WRMP EQUITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP)

Outreach by Design

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The Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program is co-managed by the San Francisco Estuary Partnership and the San Francisco Estuary Institute.

Acknowledgements

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Indigenous Peoples' Acknowledgement

"We wish to honor the Native People who have stewarded the lands and waters of the San Francisco Estuary since time immemorial. We acknowledge that the San Francisco Estuary Partnership's planning area includes the ancestral territory of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, Confederated Villages of Lisjan, Him-r^n Ohlone, Jalquin, Saclan Tribe, Coast Miwok, Plains Miwok, Bay Miwok, Muwékma Ohlone of the San Francisco Bay, Karkin and Chochenyo Ohlone speaking people, Yokuts, Patwin, Wappo, and Tamien Nations Tribes among others not identified here. We recognize that through a violent history of colonization and dispossession, today, as guests, we benefit from living and working on the traditional homeland of these Native People. We wish to show our respect to them, their elders and relatives, and their ancestors by acknowledging the injustices inherent to this history and by affirming their sovereign rights and their current efforts to achieve restorative justice.

Consistent with our values of community, inclusion, and diversity it is vitally important that we recognize that the land on which we reside is unceded Tribal territory, and acknowledge and support the Native Peoples that continue to form a crucial part of our San Francisco Estuary community today. We also acknowledge that Native Peoples remain dedicated to fulfilling their obligation to Creator to care for Mother Earth and all living things and return sacredness to the land, water and air through the restoration of traditional knowledge and stewardship led by the original Tribes of the Estuary region and beyond.

Our work to protect and restore the margins of the Bay should acknowledge and be informed by the history of injustices. We acknowledge that we are working on the land of Native people who were forced to relocate, and that it is often adjacent to or even on top of sacred cultural sites. Recognizing the intersections between wetland restoration, shoreline recreation, and historical sacred sites can facilitate opportunities throughout our Estuary to restore, create, and protect for multiple purposes. We do this work in good faith, knowing it is centrally important that we work toward repair, reconciliation, and reparations wherever possible.

We are working to build our capacity to be better stewards and allies to original peoples and disenfranchised communities across the Estuary. San Francisco Estuary Partnership invites Indigenous people to reach out to us to collaborate and identify opportunities for partnership." [1]
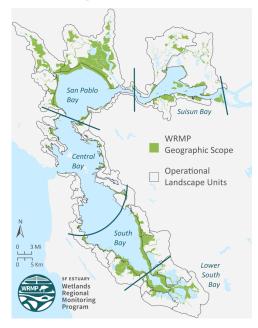
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[1] Statement from: [Commitment to Equity - San Francisco Estuary Partnership (sfestuary.org)](sfestuary.org)

Introduction

Tidal wetlands in the San Francisco Estuary provide flood protection, enhanced water quality, habitats for plants and wildlife, and recreation for surrounding communities. Unfortunately, climate change, sea level rise, and development threaten the health and existence of the region's tidal wetlands.

The San Francisco Estuary Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP) delivers coordinated regional monitoring of the San Francisco Estuary's wetlands to: 1) Inform science-based decision-making for wetland restoration and adaptive management, and 2) Increase the cost-effectiveness of permit-driven monitoring associated with wetland restoration projects. The WRMP comprises a community of scientists, regional planners, and community members who collect, analyze and communicate regional data to inform stewardship, restoration, adaptive management, and interactions between people and wetlands. The program focuses on the tidal wetlands in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

WRMP Geographic Scope

The WRMP Equity and Engagement Strategy outlines how the WRMP can center frontline community voices[2] and racial equity to better serve communities while meeting the program's mission. This work centers on building relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs)[3] and Tribes.

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[2] We define frontline communities using the Greenbelt Alliance's definition of frontline communities: "Frontline communities" are communities that experience continuing injustice—including people of color, immigrants, people with lower incomes, those in rural areas, and indigenous people—and face a legacy of systemic, largely racialized, inequity that influences their living and working places, the quality of their air and water, and their economic opportunities." definition from Greenbelt Alliance

[3] We define CBOs using the University of Michigan's School of Public Health's definition of CBOs: "A Community–Based Organization is one that is driven by community residents in all aspects of its existence. By that we mean: (1) The majority of the governing body and staff consists of local residents, (2) The main operating offices are in the community, (3) Priority issue areas are identified and defined by residents, (4) Solutions to address priority issues are developed with residents, and (5) Program design, implementation, and evaluation components have residents intimately involved, in leadership positions." (definition from University of Michigan, School of Public Health).

