

## Cyclists, pedestrians jam new Bay Bridge path

Carolyn Jones

Updated 9:38 am, Monday, September 16, 2013

The new Bay Bridge is seeing a new kind of traffic jam: bikes, roller skates, strollers, dogs, scooters and a whole lot of gawkers.

Thousands have been flocking to the span's bicycle/pedestrian path, which has become one of the Bay Area's hottest attractions since it opened Sept. 3. Crowds are so thick that the two entrances are experiencing a sort of two-wheeled gridlock that almost requires its own FasTrak lanes.

"It's pretty great - it's gorgeous out there," said Joy Wu, a scientist from San Leandro who rode across the new path Sunday with her husband and daughter. "You can see the old bridge, the new bridge, the ocean, Treasure Island, the Oakland cranes. ... It was crowded, but everyone was very courteous."

The path can be reached from Shellmound Street in Emeryville, across from Ikea, or at Burma Road and Maritime Street near the former Oakland Army Base. Parking in Emeryville can be tight, but space in a dirt lot on Burma Road, plus nearby street parking, was plentiful Sunday.

A steady stream of pedestrians and bicyclists poured onto the path Sunday, embarking on the 8-mile round-trip jaunt with water bottles, sunscreen and cameras. Some came from the West Oakland BART Station, others via the Bay Trail or car.

Herb and Pam Hadley, retirees from Piedmont, came to take pictures to decorate an upcoming dance at Piedmont's Home Club, a social group.

"Every fall it's always the same theme - leaves turning color, Halloween, the usual. This year, we thought we'd do something different - the bridge. It's so beautiful," Pam Hadley said. "All it needs now is a Fenton's (ice cream) stand."

The path extends about 2 miles from the base of the bridge toward Yerba Buena Island. Caltrans plans to extend it to the island by 2016, when the old bridge is dismantled.

Beth Moseley of San Francisco, who works in biotech, said she was impressed the path got built at all.

"Even with all the BS and the problems they've had, it was worth it," she said. "For all the bad things we say about Caltrans and politicians, they did this one right."

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## S.F. waterfront view obscured by blight

Kurtis Alexander

Updated 8:25 am, Thursday, September 19, 2013

The view ranks among the best of the bay. But to appreciate it, you have to overlook a few things, like decrepit benches strewn with graffiti, light posts gutted by vandals, and trails of cigarette butts and empty beer cans.

The pier behind the Ferry Building on San Francisco's Embarcadero, known as Ferry Plaza, has languished for years in a state of neglect, visitors say. It's a sharp contrast to the slick restaurants and tidy shops that share the waterfront - and the stunning vistas of San Francisco Bay.

"I had the impression that this wasn't one of the spots tourists are supposed to go to," said Nathan Varley, who was visiting the Embarcadero this week from Montana and happened upon the blighted pier. "There's a lot of riffraff here."

According to port officials, Ferry Plaza is leased by Ferry Plaza Limited Partnership, a private group that runs a Thai restaurant on the site and is in charge of maintaining the area. The company did not respond to a message left Monday at the restaurant.

The pier's appearance is most unsightly behind the restaurant, where walkways, benches and light poles seem devoid of upkeep. Making matters worse, BART is doing construction on a transit agency facility on the pier.

But ultimate responsibility for activity on the waterfront rests with the Port of San Francisco.

Port spokeswoman Renee Dunn Martin said this week that the port would ask its tenant to make improvements to the pier and, in the meantime, would send out its own maintenance crews to clean up the mess.

The pier hasn't always been this way. Althemus Coleman, who has fished at the spot for three decades, said the condition started to slip about five or six years ago.

He used to clean halibut and striped bass at a fish sink on the pier. But the sink was shut down, Coleman said, because homeless people used it to bathe. Coleman said that someone ran off with the trash cans on the pier and that the lights stopped working when metal thieves tore out the wiring.

"They don't patrol here as often as they should," he said. "It's too bad."

### What's not working

**Issue:** The Ferry Plaza pier in San Francisco, behind the Ferry Building, has slid into disrepair.

**What's been done:** Port officials say they'll ask the tenant at the plaza to make improvements and will send out crews to start cleaning things up.

