

SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY

Staff Recommendation
March 6, 2026

**MCINNIS MARSH AND BAYFRONT MARSHES BENEFICIAL DREDGE SEDIMENT
REUSE AND TIDAL WETLANDS RESTORATION PLANNING PROJECT**

Project No. RA-045
Project Manager: Natasha Daniels

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$640,000 to the County of Marin to augment the Authority grant of \$1,300,000, authorized on June 6, 2025, to undertake the McInnis and Bayfront Marshes Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Planning Project and to revise the project to include analysis of an innovative, nature-based alternative to traditional dredging that would not reverse subsidence on 140 acres but would instead result in additional sediment reaching the outer Bayfront marshes of Gallinas Creek.

LOCATION: McInnis Marsh and the South Fork and Bayfront Outer Marshes of Gallinas Creek, City of San Rafael, Marin County; Measure AA Region: North Bay

MEASURE AA PROGRAM CATEGORY: Vital Fish, Bird and Wildlife Habitat Program; Shoreline Public Access Program

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location and Site Maps](#)
- Exhibit 2: [McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project](#) (Staff Recommendation June 6, 2025)
- Exhibit 3: [U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Strategic Sediment Pulse Delivery Pilot Study](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority adopt the following resolution and findings:

Resolution:

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed six hundred forty thousand dollars (\$640,000) to the County of Marin to augment

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the Authority grant of \$1,300,000, authorized on June 6, 2025, for the McInnis and Bayfront Marshes Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Planning Project (formerly the McInnis Marsh Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project) and to revise the project to include analysis of an innovative, nature-based alternative to traditional dredging that would not reverse subsidence on 140 acres but would instead result in additional sediment reaching the outer Bayfront marshes of Gallinas Creek, subject to the conditions of the June 6, 2025 authorization.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Act, Government Code, Sections 66700-66706.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the San Francisco Bay Clean Water, Pollution Prevention and Habitat Restoration Measure (Measure AA).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the Authority authorize a disbursement up to \$640,000 to augment the Authority grant of \$1,300,000, authorized on June 6, 2025 (Exhibit 2), to undertake the McInnis and Bayfront Marshes Beneficial Dredge Sediment Reuse and Tidal Wetlands Restoration Planning Project (the project), which consists of furthering preliminary designs, collecting data, performing technical studies, preparing CEQA documents, and preparing regulatory permit applications to improve future tidal restoration potential of the McInnis Marsh Basin in Marin County by planning for restoration of 22 to 30 acres of diked wetlands and the reversal of subsidence across 140 acres of marsh; and to and to revise the project to include analysis of an innovative, nature-based alternative to traditional dredging that would not reverse subsidence on 140 acres but would instead result in additional sediment reaching the outer Bayfront marshes of Gallinas Creek. This alternative will be included in the data collection and technical studies that will inform the project's 65% designs, permit applications, and CEQA document.

The proposed project expansion includes an additional dredging alternative that recently emerged from a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Marin County Department of Public Works Strategic Sediment Pulse Delivery (SSPD) Pilot Study, examining an innovative, nature-based approach to traditional dredging and sediment dispersal that uses tidal and current action to transport sediment out of creek channels and to nourish nearby tidal marsh systems. Analysis of this alternative will inform the design and permit applications and be included in the CEQA document. The 65% designs and permit applications will be developed to reflect the best dredge sediment placement, which could include: (1) placement within the 140 acres of marsh through traditional dredging; (2) placement of sediment through the SSPD method that will not reverse subsidence on 140 acres but result in additional sediment reaching the outer Bayfront marshes of Gallinas Creek; or (3) both traditional dredging and SSPD. Each alternative supports the project goals of future tidal marsh restoration and sea level rise resilience of the Baylands through the reuse of on-site dredge material to support tidal marsh vegetation. The proposed expansion may

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represent a low-cost and low-carbon approach to dredging tidal flood control channels that benefits marshes through indirect movement of sediment through the natural Bay processes. This alternative is a nature-based approach that works with the Bay tides to distribute sediment naturally and sustain the outer Bayfront marshes of Gallinas Creek. This alternative could provide an additional method for on-site use of dredge material that could result in fewer impacts to fish and other ecologically important species and serve as a model of the pulse dredging method for other projects around the Bay.

Site Description: The project site is expanded to include the outer Bayfront marshes flanking Gallinas Creek, an adjacent area for potential mobilization and transport of dredged sediments using natural creek flows and tidal forces. The proposed project expansion will evaluate potential transport of sediment from the Gallinas Creek channel into the outer tidal marsh and mudflat areas of the Bay. These areas include the outer marshes to the north of the creek along the west shore of San Pablo Bay and China Camp Marsh to the south of the creek. The outer Bayfront marshes north of Gallinas Creek are owned by the County of Marin and the State of California. China Camp Marsh is owned by the State and maintained by the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The remaining areas south of the creek are owned by public and private landowners. The County of Marin will coordinate with landowners, as applicable, during the planning phase. The marshes consist of healthy mudflats, tidal marsh, and uplands that support wildlife, but the mudflat and tidal marsh habitat are in critical need of additional sediment to keep pace with rising tides. Exhibit 1 shows the revised project site, including the mouth of Gallinas Creek.

PROJECT FINANCING

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority \$640,000
(This authorization)

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority \$1,300,000
(June 6, 2025 authorization)

Local funding (Gallinas Creek County Service Area #6 and County Measure A Funds) \$174,000

Local funding (Gallinas Creek County Service Area #6 and County Measure A Funds) \$26,000

Project Total \$2,140,000

The proposed project expansion increases the total project cost to \$2,140,000, and the additional cost is funded by this authorization and the County of Marin with local funds.

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CONSISTENCY WITH AUTHORITY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION, THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY ACT:

The project remains consistent with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Act as described in the June 6, 2025 staff recommendation.

CONSISTENCY WITH MEASURE AA PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES:

The project remains consistent with the Measure AA Programs and Activities as described in the June 6, 2025 staff recommendation.

CONSISTENCY WITH MEASURE AA PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA:

The project remains consistent with the Measure AA Prioritization Criteria as described in the June 6, 2025 staff recommendation.

CONSISTENCY WITH AUTHORITY’S INTERIM TRIBAL CONSULTATION POLICY:

Before the June 6, 2025 board meeting, Authority staff sent letters to tribal organizations with interest in Marin County to provide information about the project. One tribe requested to consult on the project, and the Authority offered to schedule a consultation.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The project remains statutorily exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies), and categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15306 (Information Collection).

Upon approval of the project, Staff will file a Notice of Exemption.