

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT
MEETING DATE: February 10, 2016

ITEM **6**

SUBJECT: **U.S. EPA's San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund -**
Information presentation on federal grant program that supports water quality
and wetlands restoration

DISCUSSION: The San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund (Fund) is a competitive federal grant that U.S. EPA (EPA) has managed since 2008. Between 2008 and 2014, EPA has partnered with local and State governmental agencies and non-profit organizations, using more than \$36 million in EPA funding to leverage \$145 million in additional funds towards 54 projects that restore streams, wetlands, and water quality across the nine Bay Area counties, from the Napa River in the North Bay to the salt ponds in the South Bay.

Since the inception of the Fund, the emphasis for its use has been on achieving significant on-the-ground environmental results that reduce polluted runoff, restore impaired waters, and enhance aquatic habitat in the Bay and its watersheds. These grant funds have been used to assist implementation of the Region's Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), which is why EPA includes Board staff on its review panel. While most grant funding programs support on-the-ground project implementation, through use of the Fund, EPA has also supported projects undertaking assessment and planning.

Consistent with the Fund's priorities, projects are tracked in three categories: restoring wetlands, restoring water quality, and greening development. Of the 54 projects funded to date, 26 are wetland restoration; 22 are water quality restoration; and 6 are greening development (e.g., low impact development).

This year EPA will again solicit grant proposals via a Request for Proposal (RFP) that will be circulated sometime in March or April. EPA anticipates that approximately \$4.5 million will be available from the Fund this year to support projects in the range of \$800,000 to \$2,000,000 each.

Sam Ziegler of EPA Region IX's Watershed Protection Program will provide us with an overview of the Fund's accomplishments to date and future grant opportunities, reflecting on EPA's 2014 report [Program Progress Report \(2008 – 2014\)](#). The report includes a list of all projects funded through 2014.

RECOMMENDATION: No action needed – information item