



# **Discussion and Vote on Initiating BPA 1-26, a Bay Plan Amendment on Sediment and Beneficial Reuse**

**May 7, 2026 – Agenda Item 9**

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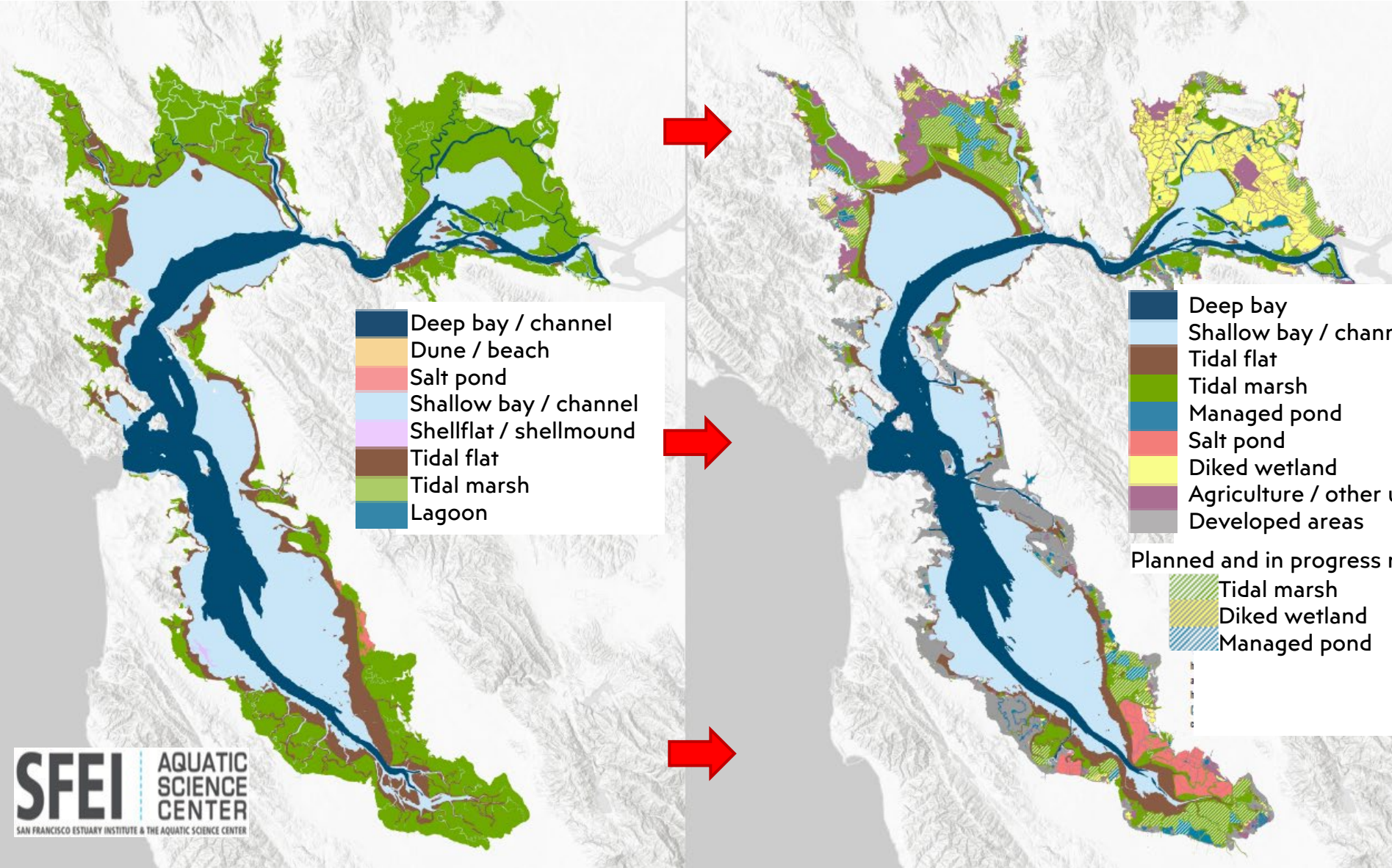
415-352-3661



