MEASURE AA
2026 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Released July X, 2026

Grants Funded by the San Francisco Bay Clean Water, Pollution Prevention and Habitat Restoration Measure

Applications Due by midnight on October X, 2026

Contents

I. Introduction 3

II. Eligibility and Required Criteria 3

A. Eligible Grantees 3

B. Eligible Project Locations 3

C. Eligible Project Phases 4

D. Eligible Project Types and Activities 4

III. Prioritization Criteria 6

IV. Grant Application Timeline and Process 9

A. Project Solicitation Period 9

B. Project Consultation 9

C. Grant Application 9

V. Grant Application Review and Evaluation 10

A. Application Screening 10

B. Review 10

C. Scoring Criteria: Quantitative and Qualitative 10

D. Grant Award 12

E. Board Meetings 12

F. Grant Agreement 13

VI. Additional Information 13

A. Available Funding 13

B. Project Timeframe 14

C. Funding Range 14

D. Environmental Documents 14
E. Project Monitoring and Reporting 14
F. Pilot Projects 14
VII. Grant Application 15
VIII. Appendices 16
Appendix A: Selection Criteria of SCC San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, BCDC Coastal Management Program, and SFBJV Implementation Strategy 17
Appendix B: Full Citations for Local and Regional Plans Most Relevant to the Grant Program 18
Appendix C: Delta Primary Zone Map 20
Appendix D: Definitions and Clarifications of Eligibility Criteria 21

I. Introduction

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority ("Authority") is a regional government agency whose purpose is to raise and allocate funds for the restoration and enjoyment of wetland and wildlife habitat along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. Funds are raised through Measure AA, which was put on the ballot by the Authority and passed by the nine-county Bay Area in 2016. Measure AA will fund shoreline projects that protect and restore San Francisco Bay through removing pollution, trash, and toxins to improve water quality; restoring habitat for fish, birds, and wildlife; protecting communities from floods; and increasing shoreline public access.

Funds will be disbursed through Grant Rounds or through the Community Grants Program. To be considered for funding in Grant Round 9, applicants must submit a full grant application by the submission deadline. If a project is eligible for the Community Grants Program, applications can be submitted and reviewed on a rolling basis (please view our website for more information about the Community Grants Program: https://www.sfbayrestore.org/community-grants).

II. Eligibility and Required Criteria

A. Eligible Grantees

Eligible grantees are federal, state, and local agencies; tribal governments; nonprofit organizations; and owners or operators of shoreline parcels in the San Francisco Bay Area, excluding the Delta primary zone.

B. Eligible Project Locations

Projects must be located within the nine Bay Area counties: Sonoma, Marin, Napa, Solano, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, or San Francisco.

Projects must also be along the shorelines of San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Carquinez Strait, Suisun Bay, and most of the Northern Contra Costa County Shoreline (not including the Delta Primary Zone – see Appendix C) that are in areas consistent with guidance provided in the *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Science Update* (2015) and *Subtidal Habitat Goals Report* (2010), including the following (see Appendix D for details):

- In subtidal areas (lying below mean low tide), within a reasonable distance of the shoreline;
- In baylands, i.e., areas that lie between the maximum and minimum elevations of the tides over multiyear cycles, including those areas that would be covered by the tides in the absence of levees or other unnatural structures, including the portion of creeks or rivers located below the head of tide; or

- On uplands adjacent to potential or actual tidal wetlands that can provide transitional habitat and/or marsh migration space, as well as areas that are needed to enhance the project's resilience to projected sea level rise.

C. Eligible Project Phases

Eligible project phases include acquisition[1], planning and design, environmental studies to prepare California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation, permitting, construction, monitoring and evaluation, operation and maintenance, and scientific studies as part of the project to guide adaptive management.

D. Eligible Project Types and Activities

To be eligible for Measure AA funds, projects must qualify as one or more of the three Restoration Act project types listed below:

1. Habitat Project

A habitat project will restore, protect, or enhance tidal wetlands, managed ponds, or natural habitats on the shoreline in the San Francisco Bay area, excluding the Delta Primary Zone.[2] "Natural habitats" are considered those habitats that are consistent with existing guidance on baylands, riparian, and subtidal habitats, including those that have been modified by human activity, but still provide tangible wildlife support and/or ecological value.[3] Habitat enhancement includes, but is not limited to, increased ecological connectivity that enables fish and wildlife to migrate into new habitat areas.

2. Flood Management, as part of a Habitat Project

A flood management project will build or enhance shoreline levees or other flood management features that are part of a project to restore, enhance, or protect tidal wetlands, managed ponds, or natural habitats identified under Habitat Project (as defined in #1 above). Flood management projects will be considered part of a habitat project if the habitat project is in the planning stages, underway, or partially complete. Generally, flood management projects will be considered part of habitat projects if they are included in the plan, environmental documents, and/or permits for the particular habitat restoration project with which they are associated.

