



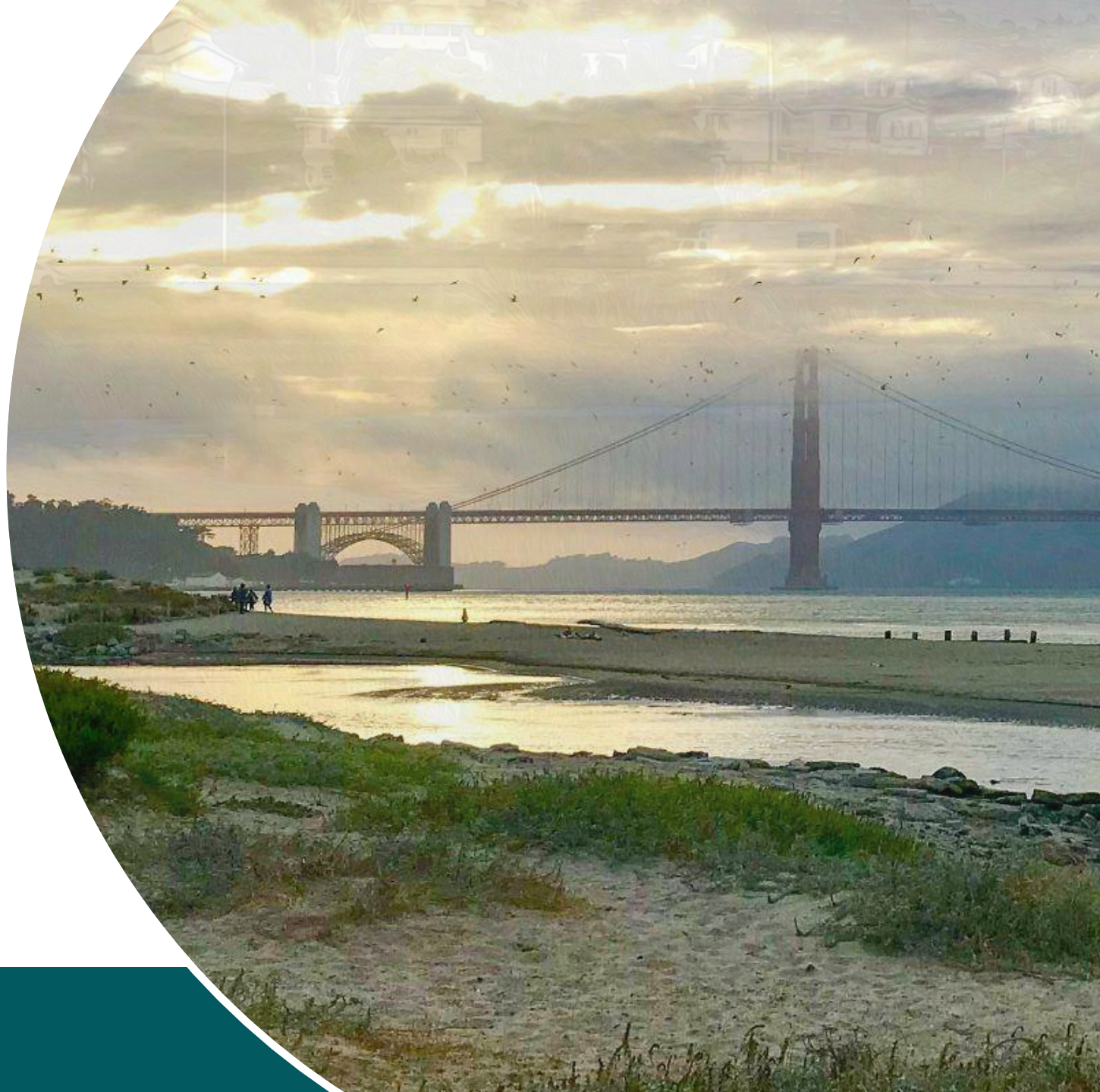
STATE OF OUR ESTUARY

Reporting on the Health of the San Francisco Estuary

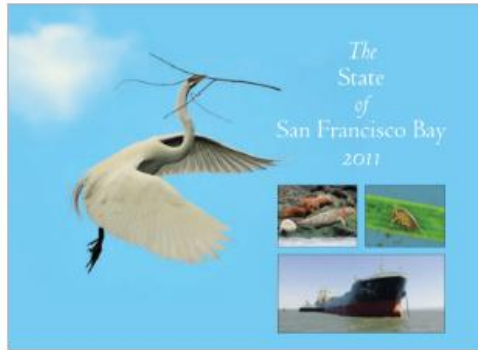
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
Advisory Committee
February 6, 2026

