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

From: **Center for Collaborative Policy**

Re: **Outcomes from the October 21, 2005 Stakeholder Forum Meeting**

Background: The Stakeholder Forum (Forum) met on Friday, October 21, 2005 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at Moffett Field in Mountain View. The Forum has been convened to provide ongoing input to the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Management Team (PM Team) and its technical consultants on the development of the South Bay Salt Pond restoration, flood management, and public access plan.

Meeting Attendance: Attachment 1 lists meeting participants.

Meeting Materials: In advance of the meeting, Forum members were provided a meeting agenda, summary memoranda on ad hoc technical groups, draft Phase 1 selection criteria, and an updated Forum roster.

Substantive Meeting Outcomes:

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Steve Ritchie, Executive Project Manager, welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the meeting's objectives, and a review of the agenda. The meeting objectives were:

- Briefing, dialogue, and consensus-seeking on the revised approach to EIR/EIS project alternatives;
- Briefing on technical ranking of the alternatives;
- To understand the role of Adaptive Management in Phase 1 actions; and
- An update on the Initial Stewardship Plan (ISP).

Key questions for discussion included:

- Do you support the role of adaptive management in alternatives development and the EIS/EIR?
- Do you support the range of alternatives?
- Do you support the proposed Phase 1 actions?

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments. However, a Forum member suggested that the representatives from the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) attend meetings. Another Forum member requested an update on the cost-sharing agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Project.

3. Overview of Revised Approach to the Project Alternatives

David Blau (EDAW) presented the overall approach for development of the alternatives. He said that a programmatic EIS/EIR covering the 50-year long-range plan is being developed. Project level review for Phase 1 actions will be undertaken allowing construction of Phase 1 actions after completion of the environmental review. Subsequent EIS/EIR supplements will be prepared for future phases. The EIS/EIR will explore a range of alternatives that respond to the program objectives. Each alternative could represent a potential "end-state" at year 50. The optimal configuration could be somewhere in between the "bookend" alternatives.

He said that the Landscape Scale Assessment confirms that the bookends are achievable with respect to sediment availability. The recently completed bathymetry studies are showing that the San Francisco Bay is sediment depositional, which is good in terms of restoring tidal marsh within the 50-year planning horizon. The revised assessment, along with project phasing and adaptive management, will provide insight into the fate of the South Bay mudflats.

He explained that program alternatives A, B, and C are being evaluated:

- Alternative A = No Action
- Alternative B = Managed Pond Emphasis (50% Tidal Habitat : 50% Managed Ponds). Ratio is assumed to be achieved in Year 2009 and evolution continues from Year 20 through Year 50.
- Alternative C = Tidal Emphasis (90% Tidal Habitat : 10% Managed Ponds). Ratio is assumed to be achieved in Year 20, but evolves through future phases to 90:10 by Year 50.

Adaptive management will guide the evolution of the selected alternative and all adaptive management actions will be reviewed in the EIS/EIR. Topics to be evaluated include:

- Restoration Targets for Each Project Objective;
- Monitoring to Clearly Assess Progress Towards Restoration Targets;
- Generation of Data to Reduce Uncertainties;
- Identification of Unexpected Outcomes; and
- Provision of Information in a Timely Manner.

4. How the Alternatives Have Changed

Michelle Orr (Phil Williams and Associates) presented an overview of the alternatives and how they have changed since the Forum last reviewed them.

No Action: The assumption is that the ISP will continue, but that the funding will diminish so actions, such as pumping, might not continue. Thus, managed ponds would be allowed to dry-up during the summer. In addition, pump structures, tide gates, and some levees are assumed to fail over time and then hydraulics would change. However, key flood control levees would be maintained to provide flood protection to key areas such as Alviso.

Alternative B: Due to comments received from various parties, the alternative has been modified. In particular, due to comments received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a few trails have been reduced to prevent/reduce conflicts between public visitors and endangered species. Additional changes to the phasing have also been incorporated. Pond A8/A8A is being shown as "reversibly tidal" to allow the pond to evolve into fully tidal (this will allow the methyl mercury issue to be resolved).

