

SUISUN MARSH PROTECTION PLAN: POLICY REVIEW

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COASTAL SCIENTIST

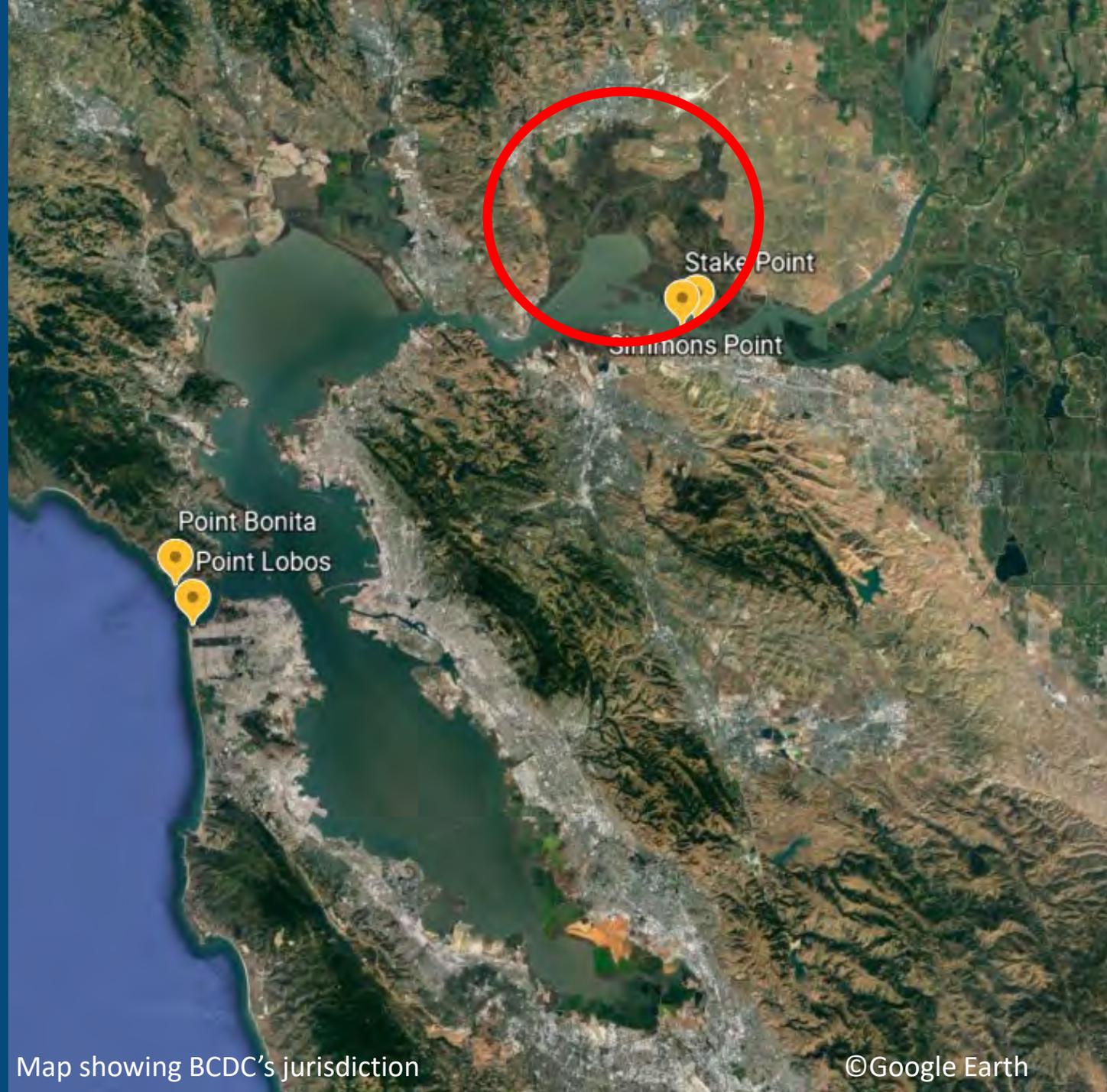
OUTLINE

- Unique value of Suisun Marsh
- The Commission's authority in Suisun Marsh
- Results of the Local Protection Program review
- Kick-off of the Protection Plan review
- Next steps



View of Denverton Pond

UNIQUE VALUE OF SUISUN MARSH & THE COMMISSION'S AUTHORITY



Map showing BCDC's jurisdiction

BCDC'S SUISUN MARSH LAW AND POLICIES

Suisun Marsh Preservation Act of 1977

(Marsh Act)

MARSH ACT GENERAL PROVISIONS

Legislative Findings and Declarations (§29002)

- The marsh "...plays an important role in providing **wintering habitat for waterfowl of the Pacific Flyway**; that during years of drought the area becomes particularly important..."
- The marsh "...provides **critical habitat** for other wildlife forms, including such **endangered, rare, or unique species**..."

