

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: Xavier Fernandez  
MEETING DATE: November 8, 2023

**ITEM: 8**

**The Napa River Flood Control Project, A Climate Resilient Approach to Flood Management, Napa County** – Discussion of the Napa River Flood Control Project's Performance during an Extreme Wet Year

**DISCUSSION:**

The San Francisco Bay Water Board (Water Board) staff have been collaborating with the Napa Flood Control District for over 20 years to implement the Napa River Flood Control Project (Project). The Project is a multi-benefit project that provides flood control, river and floodplain restoration, and recreation benefits.

The City of Napa has experienced 27 major floods in the past 120 years. After flooding in 1986, the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) undertook a two-year community-wide coalition process to develop an economically feasible and environmentally sensitive design to protect the City of Napa from flooding. Following this process, the Board adopted Waste Discharge Requirements for the Project in September 1999, and, in subsequent orders, approved cleanup of petroleum-contaminated sites within the Project's footprint, which has resulted in removal of over a quarter-million cubic yards of contaminated soil.

Last year, the Project performed extremely well despite rainfall that was the second greatest on record, with only the great flood year of 1862 having a greater amount of rainfall. Further, climate change models have indicated that extreme wet years, such as what we experienced last year, and extreme droughts will be more common in the future. As such, multi-benefit projects, such as the Napa River Flood Control Project, will become increasingly important to increase the resilience of both the built and natural environments.

Xavier Fernandez will present on the historical background of the Project, Alicia Gilbreath of San Francisco Estuary Institute will present on last year's historical rainfall in the context of climate change, and Jeremy Sarrow of the District will provide an overview on the Project's performance last year.