Orr said that there has been much refinement to public access from all the input received at recent workshops and tours. The access features have been consolidated to reduce potential impacts to threatened and endangered species.

Alternative C: Pond E14 was switched to tidal to accommodate conversion of an outside pond to managed status. There are no significant changes to flood control levees. A loop trial added around Pond A3W to provide a unique access experience.

Facilitator Mary Selkirk (Center for Collaborative Policy) asked if there were any questions on the alternatives, and if whether or not the "bookend" alternatives were credible in terms of defining the range of alternatives that are feasible for the project site.

Question (Q): On the No Action Alternative, there appears to be assumptions regarding habitat changes and levee degradation. What are these and how are they configured? Which ponds may go seasonal and which levees are thought to fail over time?

Answer (A): Michelle Orr: No specific levees are assumed to fail at this time. More work needs to be done and a series of diagrams showing the evolution of the area over time at 10-year increments might be created to help understand the possible implications under the No Action Alternative.

Q: What will happen to the salinity situation in the South Bay when the ponds are opened up?

A: The model will help us better understand the hydraulics.

Q: There appears to be a conceptual problem with the adaptive management plan.

A: It is important to make those explicit. What we tried to do is make sure that the levees are maintained and combine with types of public access.

Q: I like the concept of bookends and I like the adaptive management approach, but they don't really work unless you have the data and commitment to monitoring. Where in process of EIR/EIS is the monitoring and who will collect data?

A: Lynne Trulio: The Adaptive Management Plan itself will identify the type of monitoring data to assess our progress toward project alternatives, as well as applied studies needed to reduce uncertainties. The plan identifies those types of data specifically. Monitoring parameters have to be laid out well, and monitoring has to be

very efficient and effective and worked out for Phase I very specifically. All the teams are working on it and it's critical.

Q: Will the adaptive management plan be laid out at time the EIR/EIS is submitted to the public?

A: Lynne Trulio: Yes, it has to be.

Q: Adaptive management is a misleading term because it makes people think it can fix something that goes wrong (i.e., levee failures). There should be an acknowledgement to begin with to help us move forward, not change what we've already done. We need a clear list of what tools will be available, for example, if levees are too expensive to be rebuilt, what else can we do? We have to be very clear.

Q: It's a continuum in a direction; it does not allow us to go back along that line. We really are able to move in one direction, but not back.

A: Michelle Orr: I think it's true that unbreaching a levee is not a part of the toolbox. I think concerns about how we go forward on that continuum, for instance shorebird protection is important. For instance, you can change the way you're managing ponds, water levels, and the option of removing an outboard levee to all mudflats of the Bay to roll over.

Q: Even that one is a guess, we expect to get the mudflats, but if they don't come, if it's a managed pond, you've lost your ability to manage it. Your tools are still going to be minimum.

A: Lynne Trulio: In some ways it is a continuum. We can't uncreate tidal marsh. We will begin implementing actions where we're most sure what the outcomes will be. As we move forward, we collect information on areas we're less sure about. We have more confidence, so it's not really a crapshoot; we're reducing uncertainty as we move forward.

Q: Before levees were in, what was wrong with the way it was, now we're going to manage it and take it away. We're not putting it back close to what it was. It wasn't broken till we broke it.

5. Technical Ratings and Comparison of the Alternatives

David Blau (EDAW) then walked the audience through the ranking process. He explained that it was a response to evaluation criteria and the comparison of alternatives, particularly how they play out and how No Action and Alternatives B and C respond to those goals in a graphic way, looking 50 years out. He said this gives us the ability to do an early comparison, reveal areas where most uncertainty is, guide development of the adaptive management program, and confirm the bookends to be within an appropriate range.

Blau said that biohabitat and invasive species, in two of the six original goals, were done by H.T. Harvey and Associates: flood management was done by Phil Williams and Associates; water and sediment by Brown and Caldwell; and public access was developed by EDAW.

He said that the notion of going from six fundamental goals to more detailed criteria is an evolving tool that has changed since we started and will continue to change. But this type of analysis will be featured as a way to measure potential benefits and impacts.

