SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY

Staff Recommendation
June 6, 2025

MCINNIS MARSH BENEFICIAL DREDGE SEDIMENT REUSE AND TIDAL WETLANDS RESTORATION

Project No. RA-045
Project Manager: Natasha Daniels

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to $1,300,000 to the County of Marin to further preliminary designs, collect data and perform technical studies, prepare CEQA documents, and prepare regulatory permit applications for the McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project, which will improve future tidal restoration potential of the McInnis Marsh Basin in Marin County by restoring 22 to 30 acres of diked wetlands and the reversal of subsidence across 140 acres of marsh.

LOCATION: McInnis Marsh and South Fork of Gallinas Creek, City of San Rafael, Marin County; Measure AA Region: North Bay

MEASURE AA PROGRAM CATEGORY: Vital Fish, Bird and Wildlife Habitat Program; Shoreline Public Access Program

---

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Project Location and Site Maps

Exhibit 2: Project Designs and Photographs

Exhibit 3: Project Letters

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority adopt the following resolution and findings:

Resolution:

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed one million three hundred thousand dollars ($1,300,000) to the County of Marin ("the grantee") to further preliminary designs, collect data and perform technical studies, prepare CEQA documents, and prepare regulatory permit applications for the McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project ("the project"), which will

improve future tidal restoration potential of the McInnis Marsh Basin in Marin County by restoring 22 to 30 acres of diked wetlands and the reversal of subsidence across 140 acres of marsh. Prior to commencement of the project, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Authority the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed in carrying out the project.
3. A plan for acknowledgement of Authority funding.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Act, Government Code Sections 66700-66706.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with The San Francisco Bay Clean Water, Pollution Prevention and Habitat Restoration Measure (Measure AA).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the Authority authorize disbursement of up to $1,300,000 to the County of Marin to further preliminary designs, collect data and perform technical studies, prepare CEQA documents, and prepare regulatory permit applications for the McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project, which will improve future tidal restoration potential of the McInnis Marsh Basin in Marin County by restoring 22 to 30 acres of diked wetlands and the reversal of subsidence across 140 acres of marsh ("the project").

The project includes designing to 65% and additional planning for dredged sediment placement. The planning and design outcomes will be documented in a Basis of Design Report. In addition, the project will continue discussions with the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT), collect data, and conduct technical studies to inform preparation of permit applications and an Environmental Impact Report. McInnis Park includes approximately 2.75 miles of public trail, including trails around the perimeter of the Main Basin and southern McInnis Marsh. These trails provide important connections to adjacent segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail network. The project will facilitate improved quality of tidal marsh and non-tidal wetland habitats adjacent to the trail and, therefore, the experience of trail users. The project will plan for modifications to allow for the breaching of the outer berm in the southern marsh. The project will also plan for significant improvements to the public's low-tide, small boat access to the creek channel.

If implemented, the project will contribute to recovery and resilience of degraded baylands habitats by: 1) restoring 22 to 30 acres of diked wetlands to sea level rise through tidal hydrology restoration and tidal channel network creation; 2) preparing the 140-acre Main Basin to support

future tidal marsh habitat restoration and to improve resilience to future sea level rise by beneficially re-using approximately 110,000 cubic yards of clean dredge sediments from Gallinas Creek; 3) applying a geomorphic-based design for dredging along approximately 1.8 miles of the South Fork of Gallinas Creek to support recreational small boat access and provide a pilot scale proof of concept for the geomorphic dredging approach; 4) engaging with community and tribal partners, neighboring landowners, and land managers to garner support for tidal restoration in the Main Basin; and 5) improving the overall trail system in the marsh.

The proposed project, if constructed, will benefit wildlife habitat associated with the restoration of between 22 and 30 acres of tidal marsh in the southern McInnis Marsh and reversal of subsidence across 140 acres of the McInnis Marsh Main Basin to improve future tidal restoration potential. The proposed project would contribute to the recovery and resiliency of McInnis Marsh to future sea level rise by increasing elevations (by 0.5 to 1ft) within the 140-acre Main Basin through the beneficial reuse of sediment dredged from the south fork of Gallinas Creek. This sediment placement will begin the process of reversing subsidence in the Main Basin and increasing the grade to an elevation that could support tidal marsh habitat restoration in the future. In addition, between 22 and 30 acres of southern McInnis Marsh would be restored to tidal wetlands by breaching the perimeter berms and constructing a new tidal channel through these two basins. The south fork of Gallinas Creek would be dredged using a geomorphically informed design to widen and deepen approximately 1.8 miles of creek channel to support recreational small boat access. This nature-based approach supports the natural capacity of the corridor to adapt to sea level rise and larger storm events over time as well as supporting increased ecological connectivity between functional tidal wetlands in the region. This dredging, to be funded under a future project phase, will produce approximately 110,000 cubic yards of sediment to be delivered to the Main Basin to raise site grades closer to elevations suitable for establishment of tidal marsh vegetation. Over time the ground elevation will be raised enough for the development of tidal marsh vegetation, such as cordgrass habitat for Ridgway's rails and eventually pickleweed habitat for salt marsh harvest mouse. This local beneficial reuse of sediment in marsh restoration is a major goal of regional permitting agencies. Exhibit 2 shows the approximate footprints of the proposed work at McInnis Marsh and on the south fork of Gallinas Creek.

The County has completed conceptual designs for future dredging and tidal marsh restoration in the southern basins and has begun pre-application coordination with the BRRIT and other regulatory permitting agencies, including the Dredge Material Management Office (DMMO). The success of the proposed project tasks covered in this application would be measured by the successful completion of the major milestone deliverables, including: completion of Basis of Design, 65% designs and specifications, cost estimates, and final CEQA document. Marin County Department of Public Works will manage the project, with support from Marin County Parks co-managing public access and trails elements of the restoration design.