**Who's responsible:** Monique Moyer, executive director of the Port of San Francisco, (415) 274-0400, [monique.moyer@sfport.com](mailto:monique.moyer@sfport.com)

### Chronicle Watch

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## Regions' chance to take charge without federal aid

Gabriel Metcalf

Updated 6:21 pm, Friday, September 13, 2013

The federal government is retreating everywhere from a role in shaping the foundations of our economy. But this change, what Bruce Katz (see Page 6) calls the "metropolitan revolution," will play out in very different ways across the country.

Cities and regions will have to step up to take charge of their own destiny - taxing themselves to pay for infrastructure that the federal government once paid for, creating new ways to work together at the regional level, coming up with solutions to their own problems.

This seems like the historical moment we've been waiting for here in the San Francisco Bay Area. We are a wealthy region with one of the strongest economies on Earth. We are highly educated. We pride ourselves on our culture of openness to new ideas and new people. If anywhere in America should be able to thrive on its own, we should.

What does this mean?

First of all, we will need to raise money locally to do things we used to expect to get federal funding to do. Take transportation: If we are going to have a livable region in the future, one in which people can get where they need to go for most purposes without having to drive, then we are going to need a vastly improved public transit network. That includes relatively cheap things like more efficient, better integrated bus service, as well as big-ticket items like high-speed rail and another transbay tube for BART.

These investments cost money. We may need to establish a Bay Area regional gas tax to supplement the federal highway trust fund. We may need to begin tolling our highways, such as Highway 101. In the future, it will not be a viable strategy to simply get in line for federal funding. We need to overcome the fragmentation of our various Bay Area transit operators and instead build a system that works like one integrated network to get people where they need to go.

We also need to begin thinking like a region when it comes to questions of development. The greatest problem facing many people in our region is the high cost of housing - which stems directly from the fact that we allow each city to decide how much housing it feels like building. This has led to a chronic under-supply of housing, making the Bay Area unaffordable for many workers. It's time to rethink our approach to growth and development so that we stop imagining that we can export our housing needs to someplace else.

In terms of economic development, we need to realize that we compete with other regions in the world, and therefore need to stop cities from competing with each other to attract jobs or, in the search for sales tax dollars, from stealing retailers from each other. Perhaps it's time to enact a form of regional tax sharing, something that Minneapolis has done successfully.

Finally, as we think about climate change, it's clear that the work of adapting to now-inevitable changes will have to be done at the regional - not the federal - level. Even if we stopped generating greenhouse gases tomorrow, we are locked into centuries of sea-level rise because of the carbon already in the atmosphere. We are going to confront a painful set of decisions about what to protect, what to give up, and how to restructure our region to adapt to change over the coming decades. No one is going to come to rescue us. We are going to have to figure this out on our own.

The federal government has been a force for good over the last century. The accomplishments of the New Deal in modernizing the country's infrastructure and the achievements of the Civil Rights movement in desegregating American life are some of the proudest moments in our country's history. We hope that there is more to come from the federal government. But at this moment in history, progress appears to be blocked as the national political institutions grind to a halt. The good news is that at the local level, we have the ability to take on the big issues in a way that is immediate and pragmatic. In a time like this, we are extremely fortunate to live where we do.

We complain about how out of touch Washington is. Now is our chance to show what can be done when government is working - to demonstrate what we think America should be like, to show that it really is possible to build a prosperous, sustainable, equitable society.

### **As Uncle Sam steps away Transportation**

- How do we pay for highways, buses, rail, ferries, a second BART tube?
- Should we impose a regional gas tax?
- Should we begin to toll all highways in the Bay Area?
- Can we come up with more efficient ways to complete street, highway, bridge and other projects to reduce costs?

- Can we do a better job at prioritizing the most cost-effective transportations solutions?
- Can we figure out how to change land use and retrofit suburban areas so that it's easier to get around?
- Can we knit our 27 transit operators together into one coherent regional system?
- Do we need a new airport authority to coordinate San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland air travel, similar to the New York airports?

**Climate adaptation**

- What do we need to do to prepare for rising sea levels and other results of global warming?
- How do we decide what to protect and what to give up to rising seas?
- Can we make greater use of the Bay Conservation Development Commission to help manage our planning on sea level rise?
- How do we move commuters between San Francisco and Silicon Valley more efficiently?
- Where would we locate runways when sea-level rise inundates parts of Oakland and SFO airports?
- How should we fund the work of adapting our cities for climate change?

**Regional land use**

- How do we begin to think like a region as we make changes to how we live and work, given that land use has historically been determined by local government?
- Do we need greater regional authority over local land use decisions (as is done in Oregon)?
- Can we find enough places to grow, so that we stop exporting our housing to the Central Valley?
- Should we institute regional-sales-tax sharing (as is done in Minneapolis) to remove the incentive for cities to compete for sales-tax generating big-box retailers?