He said that they choose to combine some of the 47 criteria and split some others, so that the overall criteria are now 26. For waterfowl, because different types respond differently, they were split. He said that some criteria didn't work, such as moist grasslands, and that is not a likely direction. A couple of criteria were deferred, and mentioned that we are not dealing yet with the cost. This will be addressed in greater detail in the EIS/EIR. He mentioned that they have a handout with all of the scores for all 26 of the criteria.

Blau stated that ratings near 0 are for 2004, when the notice of intent was issued--that is the baseline. All changes are measured relative to that. He said they used a 9-point scale for technical rating—9 means a high response to the criteria and 1 is undesirable. All the technical raters made sure the scale was used in a consistent way. The ISP in 2004 is generally a 5, except in baseline for endangered special status species, it is a 1.

He continued to say that all of these scores are our professional judgment on what we know today, including the number of criteria. There is less known about some of them, a higher degree of uncertainty.

He gave biological habitat as just one example: Blau said they took the salt marsh harvest mouse where the baseline condition is a 1, since there is virtually no tidal marsh habitat in the project area. Things will change such as uncontrolled breaching, sedimentation, the island ponds will be restored and marsh habitat created, but there is no connectivity, so it resulted in the No Action Alternative as a 3. In Alternative B, there would be more tidal marsh with some upland transition zones; however, we still have poor connectivity, so that resulted in score of 4. Under C, we create larger areas of salt marsh, continuous tidal and upland habitat, so this was scored as an 8.

Blau showed polar diagrams that he said are helpful in comprehending a lot of information--all 26 criteria are around the perimeter of the diagram.

Q: Where do the numbers come from?

A: It is different for each of the criteria; we have rationale for the logic behind it.

Mary Selkirk said that there are copies of the rationales for the ranking of all the criteria.

Blau said to look in more detail at the No Action Alternative and how it responds to the goals. He said you see immediately a big dive in special status plants because of extremely limited habitat. With no improvement over the 50 years, coastal flood protection scored a 2 because the situation worsens as levees deteriorate and sea level rises. Fluvial flood protection scored a 3 because channels silt in as sea levels rise. The conditions for salmon and steelhead scored a 2 because we are not improving habitats in streams and sloughs. Bird habitat could be offset by uncontrolled breaches, so we could benefit from more study and monitoring.

Blau explained that the top quadrant is tidal related species and goals, then managed pond related goals, and that you can see the diagram pulling in different directions. Basically the dream solution would be a full circle with all 9s.

Q: Would one of them be mercury? Is that a change and why?

A: We started with a midpoint (no change). In green, we've highlighted those criteria with highest level of uncertainty such as mercury. For *Spartina*, we have to assume the eradication project will be successful. For high salinity for birds, we would benefit most from monitoring and learning.

Methyl mercury was scored an 8 under Alternative B because we have an increased ability through management to control the issue. Water quality scored a 7, you've got water management and pond design, which equal more flexibility and less low DO events, a considerable jump in improvement. Providing regional linkages scored a 9 under Alternatives B and C because we are filling in those gaps of the Bay Trail. Improving land-based access scored a 9 because in B, you keep a lot of the pond complexes surrounded by levees and have more miles of land-based trails.

For breeding birds, Alternative B managed pond dependent species, enhanced habitat was created. With islands and how the ponds are managed and physically designed, such as with furrows and trenching, the snowy plover has exactly the same response in B and C--better managed ponds equals better conditions.

Q: Did you look at diving birds and ducks?

A: Ron Duke: We have preliminary data and we did go through a process and produced some general ratings. We met with PRBO and are working towards an agreement on these. We are looking at a relative score and what's there now is a 5. In looking at managed ponds and tidal emphasis for the dabbling duck, we went from 5 to 4. In terns, they'll be some changes in the mudflats.

Q: Our goal was to maintain the population and it's going down.

Q: There is confusion on the difference between baseline and no action.

A: Ron Duke: In diving ducks there is a slight increase in foraging habitat (looking at whole Bay); under No Action, some of that is offset by uncontrolled breaching and better habitat in the channels. In B and C, there will be a reduction in the shallow subtidal habitat of the Bay. It gets offset a little by some of the management we can do. We are still trying to understand sedimentation rates. Dabbling ducks have the same kind of situation.

