

# Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Report to MCCMC<sup>1</sup>

April 2025

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Postponement of BCDC public hearing on application to change use of lanes on San Rafael/Richmond Bridge; Plan to reuse sediment and soil for wetland restoration; revised draft BCDC guidance on climate change; and, BCDC launches leadership academy for San Francisco high school students.

## **BCDC PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PERMIT APPLICATION TO CHANGE USE OF RIGHT-HAND SHOULDER OF THE EASTBOUND LOWER DECK ON THE SAN RAFAEL/RICHMOND BRIDGE HAS BEEN POSTPONED:**

In last month's BCDC report to MCCMC, I highlighted the scheduled April 3, 2025 public hearing on a permit application to change the use the right-hand shoulder of the eastbound lower deck on the San Rafael/Richmond Bridge. Shortly before the hearing date, CALTRANS and MTC requested a postponement to allow MTC more time "to answer questions and satisfy concerns raised by BCDC" since the January workshop. For more information, please refer to the March 2025 BCDC report.

## **BCDC PLAN TO ADVANCE WETLAND RESTORATION THROUGH BENEFICIAL REUSE OF SEDIMENT AND SOIL:**

In late March 2025, BCDC released the new Sediment for Wetlands Adaptation Project (SWAP) Action Plan aimed at increasing the beneficial reuse of sediment and soil to restore and enhance wetlands and help the Bay Area adapt to rising sea levels.

BCDC led a collaborative process to develop the San Francisco Bay Sediment & Soil Beneficial Reuse Action Plan for Wetland Restoration Adaptation (Action Plan). This Action Plan is a foundational strategy for how the Bay Area can more effectively and efficiently beneficially reuse sediment and soil to sustain and adapt the Bay's wetlands in light of increased shoreline flooding due to sea level rise.

Wetlands are vital natural infrastructure. They buffer waves, absorb flood waters, provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, improve water quality, and more. The Bay's shoreline was once lined with over 500,000 acres of wetlands, but diking, draining, filling, and development have deteriorated or drowned an estimated 85-95 percent of these wetlands, leaving the region more vulnerable to shoreline flooding. According to the latest science, restoring the Bay's wetlands and mudflats will require more than 450 million cubic yards of sediment between now and 2100, or the volume of almost 700 Salesforce Towers.

The Action Plan was created with input from a diverse array of stakeholders, including the dredging industry, flood protection managers, contractors, restoration practitioners, the maritime community, agencies at all levels of government, environmentalists, and other private sector partners.

The Action Plan aligns with the [Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan's \(RSAP\)](#) guidance for local jurisdictions to prioritize nature-based solutions as they plan for rising sea levels. The RSAP advises local shoreline planners to consider the efficacy of sediment management for nature-based solutions and emphasizes the need for a sustainable sediment supply to support natural adaptation processes.

The release of the Action Plan marks the end of Phase 1 of the SWAP. Phase 2 of the SWAP will assess whether increasing beneficial reuse requires amending BCDC's [San Francisco Bay Plan](#). In Phase 3, BCDC will develop a

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<sup>1</sup> Marin County Council of Mayors and Councilmembers (MCCMC)