Note: bullets and emphasis added

May 5, 2020

A CRITICAL LOCATION FOR HABITAT PRESERVATION



MARSH ACT GENERAL PROVISIONS

Legislative Findings and Declarations (§29002)

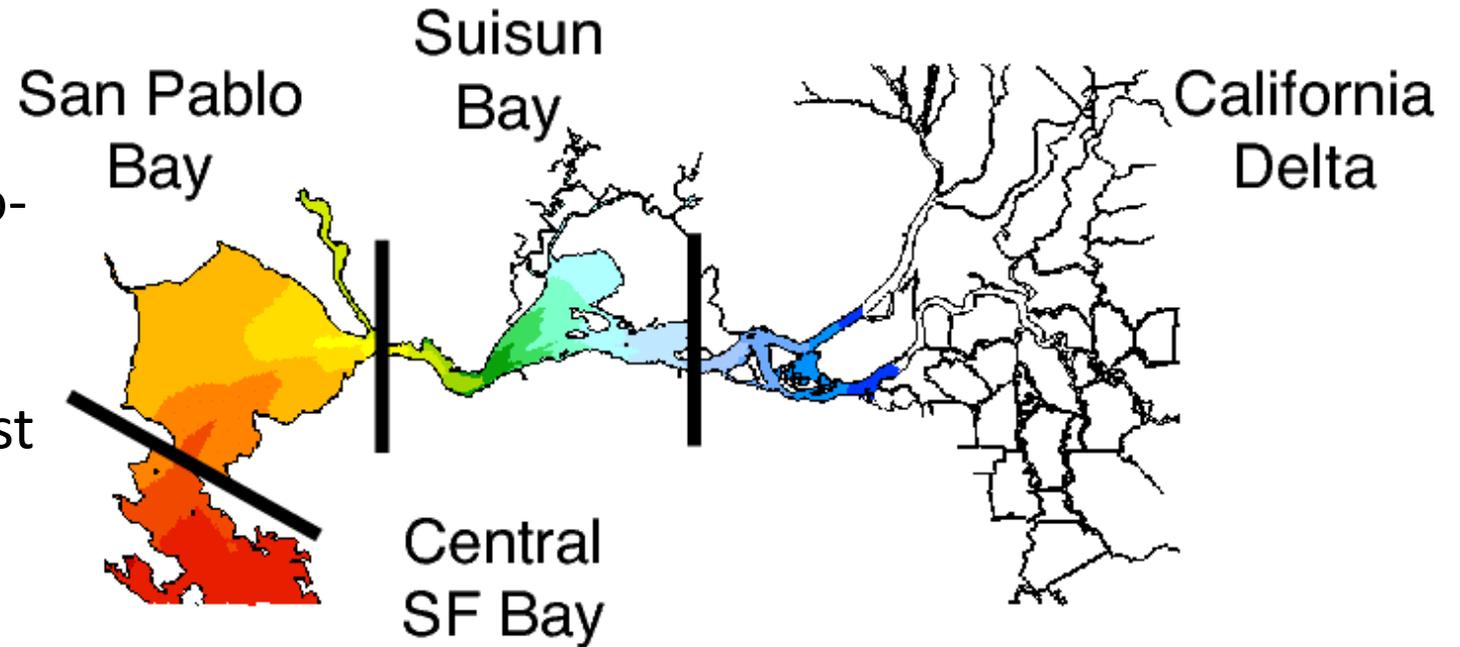
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- "...that the existence of this wide variety of wildlife is due to the relatively large expanse of **unbroken native habitat and the diversity of vegetation and aquatic conditions** that prevail in the marsh..."

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May 5, 2020

UNIQUE VALUE OF SUISUN MARSH

- Situated between the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the San Francisco Bay
- Largest brackish marsh on the west coast of the United States
- Variable ecological conditions



Map from Kimmerer et al. (2013) showing salinity variation across Suisun Bay, with warmer color representing higher salinity and cooler colors representing lower salinity areas

MARSH ACT GENERAL PROVISIONS

Legislative Findings and Declarations (§29002)

