



January 7, 2022

Zack Wasserman, Chair
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
375 Beale St., Suite 510
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for Bay Adapt: Regional Strategy for a Rising Bay

Dear Chair Wasserman:

I am pleased to offer the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies' (BACWA) endorsement of "Bay Adapt: Regional Strategy for a Rising Bay." The Bay Adapt Joint Platform is the result of a stakeholder-led process to determine the best ways for the Bay Area to become regionally resilient to rising sea levels. BACWA is a joint powers agency whose members own and operate publicly owned wastewater treatment works (POTWs) that collectively provide sanitary services to over 7.1 million people in the nine-county San Francisco Bay (SF Bay) Area. BACWA members are public agencies, governed by elected officials and managed by professionals who protect the environment and public health.

While the Bay's shoreline constitutes one-third of the California coastline, the Bay Area will likely experience two-thirds of the negative economic impacts due to the flooding caused by rising sea levels absent adequate measures to adapt and protect people, places, and habitat. As sea levels rise at an accelerating rate, the confluence of more intense winter storms, extreme high tides, and higher runoff, with higher sea levels, will increase the frequency and duration of shoreline flooding long before areas are permanently inundated by sea level rise alone.

In the face of this challenge, the Bay Area must protect and energize vulnerable and historically marginalized frontline communities, enhance and restore an ecosystem that is already deeply affected by human activities, and reduce flood risks for existing built infrastructure along the vast bay shoreline. Yet, the increasingly frequent and severe impacts of climate change in the Bay Area do not conform to our governments' jurisdictional boundaries or the planning and regulatory authorities of any one agency or organization. Bay Adapt begins to address these challenges by laying out a set of guiding principles, priority actions, and vital tasks that public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including local governments with land use authorities, can voluntarily implement in a coordinated and collaborative manner to adapt faster, better, and more equitably to a rising San Francisco Bay.

It will take tremendous efforts and investments to adapt the San Francisco Bay Area to a constantly changing shoreline and continue to improve its vibrant, diverse, ecologically unique, innovative, and pioneering quality of life. Implementing Bay Adapt will reduce flood risks for communities, businesses, infrastructure, and habitat, increase technical assistance for local governments and funding for adaptation, protect natural areas and wildlife, recognize and equitably support low-income, frontline communities, robustly integrate adaptation into community-focused local plans, and accelerate permitting and project construction of local adaptation projects.

BACWA Comments on Proposed
Regulation 2 Amendments

BACWA's members have extensive low-lying infrastructure that is vulnerable to rising seas and shallow groundwater. BACWA supports the Bay Adapt Joint Platform and will support its implementation by concentrating on regional collaboration, especially pertaining to nature-based solutions to protect upgradient infrastructure. We look forward to working with BCDC and all of Bay Adapt's stakeholders to ensure that the entire Bay Area thrives in the face of rising sea levels.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorien Fono". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Lorien Fono
BACWA Executive Director

Cc: BACWA Executive Board