

## North Bay Watershed Association

Draft Summary - the North Bay Watershed Association (NBWA) Board of Directors.

Date: Friday, January 3rd, 2020 – 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Location: Marin Municipal Water Dist.

Directors or Representatives Present Included:

Board Member	Agency/Org	Board Member	Agency/Organization
Michael Boorstein	Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Megan Clark	Las Gallinas Valley
Pam Meigs	Ross Valley Sanitary District	Susan Gorin	Sonoma County
Elizabeth Patterson	Solano County Water	Jean Mariani	Novato Sanitary District
Damon Connolly	Marin County	Rick Fraites	North Marin Water District
Paul Jenson	City of San Rafael	Ryan Gregory	Napa Sanitation District
Leon Garcia	Napa Co. Flood Control & Water Cons. Dist.	Mike Healy	City of Petaluma
Elisabeth Patterson	Solano Water	Will Stockard	MCSTOPPP

1. Call to Order – Chair Gibson began the meeting at 9:34 a.m.
2. There was no Public Comment, and the Board Approved 3. the Agenda; 4. the Teasure’s Report; and 5. the December Meeting Summary.

### 6. Board Sharing

Megan started off the round of information sharing by telling the group about the finalization of the LGVSD’s new plant and said they are just waiting on PG&E. She mentioned that they have moved their administrative offices to 101 Lucas Valley. Leon mentioned the opening of the Newell open space, which burned in a 500 acre fire last year, and that while the burn area willows seem iffy, the oaks are doing ok. They also took this opportunity to work with Napa Co to re-grade the road for better stormwater management. Elisabeth mentioned that Solano is doing a habitat conservation plan mostly for terrestrial species. Pam mentioned their new metrics reports and reminded the group about Ross Valley’s PSAs. She also said Ross Valley completed \$30M in capital projects. Paul reported out on the city’s Measure AA application to restore Tiscornia Marsh, one of several pieces that Marin Audubon was able to fund recently. Jack talked about being in year 4 of the Resilient Forestry project and that the District is looking at soil investigations and other work. MMWD also completed an annual update of the vegetation inventory, and several meetings have been held regarding the possible use of the Watershed by e-bikes. Damon followed up on the earlier NBWA discussions about the WRDA Act, discussion that began last March on invitation by the House Resources Committee. The local group brainstormed about how the Army Corps is looking at the costs of projects and have proposed a pilot program in areas around the county looking at green and grey solutions. Damon was just back in DC last week and got a favorable reception to re-

imagining the Corp's benefit cost analyses. Susan introduced herself as the new representative from Sonoma County.

#### 7. The State of the Estuary Update, Caitlin Sweeney, SFEP

Caitlin began her presentation by reminding the group that the (San Francisco Estuary Partnership) SFEP is one of 28 programs around the nation. The program covers the bay, delta, and the watersheds that drain into the bay. SFEP is a locally based EPA program, housed at MTC. They have a 38 member advisory committee. SFEP is responsible for reporting out on the status and trends of health of the Estuary, and they released the update late last year. This report focuses on the need for water and land resilience in light of climate change coupled with social resilience. The Estuary is large and it can take time for changes to show up, so they chose 5 indicators to review in 2019, ones that covered the entire Estuary and ones where change can be detected. The story is fair to good for tidal marshes, things are fair in the bay and improving, but the Delta continues to lag. There is a positive story also for urban water use as we see continuing behavior change even as the drought has abated and despite population increase. Judy S. asked if pesticide use is being tracked and Elisabeth responded that the new groundwater law is helping with that. Rick asked about plans for more water being taken out of the bay. Caitlin highlighted the poor state of freshwater flows into the bay. In the upper Estuary the fish community is poor with the exception of Suisun marsh. In the lower Estuary the status is good, but long term monitoring shows a decline. Pam asked if they look at development as a change agent; Caitlin said they only look at results and noted that the fish data is collected offshore so may not fully reflect new marsh restoration.

Some thoughts were given to new indicators of landscape and community resilience for future evaluation. One element could be acre of subsided lands; across the Estuary 400,000 acres are unconnected to the tides and their low elevation places them at risk of flooding. Another possible indicator might be shore resilience; looking at acres of shoreline hardened and therefore not very resilient. Finally, they wanted to look at the resilience of community space. Compared to the national average we do a good job of providing (proximity to) open space - with disadvantaged communities having smaller parks and more limited access. Elisabeth pointed out that the state definition of DAC does not adequately take into consideration agricultural communities. Lastly, the report highlights the voices of those who use the Estuary.

The intended impact of the report is to drive management actions around the Estuary, and clearly shows that we need to continue marsh and freshwater flow work, create resilient shorelines and make communities more resilient. The point is to stay focused on returning the Estuary to better health in the long term.

#### 8. News from US EPA, Luisa Valiela, Region 9 US EPA

Luisa began by letting the Board know the a new water quality and habitat restoration grant round will open shortly. It's a fund that has been coming to the region since 2008, at about \$5 million a year. They will have \$5.5 million this round. It's a competitive program and can fund projects within the 9 Bay Area counties. Luisa expects to get this year's RFP out in February. EPA has funded riparian and bay shoreline projects and communities looking to better manage stormwater. Megan asked about funding horizontal levees. Luisa answered by telling the group that EPA has funded an approach to that on the Hayward shoreline. She suggested everyone become familiar with the San Francisco Estuary Institute's work that was foundational to better stormwater/green infrastructure planning around the region. EPA has funded a lot of Napa River work, the Sonoma Ecology Center and the RCDs to work on corridors and fish improvements. Will asked about ability to fund a planning project, Luisa answered yes, but it should be linked to implementation projects and the

applicant must be strongly committed to completion. All the grant information is up on EPA's website.

She mentioned that in 2019 EPA released the National Water Reuse Action Plan which is now out for comment. The lead in California is David W Smith at Region 9. Finally, Luisa talked about the concerns over PFAS, (Teflon is one product) a class of chemicals that has been found in very high concentration in San Francisco Bay mammals, and there is a concern about it getting into public drinking waters. She suggested that those interested should look at EPA's website for more information on these chemicals.

#### 9. The New Game of Floods, Chris Choo, Marin County

Chris reminded the group that NBWA funded the update of the Game of Floods and she walked through the history of "the watery Marin" by showing historic flood flow photos. She reminded the group that the region has lost huge amounts of Bay wetlands. Sea level rise, now 8 inches of rise in the bay, is accelerating. How do we prepare our communities and our infrastructure? The county did a vulnerability assessment in 2016 and it will be the treatment plants, pipes, utility lines, and businesses are in the floodplain areas. Need to think about how to respond. We also need to look at those areas in wild land/urban interface for fire vulnerabilities. Chris then brought the group back to the Game of Floods and how the game helps people focus on what is at stake. The new game is simplified and boxed and is now finally ready for distribution.

#### 10. Next Meeting: February 7, 2020, Novato Sanitation District

SUBMITTED BY: Judy Kelly, Executive Director NBWA