



**To:** South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Team

**From:** Center for Collaborative Policy

**Re:** Outcomes from the July 27, 2007 Eden Landing Ponds Working Group Meeting

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**Background:** The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project held the first meeting of the Eden Landing Ponds Working Group (Working Group), a subcommittee of both the Project's Stakeholder Forum and the Lower Alameda Creek Stewardship Committee, on Friday, July 27, 2007 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center in Hayward. The Working Group is being convened to provide ongoing input and advice to the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Management Team (PM Team) on Phase 1 restoration and public access implementation, and flood protection planning, in the Eden Landing area.

**Meeting Attendance:** Attachment 1 lists meeting participants.

**Meeting Materials:** In advance of the meeting, Working Group members were provided a meeting agenda. At the meeting, a draft Working Group charter, Phase 1 actions and public access adaptive management handouts were available, as well as a printout of the meeting PowerPoint slides, a South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project brochure and FAQ document. Most presentations will be available on the SBSP Project website ([www.southbayrestoration.org](http://www.southbayrestoration.org)). Attachment 2 is the meeting's flip chart notes.

**Substantive Meeting Outcomes:**

***1. Welcome and Self-Introductions***

John Krause, who manages the California Department of Fish and Game's Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, welcomed everyone, reviewed the day's agenda and asked members of the new Working Group and other attendees to introduce themselves.

He discussed the purpose of the meeting, to gather specific concerns and points of interest about the more detailed information on Phase 1 actions that would be provided that day. He explained that the purpose of this meeting was not to submit additional comments to the EIS/R.

***2. Work Group Charter***

Lead Facilitator Mary Selkirk from the Center for Collaborative Policy introduced the draft charter for the Working Group, which lays out its roles and responsibilities. She asked for feedback or suggested changes to the draft document. The charter establishes that the work group has open membership, but Selkirk urged audience members to

continue as part of its core group. The charter lists the group's purpose as first, to serve as a forum for people who live, work and recreate in the area to provide collaborative dialogue on the project's Phase 1 restoration implementation and flood protection planning; and second, to help engender community support, which will be essential to help gain funding for the Project's 50-year mission.

**Questions/Concerns:**

One audience member said the group's mission should include work on public access as well as restoration and flood protection. Selkirk said that omission was an embarrassing oversight and it will be corrected.

Another audience member suggested that the mission should include protecting wildlife, not just habitat.

The group then supported the Charter, with those changes.

John Krause then gave an overview of the Project, describing its long-term goals and how the ponds have been managed since the transfer of ownership from Cargill.

***3. Schedule for SBSP Project***

Steve Ritchie, Executive Project Manager of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, discussed the Project's schedule. Currently, the PM Team and consultants are preparing responses to comments submitted on the draft EIS/R and considering whether to make minor or major changes. If there are no major changes, the final EIS/R would be released in the fall, and a Record of Decision and permitting would take place by early 2008. If that happens, Phase 1 implementation would occur over the next two years, and could potentially spill over into 2010. Future actions and phases would occur over the next 30+ years.

***4. Review of Department of Fish and Game Code for Ecological Reserves***

John Krause gave a refresher presentation on statutes and regulations regarding planning and management of DFG lands, as the Eden Landing portion of the Project is under DFG ownership. The lands were acquired "to protect and provide for the restoration and enhancement of wetland habitat for the benefit of threatened and endangered species and wetland associated wildlife and to provide public access opportunities compatible with fish and wildlife management and protection." Public entry may be restricted to protect wildlife or habitat. Trails can be established, and hunting and fishing allowed, when compatible with resource protection. Mary Selkirk added that one of the great challenges of the Project is how to meet the three goals of restoration, flood protection and public access while being consistent with Fish and Game codes. A purpose of this meeting is to consider how the Department is knitting these goals together.

***5. Phase 1 Actions in Eden Landing***

John Krause, Steve Ritchie, Mary Selkirk and Lead Scientist Lynne Trulio presented the Project Phase 1 actions in Eden Landing, with the aid of PowerPoint slides and handouts.

Preliminary engineering designs for the proposed actions will be mostly complete by late fall.

**Ponds E12 and E13 Restoration Plan:**

The ponds would be reconfigured to establish shallow ponds with different salt gradients, and nesting islands would be built. The ponds would discharge to a mixing basin. The system would be gravity fed, supplemented by pumps, with the goal of making sure there are no adverse effects to the larger bay. The islands would be 3-4 feet above water.

Applied studies would consider the impact of having year-round ponds and focused management for wildlife on the diversity and abundance of wildlife, and would look at the salinity preferences of different birds, if any. The present dry ponds are a great substrate for plovers; the management experiment will be focused primarily on species such as grebes and phalaropes that forage in high salinity ponds.

**Questions:** One member asked if power lines, which sometimes cause bird deaths, will be moved. Krause said there has been discussion about using generators instead, and that will be talked about further.

