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San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Independent Citizens Oversight Committee Annual Report FY 2024-2025

Garth Hall, Vice Chair

Committee Members

Jim Fiedler, Chair, East Bay, Contra Costa County

Garth Hall, Vice Chair, South Bay, Santa Clara County

Arthur Deicke, At-Large, Sonoma County

Demece Garepis, West Bay, San Francisco County

Susan Ives, North Bay, Marin County

Dr. Terry Young, Chair, At-Large, Alameda County

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Oversight Committee Responsibilities

- Annual review of the Authority's:
  - conformance with Measure AA
  - audits and expenditures and financial reports
- Publish an annual report of its findings which will be posted on the Authority's website

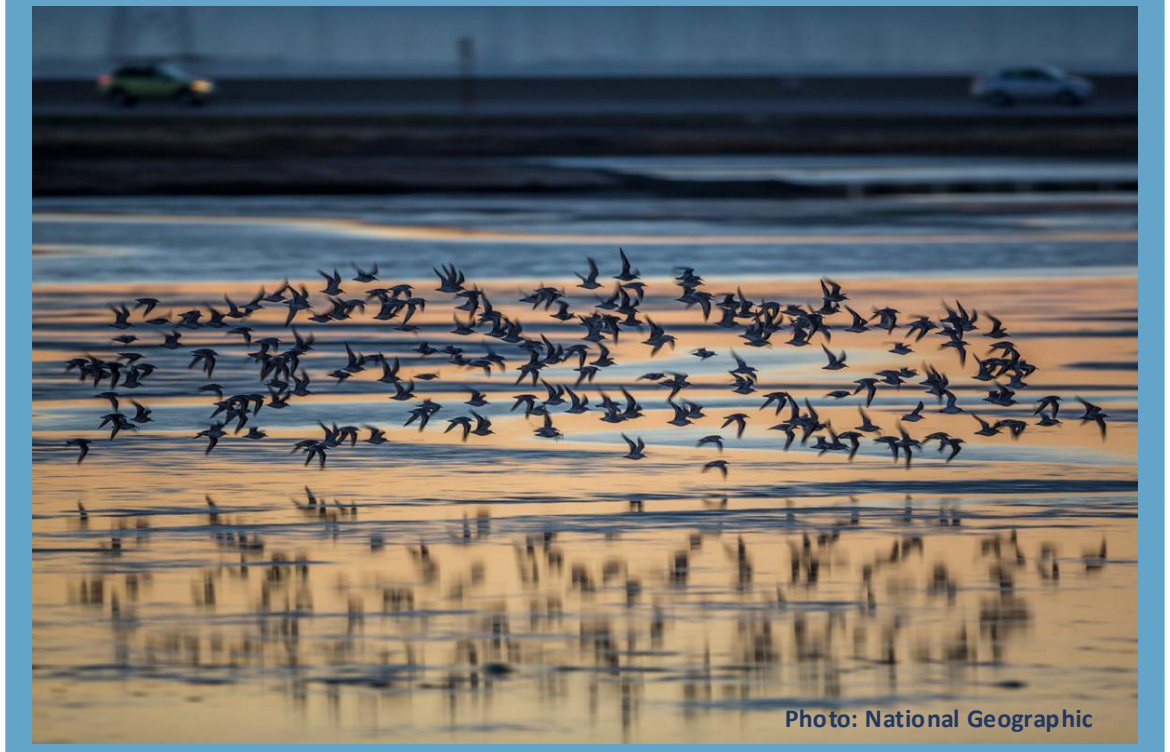

Photo: National Geographic

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Overview of Oversight Committee's Findings and Recommendations

Our Report is designed to improve the efficiency and impact of Measure AA funding, and to expand the Authority's ability to tell the story of Measure AA's successes and its benefits.

Summary Finding:

- Measure AA funds are being allocated appropriately for the purposes specified.
- The Authority is managing its project portfolio well, and its administrative services are well-organized.

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Financial Management: Allocation of Funds

Finding: The Authority's financial management is sound.

Recommendation: that the Authority update, every four years, its analysis of projected administrative costs and the funds available to cover those costs.

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Financial Management: County Collection Fees

Finding: The Authority's ability to seek more equity across counties in fees charged for collection of Measure AA parcel taxes is limited.

Recommendation: Encourage counties that charge high fees relative to other counties for Measure AA tax collection to look at how other counties approach parcel tax collection.