# Historical Baylands Circa 1800

# Modern Baylands Circa 2009

**Between 1880 – 1998,  
~90% of wetlands  
were lost due to  
human activities**



- Deep bay / channel
- Dune / beach
- Salt pond
- Shallow bay / channel
- Shellflat / shellmound
- Tidal flat
- Tidal marsh
- Lagoon

- Deep bay
- Shallow bay / channel
- Tidal flat
- Tidal marsh
- Managed pond
- Salt pond
- Diked wetland
- Agriculture / other undeveloped areas
- Developed areas

- Planned and in progress restoration (ca. 2015)
- Tidal marsh
  - Diked wetland
  - Managed pond



# Sediment in service

## Wetland environmental services

- Nutrient and mineral source
- Air and water quality
- Storm buffer
- Biodiversity

## Sediment supports Bay ecosystems

- Is the basis of habitat
- Supports plants and microbes, the building blocks of the food web
- Stabilization and growth
- Promotes ecosystem diversity



# VOLUME OF SEDIMENT NEEDED FOR TIDAL WETLANDS AND MUDFLATS BY 2100

**450–650 million metric tons**

Amount of sediment that can be supplied by nature and current management approaches



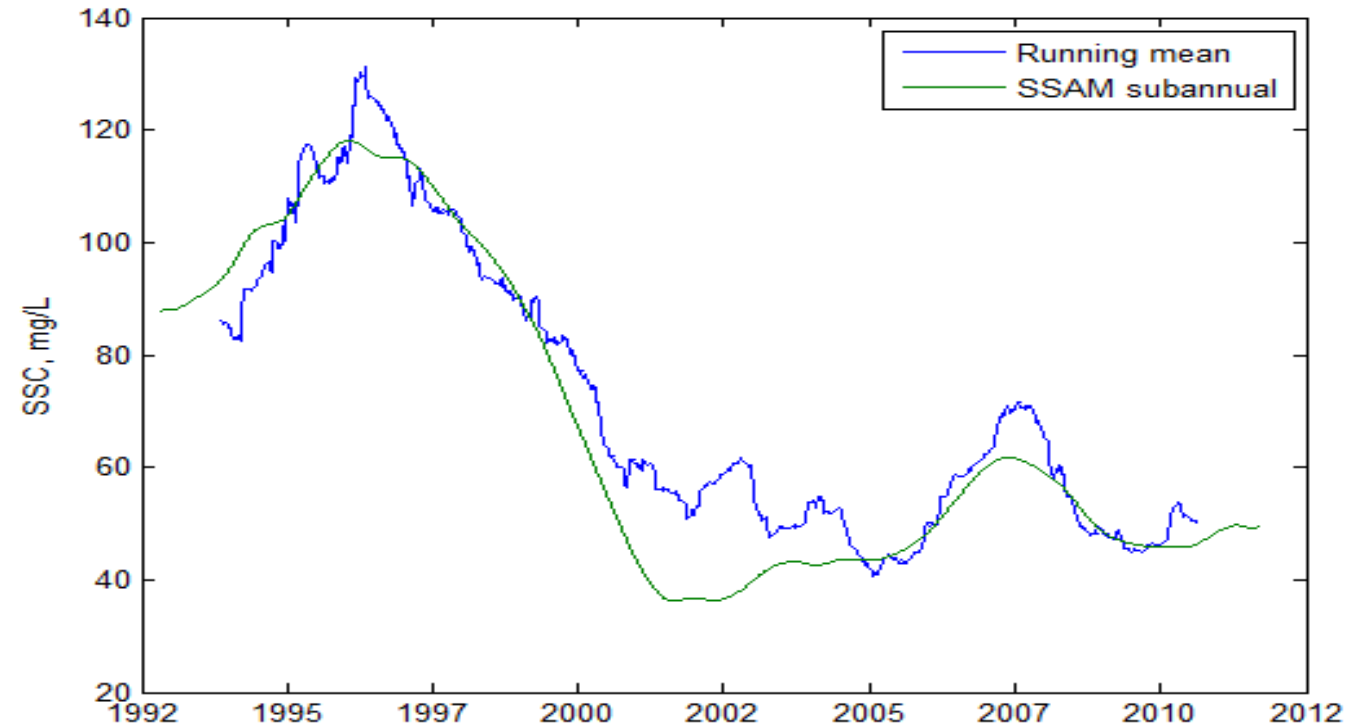
The sediment need that could be met by changing management practices to access more in-bay and watershed sediment