A: David Blau: What's happening on C is that a couple of scores moved a little, the most change is with the clapper rail, because you end up with large contiguous channels, predator management is a big dip, as you move in C with far fewer ponds and a higher density of birds, it makes the prey base larger. You can see we're at 9 in fluvial and coastal protection and public access on the water based side for water trails. If you look at specific criteria only, we find the debates are often endless, so we treat all criteria together.

Q: What is the vector control rating system and the source of that information? It appears that we favor Alternative C over B, but they appear the same.

A: Ron Duke: In looking at the amount of vector control that will be needed, it doesn't solve the problem as to which ones will need more or less vector control.

Q: It doesn't agree with our evaluation.

A: Mary Selkirk: There is a workshop on November 18 on nuisance species.

Q: The biggest problem with shorebirds is that the seagull population exploded and birds that nest on the levees are going down. Maybe only 5% of chicks make it because of seagulls and crows. We're still going to have that problem unless there is some control.

A: David Blau: The overall conclusions are that Alternatives B and C are obviously significantly responding better to the gulls than No Action. You need to build that sense of urgency in No Action for political and financial support.

Also, we feel that B and C represent reasonable bookends for EIS/EIR analysis. Recreation response, in both miles of trails and quality of experience, ended up pretty even. Flood management is very strong in both B and C, which was a fundamental mandate of the program. Alternative B is more in favor of managed pond species and C is more in favor of tidal marsh species, but if managed in the right way, we can get a good balance of both types of habitats.

Q: For flood protection and vector control—we need to look into that. On flood protection, we don't have the benefit yet of the Shoreline Study, on No Action, your assumptions are for a small amount of flood protection, is the assumption based on sea level rise, the rate of relative rise, or the number of inches?

A: Michelle Orr: The assumption is inches per year. Looking at the range of sea level rise predictions, we took a reasonable rate, these types of ratings aren't real specific. The ratings are more qualitative than exact ratings, more general.

Q: I think that the levees still have to be protected, maintained, and managed. And I hope we'll know more based on the Shoreline Study.

Q: About the number of shorebirds, if you look at the diagram, it looks like you're not meeting our goal. Alternatives B and C fail in many ways. Also, in looking at all the other uses, flood control was to maintain or improve and it has improved dramatically, but we're not achieving the restoration goals—we are achieving human elements. This shows we're failing in the attempt of what we said we'd do. Go back and see if you can go 40/60 instead of 50/50 or some other combination

A: Lynne Trulio: I think that in Alternative B these ratings are based on existing data and I'm concerned to see clapper rail numbers down despite increase in acreage—that doesn't seem like it reflects the data. The problem may be the baseline; I think it needs a lot of work. Alternative B should be excellent for foraging shorebirds.

A: Mary Selkirk: We need to understand how the ratings happened, maybe having another meeting to delve down into the rationale. To better understand these and be able to rank them, break the pie up into the six major goals, sum up the numbers for the major goals, and we can get a better idea on which alternative is better.

A: David Blau: We have a number of scores that cancel each other out, so it makes cumulative score less effective. I think in Alternatives B and C, it would be more helpful.

Q: About the birds, we're thinking of this section as the entire 15,000 acres—we already have 18.000 acres already. The main thing is one inch on the salt water, we (in Alviso) have to worry about six inches of rain and the Bay raises up three feet, not ocean rises, but large run-off of freshwater for whole season.

Q: Mary Selkirk: What was the assumption regarding the Cargill ponds?

A: No assumption. They are not providing significant habitat value, so the birds would be satisfied in going over to their still existing salt ponds. We assumed that area was neutral in conjunction with these ratings.

Q: I looked for birds feeding on ponds, and I'm not seeing that. There are no diving ducks in there—the birds are going in just to rest.

A: Mary Selkirk: We should have a meeting on bird use as well.

A: Mendel Stewart: We have got some baseline information on bird use in the Cargill ponds.