To create the Equity and Engagement Strategy, our team synthesized findings from interviews with CBOs and Tribes, Tribal engagement sessions, reviews of recent public agency engagement initiatives, published best practices for community outreach and advancing racial equity in public agencies, and in-depth interviews with 30 community members.

WRMP's Theory of Change

A theory of change describes the set of assumptions (or theories) guiding an organization towards long-term goals and objectives, and the connections between activities and outcomes that occur along the way (Weiss 1972, 1995).[4] When it comes to achieving racial equity goals in public agencies, the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) identifies the following as critical for implementing racial equity action plans:

Our theory of change requires normalizing conversations about race, making sure we have a shared understanding of commonly held definitions of implicit bias and institutional and structural racism. Normalizing and prioritizing our efforts creates greater urgency and allows change to take place more expeditiously. We must also operationalize racial equity, integrating racial equity into our routine decision-making processes, often via use of aRacial Equity Tool and development and implementation of measurable actions.

 - Racial Equity Action Plans, A How-to Manual. Government Alliance on Race and Equity

The goals of the WRMP Equity and Engagement Strategy are to: 1) center community voices and racial equity, 2) increase the WRMP's relevance to communities, particularly those disproportionately impacted by land use decisions, pollution, and climate change, and 3) enable community members to set the agenda for equity and engagement for the WRMP. Through development of this plan, WRMP staff also aimed to build relationships with community-based partners interested in collaborating with the WRMP.

The WRMP Equity and Engagement Strategy is a tool designed to support the WRMP's efforts to integrate racial equity in decision-making, policies, practices, and programs, and to evaluate and communicate results over time. This strategic plan will help advance racial equity and move towards eliminating environmental injustices in the San Francisco Bay region.

The WRMP Equity and Engagement Strategy aligns with the efforts of other Bay Area agencies and the State of California. It seeks to engage more directly with underrepresented and historically impacted communities and acknowledge and remedy past harms inflicted by racist public policies

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[4] Weiss, Carol Hirschon. 1972. Evaluation Research: Methods of Assessing Program Effectiveness. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; Connell, James P., Anne C. Kubisch, Lisbeth B. Schorr, and Carol H. Weiss, eds. 1995. New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute.

and planning. We acknowledge the disproportionate impacts of climate change on vulnerable, underserved, and marginalized communities and recognize the role that historic injustices have had on such communities. These impacts include land theft from Indigenous peoples, the redlining and pollution of Black and other non-White communities, underinvestment, and lack of accountability by government agencies and environmental groups.

Moreover, to achieve the WRMP's mission, it is important for people from all communities to trust the program, be able to engage with the WRMP, and to have opportunities to pursue environmental careers and advocacy. This strategic plan aligns well with Task 2 ("Elevate frontline and Indigenous communities in planning for and benefiting from a healthy, resilient Estuary") in the Estuary Blueprint and the broader efforts of SFEP and its sister agencies.

Methodology

Between June 2023 and April 2024, we employed a multifaceted approach focused on in-depth engagement and comprehensive analysis. Outreach by Design staff began by conducting a meticulous review of nine equity and engagement reports from other Bay Area public agencies, best practices for public sector community engagement, and notes from prior engagement sessions with Tribes and Tribal-serving organizations.

Next, we targeted outreach efforts to community-based organizations (CBOs), using a strategically devised sampling strategy that considered geographic, demographic, and thematic factors to ensure a diverse and representative array of voices were heard. We crafted and refined outreach materials and questionnaires in collaboration with WRMP staff members, with input from the People and Wetlands Workgroup. WRMP staff took the lead in CBO outreach and conducted interviews via Zoom or phone with community, youth, and Tribal-serving organizations, ensuring that meaningful dialogue would form the foundations of this report's recommendations, and laid the groundwork for future WRMP collaborations.

In synthesizing this data, we sought to develop a comprehensive, forward-thinking five-year Equity and Community Engagement Strategy. We crafted this strategy iteratively, with feedback involving WRMP staff and internal and external interested parties, ensuring that the resulting document was both ambitious, clearly defined, and actionable.