Alex Thomsen, San Francisco Estuary Partnership
Laura Feinstein, San Francisco Estuary Institute

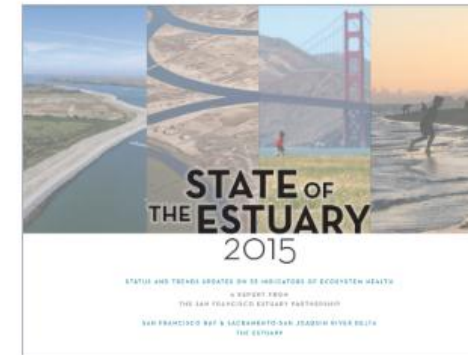
Introduction to OurEstuary.org



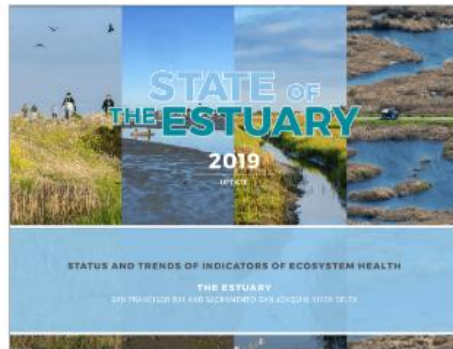
Tracking the Estuary's Health



2011 Report



2015 Report



2019 Update



State of Our Estuary website
(OurEstuary.org)

