

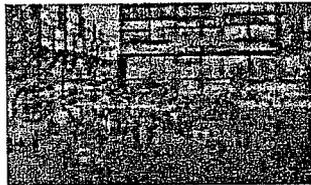
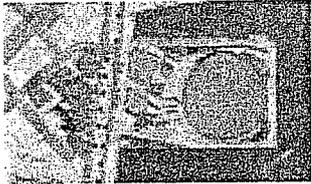
# SFGate

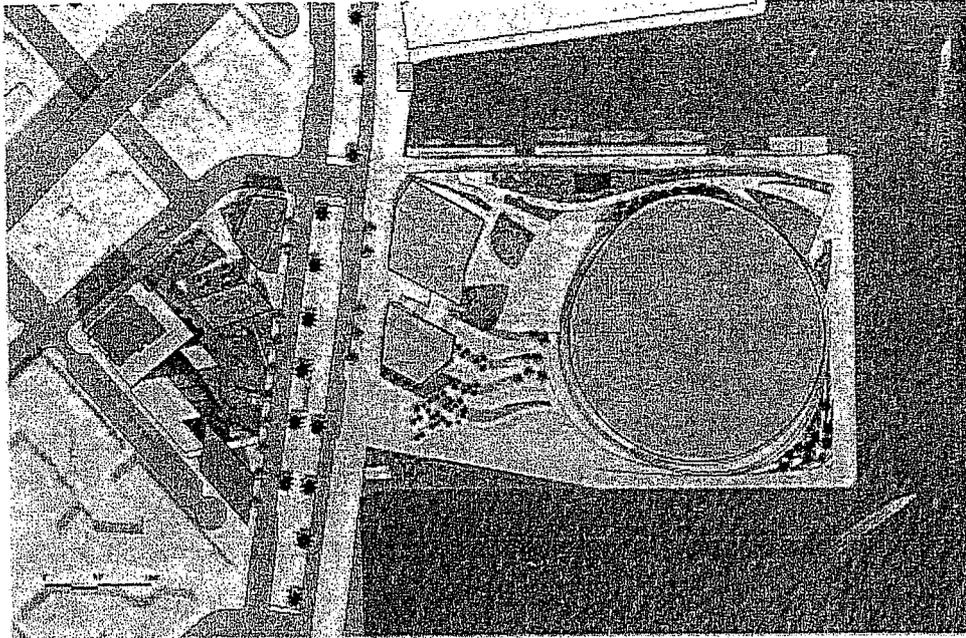
Monday May 13, 2013 11:09 AM PT

## URBAN LANDSCAPES

John King

### The changing San Francisco waterfront — who's in charge?





(Golden State Warriors / Golden State Warriors) The site plan for the development along the Embarcadero proposed by the Golden State Warriors.

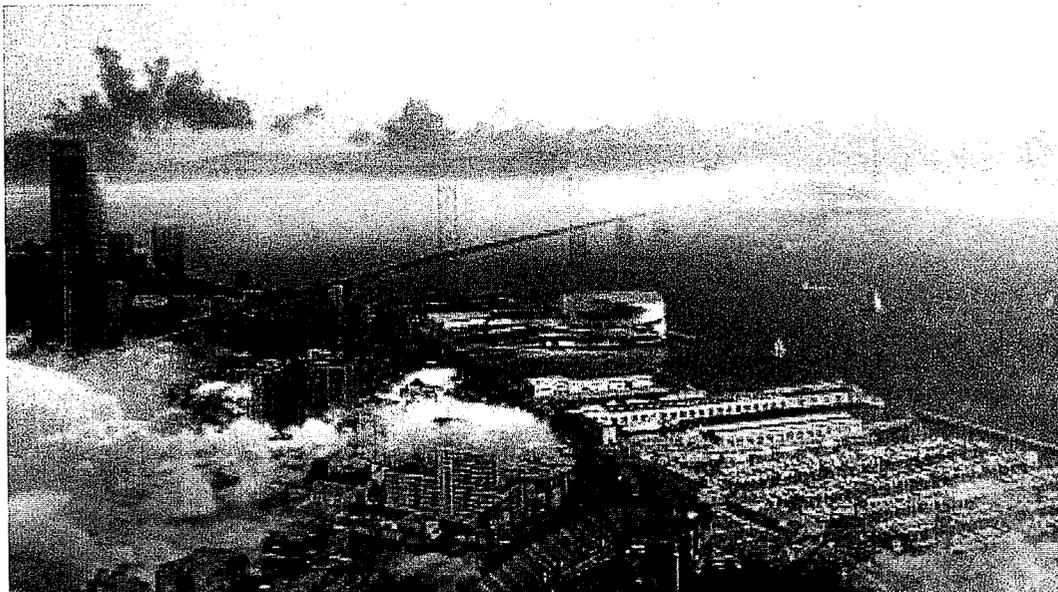
In the abstract, there's a lot to like about the design for the 15-plus acres the Golden State Warriors seek to develop at Piers 30-32 and on an inland block. There'd be a landscaped terrace 50 feet above the water, paths and plazas of varied size, an arena clad in multi-patterned and metal and glass, and so on and so forth.