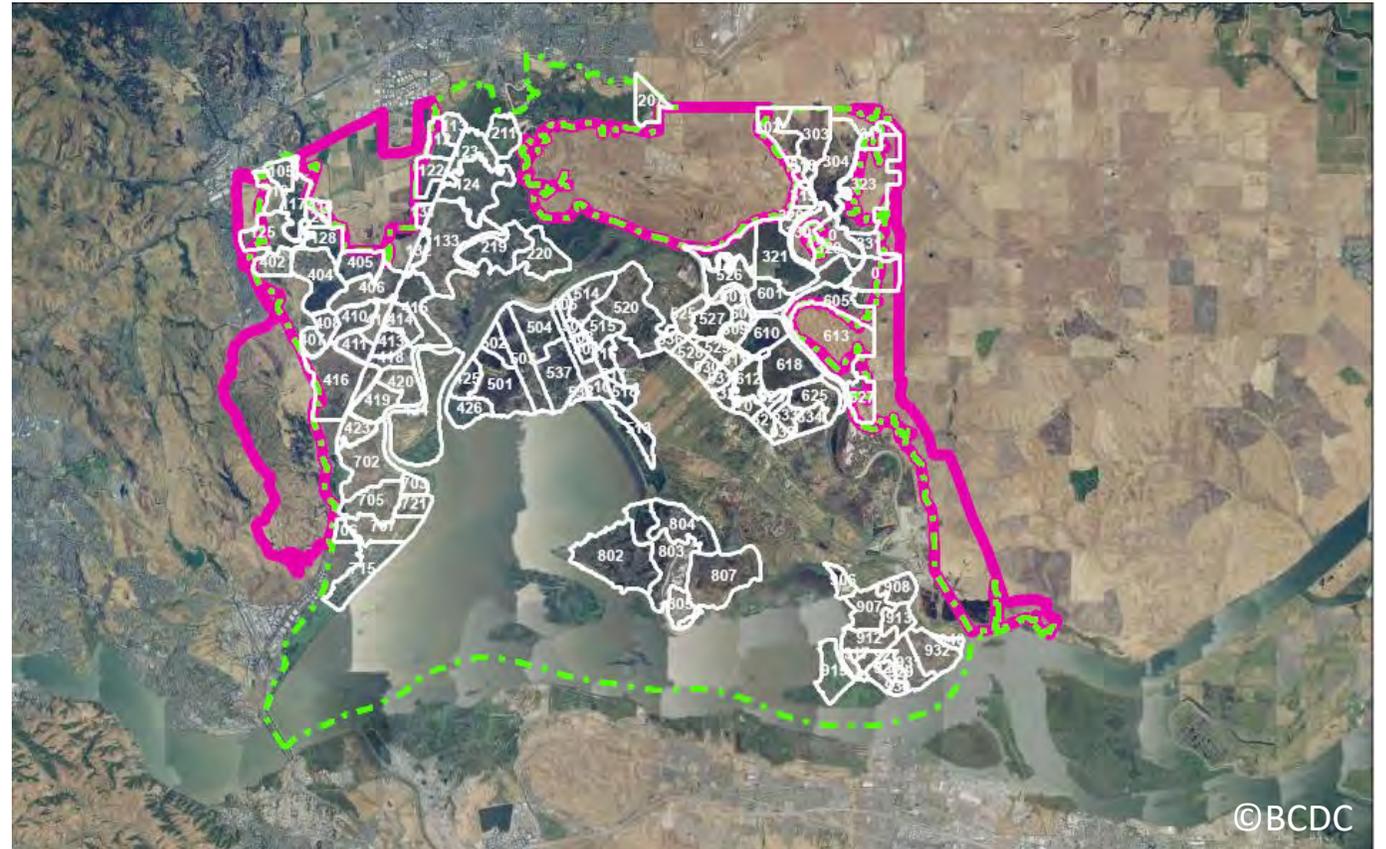
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- "...that the existence of this wide variety of wildlife is due to the relatively large expanse of **unbroken native habitat and the diversity of vegetation and aquatic conditions** that prevail in the marsh..."
- "...that man is an integral part of the present marsh ecosystem and..."

Note: bullets and emphasis added

May 5, 2020

UNIQUE VALUE OF SUISUN MARSH

- Dominated by managed wetlands



Map showing the boundaries of the managed wetlands in the Suisun Marsh (white), the Primary Management Area (green), and the Secondary Management Area (pink)

UNIQUE VALUE OF SUISUN MARSH

- Dominated by managed wetlands
- Infrastructure used to control flow of water on and off the marsh



©Melissa Riley

A water control structure being used to flood a managed wetland

UNIQUE VALUE OF SUISUN MARSH

- Dominated by managed wetlands
- Infrastructure used to control flow of water on and off the marsh
- Hunting heritage has been a critical factor in habitat preservation