*Gabriel Metcalf is the executive director of SPUR, a nonpartisan policy group that promotes good planning and good government. To comment, go to [www.sfgate.com/chronicle/submissions/#1](http://www.sfgate.com/chronicle/submissions/#1).*

## Shipping veteran seeking to revive Port of Oakland

By Matthew Artz Oakland Tribune Contra Costa Times

Posted:

ContraCostaTimes.com

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OAKLAND -- There have been two big surprises this past year at the Port of Oakland.

The first was a strip club scandal that ensnared former Executive Director Omar Benjamin. The second was that the leader of the much larger and more successful Port of Long Beach came onboard to replace him.

The bar has been set low for Chris Lytle, but the stakes could not be higher for the Bay Area's economy.

Oakland's port is an economic force, directly responsible for nearly 22,000 jobs throughout Northern California. However, it has struggled to compete with bigger and better-equipped rivals up and down the West Coast -- and its future is hardly assured.

Lytle, who signed a three-year contract that guarantees him a \$325,000 base salary this year, said he was drawn to the challenge of turning around the port. "Some of the problems that Oakland has had over the years, I think I can make a big difference," he said. "And that's essentially why I made the move."

Many of the port's biggest wounds have been self-inflicted.

Past infrastructure projects that now appear misguided have saddled the port with a debilitating \$1.3 billion debt. Unwilling to issue more bonds, the port is holding off indefinitely on a rail and warehousing project that would make it more competitive and generate thousands of jobs.

Infighting among truckers, longshoremen and terminal operators contributed to shutdowns this summer that forced shippers to reroute cargo and threaten to take their business elsewhere.

The port, like San Francisco's before it, is shrinking. After completing the sale of 64 acres earlier this year for a major housing development, the port now must decide what to do with a soon-to-be-shuttered shipping terminal. City leaders are eyeing the land as a stadium site for the Oakland A's.

Given the port's flagging reputation, industry leaders were relieved to learn that Lytle was taking over, said John McLaurin, executive director of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, which represents terminal operators and shipping companies.

"Oakland faces a number of challenges, but I think that in Chris (Lytle) they have somebody who provides some light at the end of the tunnel," he said. "His hiring was critically important."

Lytle is a shipping industry lifer. At 67, he has worked more than four decades in maritime, doing everything from driving a truck while attending the University of the Puget Sound to managing terminal operations for major shipping companies to running the nation's second-busiest port.

During his nearly two years at the helm in Long Beach, Lytle inked long-term deals with two shipping giants, but he didn't always see eye-to-eye with Mayor Bob Foster, who vetoed plans for a new port building he has referred to as a "Taj Mahal."

So far, Lytle has made a good first impression on Oakland's contentious waterfront. His first weeks on the job, in July, coincided with a major cargo backlog at a recently consolidated shipping terminal that led frustrated truckers to shut down most of the port in protest.

Lytle broke bread with truckers at a nearby taco truck and won kudos from all sides unaccustomed to personal visits from top management. "Every time he has said he was going to do something, he's done it," said Mike Villegiante, a longshoremen's union leader.

When the truckers protested, Lytle said he got a stack of emails from angry shippers, and J.C. Penney Co., a major account, told him it was rerouting cargo to Southern California ports.

"If you have labor fighting with truckers and truckers fighting with terminal management, it becomes an endless cycle," he said. "One of my big pushes is to get all these groups to work together. If everyone isn't pulling in the same direction, it's just not going to be successful."

Oakland has played second fiddle for years to Southern California ports that have better rail connections and serve a larger population base.

When the economy started booming in the 1990s, the port decided to invest hundreds of millions in boosting its capacity to receive and ship cargo. It was a gamble that has not paid off.

The economy tanked twice, and shippers began sending cargo to multiple ports. Cargo traffic in Oakland hasn't grown nearly as much as anticipated, and today the port operates at just over 50 percent capacity.

According to the port's own consultants, the key to reaching capacity is improving rail connections. But the port's debt load has forced it to shelve a \$700 million project to improve rail access at several terminals from its half of the former Oakland Army Base.

"We need to get some grant money as opposed to going more into debt," Lytle said. So far, the port hasn't secured any funds for the project.