Marin County has extensive experience managing and implementing grant-funded projects. These include management of several successful project phases (funded in part by Measure AA grant funding), including Deer Island Restoration (CEQA, permits, and final design), Bothin Marsh Restoration (30% design complete, 65% design in progress), and Greenwood Beach Restoration Design and Construction (65% design in progress).

Marin County Parks is currently managing the Bolinas Lagoon Wye Wetlands Resiliency Project (Bolinas Wye) and has designed and implemented several restoration projects (Mount Burdell in Novato, Aramburu Island in Tiburon, and Kent Island in Bolinas) that included wetlands (Creekside Restoration, Corte Madera Creek). The County has implemented grant-funded work with grantors that include Wildlife Conservation Board, California State Coastal Conservancy, National Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and US Army Corps of Engineers.

The County has been regularly sharing project updates, including the prior conceptual designs, and receiving feedback at local community meetings, including the Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association and at the publicly accessible CSA#6 meetings. Community members at the Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association and CSA#6 meeting attendees have expressed strong support for both the habitat restoration and dredging components of the proposed project. The County will continue public outreach and would also work with Point Blue Conservation Science and a local salt marsh harvest mouse expert to develop educational events for the public to learn more about marsh birds and wildlife.

This project is essential to preparing the Main Basin for future restoration actions to restore it to elevations that can support tidal marsh habitats. The basin is at high risk of being submerged due to the ongoing deterioration of the perimeter agricultural berms and sea level rise. If a natural event were to cause the perimeter berm to fail, then the entire Main Basin would become inundated and, based on existing ground elevations, the basin would be expected to convert to muted tidal open water or mudflat. Existing vegetated seasonal wetland habitats that currently support salt marsh harvest mouse would be lost, and the area would become significantly less valuable for Ridgway's rails and California black rails. The County has delayed dredging for over 30 years with the aim of finding a more ecologically suitable approach for the dredging and sediment placement. The County has identified McInnis Marsh as the most accessible and beneficial location for placing the dredge sediment; however, if planning for the restoration and beneficial reuse at McInnis Marsh is delayed due to lack of funding, the County may need to pursue other, less beneficial project alternatives. The requested Measure AA funding would allow the planning project to proceed without delay; and, pending CEQA review, the County would pursue additional grant funding for post-CEQA work, including final designs, permitting, and construction.

Site Description:

McInnis Marsh and portions of Gallinas Creek were once part of an extensive tidal marsh complex on the shore of San Pablo Bay near the mouths of Gallinas Creek and Miller Creek. Between 1914 and 1942 a series of non-engineered agricultural berms were constructed across the creek and marsh complex to support agriculture and transportation infrastructure. Berm construction disconnected McInnis Marsh from tidal inundation. Over time, ground elevations in the McInnis Marsh basin subsided, likely due to drying and de-watering of the marsh soils and the decomposition of organic material. Exhibit 1 shows the topography at McInnis Marsh. Present day ground surface elevation in the Main Basin is now approximately 2-ft above Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW), and 4-feet lower than the elevation of nearby tidal marshes. In the mid-20th century, additional berms were constructed subdividing the McInnis Marsh basin into

the areas now known as the Main Basin, Pencil and Tail. The Pencil and Tail basins are collectively known as Southern McInnis Marsh. The project area, 210 acres in total, is owned and operated by Marin County.

The south fork of Gallinas Creek drains an approximately 3.6 square mile watershed, including most of the Santa Venetia neighborhood, the Marin County Civic Center and Fair Grounds, portions of the San Pedro Mountain Preserve, and neighborhoods near Los Ranchitos Road west of Highway 101. In the early 1900s, berm construction confined the south fork of Gallinas Creek to its present-day corridor. Extensive development occurred in the diked baylands adjacent to the south fork of Gallinas Creek following channelization. Marin County's Department of Public Works, which will be the lead on the project, supported by Marin County Parks, manages County Service Area #6 (CSA#6), which receives a portion of the property tax from parcels near the south fork of Gallinas Creek to fund dredging and other channel maintenance. Through CSA#6 the creek channel was dredged four times between 1966 and 1994. The creek channel has not been dredged since 1994 and much of the channel is no longer accessible by small watercrafts during low tides.

The marsh areas on the channel/Bay side of the berms along the south fork of Gallinas Creek and around the proposed McInnis Marsh project area support healthy tidal marsh habitat and transitional wetlands and uplands that support a plethora of wildlife, including the federally and state endangered salt marsh harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys raviventris*) and Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus*), as well as California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*), and steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The non-tidal wetland habitats in the interior of McInnis Marsh also support several of these species; however, these non-tidal habitats are affected by irregular, non-tidal inundation patterns and extensive invasive vegetation coverage. The proposed project would support the creation and enhancement of habitats for these species and would improve the resilience of existing habitats to future sea level rise.

PROJECT FINANCING

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority	$1,300,000
Local funding (CSA#6 and County Measure A Funds)	$174,000
Project Total	**$1,474,000**

CONSISTENCY WITH AUTHORITY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION, THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY ACT:

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Act, Government Code Sections 66700-66706, authorizes the Authority to award grants to public entities, including owners or operators of shoreline parcels in the San Francisco Bay area, excluding the Delta primary zone, for eligible projects in the counties within the Authority's jurisdiction. The project is consistent with Section 66704.5(a) because the County of Marin is a public entity, and the project will occur in Marin County within the Authority's jurisdiction. The project is consistent with Section 66704.5(b)(1),

(3) because the planning will facilitate future restoration and enhancement of tidal wetlands and natural habitats along the shoreline and reversal of subsidence marsh to improve future tidal restoration potential and improved public access and recreation. The project is consistent with Section 66704.5(e), which provides that grants awarded under Section 66704.5(a) may be used to support all phases of planning for eligible projects, because the grant supports planning for eligible project activities.