A very good dog retrieving a duck for a hunter

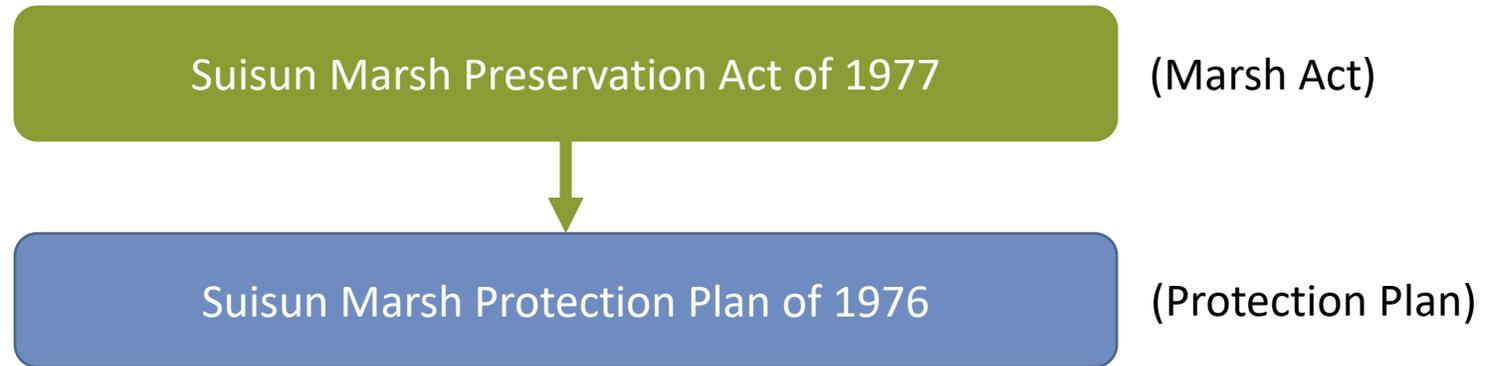
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- "...that the existence of this wide variety of wildlife is due to the relatively large expanse of **unbroken native habitat and the diversity of vegetation and aquatic conditions** that prevail in the marsh..."
- "...that man is an integral part of the present marsh ecosystem and..."
- "...represents a **unique and irreplaceable resource to the people of the state and nation**..."
- "...future residential, commercial, and industrial developments could adversely affect the wildlife value..."
- "...it is the policy of the state to **preserve and protect resources of this nature for the enjoyment of the current and succeeding generations**."