3. Public Access, as part of a Habitat Project

A public access project will provide or improve public access or recreational amenities that are part of a project to restore, enhance, or protect tidal wetlands, managed ponds, or natural habitats identified in Habitat Project (as defined in #1 above). Public access projects will be

[1] If your project is an acquisition, please include details of the restoration benefits in the project description section of the application. See Appendix D (3. Eligible Project Phases) for details on acquisitions.
[2] A Delta Primary Zone map can be found in Appendix C.
[3] A list of relevant local or regional plans regarding habitat types can be found in Appendix B.

considered part of a habitat project if the habitat project is in the planning stages, underway, or partially complete. Generally, public access projects will be considered part of habitat projects if they are included in the plan, environmental documents, and/or permits for the particular habitat restoration project with which they are associated.

Project types that qualify under the Restoration Act (see above) may receive funding for the following activities described in Measure AA:

The *Safe, Clean Water and Pollution Prevention Program's* purpose is to remove pollution, trash and harmful toxins from the Bay in order to provide clean water for fish, birds, wildlife and people. Eligible activities are:

a. Improving water quality by reducing pollution and engaging in restoration activities, protecting public health and making fish and wildlife healthier.
b. Reducing pollution levels through shoreline cleanup and trash removal from the Bay.
c. Restoring wetlands that provide natural filters and remove pollution from the Bay's water.
d. Cleaning and enhancing creek outlets where they flow into the Bay.

The *Vital Fish, Bird and Wildlife Habitat Program's* purpose is to significantly improve wildlife habitat that will support and increase vital populations of fish, birds, and other wildlife in and around the Bay. Eligible activities are:

a. Enhancing the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, shoreline parks and open space preserves, and other protected lands in and around the Bay, providing expanded and improved habitat for fish, birds and mammals.
b. Protecting and restoring wetlands and other Bay and shoreline habitats to benefit wildlife, including shorebirds, waterfowl and fish.
c. Providing for stewardship, maintenance and monitoring of habitat restoration projects in and around the Bay, to ensure their ongoing benefits to wildlife and people.

The *Integrated Flood Protection Program's* purpose is to use natural habitats to protect communities along the Bay's shoreline from the risks of severe coastal flooding caused by storms and high water levels. Eligible activities are:

a. Providing nature-based flood protection through wetland and habitat restoration along the Bay's edge and at creek outlets that flow to the Bay.
b. Building and/or improving flood protection levees that are a necessary part of wetland restoration activities, to protect existing shoreline communities, agriculture, and infrastructure.

The *Shoreline Public Access Program'*s purpose is 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. Eligible activities are:

a. Constructing new, repairing existing and/or replacing deteriorating public access trails, signs, and related facilities along the shoreline and managing these public access facilities.
b. Providing interpretive materials and special outreach events about pollution prevention, wildlife habitat, public access, and flood protection, to protect the Bay's health and encourage community engagement.

Additional Eligibility Considerations

Mitigation projects are generally not eligible for Measure AA funds.[4] Environmental mitigation is the action or activity required by a regulatory agency to remedy, reduce, or offset known negative impacts to the environment.

Additionally, the Authority's grant funding is not intended to go towards the cost of dredging navigation channels, ports, or marinas, but the Authority may provide grant funds to support the incremental cost of delivery of dredged material to a restoration project that requires sediment in order to achieve habitat restoration goals. The Authority may also consider funding projects that incorporate dredging into the design of a restoration or enhancement effort, where the dredge design approach is based on sustainable geomorphic processes using best available science.

III. Prioritization Criteria

Eligible projects will be evaluated on the depth and breadth with which they achieve the following priorities described in Measure AA:

[4] See Appendix D for more details on mitigation projects (5A. Voluntary vs Mitigation Projects) and projects that involve dredging (5B. Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediment).

a. Have the greatest positive impact[5] on the Bay as a whole, in terms of clean water, wildlife habitat and beneficial use to Bay Area residents[6].
b. Have the greatest long-term impact[7] on the Bay, to benefit future generations.
c. Provide for geographic distribution across the region and ensure that there are projects funded in each of the nine counties in the San Francisco Bay Area over the life of Measure AA.
d. Increase impact value by leveraging state and federal resources and public/private partnerships.
e. Benefit economically disadvantaged communities[8].

[5] *Greatest positive impact* refers to projects that demonstrate, through the use of established best available scientific knowledge; adopted regional and local plans; relevant studies; and established community priorities, the greatest potential benefits to the Bay ecosystem. Some of most relevant regional and subregional plans to cite, as applicable, are:

- Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals, Science Update 2015;
- San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Report;
- Adaptive Management Plan of the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project;
- Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation and Restoration Plan;
- Petaluma River Baylands Strategy;
- Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy; and
- Novato Creek Baylands Vision.

Full citations for these and other relevant plans are provided in Appendix B. When these plans are cited, describe the extent to which the project contributes to landscape-scale ecological benefits, such as:

- Increased complexity of the habitat matrix;
- Improved habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors;
- Creek-marsh connections; and
- Transition zones that can be used as refugia for wildlife as well as marsh migration as sea level rises.

In addition, projects with the greatest positive impact include those that provide co-benefits, including, but not limited to, improved flood protection, public access and recreational amenities, beneficial reuse of dredged material and carbon sequestration.