6. Initial Stewardship Plan (ISP) Update

Mendel Stewart (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) provided an update on the Initial Stewardship Plan. He said that the main thing is that they still have dissolved oxygen problems. They have put the solar bees in Pond A7, the mixing units that are solar powered, but they aren't working, so they made the pond a muted tidal system. Pond A14 is giving them the biggest problem in controlling for dissolved oxygen, everything has been tried there, including putting baffles in to see if it's an improvement. The island ponds are moving forward with opening breaches and there is a meeting on this next week.

Q: When you breach those pond, are you going to breach both sides?

A: No, we're just going to breach the south side. I'll find out the reason why. Right now it doesn't make sense to me. I believe that we were told that if it doesn't work in five years, then we'll breach the other side.

A: Carl Wilcox: There is some concern about the impact on Mud Slough and the Northern Railroad.

John Krause (California Department of Fish and Game) gave an ISP update on their ponds. He said that at Eden Landing they still have DO problems in the 2C system. He said that they are beginning the transition to the winter operations, generally resulting in ponds getting deeper by about a foot. He said that they will start to fill up some of the ponds in late October to early November, trying to capture the highest tides, and the reflooded ponds should address some odor issues that arose in late summer because of ponds that were drawn down late because of some construction activities. The north half of Eden Landing will flood up when the rainy season comes, once the water control structure is finished in the Pond 6A system.

Mendel Stewart added that Fish and Wildlife has DO problems in the ponds, but if they got a good baseline of what the water in the Bay is that is being brought into the ponds, that water may not be that good, so it might not be just the ponds.

7. Adaptive Management in Phase I

Kris May (Phil Williams and Associates) discussed the adaptive management approach and how it is fitting into the alternatives. Her goal was to give a brief overview of Adaptive Management Plan; the most important part being to establish clear management goals. She said that the Stakeholder Forum is instrumental in taking the goals and forming objectives and criteria. The next step in the Adaptive Management Plan is to take the goals and develop a decision-making structure to achieve them. Then set restoration targets and, since a lot of the criteria have a great deal of uncertainty, there may have a range of population numbers, for example.

She said that once the restoration targets are established, experiments will be designed to achieve these targets and have clear monitoring plans to assess if we're making progress. They have a lot of data collected and need a clear plan to consolidate, analyze, and get it out to decision-makers.

She said that more work is needed to identify unexpected outcomes from the experiments and that unexpected outcomes can be positive--we can implement for one species and have benefits for other species as well.

She added that adaptive management is not trial and error, or a "crapshoot", that the experiments that we're developing and hypotheses we're testing are based on sound science, and we have a clear understanding of the system, but not a complete understanding. We're not making wild guesses of what we think might work.

May gave a breeding pond associated birds example: The first thing we would do is implement a Phase 1 experiment, taking reconfigured ponds and making better habitat. After that, we will monitor breeding bird populations, and see if there is there an increase in breeding pond associated birds compared to a control. If yes, we proceed along the tidal continuum to continue tidal restoration. We will continue to monitor and if yes, we will restore more tidal habitat until get to the 90/10 alternative. If don't see an increase, then we will try to figure out why and implement another management experiment. It would change pond management to benefit the birds, for example, to look at predation and water quality and see if gets better.

She said this can be done in successive phases, and if they keep getting a no, then maybe stop at 40% or 70% tidal restoration. This is just for one criteria, when you add in other criteria, there's a lot of monitoring and assessing going on to be evaluated.

She gave another potential Phase 1 experiment: At Ponds E12 and E13 to make reconfigured ponds, Ponds E 10 and 11 can act as a control, and the key uncertainty to test is can the South Bay support breeding birds if islands are created in the ponds. We know they can increase, but don't know the scale to which we can apply this. Then subdivide E12 and 13 into multiple cells and create islands of different shapes and sizes and see what the birds prefer. After implementing the experiment, measure and monitor breeding bird densities. This will take place over a number of years—to gather the data and see what is the optimal size and shape of the islands.

She mentioned that potential outcomes, if we can manage through grading and creating these islands and this is successful, we can then move forward on the continuum of tidal action. If it doesn't work, we can look at the toolbox for other solutions. Another choice is to maintain existing ponds as is, if we can't provide better habitat. She said that there would be lots of different experiments going on and that we think 50/50 is achievable.