Note: bullets and emphasis added

BCDC'S SUISUN MARSH LAW AND POLICIES

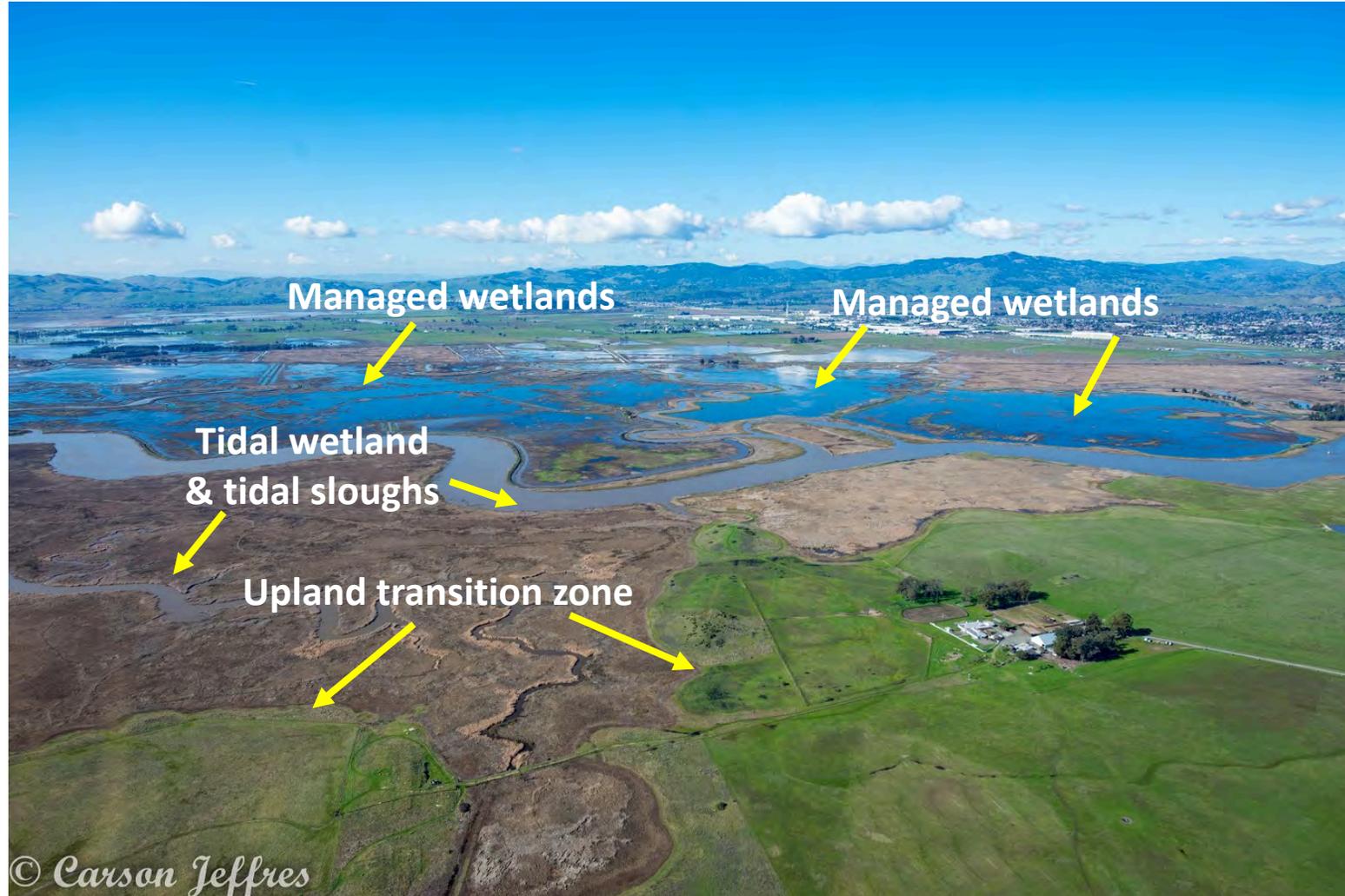


SUISUN MARSH PROTECTION PLAN OF 1976

“The objectives of the Protection Plan are to preserve and enhance the quality and diversity of the Suisun Marsh aquatic and wildlife habitats and to assure retention of upland areas adjacent to the Marsh in uses compatible with its protection.”

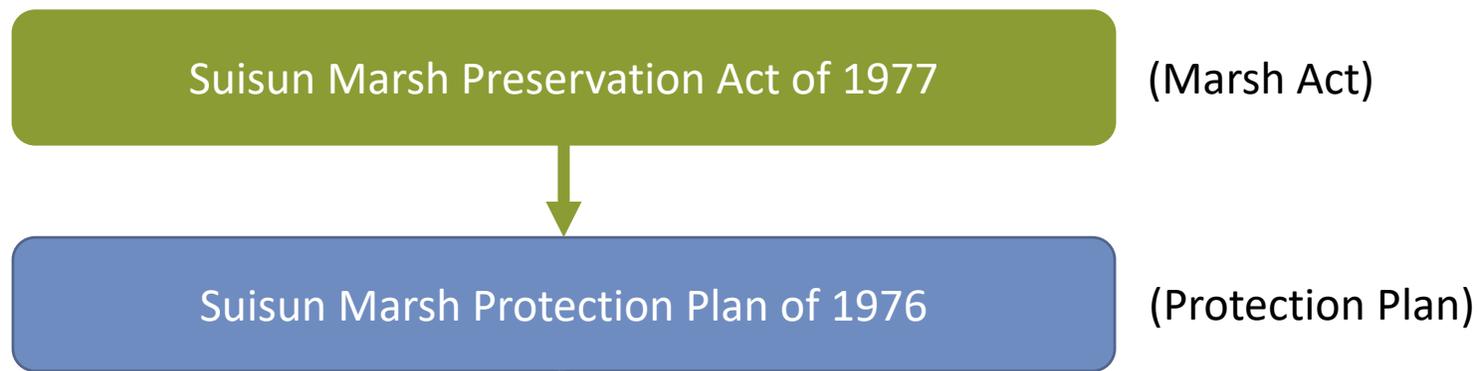


COMPLEX LANDSCAPE



Aerial view of Suisun Marsh showing the uplands, the marshlands, and nearby urban development

BCDC'S SUISUN MARSH LAW AND POLICIES



(LPP components)