Lytle notes that the port does have some strategic advantages it can market to shippers. Work has begun on a \$500 million project -- primarily financed through state grants and private capital -- to build a rail yard for the port as well as warehouses on the city's half of the former Army base.

The facilities can further establish the port as an export leader and also boost imports, Lytle said. Meanwhile, he plans to use his industry contacts to improve rail service and lure major shippers.

"One thing I am adamant about here is that you have to have a customer focus," he said. "The sense is there has not been a customer focus in Oakland."

Lytle doesn't just have to rebuild the port's reputation in the maritime industry; he has to rebuild the public's trust. His predecessor retired late last year after it was revealed that he helped run up a \$4,537 tab at a Houston strip club that was billed to the port.

"That chapter is closed; we have to look forward," said Lytle, who added that the port's stringent new reimbursement policies shouldn't hurt its efforts at attracting customers. "It's very tight in a good way."

Lytle worked in Oakland for a shipping company in the 1990s and said that his wife, a UC Berkeley graduate, was eager to return with their three school-age sons. Although he will be 70 when his contract expires, Lytle said he has no interest in retiring and is energized by his new job. Oakland's port likely won't ever be as big as the one he led in Long Beach, he said, but it also won't wither into a waterfront real-estate entity like the port in San Francisco.

"We're not going to let that happen," he said. "We're going to grow the business. There is a lot of upside capacity here."

Contact Matthew Artz at 510-208-6435.

#### New Port Director

NAME: J. Christopher Lytle

AGE: 67

FAMILY: Wife; three sons, ages 11 to 17

EDUCATION: Master's in Business Administration from the University of Puget Sound; bachelor's degree from Central Washington University

PRIOR JOB: Executive director of Port of Long Beach

#### Rising Cost for Port Director

\$325,000: Base salary for Chris Lytle, who also is eligible for a targeted 20 percent performance bonus.

\$257,508: Amount paid to former Director Omar Benjamin in 2011.

# COASTAL SERVICES



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LINKING PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

## CLIMATE CHANGE: MAINSTREAMING ADAPTATION PLANNING IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY

## MARYLAND'S MOBILE APP AIDS WATERSHED RESTORATION EFFORTS

## COMBINING HERITAGE, RECREATION, AND ECOLOGICAL TOURISM IN ONE FLORIDA SHIPWRECK TRAIL



# Climate Change:

## Mainstreaming Adaptation Planning in San Francisco Bay

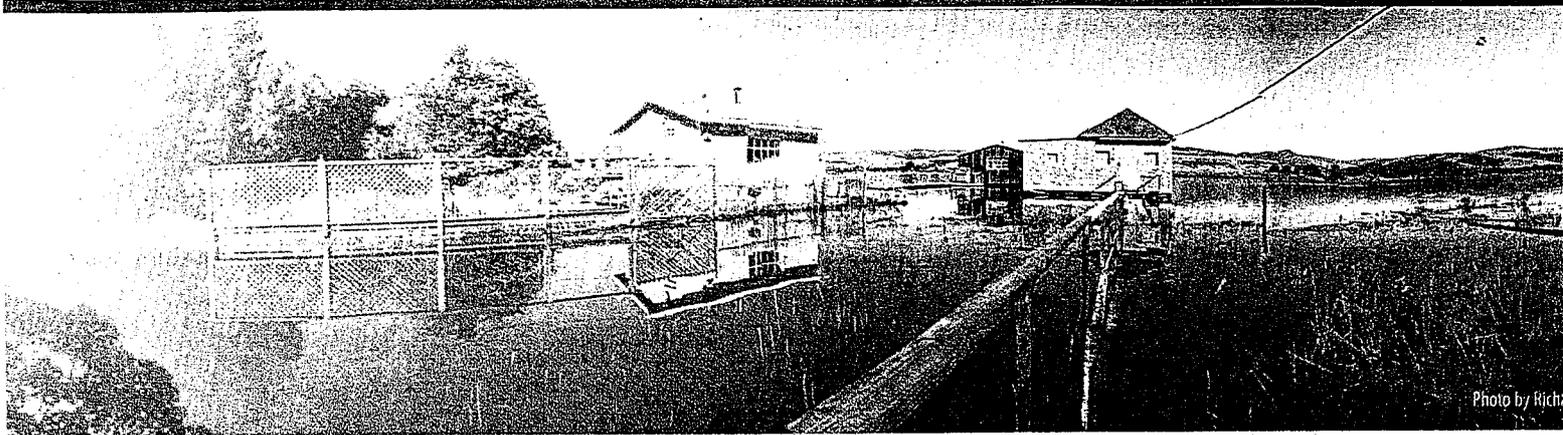


Photo by Rich



These images and cover photo were taken as part of the California King Tides Initiative, where members of the public photograph extreme high tides that demonstrate the possible future impacts of sea level rise.



