



South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project

Restoring the Wild Heart of the South Bay

Charter:

South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project

Science Technical Advisory Committee

(Final, March 15, 2010)

Overall Project Goal

The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project (Project) encompasses approximately 15,100 acres of former salt ponds located around the edge of South San Francisco Bay, and is the largest wetlands restoration project on the West Coast of the United States. Over the next approximately fifty years, the Project is intending to restore and enhance wetlands in South San Francisco Bay while providing for flood management and wildlife-oriented public access and recreation. In addition, other public sector restoration projects are being undertaken in South San Francisco Bay which can benefit from technical expertise.

Purpose

The purpose of the Project's Science Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to provide guidance to the Project Science program, management team, and land managers; to assess progress of the public sector restoration projects in South San Francisco Bay by reviewing results of monitoring and applied studies; and to suggest adaptive management strategies. The formation of a TAC also fulfills the water quality certification requirements for Bair Island and for the Project restorations. Another purpose is to inform the public through publicizing the TAC work on the Project website.

TAC Composition: The TAC is chaired by the Project's Lead Scientist. Members of the TAC are selected by the Lead Scientist with input from the Project Management Team. TAC members are selected from locally-recognized experts familiar with large-scale wetland restoration efforts and knowledgeable about application of adaptive management protocols, regulatory requirements and long-term monitoring. The TAC members are selected to encompass a broad knowledge base and multiple scientific, academic, and technical disciplines that are related to these restoration projects. The TAC can include members of the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Wetland Monitoring Group of the San Francisco Bay Wetland Restoration Project, as well as others involved in bay restoration.

Role/Responsibilities: The TAC will provide broad scientific advice and perspective, with occasional direct technical support, to the Project Science Program and the Lead Scientist. The

TAC will review the progress of the Project Science Program, and provide advice on restoration/engineering design, research, and applied studies. Analysis and results of monitoring and applied studies will be presented to the TAC at least annually for discussion and comment.

The TAC may work with the regulatory partners to assess consistency of the Project Science Program with other Bay Area efforts underway. The TAC will assist the Lead Scientist in identifying emerging key uncertainties, needed research, and/or emergent management decisions required to keep the project headed on a trajectory toward its restoration objectives. As stated in the Project's Adaptive Management Plan, "[I]t is absolutely critical, throughout the life of the Project, that the Project Managers and scientists continue to carefully select a targeted, short list of key applied studies for funding that are specifically linked to management needs and achieving the Project Objectives (p.11)."

The role of the Lead Scientist as Chair of the TAC is to identify specific questions for the TAC to address, or request review of a specific study and address a specific question. The Lead Scientist will provide materials for TAC members to review a few weeks prior to the meeting. The Lead Scientist may identify individual TAC members to preside over breakout sessions during the TAC meeting that address specific topic areas, or to preside over ad hoc committees that address a specific topic or question outside the regular annual TAC meeting.

Decision-making: Advisory only. Ideally, the TAC would reach consensus on the advice and direction for the project; however, differing viewpoints are also acceptable. As the TAC meets infrequently the Project website can be used to solicit TAC input on a more frequent basis if needed.

Reporting: The TAC will have a direct reporting relationship to the Lead Scientist. TAC recommendations will also be provided to the Project Management Team and to the appropriate Project land manager (USFWS, CDFG). The work of the TAC may also inform the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or other public agencies involved in restoration work. A written report summarizing the collective recommendations of the TAC with respect to the specific questions posed at the meeting will be produced by the Lead Scientist and a draft circulated to the TAC. Once finalized the report of summary recommendations will be posted to the Project website.

Meeting Type and Frequency: The TAC will meet at least annually. Ad hoc groups to address a specific technical issue may also meet. Consideration will be given to holding the annual TAC meeting after the State of the Estuary Conference, as that meeting facilitates summarizing lessons learned. In addition, the TAC recommendations will be presented at the biennial South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Science Symposium, at the State of the Estuary Conference, or similar conferences.