Terminal Four, Richmond

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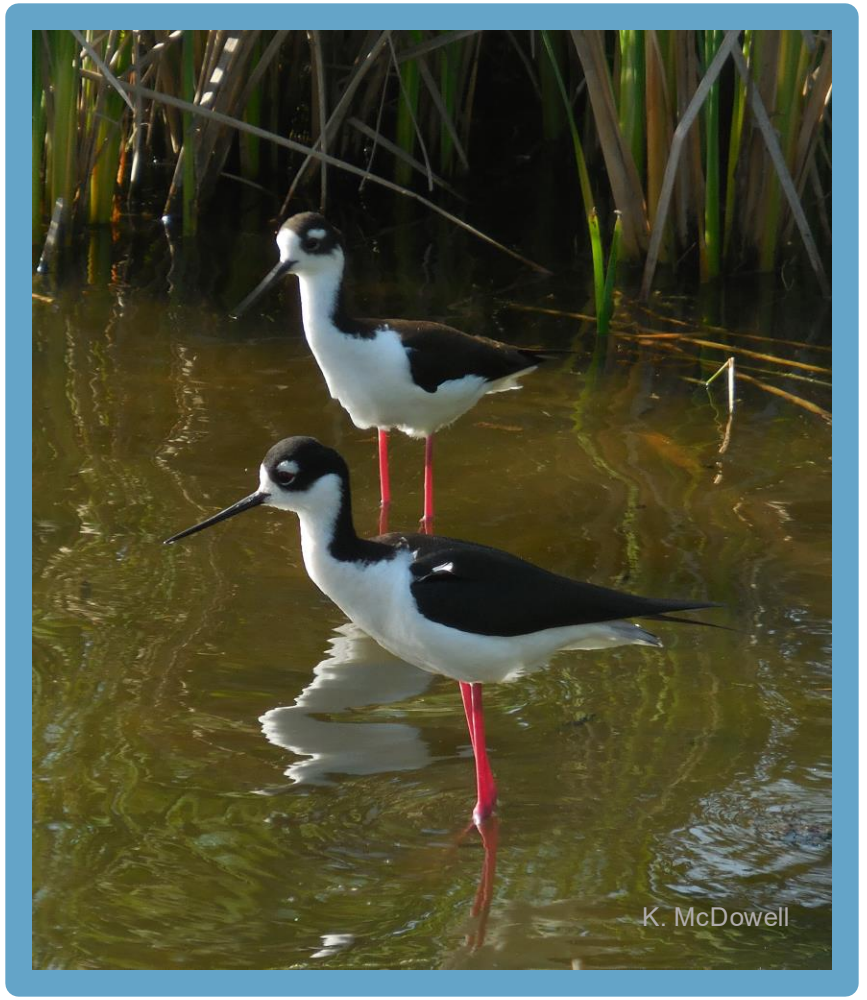
Project Portfolio Management: Landscape-Scale Attributes

Finding: The Authority has appropriately focused upon the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP) for performance measures for tidal marsh restoration projects.

Recommendation:

- Continue to report routinely on tidal marsh extent, marsh patch measurements, marsh condition, and "people and wetlands."
- Begin to report on the extent, location, and condition of estuarine-upland transition zones, shellfish beds, and submerged aquatic vegetation as soon as those indicator suites are developed.



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Project Portfolio Management: Economically Disadvantaged Communities

Finding:

- The Authority contributes funds to WRMP's evaluation of workforce training for Economically Disadvantaged Communities (EDCs) and Tribes for regional monitoring.
- The Authority continues direct community engagement to maximize the social, economic and environmental benefits of Authority-funded projects to EDCs.

Recommendation:

- Continue to encourage and report on workforce development among grantees.
- Again, create opportunities for EDC internships.
- Survey EDC members for feedback on the Authority's efforts to achieve benefits in their communities.

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Project Portfolio Management: The Bay Trail

Finding: Authority Staff is collaborating with Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Bay Trail staff and other parties to assess further trail projects that may be eligible for Measure AA funding.

Recommendation: Continue collaborating with MTC and other partners to assess Bay Trail projects that may be eligible for Measure AA funding. Evaluate whether it is feasible to achieve the projected gap of 8.8 miles of Bay Trail.

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Project Portfolio Management: Shellfish and Submerged Aquatic Vegetation

Finding: The Authority is now moving forward in partnership to identify additional shellfish and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) project sites and develop plans for these sites. Potential grantees with the necessary skills are now beginning to submit proposals to undertake this work.

Recommendation: Continue in efforts to restore habitats for shellfish and SAVs to achieve 100 percent of Measure AA campaign goals for these two habitat types.