Q: I think we still have the same problem as long as the predators are still here.

Q: Is this experiment one that's being proposed and why on breeding birds instead of migratory species?

A: Yes, it's a proposed Phase 1 action and there probably will be other species that will benefit from this experiment.

Q: During initial experiment period, you might want to look for the compounding effects, if experiment isn't successful, you want to know as much as possible about causes.

A: Ron Duke: We are looking at all of those in combination and looking at all the functions that occur in the ponds.

Q: How are you going to evaluate success?

A: We'll have to look at improvement in the population.

Q: Spread out over a larger area, then you can look at a broader evaluation.

A: That raises the point to make this transparent. The metrics for measurement need to be clear and you need to get as much feedback on those as possible.

Q: What's the timing on Phase I?

8. Phase I Actions

Steve Ritchie said that by December 16 they should be publishing the final alternative draft, including the two bookend alternatives coupled with the No Action Alternative, and that is the set of things that will go through environmental review. They will look for consensus on that at the Stakeholder Forum Meeting on January 12 for the final alternative.

He added that restoration will begin occurring no later than five years after the acquisitions, by Spring of 2008. The trail behind Moffett Field will not have a lot of capital improvements, so they might be able to do this in 2007. To do all of Phase 1 actions might take about three years and experiments need to be longer to learn as much as we can.

Q: This seems like a reasonable way to be moving forward. In Kris' presentation, she defined what the bookends are, but we may not achieve the 90/10 goal, but goals are the goals of the Project. If you don't reach 90/10, you might get frustrated, it's important to restore species to the best status. The public has to understand this or the pressure may be to continue to 90/10.

A: Good point. We haven't talked about what the preferred alternative might be, it could be working a ways along that continuum and stop where you reach the objectives. Our goal is to make sure that that the fundamental process is the same.

Q: It is anticipated there is a need for some major infrastructure changes, is that a part of Phase I? If there's need to move a flood channel or transmission line?

A: What we're doing here is at the programmatic level. At the project level, we want to set the stage for permitting for specific activities.

Q: Will the report that comes out December 16 have the applied studies in that?

A: In terms of environmental review, they would be useful, but I don't know if they need to be defined.

Q: I want to know what the commitment to the studies are in order to make decisions on the alternatives.

A: Lynne Trulio: I'll be working with the consultant team to define what studies will be a part of Phase I. Yes, they will be in the December 16 report.

Q: Does project level specific mean the associated level of mitigation?

A: Yes.

Q: If the long-term goal is a managed system or a tidal system, once we get to 90/10 we can't go back.

A: If we refer back to the (National Science Panel) charette, it is a totally self-sustaining system that is totally tidally influenced and supporting all the species. How much management do we actually have to put into the system? The goal is to minimize the amount of management, but because so much habitat has been developed, we're stuck with management. We're probably always going to be managing for something—predators, *Spartina*, etc.

A: Steve Ritchie: The demographics and other factors may change over the 50 years.

Q: In Eden Landing Ponds 10 and 11, will you put same water flow in there as before the levee?

A: Carl Wilcox: Yes, the same as before.

9. Are We on the Right Track?

Mary Selkirk then posed three questions for the stakeholders after having heard and having some in depth discussion on the alternatives with adaptive management embedded on how project objectives will be met. She said to go back to gradients of agreement we've used in the past: 5-strongly support, 4-agreement with reservations, 3-stand aside, 2-formal disagreement, 1-no agreement. Going into the EIR/EIS, this is the set of

alternatives that are fundamentally a range of alternatives informed from the beginning with an aggressive adaptive management program. Where do you stand at this time? It looks like a lot of consensus on the overall approach.

Q: Is the relationship of the Adaptive Management Plan to our objectives for public access and flood management, will there be decisions we've made that will influence how the AM will happen?

A: Mary Selkirk: Absolutely, the assumption is that the applied studies in Phase 1 will include investigations of public access into areas where there was none, impacts on wildlife, etc.

She said that the next question is: Are the bookends credible?