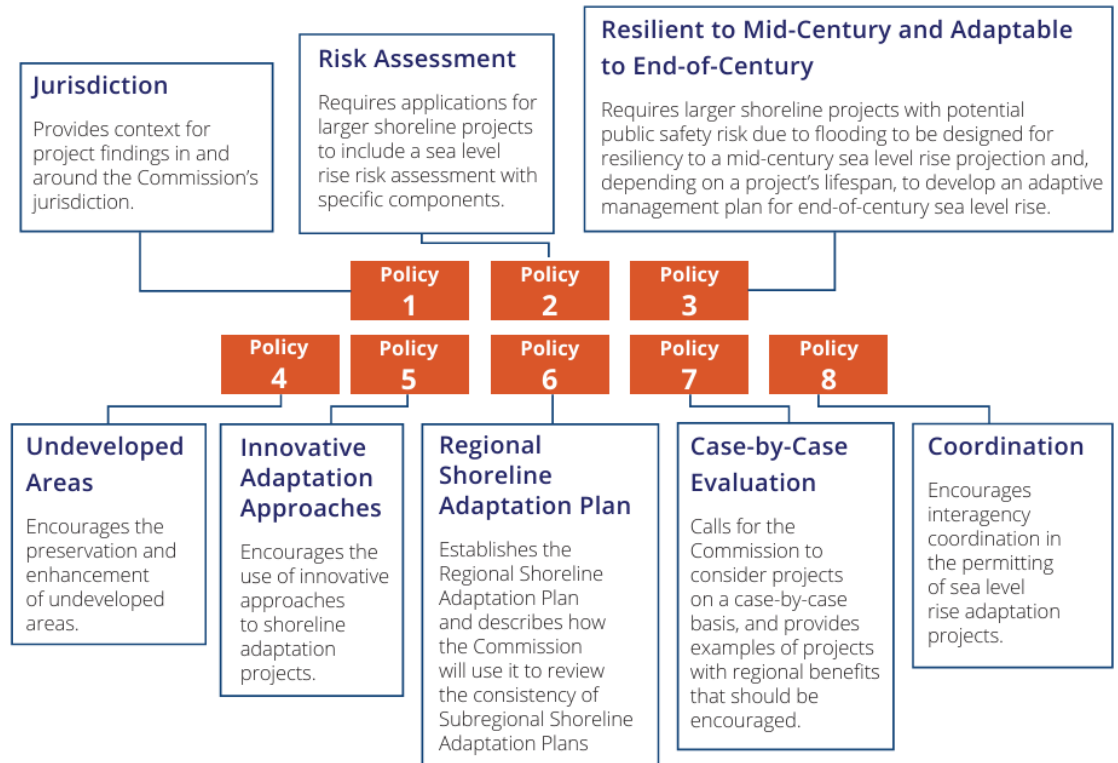
strategy to fund increased beneficial reuse. The project is funded primarily by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with additional funding from the California Ocean Protection Council.

### **REVISED DRAFT BCDC'S REVISED CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY GUIDANCE:**

On May 1, 2025, BCDC will receive a briefing and possibly vote on whether to approve an updated *San Francisco Bay Plan Climate Change Policy Guidance* document. The updated guidance is aligned with the *State of California Sea Level Rise Guidance: 2024 Science and Policy Update*, incorporates changes to the climate change policies

included in Bay Plan Amendment No. 1-24 (the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan), and includes analyses and guidance based on permits granted since the Commission adopted its existing guidance document several years ago.

The link to the revised guidance document is: [San Francisco Bay Plan Climate Change Policy Guidance](#). If you have any comments, please email me or call me at home.



### **BCDC LAUNCHES LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR S.F. HIGH SCHOOLERS:**

In January 2025 the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the [Port of San Francisco](#) launched the San Francisco Shoreline Leadership Academy, a 15-week training program for high school juniors and seniors. Participants will get to tour parts of the San Francisco shoreline and be trained by subject matter experts on a variety of topics including sea level rise, flooding, beneficial reuse of sediment, economic development, and more.

The Academy is an opportunity for high schoolers to meaningfully engage with issues related to the Bay environment and shoreline, and to practice how they can be changemakers in these spaces, individually and collaboratively. In addition to weekly in-person meetings and discussions, participants will be able to create and present a final project that combines their learning.

BCDC selected 17 participants from San Francisco high schools out of 177 applications. Each participant receives a \$1,800 stipend upon completion of the Academy (as well as food and travel stipends throughout) and will have a chance to apply for a summer internship with the Port of San Francisco.

For questions, contact Pat Eklund, Councilmember; City of Novato at: 415-336-9913 (c) and/or [pateklund@comcast.net](mailto:pateklund@comcast.net).