CONSISTENCY WITH MEASURE AA PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES:

The project supports the *Vital Fish, Bird and Wildlife Habitat Program's* purpose to significantly improve wildlife habitat that will support and increase vital populations of fish, birds, and other wildlife in and around the Bay because it will produce plans for restoring and enhancing tidal marsh and reversing subsidence within McInnish Marsh through beneficial reuse of sediment. If implemented, the project will have the potential to provide habitat for a number of species, including the salt marsh harvest mouse, Ridgway's rail, the California black rail, and migrating steelhead.

The project supports the *Shoreline Public Access Program'*s purpose to enhance the quality of life of Bay Area residents, including those with disabilities, through safer and improved public access, as part of and compatible with wildlife habitat restoration projects in and around the Bay because the plans include public trail improvements and low-tide small boat access to the creek channel. The project will plan for removal of 0.4 miles of the overall trail network to support tidal restoration through levee breaching and lowering portions of the berms around south McInnis Marsh to allow for tidal habitat restoration. This segment is the most remote segment in the trail system, and one of the narrowest and most degraded segments of existing trail. McInnis Park includes roughly 2.75 miles of public trail, and improving the trail through retreading and making other repairs will improve the experience of trail users. The nearest San Francisco Bay Water Trail trailheads are roughly 3.5 miles away, and improving small-boat access expands recreational opportunities within the area.

CONSISTENCY WITH MEASURE AA PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA:

1. **Greatest positive impact.** The proposed project will design plans to contribute to the recovery of degraded baylands and support tidal marsh habitat and transitional wetlands and uplands that support native wildlife. This includes habitat for the salt marsh harvest mouse, Ridgway's rail, California black rail, and migrating steelhead. If implemented, the project will improve the quality and resilience of diked wetlands to sea level rise and help reverse subsidence to support future tidal marsh habitat restoration. The project also provides planning for recreational small boat access through a dredging design that utilizes the natural capacity of the creek to adapt to sea level rise and larger storm events. Co-benefits include planning for increased public access and recreational amenities through enhanced trail improvements for pedestrians and increased navigation for small boats. The project is consistent with Marin County Park's Strategic Plan (2008) Goal 1: "Protect, restore, and

preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations."

2. **Greatest long-term impact.** The proposed project will represent substantial progress towards a long-term approach for channel management in the baylands near the mouth of Gallinas Creek and Miller Creek and improve the resiliency of wetlands in McInnis Marsh to sea level rise. The proposed beneficial reuse of locally dredged sediments to reverse subsidence in the Main Basin would demonstrate a pathway to accelerate the restoration of tidal marsh habitats and improve sea-level rise resilience for subsided baylands in the project vicinity, and around the entire Estuary. If constructed, the proposed project would provide additional acreage of tidal marsh connectivity along the western shoreline of San Pablo Bay from China Camp to the Hamilton Wetlands. The project would also collect important monitoring data related to the application of geomorphically informed dredging templates to manage tidally influenced creek channels for recreation and stormwater drainage. The data and institutional knowledge gained through project planning, design, and potential construction, would provide valuable insights to support future management of subsided baylands and tidally influenced creek channels throughout the region.

3. **Leveraging resources and partnerships.** The project will leverage existing local property taxes that have been allocated to CSA#6, including for creek maintenance dredging work. Marin County Parks Measure A funding would also be provided. The County anticipates pursuing additional state and federal grant funding to support final design and construction from sources that may include but are not limited to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency.

4. **Economically disadvantaged communities.** McInnis Park is a regional park located adjacent to disadvantaged communities in San Rafael and Novato, as shown in the Authority's map of Economically Disadvantaged Communities by Census Tract. The park provides developed recreational facilities, including a golf course, soccer fields, softball fields, tennis courts, batting cages, miniature golf course, and a skate park. The restoration of McInnis Marsh with the proposed trail improvements and viewing areas would provide the people who use the park with an opportunity to explore the wetlands and learn about these natural resources and effects sea level rise on this landscape.

5. **Benefits to economy.** The County is interested in pursuing later project phases that support local job creation and workforce development. Marin County Parks has been in conversations with Insight Garden Program, which empowers incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals through gardening and environmental education and participants receive mentorship and hands-on training through workshops on eco-literacy, mindfulness, and sustainable gardening techniques that prepares them for reentry. If the project is advanced to construction, Marin County Parks would work with Insight Garden Program to develop a work program that could include landscape design and gardening specific

workforce development and job creation. This is one of the many partners that could be included in construction and monitoring related activities.

6. **Engage youth and young adults.** In partnership with the Board of Supervisors office, Supervisor Mary Sackett, District 3, Marin County Parks has involved high school youth at Terra Linda High in the Marin School of Environmental Leadership in project planning and will continue to engage with high school students enrolled in the program. While also working with Supervisor Sackett's office, Marin County Parks plans to engage with youth at Marin Academy and other nearby schools, including Venetia Valley.