[6] Note that the Authority's Equity Guidelines call for prioritizing projects that "[e]nsure that public access elements of projects consider accessibility for people with disabilities."

[7] *Greatest long-term impact* refers to projects that best demonstrate an ability to provide benefits over long timeframes despite the potential for changing circumstances such as changes in freshwater supply, sediment delivery, species composition, and rising sea levels. Projects should use the best available science to incorporate future climate variability, ideally providing resilience across multiple climate change scenarios.

[8] *"An economically disadvantaged community* (EDC) is defined as a community with a median household income less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). Within this set of low-income communities, communities of particular concern include those that: are historically underrepresented in the environmental policymaking and/or projects, bear a disproportionate environmental and health burden, are most vulnerable to climate change impacts due to lack of resources required for community resilience, or are severely burdened by housing costs, increasing the risk of displacement." A project's ability to provide benefits to these communities will be judged based on the direct involvement and support of local community groups; a demonstrated track record working within communities; the use of proven strategies to increase relevance of messaging and outreach; and the ability to alleviate multiple stressors within communities, including, but not limited to, addressing the need for additional recreational amenities, resilience to climate change, reductions in pollution burden, greater civic engagement, and enhanced leadership development opportunities. For guidance and examples of strategies, see the Authority's *Equity Guidelines* and the State Coastal Conservancy's *Tips for Meaningful Community Engagement*.

f. Benefit the region's economy, including local workforce development[9], employment opportunities for Bay Area residents, and nature-based flood protection for critical infrastructure and existing shoreline communities.
g. Work with local organizations and businesses to engage youth and young adults and assist them in gaining skills related to natural resource protection.
h. Incorporate monitoring, maintenance and stewardship to develop the most efficient and effective strategies for restoration and achievement of intended benefits.
i. Meet the selection criteria of the Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program and are consistent with the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's coastal management program and with the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's implementation strategy.[10]

In addition, eligible projects will be prioritized based on the extent to which the project includes a serious effort to engage California Native American Tribes and tribal communities.[11] The Authority strives to provide tribes with equitable access to the Measure AA Grant Program, as detailed in the Authority's Tribal Engagement Recommendations. The San Francisco Estuary Partnership's Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program and their partners have developed a set of Best Practices for Tribal Engagement. The Authority encourages applicants to use these Best Practices to help them meaningfully engage with tribes in their projects.

[9] The Authority requires grantees to negotiate, enter into and execute a project labor agreement with the local building trades council or councils, subject to certain conditions and exceptions outlined in its Resolution 22, adopted November 30, 2016.

[10] See Appendix A for the selection criteria of the Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Coastal Management Program, and the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's Implementation Strategy.

[11] California Native American Tribes are recognized by the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission; some but not all these tribes have federal recognition. The Authority can enter into a grant agreement with federally recognized tribes as well as non-federally recognized tribes and tribal communities applying as nonprofit organizations or through fiscal sponsors. As described in the State Coastal Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria, "Examples of tribal engagement include good faith, documented efforts to work with tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area in the following types of ways:

- Communicate, consult, or engage with tribes who are traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area as early as possible in project development.
- Work with tribes to enable traditional stewardship and cultural practices on ancestral land and co-management of their ancestral lands and natural resources.
- Assist tribes to regain access to their ancestral lands on the coast.
- Incorporate indigenous voices, leadership, and perspectives, including traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous stewardship, and educational programs.
- Respect tribal knowledge and concerns in the project.
- Protect archaeological and cultural resources or mitigate to the extent feasible impacts to these resources.
- Include tribal land acknowledgement and accurate historical information in signage, communications, and other project information."

IV. Grant Application Timeline and Process

A. Project Solicitation Period

Requests for Proposals will be posted on the Authority's website and sent out to the Authority's mailing lists. The timeline below is subject to change.

Request for Proposals Released	July X, 2026
Informational Webinar	July X, 2026
Grant Round Full Applications Due	October X, 2026 by midnight
Grant Round Evaluation Period	Fall 2026 to Winter 2026/2027
Grant Round Funding Recommendations and Board Meeting	Spring 2027

The link to sign up for the webinar will be posted on the Authority's website and sent out to the Authority's mailing list.

All Authority grants will be awarded at a San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Governing Board meeting. The specific meeting when a grant will be considered will depend on project readiness and staff capacity.

B. Project Consultation

Applicants for the Grant Round are strongly encouraged to submit a pre-application, so Authority staff can determine if a project is eligible for our funding. Authority staff will follow up with a phone consultation. Applicants can then submit a full application based on feedback from the consultation.

Applicants for the Community Grants Program need to submit a Community Grants Program Application to provide a basis for the initial conversation between the community-based organization and staff. Applicants can then submit a revised application based on feedback from the consultation. View https://www.sfbayrestore.org/community-grants for more information.

C. Grant Application

Applicants must submit a complete application to grants@sfbayrestore.org. All materials are posted on the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority's Grants webpage.

Applicants can demonstrate community support for their projects by including support letters from community representatives.