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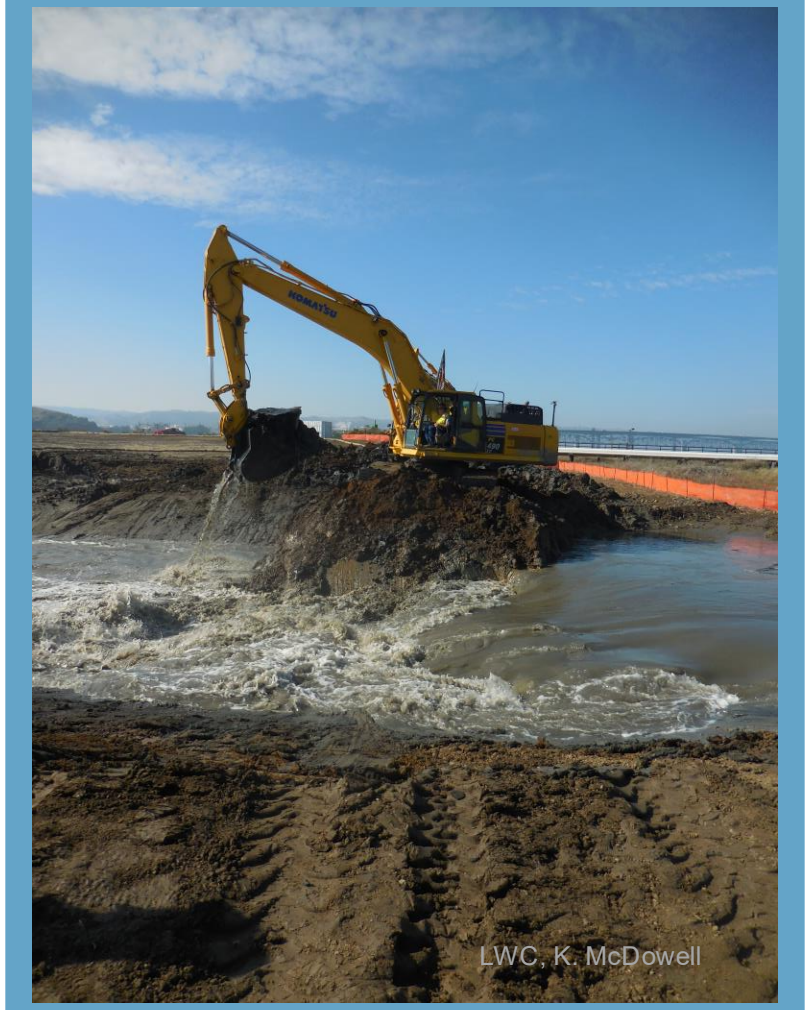
Project Portfolio Management: Forecasting and Budgeting

Finding: The Authority tracks and reports each Authority-funded construction project: grant amount, augmentation amount (if any), cumulative expenses, remaining grant balance, and approved project completion date.

Recommendation: The status of construction projects should be reported biennially. These future reports should include a Staff assessment, either graphically or in words, of whether the project is on track in terms of scope completion together with a brief description of any significant issues that may hinder the project's completion by the approved completion date.



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Project Portfolio Management: Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT)

Finding: The Oversight Committee reiterates its strong support for BRRIT and the improvements it continues to achieve in the permitting process.

Recommendation: If, in the future, the Authority finds that increasing the capacity of BRRIT will enable more projects to be funded and implemented on shorter timelines, then BRITT funding should be increased, including consideration of using investment interest income.

Encinal Dunes, Carmen Erasmus, EBRPD

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Communications

Finding: The Authority produces an annual report that targets primarily internal audiences, which limits the report's usefulness to raise awareness, understanding and support for the Authority's mission among external audiences.

Recommendation: Given the significant time and resources to produce the annual report, we encourage the Authority to rethink the annual report as a vehicle not only for disseminating information internally, but also for public engagement.