7. **Monitoring, maintenance, and stewardship.** A preliminary Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan (MAMP) will be developed in coordination with permitting agencies as part of the proposed workplan. Marin County Parks will continue annual monitoring of the salt marsh harvest mouse, Ridgway's rails, and California black rail population at McInnis Marsh, and will conduct additional monitoring as determined in the MAMP, likely including vegetation community mapping, topographic/bathymetric surveys, and other geomorphic monitoring. Findings from the monitoring program would be documented in annual reports that would be made available to inform other baylands restoration and beneficial reuse science, planning, and design efforts. The County's Park Rangers and Natural Resources staff would address maintenance and stewardship of the McInnis Marsh restoration site. The County's rangers and biologists have extensive experience with the management of land, water, and vegetation within its parks and open space preserves, which support a variety of habitat types including tidal baylands.

8. **Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program.** The proposed project satisfies the selection criteria of the Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservation Program as follows:

    a. The proposed project is consistent with local and regional plans, including Marin County Parks' Strategic Plan (2008) goal to "[p]rotect, restore, and preserve the natural systems of the lands held in trust for current and future generations." The project is located in the Strategic Plan's "San Pablo Bayfront" land conservation area, which identifies prioritization of conservation of Gallinas Creek and associated tidelands. The project is also consistent with regional planning guidance documents, including the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals, Science Update 2015's strategy to "Restore the baylands to full tidal action before 2030." The project also advances the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals' priority of beneficially reusing all suitable dredged sediment as expressed in the strategy to "develop and implement a comprehensive regional sediment-management plan." The project is consistent with regional visions for sediment management such as the SFEI Adaptation Atlas. The Adaptation Atlas identifies opportunities for polder management in the "Main Basin" (polder management includes raising elevations in areas that are diked and below mean sea level), and tidal marsh restoration in southern McInnis Marsh.

b. McInnis Park is a regional recreational amenity serving a broad range of communities in east Marin County. The proposed project will facilitate habitat enhancement near trails and better visitor experiences.

c. Pending environmental review, Marin County is highly motivated to implement the proposed project in a timely manner. There is strong community interest in timely implementation of both the dredging and habitat restoration elements of the project, and the project is a priority for County leadership. The County holds all necessary land ownership rights and already has partial funding dedicated through CSA#6 to support future project implementation.

d. The proposed combination of dredging with restoration would allow for great benefits through the local beneficial reuse of the dredged sediment to support habitat enhancement and sea level rise resilience and there is very strong desire in the local community to quickly begin work on both the dredging and tidal marsh habitat restoration elements. Project delays could result in the County revaluating the project scope, and may lead the County to pursue project alternatives that would place the dredged material elsewhere, such as in-bay disposal. Doing so would result in a missed opportunity to locally use the dredged sediment to enhance the Main Basin, and the project would not be able to realize the associated benefits for subsidence reversal and improved sea level rise resilience.

e. Matching funds will be provided by CSA#6 ($107,000) and Marin County Parks through Measure A ($67,000), which will cover costs for updated creek surveying and development of a sampling analysis plan, coordination with the DMMO, and permit application coordination.

9. **San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Coastal Management Program.** The proposed project is consistent with policies of the BCDC Bay Plan in the following ways:

   Tidal Marshes and Mudflats Policy 5: Former tidal marshes and tidal flats that have been diked from the Bay should be restored to tidal action in order to replace lost historic wetlands.

   Fish, Other Aquatic Organisms and Wildlife Policy 1: To assure the benefits of fish, other aquatic organisms and wildlife for future generations, to the greatest extent feasible, the Bay's tidal marshes, tidal flats, and subtidal habitat should be conserved restored and increased.

   Climate Change Policy 6: Where feasible and appropriate, effective, innovative sea level rise adaptation approaches should be encouraged.

Dredging Policy 11: The Commission is encouraged to support projects that evaluate the feasibility of beneficial reuse of dredged sediment for habitat creation, enhancement, and restoration.

10. **San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's Implementation Strategy.** The proposed project would advance the SFBJV Implementation Strategy's goal of enhancing 4,000 acres of bay habitats in the Central Bay Subregion and is on the SFBJV's adopted project list.