V. Grant Application Review and Evaluation

A. Application Screening

The Authority staff will screen grant applications to ensure that:

- The project and potential grantee meet the Authority's eligibility requirements as outlined in the Authority's enabling legislation;
- Proposed activities are eligible for funding as set forth in Measure AA; and
- The project will be ready to use Authority funds within 12 months of the application due date. The Authority will only authorize funding for construction projects that have completed CEQA analysis.

If an application does not pass the screening process, Authority staff will notify the applicant. Upon request, Authority staff will provide feedback on whether and how the proposal could be modified to meet the screening criteria, and the applicant may resubmit it in a future grant round.

B. Review

Complete applications that have passed the screening process will be reviewed and evaluated by a minimum of three professionals with relevant expertise in the Authority's program areas (as described in the enabling legislation and Measure AA). Reviewers may include, but are not limited to, Authority staff and Advisory Committee members.

C. Scoring Criteria: Quantitative and Qualitative

For Grant Round applications, reviewers will score projects quantitatively within the categories below, as well as evaluate projects qualitatively against one another.

Criteria		Points	Where to Find the Corresponding Content in the Grant Application
I.	The extent to which the project implements the programs and activities of Measure AA (Section II).	20 Points	I. Grant Application – Project Description: #1. Project Eligibility #2. Project and Site Description #3. Specific Tasks
II.	The extent to which the project achieves the priorities of Measure AA, as defined by the prioritization criteria under Section III.	40 Points	III. Grant Application – Prioritization Criteria: #1 - #11

III.	The project's likelihood of success, based on:
	• Applicant's capacity and resources to complete and maintain the project
	• Project's level of community involvement and benefits and/or innovative partnerships[12]
		40 Points
		
		20 = Applicant's capacity and resources to complete the project effectively, and to maintain the project over time
		
		20 = Project's level of meaningful community involvement and benefits and/or innovative partnerships
			<u>Applicant's capacity and resources to complete and maintain the project:</u>
			• I. Grant Application – Project Description:
			  ○ #7 Measuring Success
			  ○ #8 Applicant History
			  ○ #9 Barriers and Risks
			• II. Grant Application – Preliminary Budget
			• III. Grant Application – Prioritization Criteria
			  ○ #3 Leveraging Resources and Partnerships
			  ○ #7 Monitoring, maintenance, and stewardship
			
			<u>Project's level of community involvement and benefits, Tribal engagement, coordination with local jurisdictions, and/or innovative partnerships:</u>
			• I. Grant Application – Project Description:
			  ○ #5 Project Partners
			  ○ #6 Community Support, Involvement, and Benefits
			• III. Grant Application – Prioritization Criteria
			  ○ #4 Economically disadvantaged communities
			  ○ #5 Benefits to economy
			  ○ #6 Engage youth and young adults
			• Application Checklist items – Support Letters

		100 Total Points	

[12] For the purposes of this grant program, an innovative partnership is defined as two or more stakeholder groups working together creatively to develop and implement a multi-benefit project. Innovative partnerships could be collaboration between community-based non-profit organizations; environmental non-profit organizations; federal, state, local, and tribal governments; health care providers; faith-based organizations; philanthropies; civic organizations; educational institutions; arts organizations, local businesses, or others.

Quantitative Scoring
To achieve the maximum number of points, the proposal must provide clear, substantive, and coherent evidence that the proposed work will adequately address all relevant aspects of that category.

Proposals that describe in sufficient detail how the proposed work will effectively address multiple, or excel in a particular, aspect(s) of a category can achieve up to 75% of a category's points. For example, projects can receive high scores for Section II by addressing most of the priorities adequately, or by addressing several of the priorities very well.

Proposals that address multiple or single aspects of a category without clearly describing how these aspects would result in measurable benefits will not receive more than half a category's points.

Proposals that need significant work may mention, but not adequately describe, how the proposal would meet some or one relevant aspect/s of that category, or not mention or adequately describe those aspects at all and shall not receive more than 25% of a category's points.

Qualitative Review
In addition to quantitative points as described above, each proposal will have an additional qualitative review section. This section will include a space for reviewers to record the proposal's top strengths, as well as the proposal's top weaknesses, when considering Measure AA's four programs and related activities, Measure AA's priority criteria, and the project's likelihood of success.

D. Grant Award

Based on proposal review and scoring, Authority staff will decide which applications to recommend to the Governing Board for funding, and the amount of funding to recommend. Authority staff will take into account the project's merit and urgency relative to other eligible projects, the total amount of funding available for projects, and the readiness of the projects to proceed. Authority staff will finalize their list of funding recommendations three to four months after grant applications are due, and then will notify applicants.

E. Board Meetings

The Governing Board will consider and make grant approvals at public meetings. The meeting schedule and materials will be made available to the public in advance, through the Authority's website.