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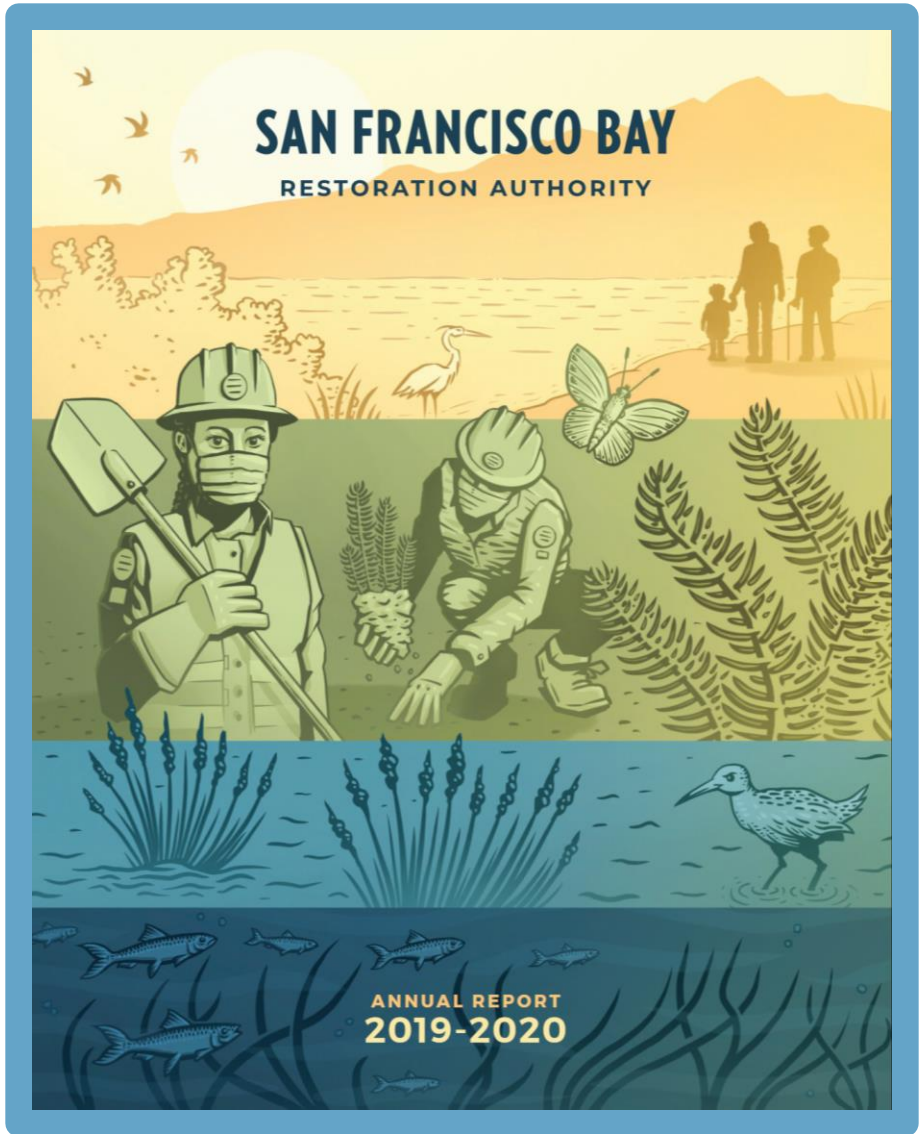

Communications
(cont.)

Finding: The Oversight Committee received a summary of the Authority's communication materials at its May 1, 2026 committee meeting.

Recommendation: To help the Oversight Committee better understand the Authority's communications goals, target audiences and outreach strategies we would like to have Staff provide the Oversight Committee with a communication "matrix". A communication "matrix" would provide an overview of communications vehicles currently in use. It would include the Authority's target audiences and the intended purpose of each communication.

Filming of NBC OpenRoad

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Communications
(cont.)

Finding: The Oversight Committee recognizes the 10th anniversary of Measure AA as an opportunity to showcase the cumulative impacts of the Authority's grant making with an eye to building public support for the Measure's potential renewal.

Recommendation:

The 10th anniversary communications plan should emphasize:

- Collaboration among Bay Area governments, agency partners and NGOs to share outreach materials and resources such as mailing lists and media contacts
- Consistent messaging among Authority partners by providing talking points and a common graphical identity for materials publicizing the 10th anniversary.
- The cumulative benefits of Measure AA to the public, including climate preparedness, habitat restoration, recreation, and quality of life for Bay Area residents.

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Applying Lessons Learned

Finding: Staff provides a feedback mechanism for grantees to give input to improve the grant process. Capturing and archiving experiences encountered in project management and sharing those lessons with grantees and future public officials attempting large-scale restoration projects helps create a culture of institutional learning and informs future restoration efforts.

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Looking to the Future

The passage of Measure AA in 2016 remains visionary, and the work of the Authority since then has helped to lead the way for an accelerating pace of adaptation and restoration.

Towards that end we are encouraged by the excellent work of the Authority.

Natasha Daniels

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Thank you

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