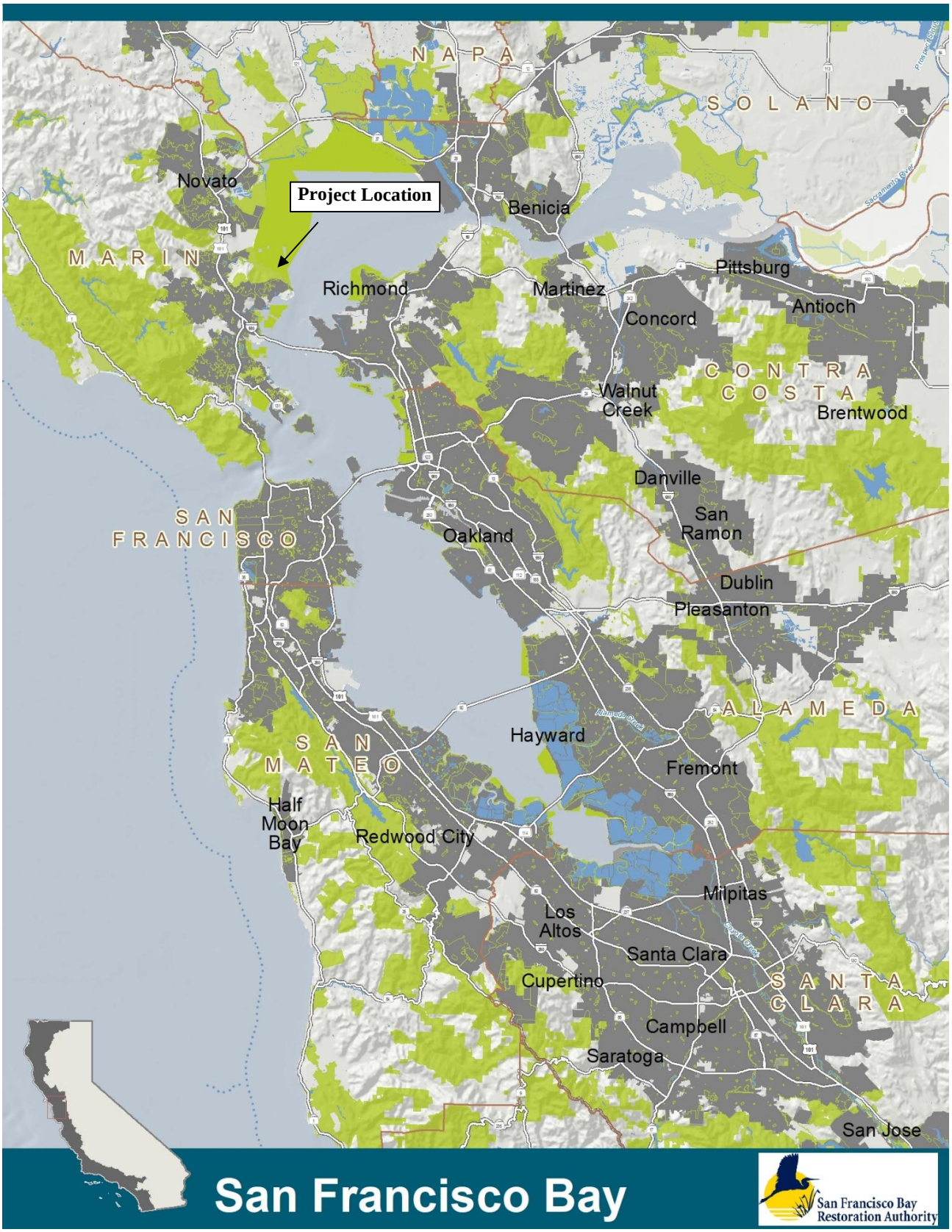
CONSISTENCY WITH AUTHORITY'S INTERIM TRIBAL CONSULTATION POLICY: Restoration Authority staff sent letters to tribal organizations with interest in Marin County to provide information about the McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project. One tribe requested to consult on the project.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15262 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded; and categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to 15306 of Title 14 of the CCR, which exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. The proposed project consists of collecting basic data that will not result in serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, designing plans, conducting environmental review, preparing permit applications, and performing technical studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded. Thus, the project involves planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved or funded and basic data collection, research, and/or resource evaluation activities. Consistent with Sections 15262 and 15306, the project will consider environmental factors and not include activities that will result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Upon approval of the project, Staff will file a Notice of Exemption.