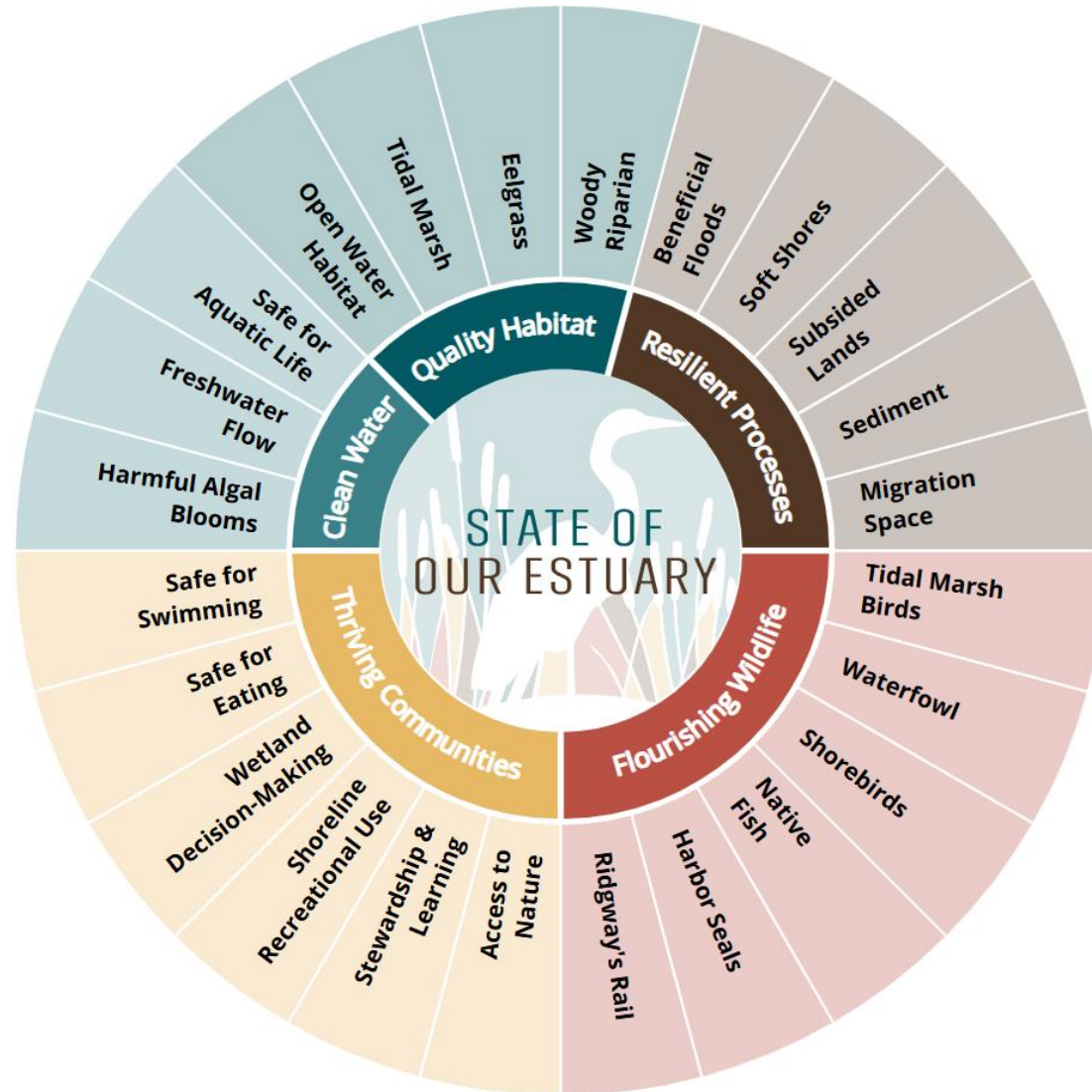


About the State of Our Estuary

State of Our Estuary uses the best available scientific information on clean water, healthy ecosystems, and thriving communities to assess the health of the San Francisco Bay and Delta

[LEARN MORE](#)

How Do We Measure Estuary Health?



24 Indicators



STATUS



Good



Fair



Poor

TREND



Improving



No Change



Declining

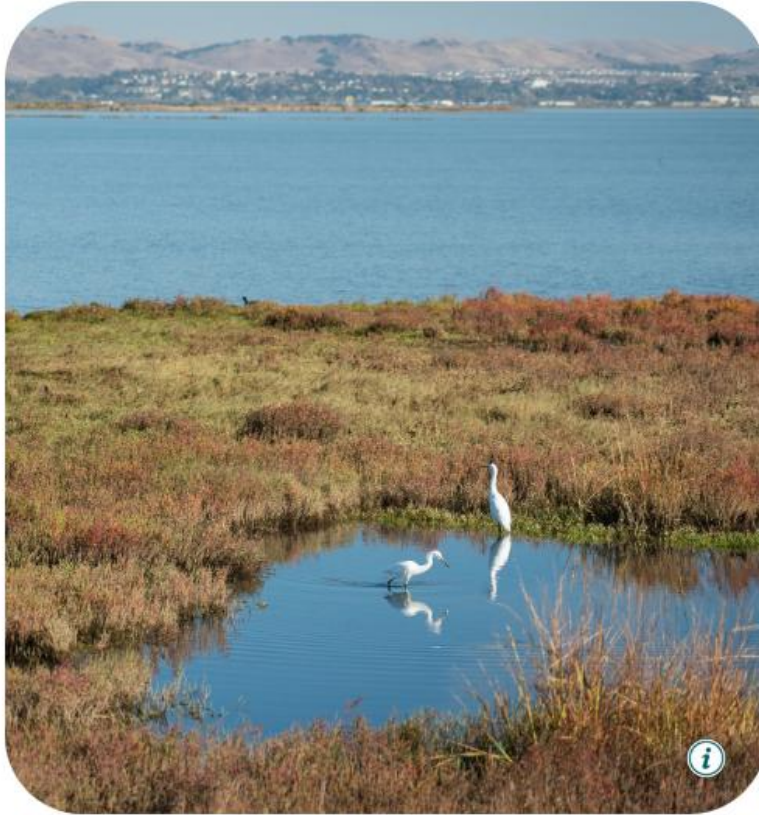


Mixed



Not Available

Indicator	Definition	Status & Trend	Indicator Highlight	Last Update
Clean Water				
Freshwater Flow	Amounts, timing, and variability of fresh water flowing into the Estuary compared to the flows that would have occurred without dams and water diversions	ESTUARY	1/2 Freshwater flow to the Estuary has been reduced by nearly half.	2025
Safe for Aquatic Life	Concentrations of toxic pollutants in water and fish from the Bay	BAY	Over a hundred pollutants are routinely monitored and some are found to exceed regulatory thresholds in fish, endangering the health of the food chain.	2025
Flourishing Wildlife				
Native Fish	Abundance, species diversity, species composition, and distribution of native fishes in the San Francisco Estuary	BAY DELTA	Declines in native fish abundance and diversity are influenced by drought, reduced outflow, and poor recruitment for key species.	2025



TIDAL MARSH

Status & Trend

Latest Update: October 2025



The acreage of tidal marsh in both the Bay and Delta is increasing, leading to Improving scores for both regions. The Bay is in Fair condition in terms of total acres, while there is still far too little marsh in the Delta, which warrants a Poor status. Tidal marsh extent in the Bay, including places that have been restored, has increased from about 52,800 acres in 2019 (see [State of the Estuary 2019](#)) to nearly 57,800 acres in 2024 (a 9.5% increase).