Point Reyes boat in Inverness

Photo by Richard Ja

Local governments are on the front lines of addressing climate change impacts, but planners and decision makers often lack the resources and information necessary to implement adaptation strategies. Coastal resource managers in the San Francisco Bay area have worked together for the past several years to help communities build their capacity to better plan and adapt.

“When we started, there was a lack of understanding on the likely issues and impacts of climate change and where communities should even start to begin planning for them,” says Sara Polgar, coastal planner for the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC).

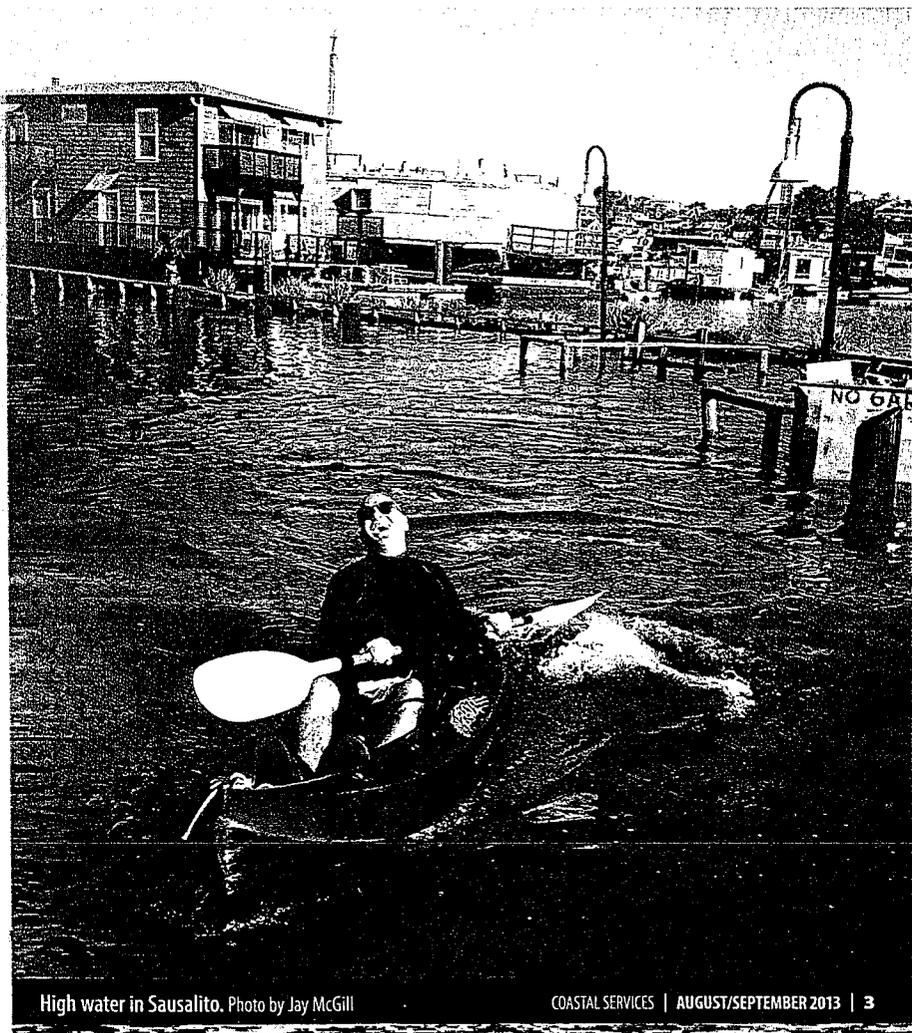
“We couldn’t do a lot in terms of controlling how shoreline development will happen,” Polgar says, “but we could take some leadership on building awareness of the issues, and facilitating connections with federal agencies and other state and regional agencies to bring the necessary resources to the local level.”