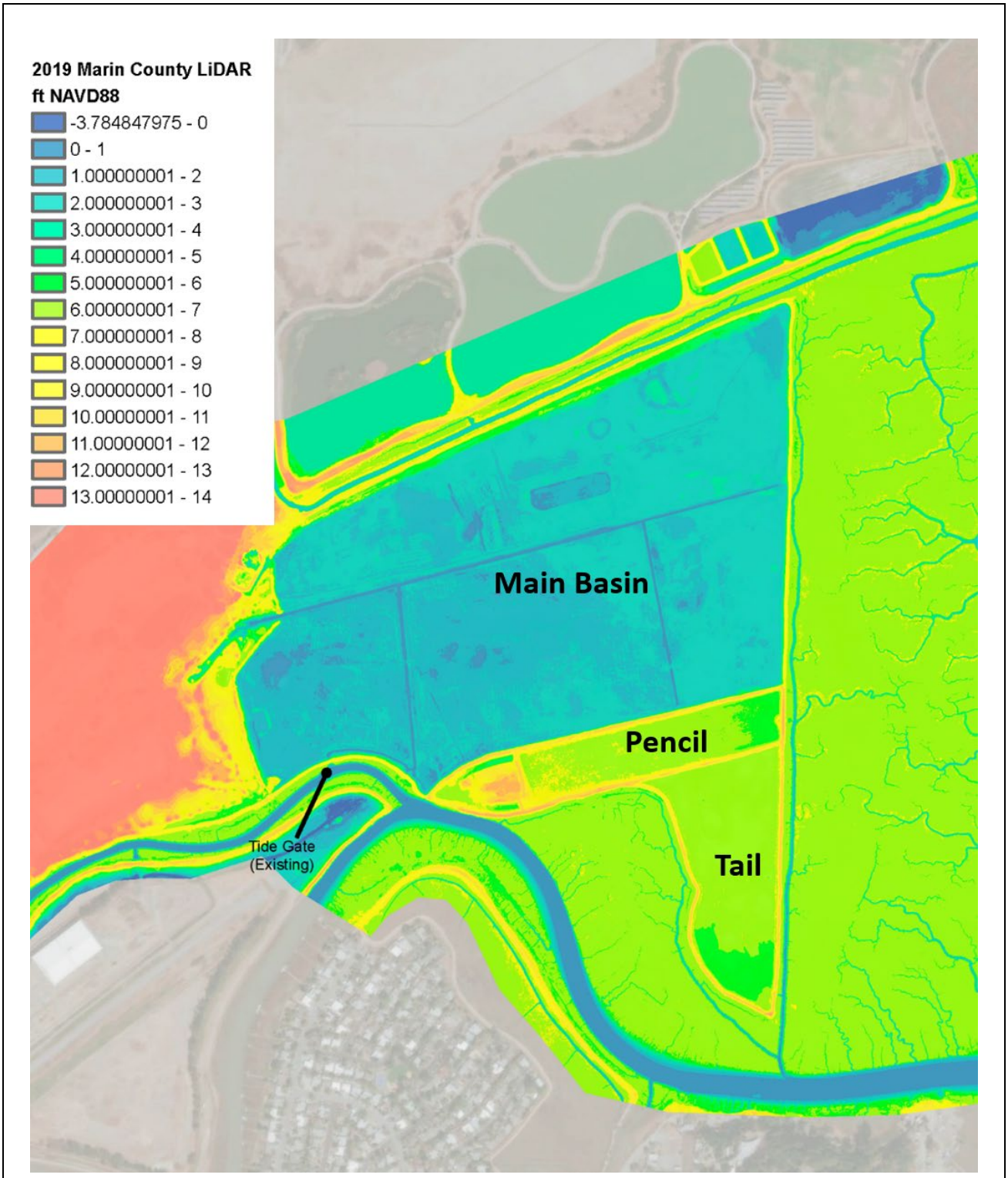
Exhibit 1: Project Location Map



SOURCE: Google Earth (aerial imagery)

McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration

Figure 2
Vicinity Map



SOURCE: Marin County LiDAR (2019)

McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration

Figure 3
Topographic Map

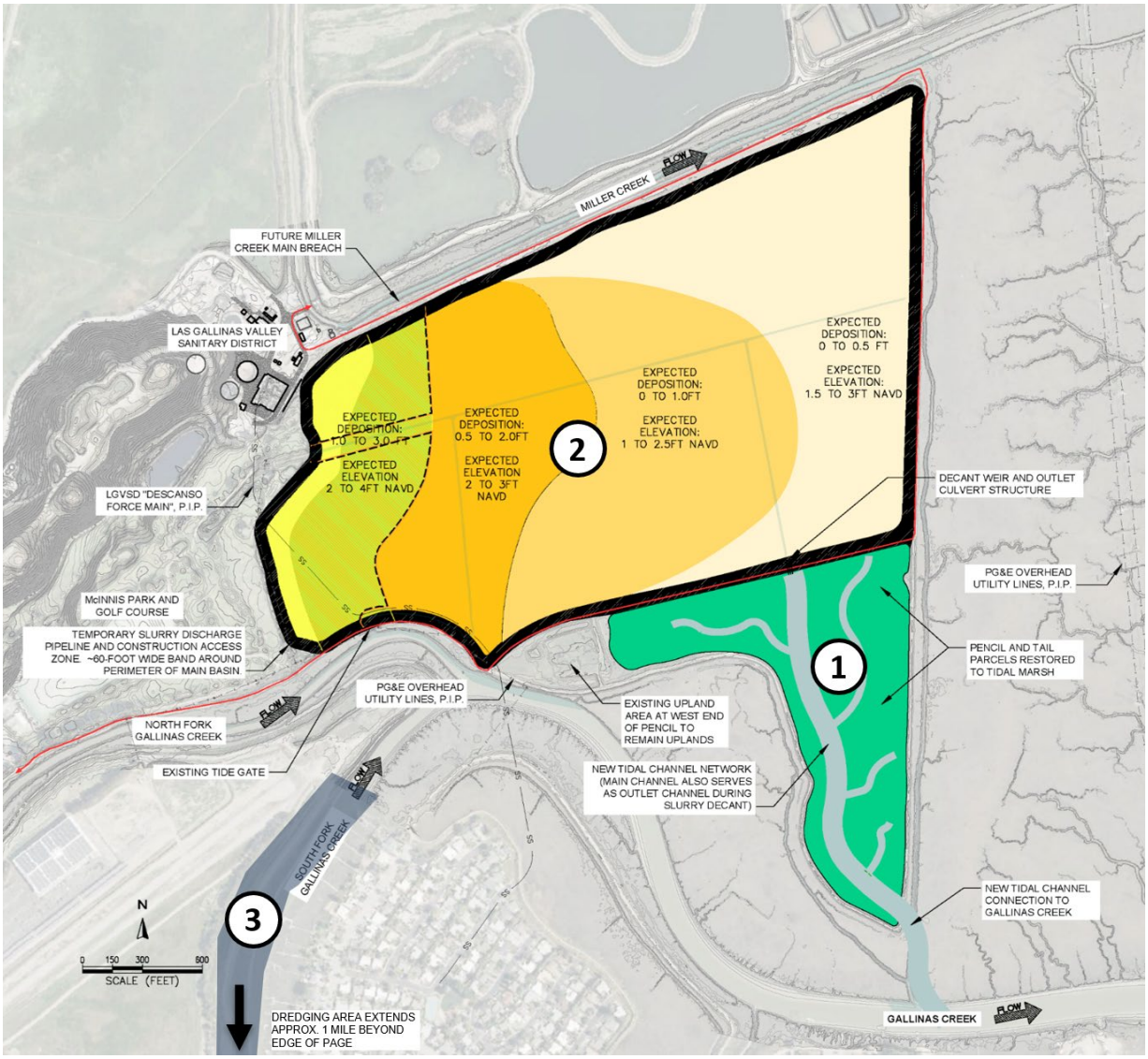


Figure 1: Conceptual Design for Project

SOURCE: ESA 2024 (Originally Figure 4)

McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration
Conceptual Design

Numbers indicate major project elements:

1) Tidal marsh restoration in southern McInnis Marsh
2) Beneficial reuse of ~100,000CY of dredged sediment in Main Basin
3) Geomorphic dredging on south fork of Gallinas Creek