David Blau: I want to make one clarification. When I sat back down and looked at the scores, we're using a 9-point scale, but if rated, for example as a 4, that doesn't mean it's bad, because you're still maintaining that condition. Species related to tidal marsh in all cases in B and C moved in a positive direction from No Action. Only one went in the opposite direction: specialized species that use the high salinity ponds.

Q: I'm going to a 2 on this, if you agree to hold another workshop. I'm still very uncomfortable and I would like more information before I say that 50/50 is fine. Consider this, we said we like the way you're going, but I think we need more information and not push us forward before we're ready to get there.

Mary Selkirk: Let me make a suggestion, you want to understand more deeply how the ratings were arrived at and what they mean in terms of improvements of the baseline. What we may want to do in the next month is to have a meeting for those members of the Forum and Science Team who may want to meet with the Consultant Team to discuss this, so you feel like you can give informed advice.

Q: Steve Ritchie: Are you going to go through every single detail?

A: Mary Selkirk: No, just focused on the bird rating predictions.

Q: Some of us may have some concerns in some of the other areas. We need something that will guide us to decide on a preferred alternative. Give us a little more time to think these issues through.

I would probably locate it about 3. I'm still having trouble looking at bookends at 50/50 and 90/10. I like the continuum approach.

Q: I have a concern about this 50-year time frame also, I think we're going to pretty well know before that time. I think we can probably come to the solutions much sooner. The baseline is going to change; we don't know what's going to happen in 50 years from now.

Q: One thing that bothers me is that we haven't solved predators and controlling salinity.

Q: I think you're raising an important issue; the management of predators is a huge problem as well as the issue of water quality. We can benefit from an additional workshop—how adaptive management affects public access I'm still trying to figure out.

Q: My rating is also around 4, I agree with comments to address the predator issue and want to know exact studies that will be conducted and understand better these data points. These are the best techniques that we see in the field.

A: John Krause: Predator management will be a significant issue, there are programs already existing at Eden Landing and at the Refuge. Gulls are a different issue, but maybe a bigger issue than we can get our hands around in this project, more related to landfills.

Mary Selkirk said that she was hearing one person registering 2 and others registering around 4. There is pretty strong support for question 1 with opportunity to understand these more deeply. We're going to query the Forum about the Phase 1 actions—the third question. With the caveat of understanding what adaptive management actions are going to be embedded in those actions.

Q: I'm not comfortable about Pond A8 and mercury. Do we need to play with it down near the outlet of where the highest concentration is, maybe that's one of the riskiest places to do it?

A: We're not actually doing it there. In Ponds A19-21, we could learn a lot about mercury there and salinity.

A: Steve Ritchie: As part of workshop on ratings, we will spend some time on the island ponds and that process.

Q: Is that all outlined and the monitoring associated with that?

A: Steve Ritchie: What's outlined in the ISP is deferred to the regulatory agencies, one thing we're working on is to identify some data collection points and how it would relate to this project.

Q: I'm not sure there's a good baseline that's been established prior to opening up those ponds. You've missed the summer season prior to opening those ponds.

A: Lynne Trulio: There is quite a bit of data that has been collected at the island ponds and we are looking at more for bathymetry, hydrology. and sediment. We're going to get it going right away and I'm working with the Science Team to develop the studies.

Q: What about the data that's already been collected?

A: We can compile that.

10. Next Steps

Steve Ritchie said that we need to commence restoration in 2008 and, in order to do that, we have to start the EIR/EIS very soon. The Draft EIS/EIR will be presented in January and the final one probably about October 2006.

Ritchie said that regarding the Shoreline Study, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working with a federal agency on a feasibility study to determine if federal investment is appropriate. The federal cost sharing agreement is to perform for the Alviso ponds, plus shoreline that extends over to San Francisquito Creek, and that they are looking to go forward on that effort right away.

He said that the Shoreline Study will be ready in time to go into Phase 2 of this Project. It will probably take about four years to complete and there is a formal kickoff meeting next Monday. They will have the initial public meeting on January 26. One thing they are working on is to make sure that effort is clearly integrated with this one. They are developing communication tools to help people see the relationship.