**LOCAL PROTECTION
PROGRAM:
REVIEW RESULTS**



Native marsh plant, *Grindelia stricta*

©Flicker User John Rusk

LPP REVIEW PRODUCED FIVE MAJOR FINDINGS

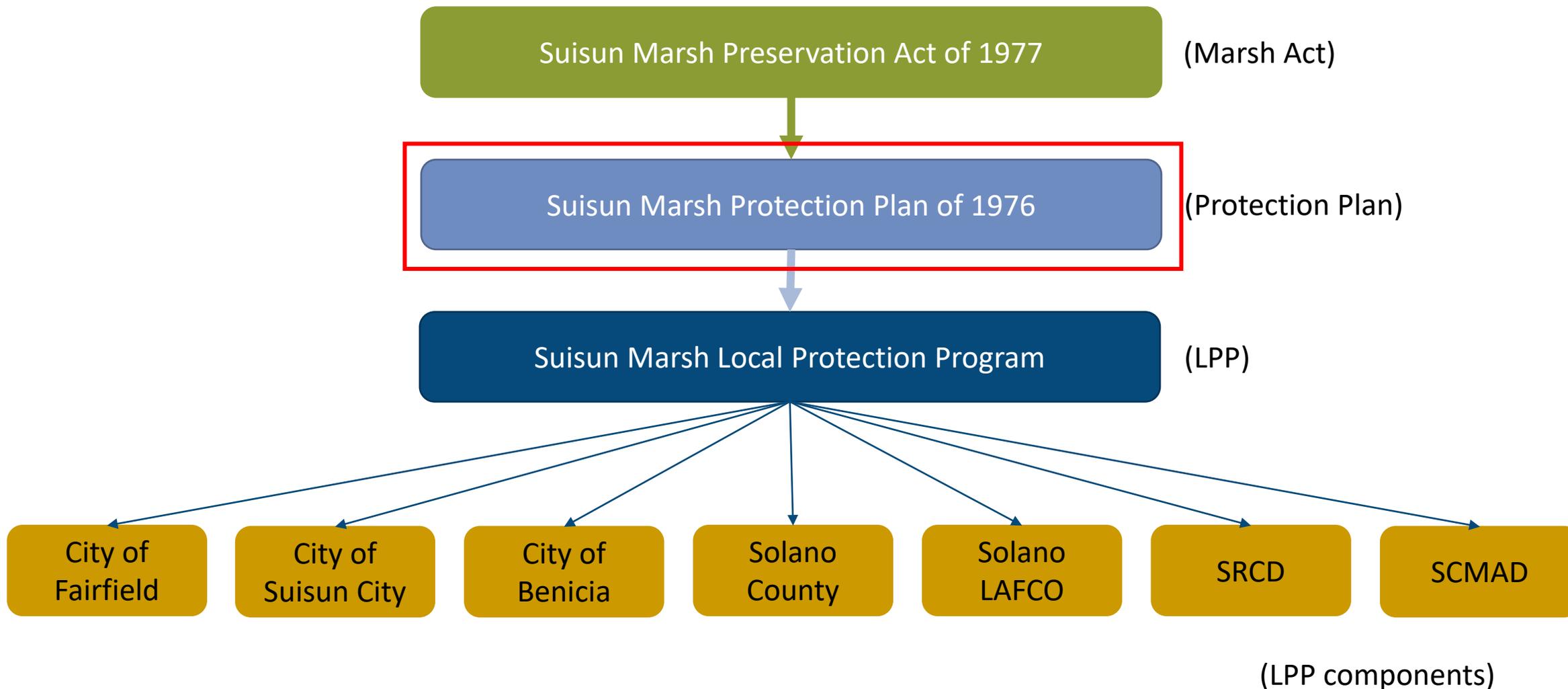
- Four of the seven LPP components **are** in conformity
- The City of Benicia's LPP component was never completed and certified
- The cities of Fairfield and Suisun City have updated their General Plans and city ordinances, but not their LPP components
- All the LPP components contain dated or obsolete references that need to be updated or deleted
- The Local Protection Program lacks references to best available science on climate change, rising sea level, emerging technologies, and several other key topics important to the preservation of the Suisun Marsh.

SUISUN MARSH PROTECTION PLAN: REVIEW

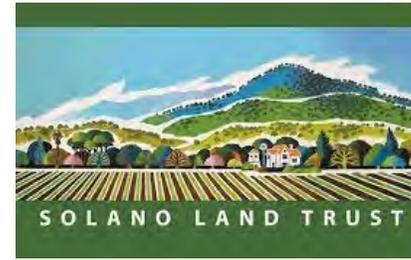


A westbound Capitol Corridor train rolls
through the marsh at Bahia, CA

BCDC'S SUISUN MARSH LAW AND POLICIES



KICK-OFF WORKSHOP FEB. 13TH



San Francisco Bay
National Estuarine Research Reserve





©Solano Land Trust



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How do we continue to preserve and protect a functional marsh?