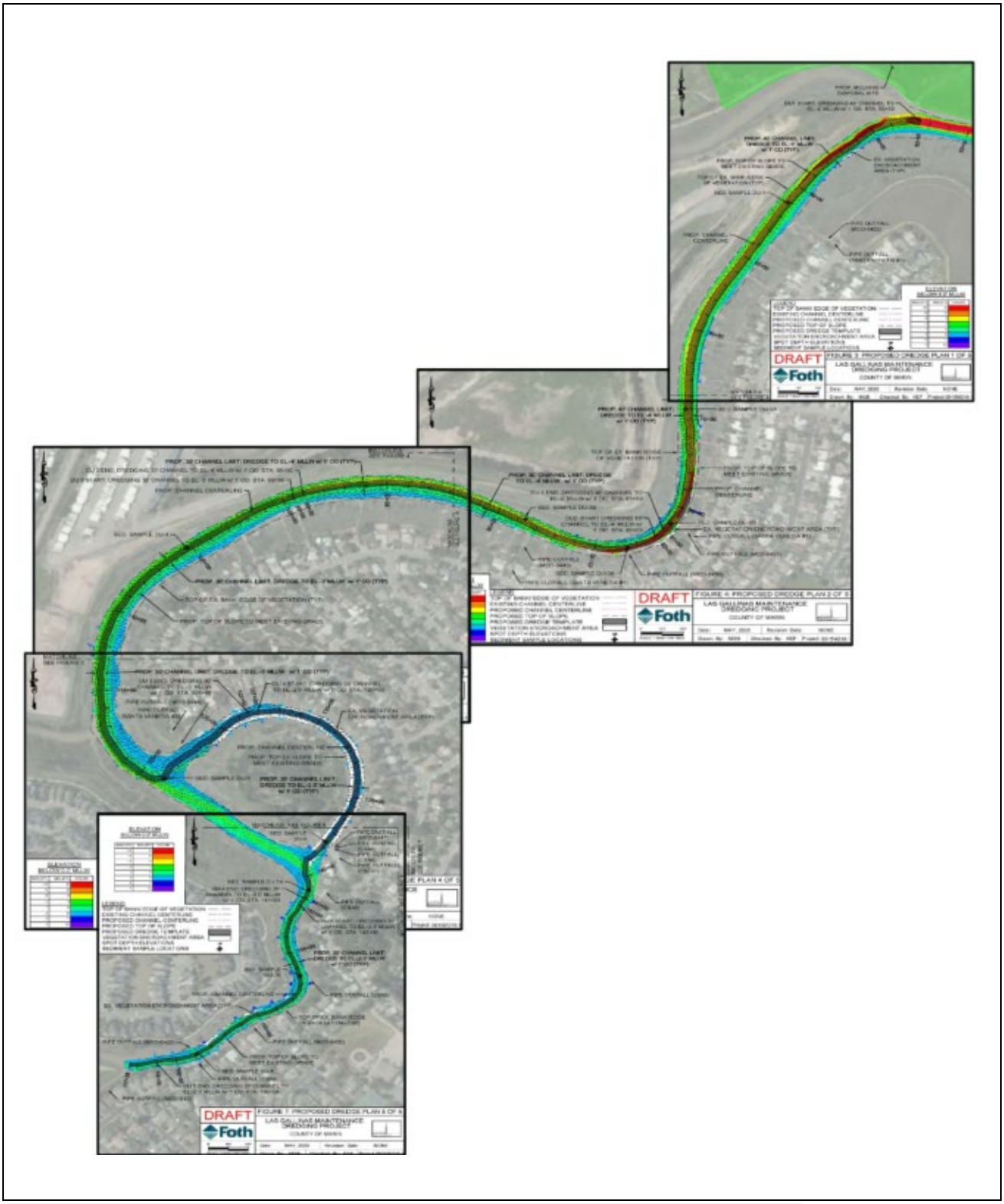


Figure 2: Conceptual Design for South Fork Gallinas Creek Dredging

SOURCE: Foth Engineering (2020)

McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration

Conceptual Design for South Fork Gallinas Creek Dredging

Figure 3: Gallinas Creek, low tide

Figure 4: Non-tidal view, McInnis Marsh Main

Figure 5: Non-tidal view (2), McInnis Marsh Main Basin

Figure 6: Non-tidal view (3), McInnis Marsh Main Basin

Figure 7: McInnis Marsh Pencil, tidal (at left) and non-tidal (at right) views

COUNTY OF MARIN

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MARY SACKETT
First District

Marin County Civic Center
3501 Civic Center Drive
Suite 329
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 473 7331 T
415 473 3645 F
415 473 6172 TTY
Mary.Sackett@MarinCounty.gov
MarinCounty.gov/board

September 30, 2024

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
c/o State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Support for Marin County's Geomorphic Dredge Sediment Beneficial Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Habitat Restoration Project

Dear San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority,

I am pleased to support the Measure AA Grant application submitted by the Marin County Department of Public Works, in partnership with Marin County Parks. This grant will enable critical steps, including the 65 percent design, CEQA-compliant documentation, and regulatory permitting for the proposed geomorphic dredging design of the south fork of Gallinas Creek and the beneficial reuse of dredged sediments at the main basin of McInnis Marsh.

Marin County Parks manages McInnis Park, located along the north side of Gallinas Creek. The McInnis Marsh project aims to restore approximately 30 acres of tidal habitat within the park, enhancing critical habitat for protected species including the black rail, Ridgway's rail, and salt marsh harvest mouse. This project would also prepare the main basin at McInnis Marsh for tidal restoration by raising site grades with the beneficial reuse of over 100,000 cubic yards of dredge sediments from the south fork of Gallinas Creek.