The Adaptation Assistance Program, led by BCDC, the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), and the NOAA Coastal Services Center, provided climate change training, region-specific case studies, and a compilation of resources for local resource managers, land use planners, public works officials, park and open space

*“We discovered that there’s a lot of really exciting adaptation work that you don’t hear about.”*

*Heidi Nutters,*

*San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve*



High water in Sausalito. Photo by Jay McGill

district officials, and flood control district and wastewater authorities.

"That early focus on the training really led to great products and tools that can be a model for folks who are just getting started with adaptation planning," says Marina Psaros, the former Coastal Training Program coordinator at San Francisco Bay NERR, who is now principal at Coravai, a technology and communications consulting firm.

Psaros adds, "Often local managers find planning for climate change impacts so daunting because they think about it as something separate from their existing planning processes. In fact, mainstreaming climate into existing planning processes makes your life a whole lot easier—and it's cheaper and more efficient."

#### WHAT DID THEY NEED?

In 2006, BCDC and NERR staff members began discussing the need for climate change action in the San Francisco Bay area, Psaros says.

To help prioritize initial adaptation assistance efforts, in 2007 BCDC did a literature review on adaptation planning and conducted a survey and series of interviews with Bay Area planners and resource managers to learn more about the key barriers that local governments faced, what they

needed to overcome those challenges, and what they saw as an appropriate role for BCDC in supporting them.

The NERR also conducted a climate change training needs assessment, and the two organizations shared the results.

"They were overwhelmed by the volume of information emerging about climate change impacts," Polgar says. "They found it difficult to know what was relevant to their work, and at the time, none of the information was compiled anywhere, so they didn't know where to find it all."

#### BUILDING CAPACITY

Responding to the needs of local officials, BCDC compiled a Web-based adaptation resource list, and the partner organizations worked together to develop new education and outreach.

A series of workshops and trainings were developed, organized, and led by the program partners on climate change impacts in the area and how to plan for them.

"As a regulatory agency, we had to maintain a delicate balance," Polgar says. "We had to be explicit these were just trainings to help them understand the issue and assess their vulnerabilities. We were learning, too, and there was nothing regulatory going on."

Trainings ranged from broader and more introductory half-day sessions on addressing climate change impacts to an intensive five-day workshop on adaptation planning.

After each training, the NERR surveyed attendees about what they needed next, Psaros says.

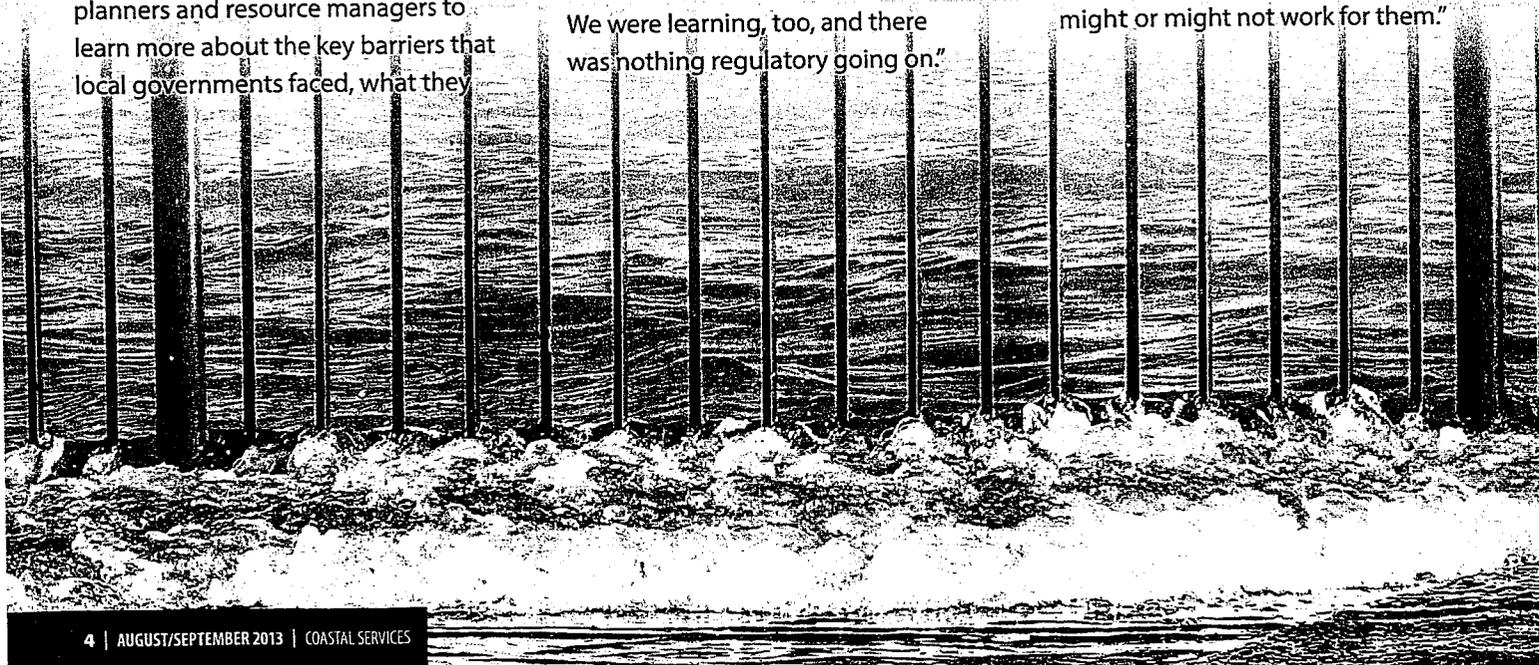
The trainings provided "a logical progression that began with building awareness, and then increased knowledge and skills in the specific topical areas that planners were wrestling with," Psaros says.