©Rachel D. Wigginton



©Mike Casazza



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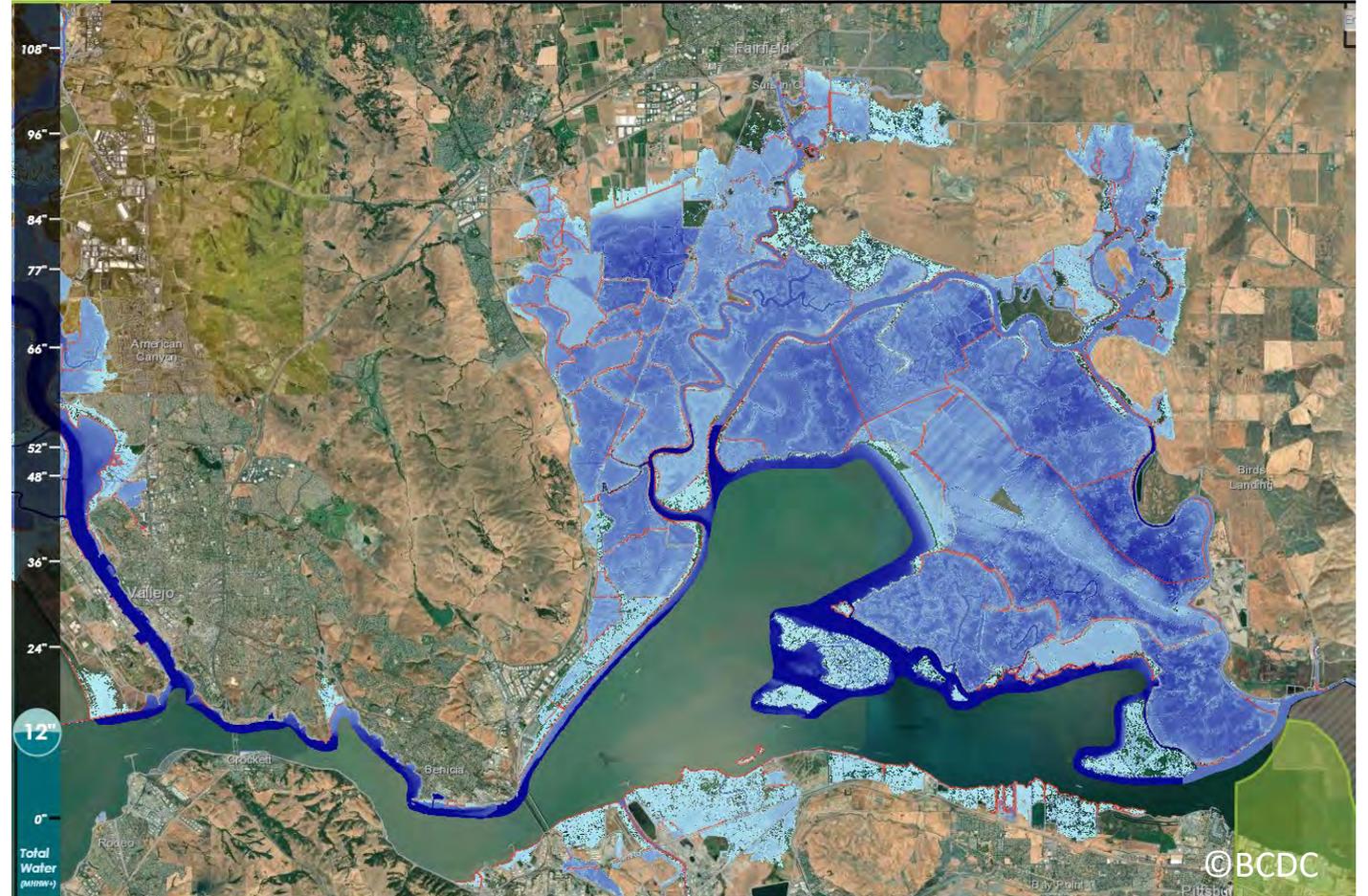
MAJOR TAKEAWAYS FROM STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

- Ecology

- Public access-wildlife conflicts
- Sea level rise and climate change
- Tidal marshes and managed wetlands and restoration
- Permitting and policy interpretations

- Built Environment

- Public Access



Map showing flooding at 12" Total Water Level from BCDC's shoreline flood explorer

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS FROM STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

- Ecology
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 - Sea level rise and climate change
 - Tidal marshes and managed wetlands and restoration
 - Permitting and policy interpretations
- Built Environment
 - Levee maintenance
 - Salinity control gates
 - General maintenance
 - New technologies
- Public Access



©California Department of Water Resources

View of the salinity control gates in Suisun Marsh

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS FROM STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