# Human Impacts on Suspended Sediment Supply

- Hydraulic mining during the Gold Rush
- Deforestation
- Draining wetlands
- Dams, aqueducts, levees
- Salt production
- Waterfowl hunting
- Modifying streams
- Bank armoring
- Flood control channels

## Decline in suspended sediment input

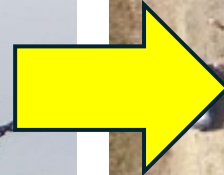


Dumbarton Bridge, mid-depth, Dave Schoellhamer, USGS

# Dredged sediment available for reuse



Sediment dredged from Bay, streams, channels



Sediment Reuse in Deer Creek, Novato

# Soil available for reuse



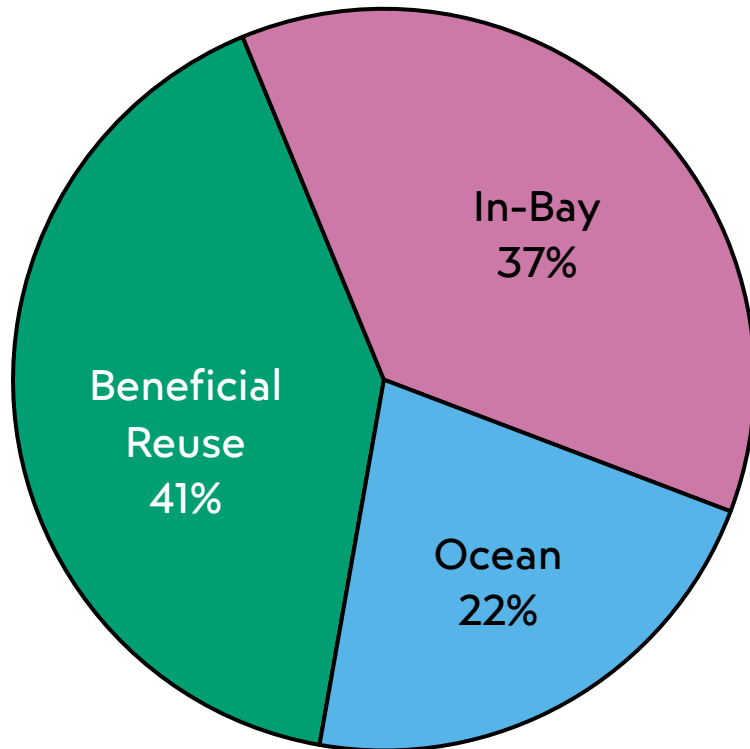
Excess upland construction soil



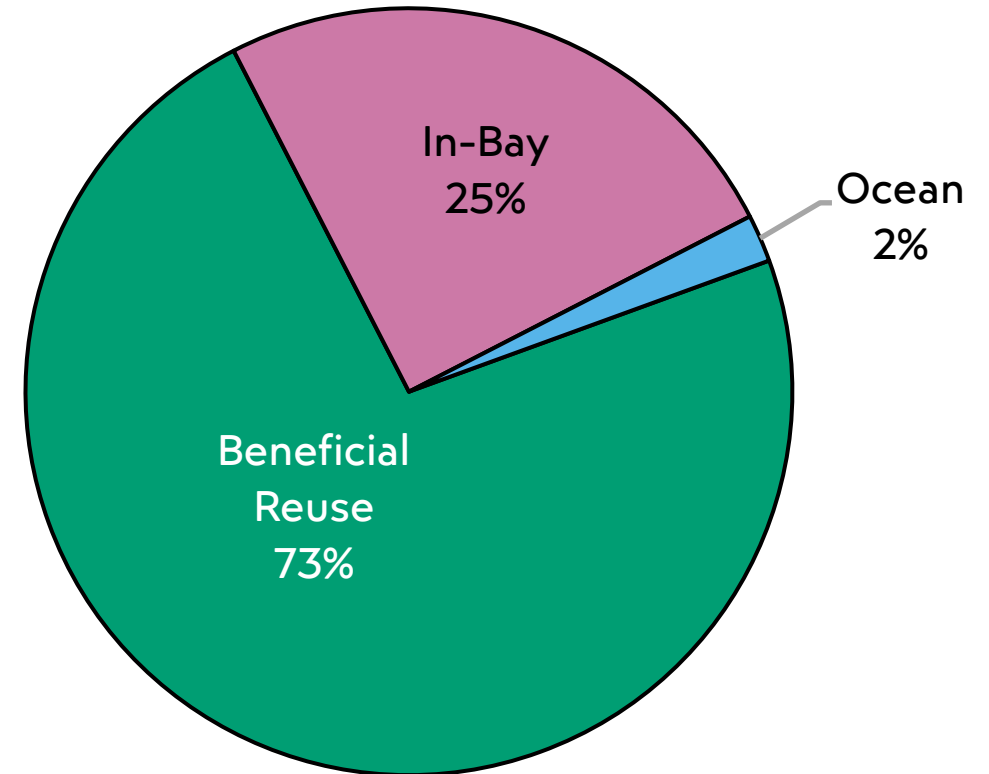
Soil reuse at South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project