While there is far less tidal marsh in the Delta today, there has been a large increase in tidal marsh restoration in the last 5 years. The extent of tidal marsh in the Delta, including restoration projects, has increased from around 8,300 acres

The Estuary Scorecard



Key Takeaway

Where the approaches to restore ecosystem health are well-understood and managers have taken action on the ground, results are visible.



Tidal Marsh and Marsh Birds



Key Takeaway

Other problems persist because they're physically difficult to address, or their solutions come with social and economic trade-offs.

Freshwater Flow



Open Water Habitat



Beneficial Floods



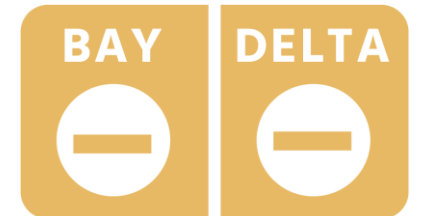
The Estuary continues to support important community uses



**Safe for
Swimming**

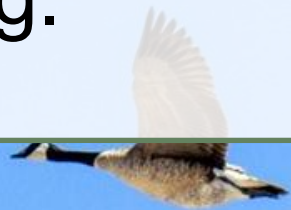


**Fish Safe
for Eating**



Key Takeaway

Most Bay indicators are in Fair condition and stable, while most Delta indicators are in Poor condition and declining.



Key Takeaway

Better (and worse) trends become apparent when looking at finer-scale data. These trends provide insight into what the ecosystem needs.

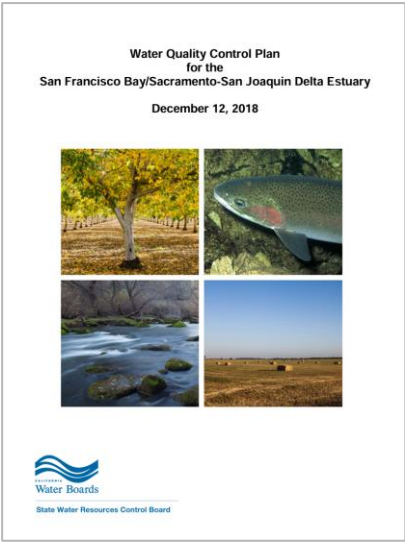
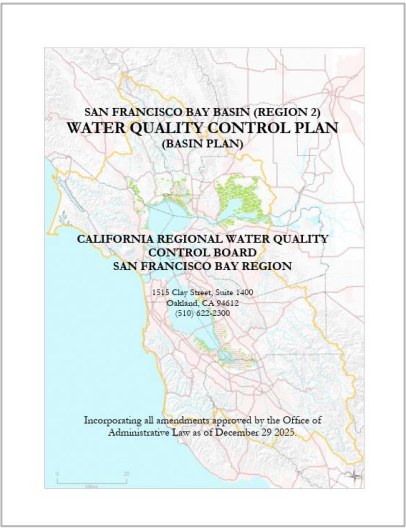
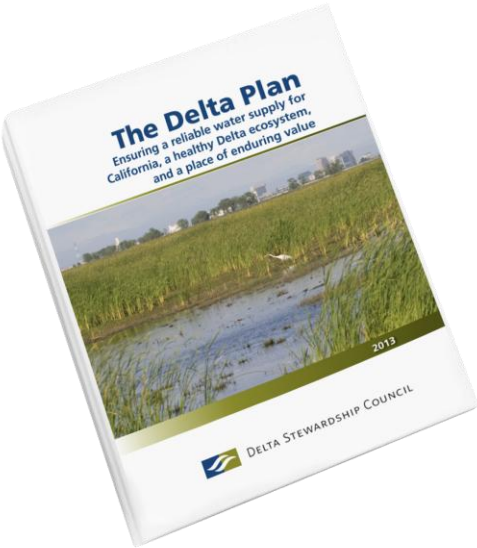
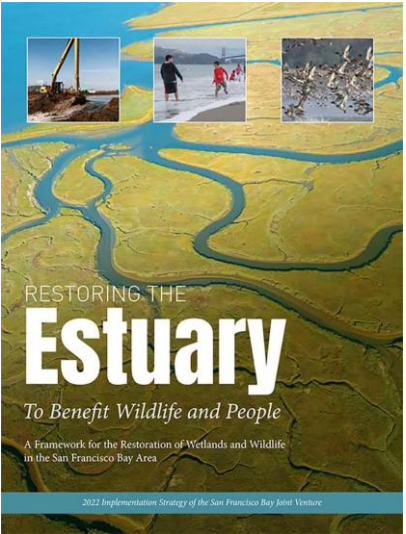
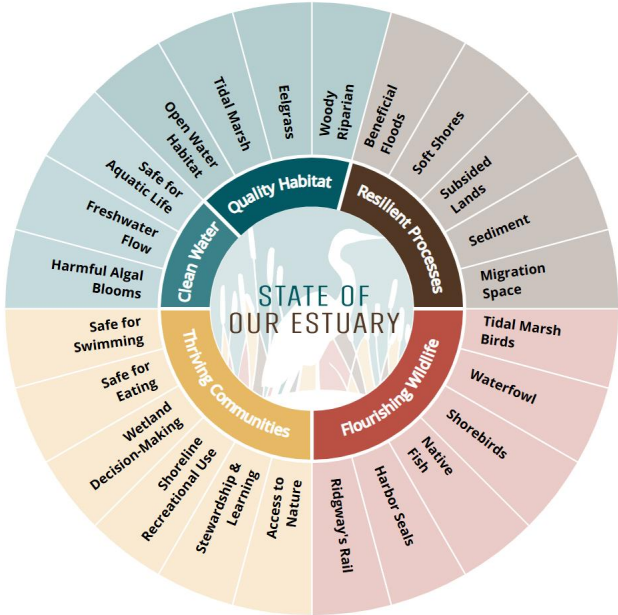
Waterfowl