**Concerns:** One member asked whether there would be adequate personnel to manage vegetation. Krause noted that there is now a staff of one, but there is hope for continued partnerships with groups such as Save The Bay.

**Ponds E8A, E9 and E8X Tidal Restoration Plan:**

The levee between the ponds and Mt. Eden Creek would be breached to reconnect the ponds with the bay. Work will be done to restore old slough channels; ditch blocks and fill would block the borrow ditches. The goal is to replicate some of the tidal marsh ponds, or "pan ponds" that were part of the original natural features. The gypsum hardpan at Pond E8A will be pre-treated in select locations to test whether marsh development is impeded by the gypsum. The levee between Pond E9 and E14 will be improved and designed as a transition zone to upland, a habitat feature presently missing from bay many wetlands.

**Questions:** One member asked how much the breaching will scour Mt. Eden Creek. Krause said it is uncertain, but it is expected to be about doubled, from 100 feet to 200 feet wide. Lynne Trulio said a breach at the island ponds in Alviso is part of a major hydraulic modeling effort, which will include work with UC Berkeley and Stanford, to gain more information.

Another attendee asked how invasive species will be accessed without the levees. Krause said there are now aerial applications and that will continue, or access will be from the water.

**Eden Landing Phase 1 Public Access Plan:**

The Bay Trail segment that was part of the state's original Eden Landing restoration project has been delayed as EBRPD waits for funding from Caltrans, but will be

completed. That original project also includes a large parking/staging area at Eden Landing Road.

The South Bay Salt Pond Phase 1 actions include a year-round surfaced trail from the staging area to access the Bay Trail pedestrian crossing over Hwy 92, and a trail spur to the Eden Shores neighborhood. On site, a year-round trail will be built along Mt. Eden Creek to a viewing point on the marsh and bay at Pond E9, and loop trails will be constructed around Ponds E12 and E13.

While the Bay Trail spine will be year-round, the eastern portion of the loop trail is proposed to be seasonal, as it is close to ponds that will be migratory bird habitat. The project has been changed since the EIR/S. Instead of a seasonal trail on the north side of the creek, a year-round trail will be built on the south side of the creek, farther from the snowy plover habitat in Ponds E10 and E11.

New features will include a kayak/boat launch at E12 and Mt. Eden Creek, which is being looked at as a possible part of the bay water trail. A viewing platform, with a shade structure, and L-shaped boardwalk would be built at the historic saltworks, providing opportunities for viewing wetlands habitat and a cultural/historical resources. Some of the earthen and wooden barriers at the historic saltworks would be rebuilt. There will be interpretive signs at all the locations with information about natural, cultural and historical aspects.

Lynne Trulio presented an adaptive management staircase of recreation and public access that is being developed that lays out the process for studying construction impacts and making decisions on more access features based on the resulting effects on habitat and species.

**Questions:** One questioner asked about the slope of the boat launch, as the site now has a 3-to-1 slope. Krause said it would either be graded to be a gradual slope, would zigzag down, or might possibly be floating piers.

Another member asked if future trends and technology in recreation have been considered. Trulio said that monitoring will include interviewing users to identify changing needs and desires.

**Concerns:** One working group member raised concerns about how vandalism will be controlled at the historic salt works. The site would be gated at night.

One member asked that great caution be used in creating public access, because once an access point is opened, it's hard to tell people they can't go there afterwards. Project managers said they do need to accommodate public access in the Project, and the challenge is doing so in a way that strikes a balance of protecting habitat and species.

Another attendee emphasized the importance of maintaining the amount of proposed public access that the Bay Trail has planned since 1989.

**Suggestions/Recommendations:** One member suggested that there be phasing of public access on the new loop trail so that impacts could be studied to resolve some of the unknowns. A suggested order was: 1) create habitat; 2) allow limited public access; and 3) observe impacts. Another aspect that will need to be considered is the higher concentration of species in a smaller geographic footprint, which could possibly lead to an increase in predators or potential tipping point.

Another attendee asked that there be access for larger groups, for educational programs and restoration projects.

**Comments/Feedback:** One member stressed the importance of maintaining the integrity of the historic saltworks, as that is a component in eligibility for the National Historic Register.

Another attendee said she is gathering data on snowy plover impacts and said birds will flush out of their nests from a vehicle or other disturbance 200 meters away, which was much higher than originally thought. Another speaker suggested that birds may become adapted to people if visitors are a more constant presence. One member noted that national parks have been successful at keeping people away from sensitive areas, while giving them the impression that they have seen what they came to see.

