

Channel & Streambed Maintenance



Bay Plan Section

Problem:

Most of the Bay's tributaries have been modified – straightened, constrained, buried, and/or disconnected from wetlands and flood plains. While BCDC's jurisdiction includes tidal channels and streambeds, the Bay Plan has no clear policy to guide flood protection planning, review, and approval of projects that affect the Bay's tributaries. In addition, sediment dredged from channels and streambeds to improve flood water conveyance could be beneficially reused in local restoration projects.

Proposed policy concepts:

- A. As aging flood protection channel and creek infrastructure is replaced, or programming is updated, evaluate reconnection and realignment of creeks and waterways to tidal and seasonal wetlands to supply fresh water and sediment to these areas, as well as increase flood absorption.
 - Working with experts, the Commission would establish best management practices for flood protection and streambed maintenance, and sediment for tidal portions of tributaries.
- B. Require beneficial reuse of sediment dredged from channels and creeks to support habitat restoration. Evaluate the ability of flood protection and streambed maintenance projects/programs to beneficially reuse sediment locally.
- C. Advise local governments to expand easements surrounding flood water conveyance channels to allow for larger flood plains with improved capacity and habitat benefits.
- D. Standardize sediment testing programs for tributaries and associated beneficial uses.

What does this policy do?

1. Provides direction for reconnecting waterways and wetlands, creating connectivity and sediment and water supply where it was previously lost.
2. Provides policy basis for beneficial reuse of sediment dredged from channels and tributaries.
3. Provides more flood protection by increasing connectivity and expanding flood plains.
4. Directs more sediment to beneficial reuse, reducing the sediment deficit for restoration.

Discussion questions:

1. What is an important part of this concept?
2. What is unclear?
3. What is missing?
4. Is there anything you disagree with?
5. What issues do you see with this concept?