F. Grant Agreement

Once the Governing Board has approved a grant, Authority staff will prepare a grant agreement setting forth the terms and conditions of the grant. The grantee must sign the grant agreement and comply with its conditions in order to receive funds. Typical grant agreement provisions will include:

- Grantees must submit a detailed project work program and budget and the names of any contractors.
- Grantees must provide proof that all necessary permits have been obtained.
- Grantees must provide proof of liability insurance ~~and name the Authority as an additional insured~~.
- Where appropriate, grantees will be required to provide signage informing the public that the project received Authority grant funding.
- Grant funds will typically be paid on a reimbursement basis, although advanced payments to small nonprofit organizations are allowable in some cases.
- Grantees must submit invoices and progress reports regularly, and at least quarterly.
- Grantees must meet project completion requirements (typically grants will include a 10% withholding that is not paid until the project is completed), including a final report as outlined in section VI, Project Monitoring and Reporting, below.
- Grantee must agree to monitor and maintain the project for an agreed-upon time, typically for a period of 20 years, and if the grantee is not the landowner, the grantee must secure the landowner's written permission to monitor and maintain the project for that period.
- Grantees may be required to reimburse the Authority for some or all of the disbursed grant funds if the project is not satisfactorily completed.
- The Authority requires grantees to negotiate, enter into and execute a project labor agreement with the local building trades council or councils, subject to certain conditions and exceptions outlined in its Resolution 22, adopted November 30, 2016.
- Grantees must agree to maintain records and may be subject to audits.
- Construction projects will need to be bonded.

VI. Additional Information

A. Available Funding

The Authority expects to generate approximately $25 million each year for twenty years for a total of $500 million, which will be disbursed through grant rounds. Grantees should limit indirect costs to a maximum of 20% of a grant request.

B. Project Timeframe

The Authority may request that proponents of projects with schedules longer than five years break their projects into phases and return to the Authority for the funding and authorization of each phase of the project.

C. Funding Range

There is not a set funding range for proposals – past project budgets have ranged from several hundreds of thousands of dollars to multimillion-dollar projects. The Authority currently anticipates funding approximately 5-10 projects per grant round.

D. Environmental Documents

The Authority is required to comply with CEQA and all other applicable environmental laws. Grant applicants must consider whether their proposed project will trigger the need for an environmental impact report or negative declaration, or whether a CEQA exemption applies. Grant applicants that are not potential CEQA lead agencies, e.g., nongovernmental organizations, should work with a lead agency, e.g., the planning department of the city or county in which the project is located, to determine the CEQA requirements.

E. Project Monitoring and Reporting

All grant applications must include a plan for how the effectiveness of the project will be measured and reported. Monitoring and reporting will vary depending on the nature of the project and may include regional monitoring approaches as appropriate. Authority staff may work with grantees to develop appropriate monitoring and reporting templates and procedures.

All projects must complete a final report, including a lessons-learned summary report describing lessons learned under all phases of the project including design, construction, and monitoring. Lessons learned should focus on project trouble areas and issues to be addressed as a guide to helping future projects to avoid these issues to the extent possible. The Authority's monitoring requirements will seek to assess the ongoing effectiveness of the project.

F. Pilot Projects

Pilot and demonstration projects are eligible under this grant program and serve to enhance our technical understanding of "nature based" approaches to wetlands enhancement and flood protection around the Bay.

VII. Grant Application

Please check the Authority's website to access the Grant Application, linked under the Restoration Authority Grants tab.

VIII. Appendices

Appendix A: Selection Criteria of SCC San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, BCDC Coastal Management Program, and SFBJV Implementation Strategy

Appendix B: Full Citations for Regional Plans Most Relevant to the Grant Program

Appendix C: Delta Primary Zone Map

Appendix D: Definitions and Clarifications of Eligibility Criteria

Appendix A: Selection Criteria of SCC San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, BCDC Coastal Management Program, and SFBJV Implementation Strategy

See below for details regarding bullet point I, above under section III. Prioritization Criteria.

I. State Coastal Conservancy's (SCC) San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program

1. "Are supported by adopted local or regional plans;[13]
2. Are multijurisdictional or serve a regional constituency;
3. Can be implemented in a timely way;
4. Provide opportunities for benefits that could be lost if the project is not quickly implemented;
5. Include matching funds from other sources of funding or assistance."

II. San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's (BCDC) Coastal Management Program

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Coastal Management Program is based on the provisions and policies of the McAteer-Petris Act, the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act of 1977, the San Francisco Bay Plan, the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan, and the Commission's administrative regulations. The McAteer-Petris Act and the Bay Plan apply to the entire Bay, while the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act and Suisun Marsh Protection Plan apply only to Suisun Marsh.

The Bay Plan elements most relevant to this grant program include policies related to habitat goals, climate change resilience, setting goals and success criteria, monitoring and adaptive management, public access, mosquito abatement, fill for habitat restoration, and environmental justice and social equity. Consistency with these policies is required in order to obtain a permit for project construction from the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. View the full Bay Plan here: http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/plans/sfbay_plan.html.

III. San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's (SFBJV) Implementation Strategy

Applicants may describe how their project is consistent with the Joint Venture's Implementation Strategy, indicate that their project is on the Joint Venture's project list, and/or indicate that they consulted the Joint Venture to assess whether their project would be eligible for the Joint Venture project list.

- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture 2022 Implementation Strategy: https://sfbayjv.org/conservation/planning/
- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Projects Information: https://sfbayjv.org/conservation/projects/
- How to Get Your Project Added to the SFBJV Project List *Link to Instructions*

[13] See Appendix B for a list of relevant local and regional plans.

Appendix B: Full Citations for Local and Regional Plans Most Relevant to the Grant Program

The Restoration Act states that the Authority will "give priority to projects that, to the greatest extent possible, meet the selection criteria of and are consistent with the State Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy program (in accordance with subdivision (c) of Section 31163 of the Public Resources Code)." One of these criteria is, "Are supported by adopted local or regional plans." Full citations for the local and regional plans the Authority considers most relevant to the grant program are provided below.

Restoring the Estuary: An Implementation Strategy for the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture. (2022.) San Francisco Bay Joint Venture. https://sfbayjv.org/conservation/planning/

*The Baylands and Climate Change: What We Can Do. Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Science Update 2015. (*2015.) California State Coastal Conservancy. https://www.sfei.org/sites/default/files/biblio_files/Baylands_Complete_Report.pdf

Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems for Northern and Central California. (2013.) U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/TMRP/20130923_TMRP_Books_Signed_FINAL.pdf

San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Report: Conservation Planning for the Submerged Areas of the Bay. (2010.) California State Coastal Conservancy, Ocean Protection Council, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service and Restoration Center, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, San Francisco Estuary Partnership. http://www.sfbaysubtidal.org/report.html

San Francisco Estuary Blueprint. (2022.) San Francisco Estuary Partnership. https://www.sfestuary.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/SFEP_Blueprint_2022_ADA_081623.pdf

Adaptive Management Plan. (2007.) Science Team Report for the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project. https://www.southbayrestoration.org/document/adaptive-management-plan

Petaluma River Baylands Strategy. (2023.) Sonoma Land Trust and partners. https://sonomalandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Petaluma-River-Baylands-Strategy-April-2023.pdf

Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy. (2020.) Sonoma Land Trust and partners. https://www.sfbayrestore.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Sonoma%20Creek%20Baylands%20Strategy_May%202020.pdf

Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation and Restoration Plan. (2013.) U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and California Department of Fish and Game.
https://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/includes/documentShow.php?Doc_ID=17283

Novato Creek Baylands Vision. (2015.) San Francisco Estuary Institute.
https://www.sfei.org/documents/novato-creek-baylands-vision-integrating-ecological-functions-and-flood-protection-within

Surviving the Storm. (2015.) Bay Area Council Economic Institute.
http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/files/pdf/SurvivingTheStorm.pdf

San Francisco Bay Trail Plan: A Recreational Ring Around San Francisco Bay. (1989.) Association of Bay Area Governments. https://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-10/San-Francisco-Bay-Trail-Bay-Trail-Plan-Summary.pdf

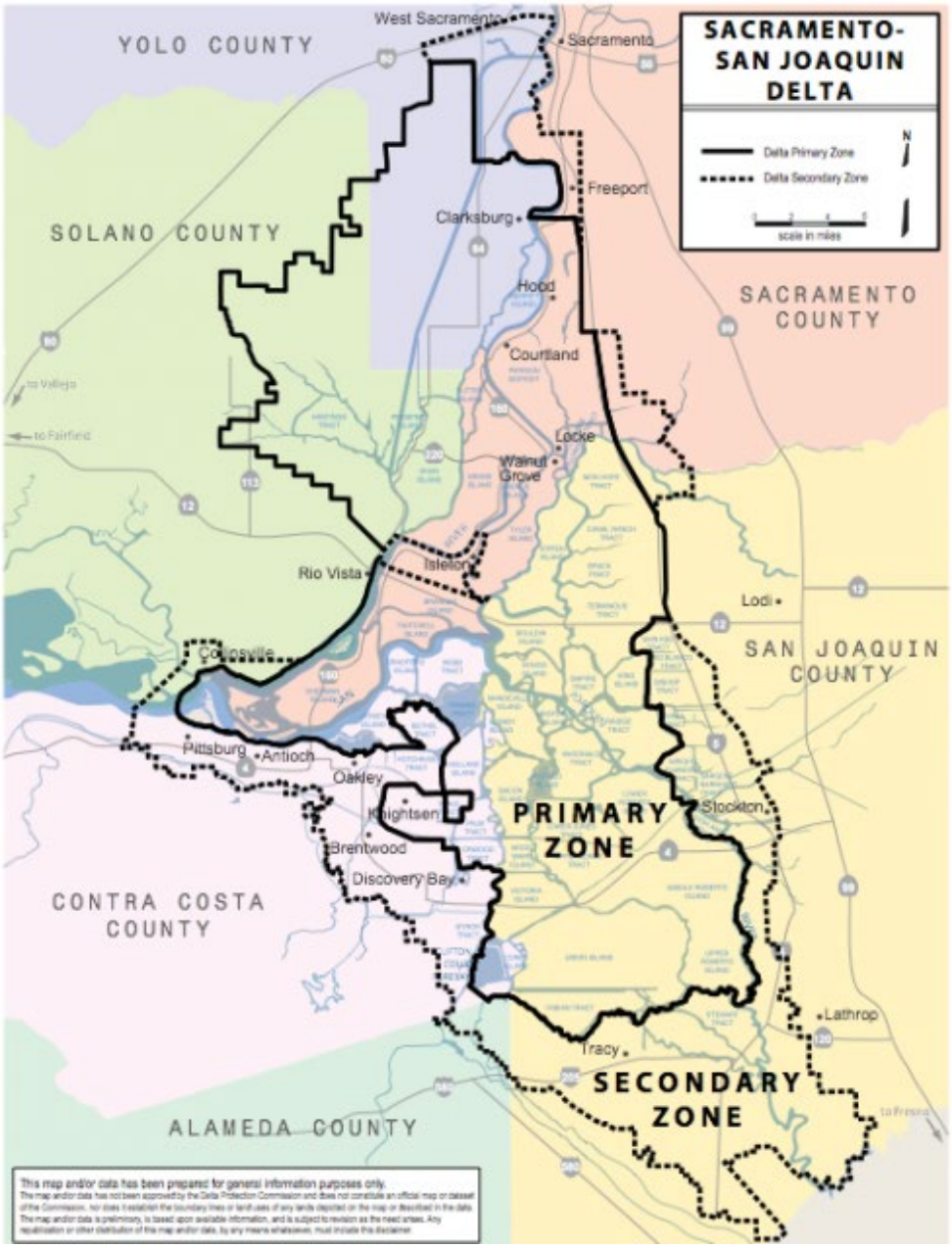
San Francisco Bay Trail Design Guidelines & Toolkit (2016.) San Francisco Bay Trail.
https://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-10/Bay-Trail-Design-Guidelines-and-Toolkit.pdf