#### ***6. Integration of Alameda County Flood Control Channels with the SBSP Project***

Ralph Johnson of the Alameda County Flood Control District discussed the flood control history of the Eden Landing area and how the South Bay Salt Pond and future flood control projects will be integrated. Nick Garrity of PWA described the projects in more detail. Johnson said both Old Alameda Creek and the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel are engineered flood control channels, and both have become problematic because sedimentation has reduced their capacity. The plan is to remove levees by the salt ponds, allowing the ponds to provide floodplains storage and to increase scouring in the channels, thereby providing more flood protection. In the long term, the salt ponds will accumulate sediment and become salt marsh habitat. The Flood Control District has contracted with PWA to analyze and design the flood control channel modifications and coordinate them with the Salt Pond Project.

The Phase 1 action would be a pilot project on Old Alameda Creek in conjunction with restoration of Ponds E8A, E9 and E8X. It would include lowering the levee to pickleweed marsh height and breaching levee walls at the areas of the old channel sloughs to restore those channels. For the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel, PWA will be undertaking hydrodynamic modeling and alternatives analysis. That project will involve working with the Army Corps of Engineers.

In addition, the Flood Control District will be building an Eden Landing perimeter levee along the urban edge from Hwy. 92 to the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel, to protect urbanized areas from flooding. It will be designed to FEMA criteria, for a 100-

year flood level, and will have a gradual slope to provide a good upland transition for habitat. There will be a public access trail on the top of the levee.

Steve Ritchie said a potential future benefit may be the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study that the Army Corps is undertaking. There is not yet an active study in the Eden Landing area -- there would have to be a local sponsoring agency to pay half the cost. It could be a possible way to proceed with construction of the perimeter levee.

#### ***7. Outreach Opportunities for the Project***

Mary Selkirk said there will be enormous challenges to find funding for maintenance of the Restoration Project. Therefore, the PM Team is interested in building a stronger base of support for the Project in the East Bay. Any Working Group members who know of opportunities to communicate about the Project at local venues, such as community groups, churches, or local advisory bodies, can e-mail the Project's Public Outreach Coordinator, Tracy Grubbs, at [t.grubbs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:t.grubbs@sbcglobal.net).

#### ***8. Next Steps***

Steve Ritchie thanked the Working Group members for attending, and for their comments and ideas. Selkirk said the Stakeholder Forum will probably meet in winter, after the final EIR/S is released, and the Working Group will probably be reconvened in January to look at the more detailed level of public access and restoration designs that will be available at that time. The design process will take into account the input given today.

The meeting was then adjourned.

**Attachment 1:  
Eden Landing WG July 27, 2007 Meeting Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization/Affiliation</b>
Maria Adas	Eden Shores Community
Patrycja Bossak	SF Bay Trail/ABAG
Rachel Cohen	Hayward Daily Review
Evelyn Cormier	CCCR/Ohlone Audubon
Manny da Costa	Alameda Co Flood Control
Frank Delfino	CCCR
Janice Delfino	CCCR
Martin Eschen?sp	CAC
Agnes Farres	SF Regional Water Quality Control Board
Nick Garrity	PWA
Carin High	CCCR
Lee Huo	SF Bay Trail/ABAG
Ellen Johnck	Bay Planning Coalition
Matt Kaminski	Ducks Unlimited, Western Reg. Office
Terry Kurtz	
Gary Martz	Weber
Jim McGrath	Port of Oakland (retired)
Bettina Mok	High School Programs/Leadership Corp
Peggy Olofson	Spartina Project
Austin Payne	Ducks Unlimited
Erik Pearson	City of Hayward
Mark Pearson	EBRPD Coyote Hills Regional Park
Roy Peek	Novo Nordisk
Mike Perlmutter	Audubon California
Leslie Perry	SF Regional Water Quality Control Board
Mark Ragatz	EBRPD
Caitlin Robinson	San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory
John Rusmisl	Alameda Co Mosquito Abatement Dist
Robert Schlipf	SF Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jenny Seiler	Student Conservation Association
Carol Severin	EBRPD
Katie Tague	Senator Ellen Corbett
Mark Taylor	EBRPD Hay. Reg. Shoreline
Jim Townsend	EBRPD
Laura Wainer	Save the Bay
Carl Zable	H.A.R.D.

## **Attachment 2: Flip Chart Notes Eden Landing Ponds Working Group**

The following are public questions/comments captured at the Working Group's July 27, 2007 meeting.

### **RESTORATION**

#### **Ponds E12 and E13**

##### Management Issues

How to deal w/ vandalism

How to manage vegetation on the islands? Guarantees of adequate staffing?

##### Comment

Integrity: potential nat'l. landmark

#### **Ponds E8A, E9 and E8X**

? adaptive mgt. piece looking at tidal action effects

How to preserve access for invasive species treatment

### **PUBLIC ACCESS/RECREATION**

Phase the access on seasonal trail on 12-13.

Comparison/trade off of Old Alameda Creek & proposed Mt. Eden trail access

Caution re where access allowed

Test adaptability of birds

Create different types of access

##### Suggested guidance:

Sensitive areas away from P.A., while providing enough P.A.

Suggest: Establish baseline goals

AM Diagram: Show how CEQA/pub. process would work