But there's no obvious reason the proposal is located on this super-visible spot along the Embarcadero — except that the Warriors would love a sexy piece of bayside real estate to call their own. And they're not alone: two other large Port-owned sites are now in being worked on by developers with Big Plans.

That's fine. Cities need to grow, and each of the projects has strong points. But as I say in today's critique, there's a problem. Developers are the players framing the debate about San Francisco's future waterfront, not City Hall.

San Francisco Chronicle  
May 20, 2013

## Warriors arena not right for waterfront



Snzhetta And AECOM/Golden State

Artist drawing shows proposed location for Golden State Warriors' new San Francisco arena.

Art Agnos

May 20, 2013

When I made a controversial decision to demolish the double-deck Embarcadero Freeway against the demands of 22,000 petitioners in 1990, I believed it was in the best interests of the city.

The dream of a revitalized waterfront with a magnificent boulevard resulted in the restoration of a major portion of the city to us, much the way the Haas family restored Crissy Field to us and much the same way Rep. Nancy Pelosi's legislation restored the Presidio to us.

No one would dare suggest using the old barracks adjacent to Crissy Field for an arena with a view of the Golden Gate Bridge. When Don Fisher, one of the great patriarchs of this city, proposed an outsize building for a modern art collection, it was rejected as inappropriate for the Presidio despite the fact that commercial ventures were needed to sustain it.

So it should be with the Embarcadero that has become a top destination for San Franciscans and visitors alike.

No wonder. A revitalized Ferry Building with specialty shops, farmers' market, two public piers reaching out to the bay for the first time, a cruise ship terminal, restaurants offering indoor and outdoor venues, and the latest jewel, the Exploratorium, beckons everyone.

I never dreamed that, 23 years later, after fighting to tear down ugly freeway blight, I would be fighting to protect this priceless restored waterfront from a modern-day real estate gold rush. But I am.

The billionaire owners of the Warriors chose the most beautiful spot on the waterfront to propose pouring tons of concrete into the bay for a publicly subsidized, 12 1/2-story entertainment complex with no public parking; and across the street stuff a 17-story luxury high-rise condominium building, a 10-story, twin-towers hotel and enough retail space that could encompass most of the restaurants at Fisherman's Wharf.

Would I love to see the Warriors come to San Francisco?

Of course - but not at any cost!

This is the biggest project in San Francisco's waterfront history being steamrolled in the shortest time in San Francisco history. AB1273 by Assemblyman Phil Ting, D-San Francisco, just makes it worse.

AB1273 helps the developers by providing shortcuts through and around historical processes that protect the bay and the public from this kind of unwarranted maritime incursion.

AB1273 threatens 38 years of bay protections by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and 48 years of public trust protections by the State Lands Commission.

AB1273 puts the Port of San Francisco, instead of a neutral third party, in charge of compliance of stated conditions and improvements. In that regard, it is like letting Caltrans determine that the bolts and rods of the new Bay Bridge are really safe after all.

For 35 years, people of San Francisco would look at the Embarcadero Freeway and ask, "Who the hell did that?"

If this entertainment arena/hotel/luxury condo development is built on the water at this precious place, San Franciscans will again ask, "Who the hell did that?"