# Placement and Disposal Status

Average Annual Dredged Material Placement & Disposal 2013-2024



Dredged Material Placement & Disposal 2023



Beneficial reuse example:  
**Sonoma Baylands**



# Sonoma Baylands: 1993

Sonoma Baylands Trail

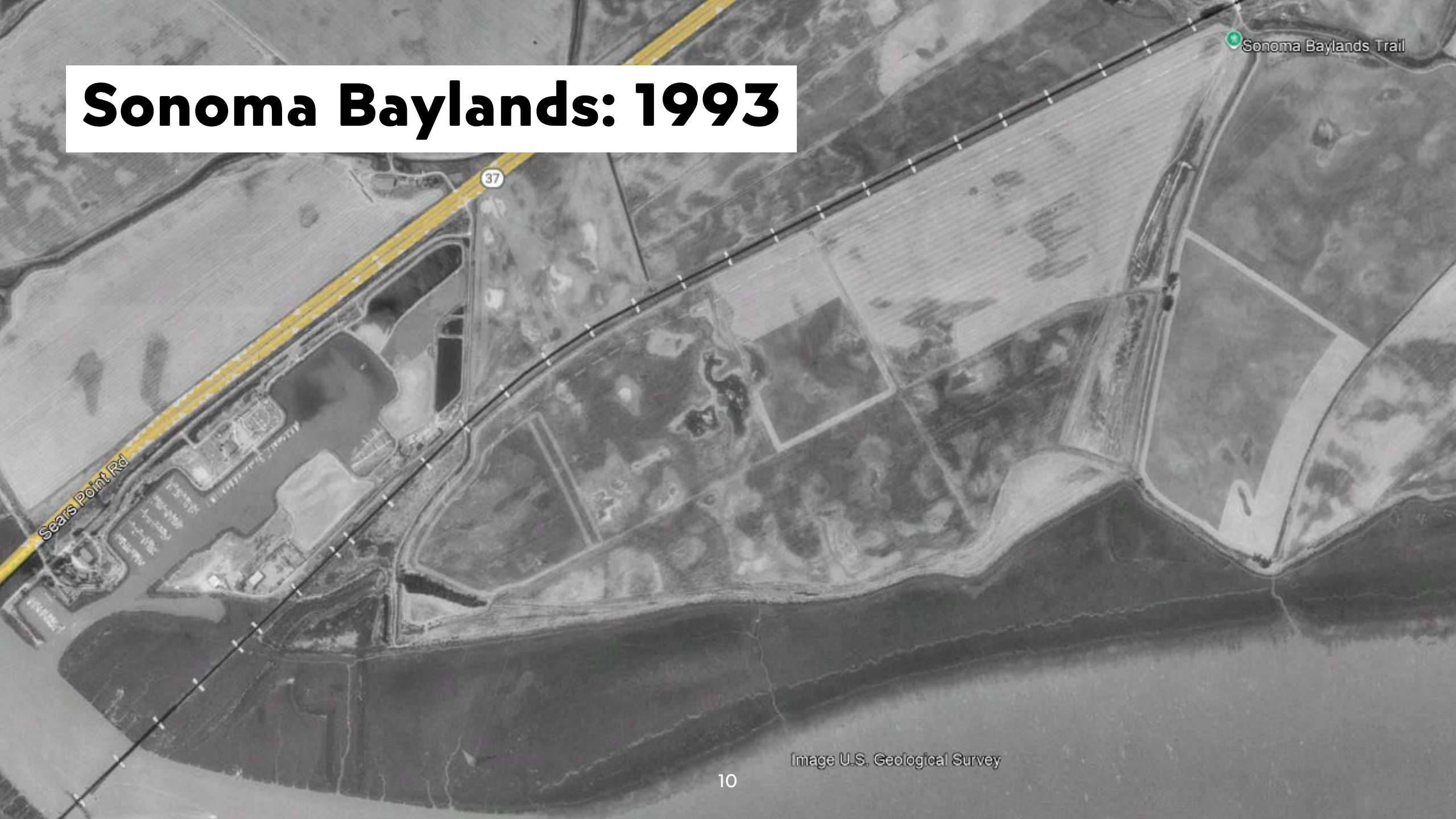


Image U.S. Geological Survey