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- Built Environment

- Levee maintenance
- Salinity control gates
- General maintenance
- New technologies

- Public Access

- Public access-wildlife conflicts
- Wildlife-oriented recreation
- Existing public access
- Public access maintenance



©Jacqueline Satter

Hunters in the Suisun Marsh with a managed wetland in the background

A NEED TO CLARIFY POLICY INTERACTIONS

- How does the Bay Plan interact with the Protection Plan?
- How do the Marsh Act and Protection Plan interface with:
 - Delta Reform Act and the Delta Plan
 - Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation, and Restoration Plan
 - The USFWS Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems of Northern and Central California
 - Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement
 - US Army Corps Regional General Permit
 - Others?



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Endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse

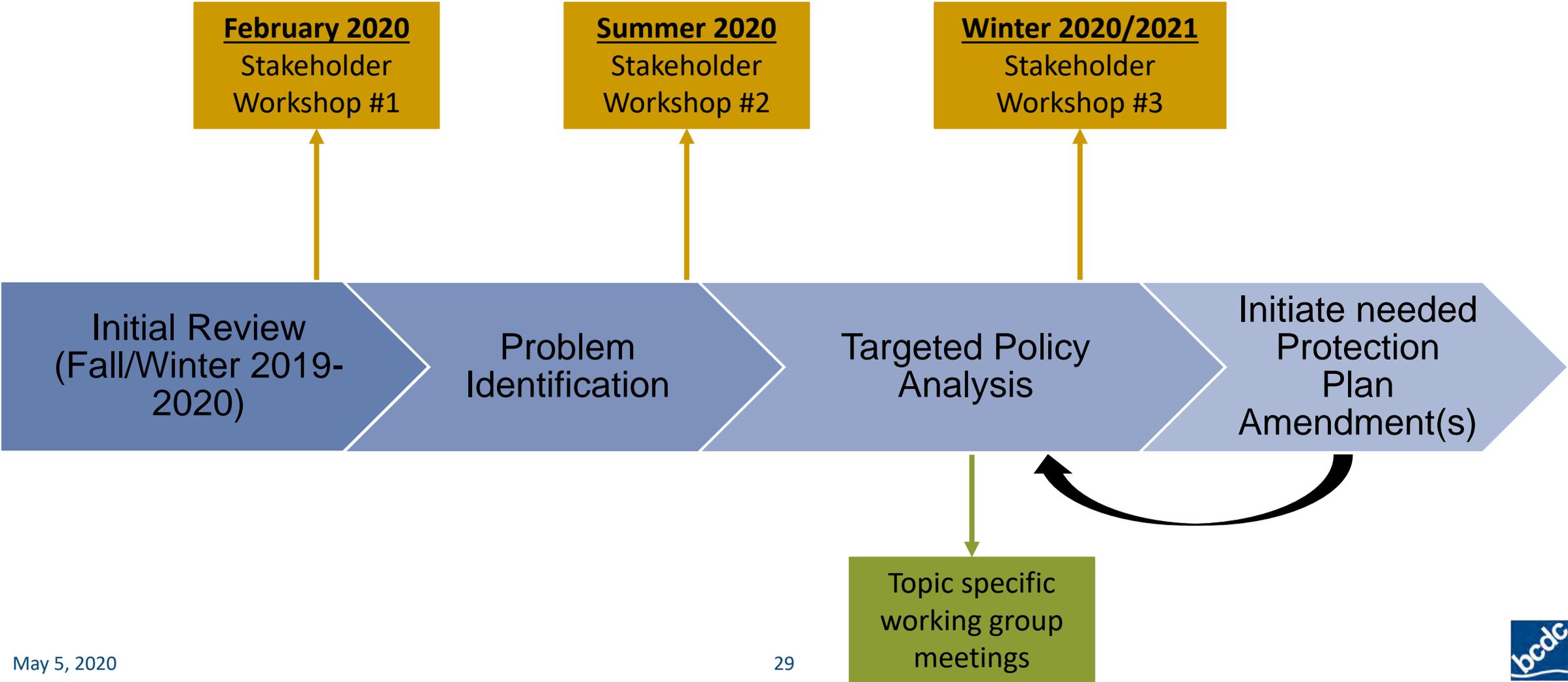
WHAT COMES NEXT?



Hunters in Suisun Marsh

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SUISUN MARSH PROTECTION PLAN REVIEW PROCESS



QUESTIONS?



View of Suisun Marsh from the channel edge

©Ann Holmes

THANK YOU!



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<https://www.bccdc.ca.gov/plans/Suisun-Marsh-Policy-Review.html>