Art Agnos is a former mayor of San Francisco.

Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/Warriors-arena-not-right-for-waterfront-4529729.php#ixzz2U479qAHd>

## **Environmentalists, officials turn out in Tiburon to cheer SF Bay wetlands designation**

Posted:

marinij.com

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With choppy Richardson Bay as a backdrop, dozens of people gathered at the Lyford House in Tiburon on a breezy Friday afternoon to celebrate the naming of San Francisco Bay as an international Ramsar "wetland of importance."

The designation adds the bay to a list of protected areas under an international treaty among 163 countries signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971 to limit damaging development along ecologically important waterways.

"It took more than four years to make all this happen," said Rowan Gould, deputy director of operations for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Wetlands are not only internationally important, they are important in the communities we live in."

The proclamation of the bay as a Ramsar site was made in February when the U.S. government added the bay as the nation's 35th "wetland of importance" under the treaty. On Friday, representatives from myriad conservation groups came to celebrate.

The designation does not result in new legally binding protections for wildlife and habitat in the bay, but it does focus international pressure on agencies to step up conservation efforts and may lead to additional funding for wetlands restoration.

"Pollution, development, invasive species, sediment, disease, disturbance to wildlife, climate change, all these challenges are daunting, but this designation allows us an opportunity to point out the special significance of this area," Gould said.

San Francisco Bay is the largest estuary — about 400,000 acres — on the Pacific Coast, and it is widely recognized as one of North America's most ecologically important ones. It accounts for 77 percent of California's remaining wetlands, providing key habitat for a broad suite of flora and fauna — more than 1,000 species of animals, including native species and wintering shorebirds.

It also provides a range of ecological services such as flood protection, water-quality maintenance, nutrient filtration and limiting carbon that gets into the air.

There are many waterways and wetlands in Marin included as part of the designation: Richardson Bay, Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve, Marin Islands, Petaluma Marsh (which includes Bahia), Angel Island, China Camp, parts of Olompali, Bel Marin Keys, Simmons Slough, Tiscornia Marsh, Triangle Marsh, San Rafael tidelands, Gallinas Marsh, Pickleweed Park and a number of other smaller sites.

"Everyone in the larger Bay Area should feel proud of this designation," said Beth Huning, coordinator of the Marin-based San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, which led the effort for the Ramsar designation. The group works to protect wetlands around the bay.

"The bay has experienced a number of challenges over the years, but the public will to protect this invaluable resource continues to grow," she said.

Speakers noted that Richardson Bay itself was once eyed for development. A plan in the 1950s called for fill and 2,000 homes, roads and other development.

"Increasingly, San Francisco Bay has come to be part of that deeply held value of environmental protection and conservation here in my district and throughout the Bay Area and much of California," said Rep. Jared Huffman, D-San Rafael.

Mike Sutton, vice president of the National Audubon Society, said he hoped the designation leads to more action.

[http://www.marinj.com/tiburonbelvedere/ci\\_23219117/environmentalists-officials-turn-out-tiburon-cheer-sf-bay](http://www.marinj.com/tiburonbelvedere/ci_23219117/environmentalists-officials-turn-out-tiburon-cheer-sf-bay)

"It highlights that it's our job to protect the bay, all of us, and safeguard it for future generations," he said.

Contact Mark Prado via email at [mprado@marinj.com](mailto:mprado@marinj.com)

## Gov. Brown keeps pressing climate change crusade

By MARTHA MENDOZA, AP National Writer  
Updated 12:18 pm, Thursday, May 23, 2013

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. (AP) — Gov. Jerry Brown warned scientists and policymakers Thursday that they are losing the war on climate change and urged them to become advocates for the planet.

"We've got a big challenge. It's daunting," Brown said. "This is not just about science, this is about activism."

A team of climate change experts gave Brown a new, 20-page call to action during a conference at NASA Ames Research Center sponsored by the nonprofit group Sustainable Silicon Valley.

The report, signed by more than 500 scientists, is aimed at providing lawmakers with specific action items. These include ensuring adequate water supplies to major population centers, restoring wetlands, protecting forests, and developing new materials that will curb the release of toxic substances into the environment.