"That constant checking in is really key," Polgar says. "Every step of the way we were asking them what they wanted."

After several years of conducting trainings, requests turned to more specific case studies.

#### REAL LIFE EXAMPLES

Local government staff members began asking for specific examples of planning efforts and projects that considered climate change impacts and included adaptation, Polgar says. "They really wanted access to examples that were relevant to them in the Bay Area. They didn't want to try to figure out how case studies from around the country might or might not work for them."



In response, a series of Bay Area case studies of local planning efforts and projects that address climate change impacts were developed by the program partners.

Case studies were presented in both a longer, more detailed format, as well as a one-pager for broader "public" consumption, says Heidi Nutters, who worked on the case studies as a NOAA Coastal Management Fellow. "We discovered that there's a lot of really exciting adaptation work that you don't hear about."

Doing the case studies "was pretty labor-intensive," Nutters says, but "it's had a big impact."

As the new Coastal Training Program coordinator for the San Francisco Bay NERR, Nutters regularly shares the case studies during trainings she conducts, and they have been used nationally as examples.

The case studies cover:

- A San Francisco Creek Joint Powers Authority flood protection project that is designed to accommodate over 20 inches of sea level rise,

- The City of Berkeley's inclusion of resilience measures into its climate action plan,
- Climate change adaptation strategies in the City of Pinole's general plan update, and
- Examples of designing public shoreline spaces to adapt to sea level rise.

Other case studies are under consideration, Nutters says.

#### NEXT PHASE

Since the case studies were completed in 2011, BCDC has led a collaborative adaptation planning effort, *Adapting to Rising Tides*, which involved local governments and organizations along the Alameda County shoreline. Together they assessed the effects of sea level rise and storm events and developed potential responses. The project serves as a model for the region.

Nutters is also primed to conduct another needs assessment to determine how to support local managers with climate change adaptation moving forward.

As a result of the work conducted by the Adaptation Assistance Program, communities are better educated, are communicating with each other more, have improved resources, and in some cases are moving forward with adaptation planning. The project also developed a strong working partnership of the BCDC, San Francisco Bay NERR, and NOAA Coastal Services Center.

#### STRONG PARTNERSHIP

"A strong partnership was really key" to the program, Nutters says.

Polgar agrees, and notes another reason the program was successful was "our constant willingness to change direction or adjust."

"I'm so proud of what we've done in the Bay Area," Psaros says. "I feel like we were really pushing the envelope on how to do adaptation planning, and developing tools, resources, and a framework that now others can use."

She adds, "It was also really, really fun. Talking about climate change is not normally fun—it's normally depressing—but it was gratifying to be a part of this partnership and to help shape the future of the Bay Area in some small way." ❖

*For more information on the trainings or to view the case studies, go to [www.bcdc.ca.gov/planning/climate\\_change/LocalGov.shtml](http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/planning/climate_change/LocalGov.shtml). You may also contact Sara Polgar at (415) 352-3654 or [sarap@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:sarap@bcdc.ca.gov), Marina Psaros at (415) 839-8571 or [marina@coravai.com](mailto:marina@coravai.com), or Heidi Nutters at (415) 338-3511 or [heidin@sfsu.edu](mailto:heidin@sfsu.edu).*