As the Marin County Supervisor representing the Parks on the North side of Gallinas Creek, Creek users, and residents on the Southside of the Creek, the importance of this proposed project cannot be overstated. It embodies the type of multi-benefit navigation and restoration initiatives that the County strongly supports, combining habitat restoration with essential tidal flood reduction. Additionally, the community members have been asking for the dredge for decades to aid in addressing storm events and resiliency for sea level rise, and for recreational access to the Creek and Bay. Marin County and our Parks Department have been working toward enhancing marsh resiliency and protecting McInnis Park, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, and our community against the impacts of sea level rise.

We look forward to working with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority to address our shared goals of expanding tidal marshes around San Francisco Bay and adapting to rising seas.
I strongly support this innovative project and thank you for your consideration. Please, contact me with any questions, and opportunities for collaboration.

Sincerely,

Mary Sackett
Supervisor, District 1
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Point Blue Conservation Science

Conservation science for a healthy planet
3820 Cypress Drive, #11 Petaluma, CA 94954
T 707.781.2555 | F 707.765.1685
pointblue.org

October 2, 2024

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
c/o State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for Marin County's Application to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) for the Gallinas Creek to McInnis Marsh Geomorphic Dredge Sediment Beneficial Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Habitat Restoration Project, Design, CEQA Compliance, and Regulatory Permitting

Dear San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority:

Point Blue Conservation Science is pleased to support the Measure AA Grant application submitted by the Marin County Department of Public Works in partnership with Marin County Parks for preparation of the 65 percent design, preparation of a document in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and regulatory permitting for the proposed geomorphic dredging of the south fork of Gallinas Creek and the beneficial reuse of dredge sediments at the main basin of McInnis Marsh.

At Point Blue, our mission is to conserve birds, other wildlife, and ecosystems through science, partnerships, and outreach. A major facet of the work we do at Point Blue is focused on improving the resiliency of our shorelines to climate change, which includes protecting, enhancing, and restoring wetlands habitats in the Bay. Our science-based approach to support thriving baylands ecosystems has guided restoration work throughout the Bay, including the Baylands Goals Science Update which was informed by our results on tidal marsh response to sea-level rise. We are committed to using our data and expertise to help inform restoration in Marin County to benefit wildlife and human communities.

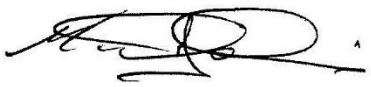
The proposed project would restore up to 30 acres to tidal marsh and would prepare the main basin at McInnis Marsh for tidal restoration by raising site grades with beneficial reuse of over 100,000 cubic yards of dredge sediments from the south fork of Gallinas Creek. The proposed project is exactly the type of multi-benefit navigation and restoration project with ancillary tidal flood reduction benefits that Point Blue Conservation Science has been working to promote around San Francisco Bay to address significant, long-standing challenges related to long-term marsh resiliency relative to sea level rise conditions.

The proposed project is in an area of important habitat for a variety of threatened and endangered species most notably the California Ridgway's Rail *(Rallus obsoletus obsoletus)* which Point Blue Conservation Science has been monitoring at McInnis Marsh since 2010. The tidal restoration of up to 30 acres adjacent to Gallinas Creek would increase habitat for Ridgway's rails and the salt marsh harvest mouse *(Reithrodontomys raviventris)* and would meet goals for the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture and other agencies that support healthy habitats. The reuse of

these sediments would raise elevations in the main basin of McInnis to levels suitable for tidal marsh vegetation and habitat restoration.

We strongly support this innovative project and thank you for your consideration of the grant application. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Manuel J. Oliva
Chief Executive Officer
Point Blue Conservation Science

Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 4047 · San Rafael · CA · 94913-4047

September 29, 2024

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
c/o State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for Marin County's Application to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority for the Gallinas Creek to McInnis Marsh Geomorphic Dredge Sediment Beneficial Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Habitat Restoration Project, Design, CEQA Compliance, and Regulatory Permitting

Dear San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority:

We are pleased to add our names in support of the Measure AA Grant application submitted by the Marin County Department of Public Works in partnership with Marin County Parks for preparation of the 65 percent design, preparation of a document in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and regulatory permitting for the proposed geomorphic dredging of the south fork of Gallinas Creek and the beneficial reuse of dredge sediments at the main basin of McInnis Marsh.

The proposed project would restore up to 30 acres to tidal marsh and would prepare the main basin at McInnis Marsh for tidal restoration by raising site grades with the beneficial reuse of over 100,000 cubic yards of dredge sediments from the south fork of Gallinas Creek.

The proposed project is in an area of important habitat for a variety of threatened and endangered species, most notably the Ridgway's Rail (Rallus obsoletus). The beneficial reuse of these dredge sediments would raise elevations in the main basin of McInnis to levels suitable for tidal marsh vegetation and habitat restoration. The restoration of the main basin at McInnis Marsh, which is adjacent to Gallinas Creek, would increase habitat for Ridgway's rails and the salt marsh harvest mouse (Reithrodontomys raviventris) and would meet goals for the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture and other agencies that support ecological values.

The proposed project is exactly the type of multi-benefit navigation and restoration project with ancillary tidal flood reduction benefits that Marin County District 1 supports to address significant, long-standing challenges related to long-term marsh resiliency relative to sea level rise conditions. We strongly support this innovative project and thank you for your consideration of the grant application.

Sincerely,

The SVNA Board of Directors and Land Use Committee