Brown has repeatedly called for revisions in public policy to better address the impacts of the changing climate on the world's economy and environment. At a University of California, Berkeley, commencement Monday, the Democratic governor warned students that climate change will be a greater concern for them than mortgages, debt or war.

Marianna Grossman, president of Sustainable Silicon Valley, opened Thursday's conference, noting that worldwide levels of the chief greenhouse gas that causes global warming have hit a level never before encountered by humans.

Silicon Valley and NASA both tackle "big audacious challenges that are impossible," she said, from sending people into space to creating revolutionary technologies.

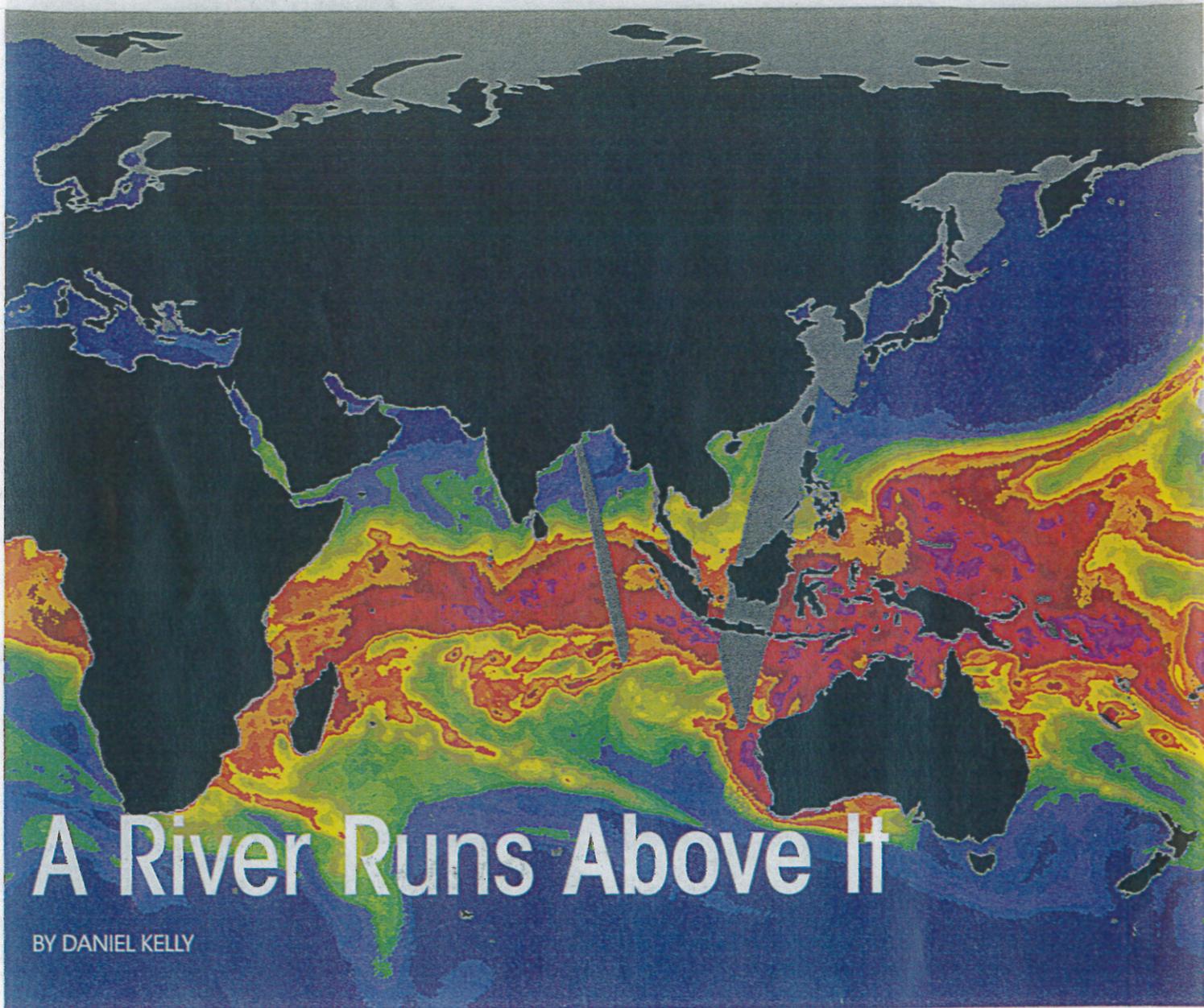
"We want to apply that ingenuity to the challenges of the planet," Grossman said.