# Sonoma Baylands: 2024

Sonoma Baylands Trail

Sears Point Rd

37

# What is the SWAP?

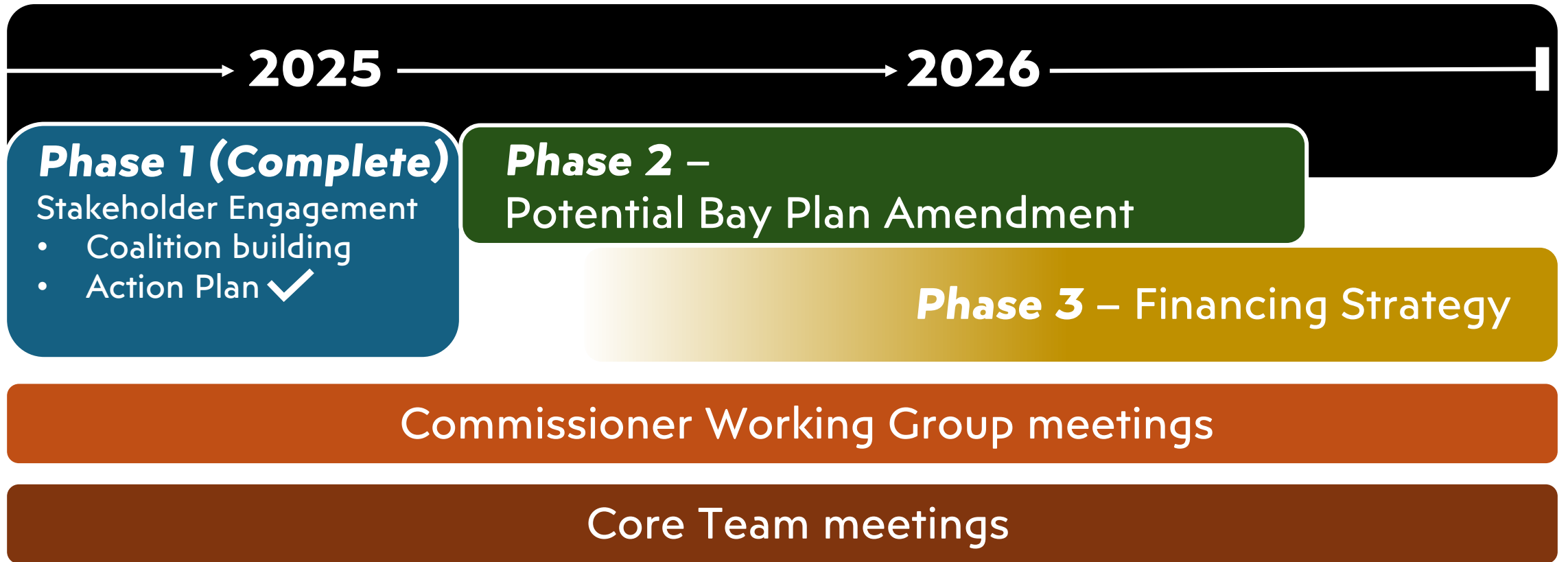
**Goal:** Increase beneficial reuse of sediment and soil for wetland habitat restoration, resilience, and sea level rise adaptation in the San Francisco Bay Area.