Fueling Regional Action



Fueling Regional Action



Our (Amazing) Team

- Caitlin Sweeney, SFEP
- Natasha Daniels, SFEP
- Alexis Gabriel, SFEP
- Alex Thomsen, SFEP
- April Robinson, SFEI
- Sacha Heath, SFEI
- Katie McKnight, SFEI
- Vanessa Lee, SFEI
- Laura Feinstein, SFEI
- Luisa Valiela, US EPA
- Dan Hossfeld, US EPA
- Martina Koller, DSC
- Lisamarie Windham-Myers, DSC
- Ariella Chelsky, SFEI
- Jay Davis, SFEI
- Scott Dusterhoff, SFEI
- Kendall Harris, SFEI
- Cate Jaffe, SFEI
- Dan Killam, SFEI
- Sam Safran, SFEI
- David Senn, SFEI
- Emma Sevier, SFEI
- Lydia Vaughn, SFEI
- Lorenzo Flores, SFEI
- Jennifer Symonds, SFEI
- Tony Hale, SFEI
- Gemma Shusterman, SFEI
- Ruth Askevold, SFEI
- Anthony Khalil, SFEI
- Karen Verpeet, SFEI
- Lita Brydie, DDC
- Jay Sah, Florida Int'l University
- Jim Hobbs, UC Davis
- Joy Zedler, Univ. of Wisconsin
- Karen Thorne, USGS
- Tina Swanson, Lead Scientist
- Nadav Nur, Point Blue
- Matthew Reiter, Point Blue
- Julian Wood, Point Blue
- Nathan Van Schmidt, SFBBO
- Levi Lewis, UC Davis
- Susan DeLa Cruz, Western Ecol. Research Ctr.
- Laurie Hall, Western Ecol. Research Ctr.
- Tanya Graham, Western Ecol. Research Ctr.
- Jessie Kong, Stanford University Bill Lane Center

Thank You!



**Delta
Stewardship
Council**

A CALIFORNIA STATE AGENCY

Funding for this project has been provided in full or in part through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board. California's Clean Water State Revolving Fund is capitalized through a variety of funding sources, including grants from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and state bond proceeds. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the foregoing, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

This material is based upon work supported by the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Science Program, under Contract No. DSC23010.