Enhanced San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail Plan. (2011.) California State Coastal Conservancy. https://sfbaywatertrail.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Enhanced-San-Francisco-Bay-Area-Water-Trail-Plan-December-2011.pdf

Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin (Basin Plan). (2017.) San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/basin_planning.shtml#basinplan

Long-Term Management Strategy for the Placement of Dredged Material in the San Francisco Bay Region, Management Plan (2001.) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.
http://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Portals/68/docs/Dredging/LMTS/entire%20LMTF.pdf

Appendix C: Delta Primary Zone Map[14]



[14] Source: Water Education Foundation: http://www.watereducation.org/aquapedia/sacramento-san-joaquin-delta-land-use-and-boundaries

Appendix D: Definitions and Clarifications of Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility is based on a combination of requirements of the Restoration Act and Measure AA.

1. **Eligible Grantees**

   According to the Restoration Act (Section 66704.5(a)), the Authority may award grants to "public and private entities, which include but are not limited to owners and operators of shoreline parcels in the San Francisco Bay Area." The Authority interprets this to mean that eligible grantees include federal, state, and local agencies; tribal governments; and nonprofit organizations.

2. **Eligible Project Locations**

   According to Measure AA, to be eligible for funding, projects must be located "along the Bay shorelines" within one of the nine Bay Area counties. In addition, Measure AA states, "The shorelines include the shorelines of San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Carquinez Strait, Suisun Bay, and most of the Northern Contra Costa County Shoreline to the edge of the Delta Primary Zone."

   A. Definition of "Along the Bay Shorelines"

      The question is how far from the shoreline a project may be located. "Baylands" is the technical term adopted by the science community within *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals* (1999) to refer to the areas adjacent to the Bay that are of primary ecological important to it; it defines these as "the lands that lie between the maximum and minimum elevations of the tides over multiyear cycles, including those areas that would be covered by the tides in the absence of levees or other unnatural structures." Additionally, the 2015 Science Update to the goals report *(The Baylands and Climate Change: What We Can Do*) recognizes the importance of transition zones moving inland above the extent of high tide, as well as the need to plan ahead for the effects of sea level rise. Therefore, the Authority defines "along the Bay shorelines" to include these important lands adjacent to the Bay. Along with the definitions below, San Francisco Estuary Institute's **Baylands Maps** may be a resource.

   B. Definition of "Creek Outlets"

      Measure AA states that eligible projects may: "Clean and enhance creek outlets where they flow into the Bay" or "Provide nature-based flood protection through wetland and habitat restoration along the Bay's edge and at creek outlets that flow to the Bay." However, these descriptions of eligible project activities still fall under more general requirement for projects to be located "along Bay shorelines."

Therefore, the Authority interprets the language of Measure AA regarding creek outlets to mean that projects located in rivers or creeks also must be located along the Bay, i.e. adjacent to the part of the river or creek subject to tidal action. This area is also referred to as being below the head of tide. Similar consideration of the value of transitional habitats and the effects of future sea level rise should be made when considering the extent of creek outlets.

3. Eligible Project Phases

According to the Restoration Act, grant funds may be used to support "all phases of planning, construction, monitoring, operation, and maintenance of [eligible projects]." The Authority interprets "all phases of planning [and] construction" of a project to include acquisition, planning, design, environmental studies, permitting, construction, monitoring and evaluation, operation, scientific studies as part of the project to guide adaptive management, and maintenance. In addition, an acquisition may be considered an eligible project.