UC Berkeley biology professor Anthony Barnosky said one solution is to collect a fee from companies that produce fossil fuels. This would force the price of gas and other fuels up, and some of the proceeds from those fees would go to the public to mitigate those increases, he said.

"The problem is that as long as fossil fuels are the cheapest energy, we will keep burning them," he said. "But they're not really cheapest. They only appear to be cheapest because we subsidize them."

The conference focused on how advanced technology and innovation can transform energy, water, transportation and materials to help curb climate change.

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# A River Runs Above It

BY DANIEL KELLY

Scientists have long studied “pineapple express” storms that originate near the Hawaiian Islands and bring heavy rain or snow to the West Coast of the United States.

But a breakthrough in understanding these storms, which contain strong flows of atmospheric moisture, didn’t come until advancements in satellite technology made it clear that the powerful storms were being fed by long bands of water vapor circling the earth.

Known as “atmospheric rivers,” these bands can stretch from California all the way to Japan and can contain more water than the Amazon River, Earth’s largest by waterflow.

“It turns out that water vapor in the atmosphere has an unexpected tendency,” said Michael Dettinger, a research associate at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. “It doesn’t move around in vast bubbles of moist air. About 90 to 95 percent of water vapor moving toward the north pole is actually moving in a half dozen bands covering about 5 percent of the area of the earth.”

In most cases, atmospheric rivers move from west to east, continually forming or disintegrating. One of Dettinger’s current

projects is to find ways to improve forecasts of pineapple express storms caused after atmospheric rivers reach the West Coast of the U.S.

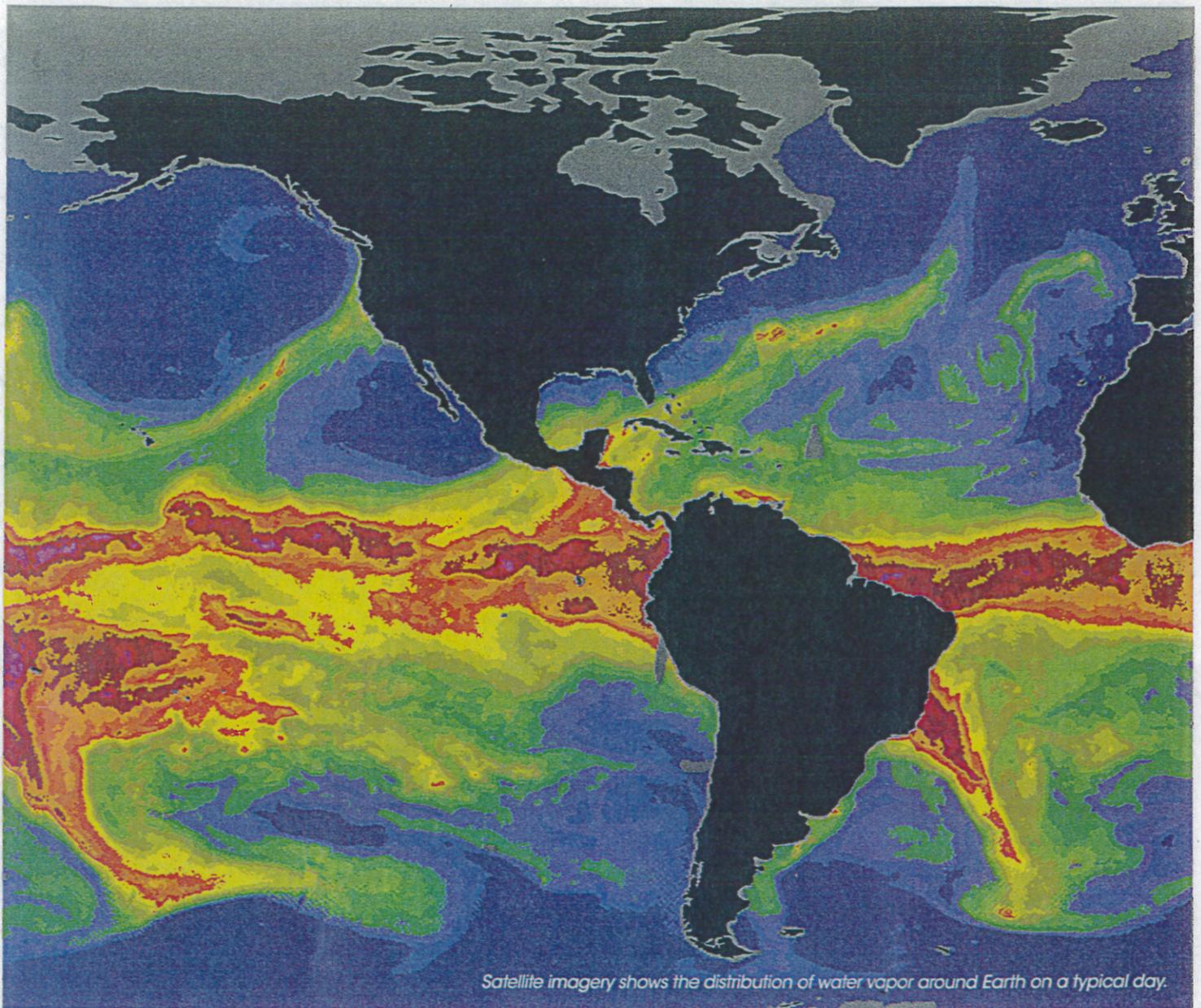
“When these rivers encounter western coasts or mountain ranges, they get lifted up, the water vapor condenses and strong rainfall events occur,” said Dettinger. “About 80 percent of damaging floods in California rivers are a result of these atmospheric river storms.”