## Objectives:

- Increased collaboration ✓
- Beneficial Reuse Action Plan ✓
- Possible policy changes
- Financing Strategy

Funders:  EPA +  CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

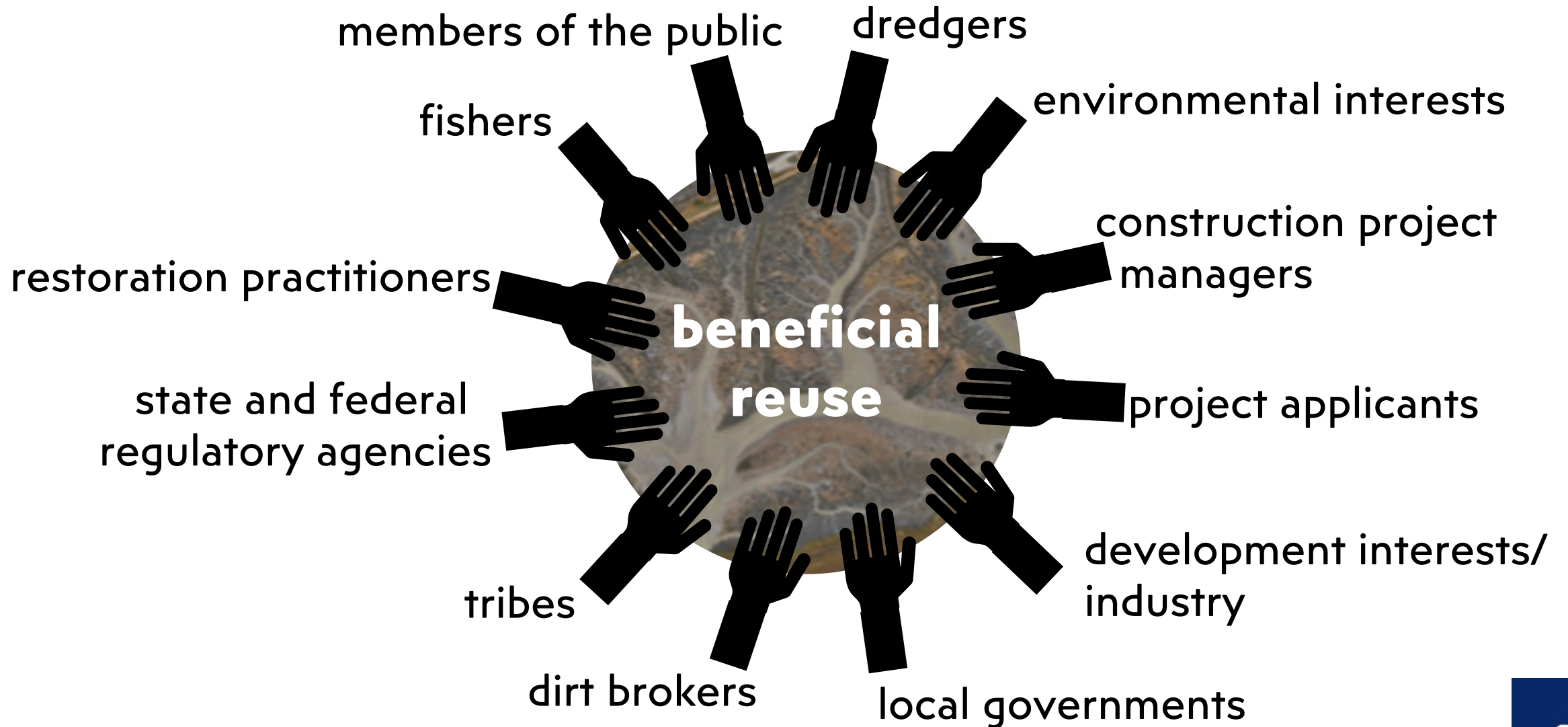
# SWAP Timeline



Core Team:



# Stakeholders



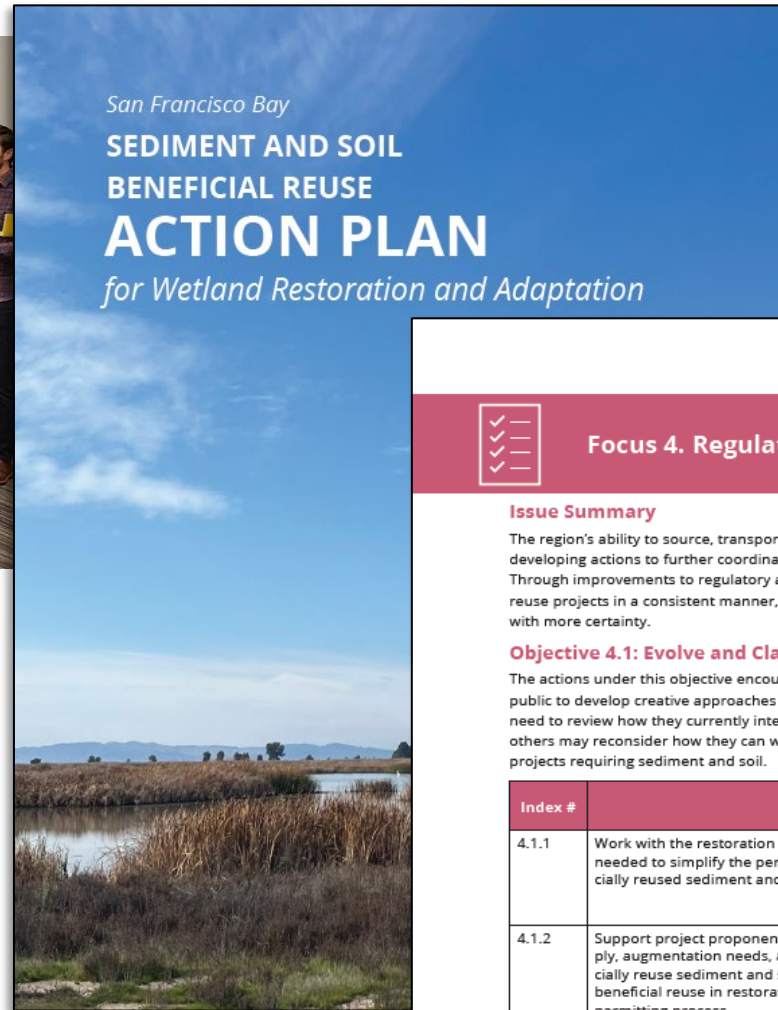


# Stakeholder Workshops

- Early 2024

# Regional Action Plan

- Released March 2025
- Beneficial reuse challenges
- 70 actions organized into 8 focus areas
- Action prioritization



**Focus 4. Regulations and Permitting**

**Issue Summary**

The region's ability to source, transport, store, and place sediment and soil can be improved by developing actions to further coordinate and streamline regulatory and permitting processes. Through improvements to regulatory and permitting processes, agencies can address beneficial reuse projects in a consistent manner, allowing project proponents to plan their restoration with more certainty.

**Objective 4.1: Evolve and Clarify Permitting Regulations and Practices**

The actions under this objective encourage project proponents, permitting agencies, and the public to develop creative approaches and evolve processes and practices. Some entities may need to review how they currently interpret and apply their legal and regulatory authority; others may reconsider how they can work together to support successful wetland restoration projects requiring sediment and soil.

| Index # | Action   | Status & Champion(s)  |
|---------|--|---|
| 4.1.1   | Work with the restoration community to understand what is needed to simplify the permitting process to receive beneficially reused sediment and/or soil.   | In process<br>BCDC, Water Board, SCC, USACE, U.S. EPA   |
| 4.1.2   | Support project proponents in understanding sediment supply, augmentation needs, and how to design sites to beneficially reuse sediment and soil. Develop guidance to support beneficial reuse in restoration site development and the permitting process. | Not yet started   |
| 4.1.3   | Consider whether beneficial reuse of sediment and/or soil at wetland restoration sites can mitigate for dredging or flood protection project impacts.  | In progress<br>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USACE, Water Board, BCDC, CDFW |
| 4.1.4   | Discuss among regulatory agencies appropriate characterization and review of stream maintenance sediment (chemical/contaminant analyses, soil grain size and type, geotechnical properties, etc.).   | Not yet started   |

San Francisco Bay  
San Francisco Bay Sediment and Soil Beneficial Reuse Action Plan  
40  
bcdc

# Bay Plan Amendment Goals

1. Acknowledge sediment as a critical Bay resource and a public trust resource.
2. Make beneficial reuse BCDC's priority for sediment and soil.
3. Address sources of sediment and soil other than navigation dredging.
4. Encourage local connections and innovation.