The Authority will consider funding acquisitions (fee and/or less-than-fee (e.g., easement) interests in land where demonstrably significant opportunity exists to either protect existing natural baylands resources from loss, degradation or development or to meaningfully enhance or restore baylands resources and/or provide habitat-related public access and flood benefits[15]. In general, the Authority will seek to fund the least costly, most efficient and effective method of securing the long-term benefits of site tenure; acquisitions will therefore be judged on the tangibility, significance and likelihood of success of the eventual restoration or enhancement opportunity. In addition to the eligibility and prioritization criteria for any other Measure AA-funded project, eligible acquisitions must:

- Be transacted with willing sellers;
- Be for no more than fair market value as determined in an approved appraisal pursued at or above USPAP standards;
- Have legal access to the property and be acceptably free and clear of defects of title;
- Be free of contamination that could impact the projected use and benefits of the property, as demonstrated through a Phase I environmental assessment or higher-level site analysis;
- Be secured in perpetuity for the Measure AA-purposes. For any acquisition by a private entity, a third-party public entity must partner to secure the public's interest in the acquisition.
- If an easement, include terms sufficient to achieve the protection, restoration, or public access purposes of the easement.

[15] Please include details of the restoration benefits of the project in the project description section of the application.

4. Eligible Project Activities

The Authority will fund activities described under the four program areas in Measure AA. In addition, the Authority interprets eligible project activities according to the Restoration Act, as described below.

A. Habitat Projects

The Restoration Act calls for funding projects that "restore, protect, or enhance tidal wetlands, managed ponds, or natural habitats" (Section 66704(b)). The Authority defines "natural habitats" as those consistent with existing guidance on baylands, riparian and subtidal habitats (see relevant local or regional plans, Appendix E); these can include habitats that have been modified by human activity but still provide tangible wildlife support and/or ecological value. Projects should restore, protect or enhance habitat for native species, including native plants.

B. Flood Management and Public Access Projects

The Restoration Act states that eligible projects include those that provide or improve flood management features or public access or recreational amenities "that are part of a project to restore, enhance, or protect tidal wetlands, managed ponds, or natural habitats" (Section 66704.5(b)). The Authority interprets this to mean that such projects will be considered eligible for funding if they are part of a restoration project that is in the planning stages, underway, or partially complete. In general, such elements will be considered part of a restoration project if they are included in the plan, environmental documents and/or permits for the particular habitat restoration project with which they are associated. Therefore, closing a trail gap or extending a project levee are eligible activities if the elements are or were part of a habitat restoration project as described above.

5. Additional Eligibility Considerations

A. Voluntary vs. Mitigation Projects

The Restoration Authority will primarily fund voluntary habitat restoration projects. The Authority will not fund project ~~impacts~~ that are not carried out ~~compensated~~ on-site as part of the restoration project (e.g., mitigation ~~impacts that are compensated~~ through private mitigation banks, in-lieu fees, or other off-site mitigation actions). ~~However, the Authority may fund the on-site compensatory requirements of a project that is eligible for Measure AA funds and that demonstrates net positive benefits.~~ The Authority may contribute to a project that is making use of mitigation funds, but the Authority's share of the funds must pay for an incremental improvement beyond compensation for damages that may have occurred elsewhere as part of the mitigation requirements. See

this **Memo** and **Grantee Guidance** for details on the permissible use of mitigation funds for projects that will or have received Authority funding.

B. Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediment

The Authority may provide grant funds to support the delivery of dredged material to a restoration project that requires sediment in order to achieve habitat restoration goals. Sediment may be needed to raise elevations of subsided lands, provide for ecotones or transitional habitat along levees, provide for berms or islands within a restoration plain, or for other purposes. Restoration projects that include beneficial use of dredged sediment are eligible to apply for Authority funds and should describe the ecological purpose of the dredged sediment and the estimated costs for delivery and placement of dredged sediment.

Much of the dredging in the Bay Area is conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with other dredging conducted by ports, local agencies, or private entities, such as refineries. The Corps must dispose of the sediment in the least cost, environmentally acceptable manner (the Federal Standard). The Federal Standard is often the Deep Ocean Disposal Site or In-Bay Disposal sites. The Authority's grant funding is not intended to go towards the cost of dredging navigation channels, ports, or marinas. However, the Authority's grant funding may support the incremental cost, above the Federal Standard, to deliver dredged material to a restoration site, and the placement, management, and sculpting of material on-site. For more information about beneficial use of dredged sediment, please refer to the *Long-Term Management Strategy for the Placement of Dredged Material in the San Francisco Bay Region, Management Plan* (2001).

The Authority may also consider funding the dredging costs of restoration projects that incorporate dredging into the design of a restoration or enhancement effort, and where the design approach creates sustainable geomorphic processes. For example, the Authority could consider funding for restoration projects that require dredging of sloughs or creek channels, or to lower elevations as part of the overall design, and then beneficially use that sediment to raise elevations in other parts of the project site.