To improve current forecasting models, Dettinger, other researchers at the Scripps Institution and a team from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are deploying four land-based observatories.

“Others have used weather balloons that you send up twice a day,” said Dettinger. “It’s rare that you’d encounter the jets with those, and you wouldn’t know how wide one was if you did.”

Improving forecast capabilities may become more important as warmer temperatures become more prevalent.

“Warmer air can cause more water vapor to form,” said Dettinger. “Going into the projections of climate change in the



*Satellite imagery shows the distribution of water vapor around Earth on a typical day.*

21st century, the number of atmospheric rivers that were arriving and the amount of water vapor they were carrying - in both cases - was increasing by 10 to 15 percent."

Each new observatory has upward-looking radar at its core, acoustic sounders, specialized rain gauges and high-end GPS antennas, along with other instruments. The cost for each one runs around \$1 million.

The radar is the most expensive component, able to measure in great detail the composition of winds, rain, sleet and snow at different levels in the atmosphere. Acoustic sounders on the units give an insight into storm turbulence, while the rain gauges measure rate and size of water droplets as they fall. The GPS antennas can record location and altitude down to a centimeter.

"We want to develop a growing understanding of these storms, to observe and track them in real time, and better predict where they're going" said Dettinger. "Advances in technology have given us those new possibilities."

New technology may have made the project possible, but partnerships helped get it off the ground.

"Some of us at Scripps and NOAA started talking a few years back about what a network could look like to monitor the storms," said Dettinger.

Those conversations eventually led to a presentation to the flood management division of the California Department of Water Resources.

"We felt like it was our duty to make them aware of the options. In the end, they told us this kind of network was exactly what they were looking for," said Dettinger. "The state agreed to provide half the funding and NOAA put up the other half."

In addition to the four new observatories, which are being deployed in Bodega Bay, Eureka, Point Sur and Goleta, there are 100 other sites where smaller-scale measurements are taken.

"This is a really unique network. There's nothing like it yet in the world," said Dettinger. "California has a long tradition of devastating floods and this is the latest in a long history of dealing with them. We're taking the latest science and ramping up our ability to manage these storms better." DK

*SPRING 2013*