

CSA 6 2024 Update

January 14, 2025

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This serves as an update to County work activities for County Service Area 6 staff (CSA) since the last public meeting on February 27, 2024. Staff have been busy this year working to secure both permits and funding to dredge and place the sediment. This work required close coordination with Marin County Parks, and we have continued our excellent working relationship with Parks staff. In late 2024, Veronica Pearson, the Parks project manager, left the County (and will be missed). Michelle Julene from Parks has stepped in.

As a reminder, on September 20, 2023, CSA and Parks staff presented the updated project plan to the group of permitting agencies known as the San Francisco Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) for the placement of dredge sediments into the main basin at McInnis Marsh and restoration of the “Pencil and Tail” portions of McInnis Marsh (the “combined plan”). Following this meeting, BRRIT sent a response letter in October 2023 that was generally very positive about the proposed project but contained a few concerns. Notably the BRRIT raised concerns over the San Francisco Bay Trail alignment under sea level rise (SLR) conditions. CSA 6 staff also had concerns over potential costly dredge placement and lengthy monitoring and maintenance requirements from the BRRIT agencies following sediment placement. To address both issues, a new scope and budget was required for the project to support staff to meet with the BRRIT again in September 2024.

Combined CSA 6 Dredge and Parks McInnis Marsh Restoration Project at McInnis Marsh

A summary of Staff activities in 2024 included the following:

- CSA 6 Staff worked with Parks to address the issues from the October 2023 BRRIT letter and to develop a scope and budget with Environmental Sciences Associates (ESA) to conduct studies and prepare technical memorandums in response.
- CSA 6 and Parks staff, along with Marin County Supervisor Sackett and her staff, met with several of the permitting agencies at the site in February 2024 to discuss the agencies concerns about the Bay Trail alignment if the project progresses and there is a break in the Bay Trail in the “tail” of McInnis Marsh.
- The new contract with ESA was awarded in July 2024 for \$65,477. There was a cost share between Parks and CSA 6 for this work.
- ESA worked with Parks staff to prepare an [updated Bay Trail Resiliency Memo](#) in August 2024. The memo was intended to address BRRIT comments on the trail alignment and its resiliency to

flooding and projected sea level rise. The memo was submitted prior to the September 2024 BRRIT meeting.

- On September 25, 2024, CSA and Parks staff presented responses to the 2023 BRRIT comments with the primary focus on the Bay Trail Resiliency Memo. The meeting went well, and the next BRRIT comment letter was received on October 31, 2024.
- Staff prepared a grant application to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) in October 2024 to do 65 percent final design of the dredge placement into McInnis Marsh pencil and tail, CEQA, and permitting for the combined project. Note that based on engineer's estimates, the project construction will require a future grant of several million to implement the project. However, if successful, the SFBRA grant will make the project shovel-ready and thus more attractive to grant funders. In past grant cycles, applicants were notified by mid-January the following year (i.e. January 2025) if their grant application was successful.
- Marin Parks staff held a meeting with the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Bay Trail permitting staff in November 2024 to discuss their comments and concerns regarding the Bay Trail alignment proposed by Marin County Parks. Several BRRIT representatives also attended. Prior to this meeting, [Parks sent out responses to comments](#) and concerns in November 2024 regarding the August 2024 Bay Trail Resiliency Memo received from the MTC and comments from BCDC received through the BRRIT in response to the September 2024 BRRIT meeting. Marin County Parks is currently working to resolve remaining issues with MTC and BCDC regarding the proposed Bay Trail alignment.

Update to the Novel Dredging Approach Project Developed by CSA Staff

For those who attended the March 2024 CSA 6 meeting, staff presented a novel approach to the dredging of tidal channels developed by Marin County Flood Control staff that may be much less expensive and less environmentally impactful to implement. This approach, named the "Strategic Sediment Pulse Dredge (SSPD)," was pitched to the Corps by Marin County in 2022. The Corps was very interested and funded a \$225,000 federally funded feasibility study with CSA staff time as the match to help prepare the report. The study identified Gallinas Creek as the pilot study location for the project and the hydrodynamics of the project were modeled by the experts at the Army Corps in the engineering research office (ERDC) in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

This study, co-prepared by CSA and Corps staff over the past year, has been completed and the [report is available online](#) to the public. The results of the study are very positive and next steps will involve presentations to the permitting agencies and seeking funds for a pilot project in Gallinas Creek. One of the many benefits of working with the Corps is that it opens new potential avenues for funding through the Federal Corps dredging or flood reduction programs. There are no guarantees that this new dredging approach can be permitted in the difficult permitting environment of SF Bay or that funding for the pilot project implementation could be found.

Next Steps

If the SFBRA grant is successful, then staff will continue to design, conduct CEQA, and permit the combined project. If this grant is unsuccessful, we will focus on future grant funding opportunities which may be made easier by the passage of the new climate bond, Proposition 4.

We propose an in-person meeting with the CSA 6 Advisory Board to discuss next steps with the CSA 6 after we hear back about the grant application. We believe we will know if our grant application is successful by January or February 2025.

Budget Update

The CSA 6 reserve has approximately \$4M dollars collected at a rate of approximately \$250,000 annually. CSA revenue is generated from the base ad-valorem property tax. CSA 6 residents do not pay any additional taxes as a result of being in the CSA, rather a portion of the 1% base tax is earmarked for dredging. Therefore, if the CSA is abandoned, CSA 6 members will not pay less taxes, just the portion reserved for the dredging would then go into other funds in the tax rate area.

The Office of the County Executive requested that County Service Areas adopt a baseline budget for the beginning of each fiscal year that does not include major project expenses. Baseline budgets are intended to be relatively consistent year to year. Major project expenditures and grant awards will require separate actions from the Advisory Board and the Marin County Board of Supervisors to adjust the budget as needed. As usual, the approved budget may always be adjusted as necessary as priorities and cost estimates for projects, grants, and studies planned for this coming fiscal year are more clearly identified and reviewed with the advisory board. The 2025 and 2026 baseline budgets were recommended to [the advisory board on March 13, 2024](#).

Note, actual expenditures in fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024) were less than what was budgeted so the projected fund balance presented at the March 13, 2024, meeting is lower than the actual available fund balance. [An updated budget report](#) with last year's actual expenses is attached for reference.