work, SFEP brings together resource agencies, non-profits, citizens, and scientists to implement the CCMP through projects to protect water quality and restore fish and wildlife habitat. SFEP currently manages 50 such projects, with budgets totaling \$10 million. SFEP also coordinates CCMP implementation efforts of other agencies, including the 35 agencies and organizations currently represented on the CCMP Implementation Committee.

SFEP has grown over the past few years by successfully competing for grants and is taking steps to prepare for further growth. SFEP recently adopted a Strategic Plan for 2010-12, which focuses program efforts on key areas including integrated watershed stewardship, estuary resilience in the face of climate change, green infrastructure and stormwater pollution, and serving as champion of the Estuary. SFEP is now watching a new bill in the U.S. Congress that would exponentially increase funding for San Francisco Bay restoration work: H.R. 5061, introduced by Rep. Jackie Speier, would authorize up to \$100 million per year for ten years to fund projects, programs, and studies that implement the CCMP.

SFEP and the Water Board have a symbiotic relationship with many mutual advantages. The Board is the lead agency for CCMP implementation since its mission overlaps significantly with many CCMP actions. Assistant Executive Officer Tom

Mumley serves as chair of the Implementation Committee. SFEP is part of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which provides administrative and contract support and brings Estuary issues to elected officials and decision makers to facilitate local government's support and commitment to implementing CCMP actions. SFEP staff are ABAG employees and, under a memorandum of understanding with ABAG, are housed at the Board's office.

The following are some of the current SFEP projects assisting the Board:

Stream and Wetlands Protection Policy

SFEP staff is providing technical assistance to the Board on the development of a policy to better protect streams, wetlands, riparian areas, estuaries and floodplains.

Urban Pesticides Pollution Prevention (UP3) Project

The UP3 Project assists municipalities and the Board in implementing the Urban Creeks Pesticide Toxicity TMDL. It provides tools to municipalities to reduce pesticide use and support less-toxic methods of pest control, reports on new science and monitoring information, and provides technical assistance to the Board and municipalities on pesticide regulation.

Bay Area-Wide Trash Capture Demonstration Project

This ARRA-funded grant project will fund installation of trash capture devices in the Bay Area's municipal separate storm sewer systems, in order to trap and remove trash. As reported in the June Executive Officer's Report, over \$4 million in assistance is available to Bay Area municipalities.

Erosion Control Workshops for Construction

SFEP conducts workshops annually for developers/contractors, the building industry, and local governments on best management practices (BMPs) to prevent construction-related erosion and sediment problems. Two award-winning videos developed by SFEP with Board assistance have been translated into Spanish, and the workshop materials and slideshows are marketed.

Supplemental Environmental Project Oversight

SFEP provides project evaluation and oversight for Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) undertaken by dischargers in lieu of Administrative Civil Liability penalties. SFEP manages 14 current SEPs, including several private lateral improvement projects, the Aramburu Island restoration design, and a rain gardens project in five San Francisco elementary schools.

Technical Support for Water Quality Certifications

SFEP provides technical support for reviewing applications for water quality certification by the Board for sediment removal. Services include site visits, reviewing monitoring reports, and recommending BMPs for wetland protection, creek flood protection and transportation projects.

SFEP's longstanding relationship with the Board has been beneficial to both parties. We look forward to further collaborations along these lines, and we are actively engaged in planning for what those collaborations might look like under increased funding in the future.

RECOMMENDATION: No action needed – information item.