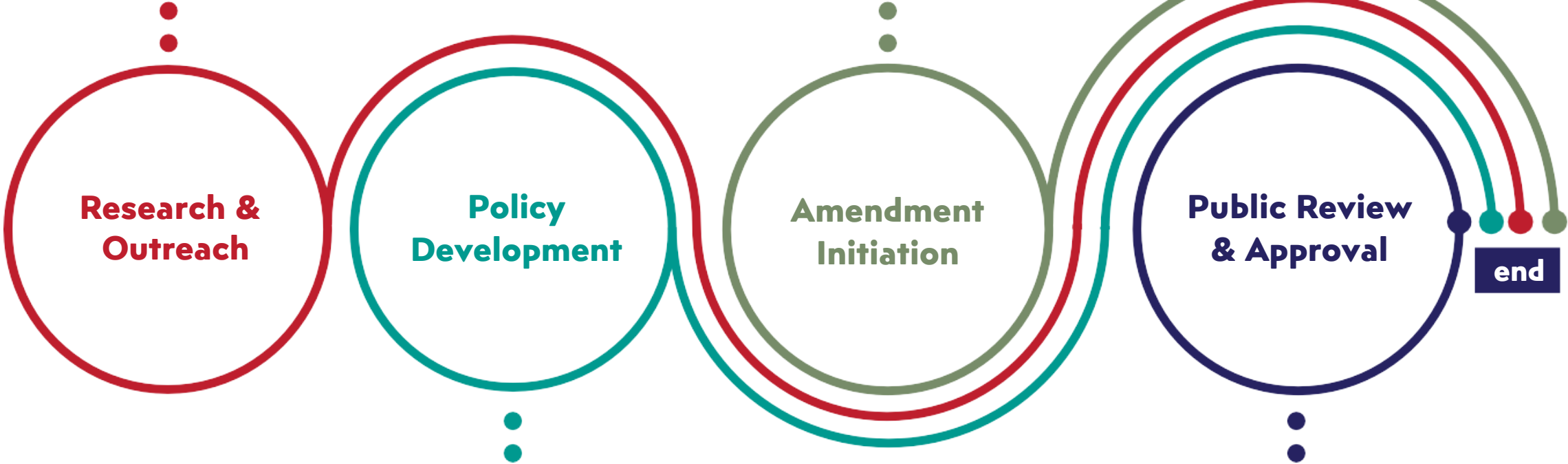


# Bay Plan Amendment Process

**begin**

Staff conduct research and outreach to subject matter experts and conduct meaningful community engagement.

At a public hearing, Commissioners vote on whether to initiate the amendment. A majority of Commissioners present at the hearing must vote in favor to initiate the amendment.



Staff develop policy by analyzing and integrating results of research and outreach.

At a public hearing, the Commission reviews Staff’s preliminary recommendation and policy language, and the 30-day public comment period ends. At a later public meeting, the Commission votes on the amendment based on Staff’s final recommendation.

# Tentative BPA Timeline

- Commissioner working group - April 7
- Initiate amendment** - May 7
- In-person policy workshop** - June 4
- Commissioner working group - July 7
- Mail preliminary staff recommendation - July 21
- Public comment period - July 21 – August 20
- Public hearing** - August 20
- Vote** - September 17 or October 1
- OAL and NOAA review - After vote

# Staff Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Commission:

1. Adopt the attached “Descriptive Notice” to initiate the process to consider BPA 1-26, an amendment to the San Francisco Bay Plan to address beneficial reuse of dredged sediment and upland soil for wetland restoration and sea level rise adaptation; and
2. Schedule a public hearing to consider the proposed amendment on August 20, 2026.