He added that the cost sharing agreement is for about $16 million, and that there is an agreement between the State Coastal Conservancy and the Santa Clara Valley Water District for a local share,

Q: Is there going to be a separate EIR/EIS for the Corps work?

A: The Corps is actually a co-sponsor of the restoration project. A separate document would be by the Corps, to have a NEPA document and ROD.

Q: Is the feasibility study also an EIS?

A: Yes.

Ritchie went on to remind the group that they had talked about scheduling a workshop on the rating criteria, hopefully early in November and that the Draft Alternatives Report is scheduled for December 16.

He added that the next Stakeholder Forum Meeting is set for January 12 and to keep in mind if this is the right set of alternatives for the environmental review process.

Mary Selkirk said that Kris May has copies of the complete set of ratings criteria.

Q: I was looking at the bottom line on your diagram, so the Stakeholder Forum meetings are continuing on indefinitely?

A: Steve Ritchie: They are set up to carry us to the ROD. We know that for the Project, there will continue to be public interaction, so we haven't figured that out yet.

Q: You need some type of a similar group that's going to go through the implementation, and you need to address potential changes of the make up of the group.

Q: I have a question about the Phase 1 experiments. I assume you're going to provide a timeline for those?

A: Steve Ritchie: Yes. There will be enough structure to do that to give us some idea of the length of each of these.

Q: The phase in of the managed ponds vs. tidal – a managed pond is a whole range of solutions dependent on that individual site. It is difficult to evaluate what will happen based on those categories. I'm not sure how to address that, but in the rating scheme it may be necessary to go to a deeper level of detail on a pond-by-pond basis.

A: Michelle Orr: There has been some thought on what types of ponds and specific pond detail for Phase 1. There would be a lot more detail on how those would be managed.

A: David Blau: Currently, they look a lot like salt ponds, but they are not going to be vegetated ponds or diked pickleweed areas.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Attachment 1: October 21, 2005 Meeting Attendance

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Phil Bobel	City of Palo Alto
Patrycja Bossek	Bay Trail
Dan Bruinsma	City of San Jose
Brenda Buxton	California State Coastal Conservancy
Deborah Clark	Center for Collaborative Policy
Evelyn Cormier	Wildlife Stewards
Ron Duke	H.T. Harvey and Associates
Diane Dryer	City of Menlo Park
Beth Dyer	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Arthur Feinstein	Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge
Jim Foran	Santa Clara Co. Open Space Authority
Tom Ford	San Francisco Bay BRAND
Andrea Gant	BCDC
Phil Gordon	HASPA, OAS
Carin High	Citizens to Complete the Refuge
Rob Holt	Photowall Design
Beth Huring	San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Ellen Johnck	Bay Planning Coalition
Ralph Johnson	Alameda Co. Flood Control
Matt Kaminski	Ducks Unlimited
John Krause	California Dept. of Fish & Game
Matt Krupp	City of San Jose
Tom Laine	Alviso Resident
Marilyn Latta	Save the Bay
Yvonne LeTellier	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Libby Lucas	California Native Plant Society
Greg Lyman	Wildland Inc.
Kristy McCumby Hyland	City of Sunnyvale
Jim McGrath	Port of Oakland
Austin McInerny	Center for Collaborative Policy
Eileen McLaughlin	Wildlife Stewards
Kevin Murray	San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers
Terry Noonan	East Bay Regional Parks District
Sandy Olliges	NASA Ames
Michelle Orr	Phil Williams and Associates
Teri Peterson	Cargill Corp.
Donna Plunkett	EDAW
Steve Ritchie	Executive Project Manager
Antoinette Romeo	Santa Clara Co. ERA
Diane Ross---------	PG&E
Ana Ruiz	Mid-Pen. Regional Open Space District
Mark Sanders	WestPoint Marina

Mary Selkirk	Center for Collaborative Policy
Mendel Stewart	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dan Strickman	Santa Clara Co.
Noor Tietze	Santa Clara Co. Vector Control District
Lynne Trulio	San Jose State University
Carl Wilcox	California Dept. of Fish and Game