Synthesis of Bay Area equity strategy themes

Beginning in June 2023, Outreach by Design staff researched nine San Francisco Bay Area agencies and organizations engaged in work related to the Bay, shorelines, and climate adaptation. Each group had Steering Committees, Councils, and/or Working Groups focused on environmental justice topics. We identified the members of these groups (if named), affiliations, and geographic locations (see Appendix F). To accomplish this task, we also consulted the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's (BCDC) [Community Based Organization Directory Map](#).

To determine which additional CBOs to contact, our team then identified twenty-three topic categories encompassing various social justice issues and assessed which CBOs addressed one or more of the different topic categories. Importantly, this is not an exhaustive list of topic areas and should be revised as needed.

The twenty-three topic categories include:

- Climate
- Disability/Senior (65+)
- Education Level
- Environmental Justice
- Farmworkers
- Food Justice/Emergency Food
- Formerly Incarcerated
- Geography/Proximity
- Health/Human Services
- Housing
- Indigenous Residents
- Isolated/Afraid to Engage
- Labor/Organizing
- LGBTQ+/Gender
- Limited Technology/Written Literacy/Internet Access
- Mental Health/Substance Abuse
- Minority-Owned Businesses
- Natured-related interests
- Race and Ethnicity Specific
- Religion/Faith-Based/Religious Environmental
- Transportation
- Undocumented Residents/Citizenship Status/Immigration
- Youth/Child Development/pre-K+

To ensure the WRMP reached organizations across the Bay Area, the team created an Equity Geographies ArcGIS map that compares frontline communities in the San Francisco Bay Area to the WRMP Geographic Scope (Appendix D).[5] The map contains four layers that highlight where frontline communities are geographically situated in the Bay Area, allowing for comparison with the WRMP Geographic Scope. Each layer represents datasets that define frontline justice communities differently and cover different social and/or environmental issues.[6]

In September 2023, Outreach by Design presented an overview of preliminary findings and goals to the WRMP People and Wetlands Workgroup. We incorporated guidance from the workgroup members and invited them to participate in interviews to assist us in the development of the Equity and Engagement Strategy.

Interviews with Bay Area Communities and Tribes

To prepare for interview outreach, the team identified all the groups—including CBOs, community colleges, high schools, experiential schools—that were engaged in equity and engagement efforts with the nine Bay Area agencies (Appendix F). The team created an Interview Contact spreadsheet that included the best point of contact for each organization.

Beginning in October 2023, WRMP staff utilized the Interview Contact spreadsheet to conduct outreach to organizations for potential interviews. WRMP staff emphasized the importance of conducting outreach to geographically diverse organizations from across the Bay Area, including the North Bay, East Bay, San Francisco, Peninsula, and South Bay regions. The team reviewed the

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[5] To view the map online, please visit: https://arcg.is/1O1HCe

[6] The five ArcGIS map layers are: (1) San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Adapting Rising Tides Program (2018). https://services5.arcgis.com/YwYKVM0aCJCdDIHN/arcgis/rest/services/bay_slr_inundation_2018/FeatureServer/0

(2) SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities (Census Tracts and Tribal Areas) (2022). Layer: SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities 2022 (Census Tracts and Tribal Areas) (ID:0) (arcgis.com)

(3) San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Community Vulnerability (2020). Layer: CommunityVulnerability_BCDC_2020 (ID:0) (arcgis.com)

(4) Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)/Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Equity Priority Communities (updated 2021). https://services3.arcgis.com/i2dkYWmb4wHvYPda/arcgis/rest/services/communities_of_concern_2018_w_acs2016/FeatureServer/0

(5) SFEP WRMP Geographic Scope. https://services5.arcgis.com/YwYKVM0aCJCdDIHN/arcgis/rest/services/WRMP_Geographic_Scope/FeatureServer/0

locations and service areas of each organization, adjusting outreach initially to prioritize areas and organizations that had not participated in recent public agency engagement initiatives or geographies that were not yet represented in our outreach efforts.

An Interview Guide was developed to provide a standard set of interview questions and was revised based on input received from the People & Wetlands Workgroup (see Appendix C for final interview script and guidelines). While the questions were slightly modified for each interview based on the interviewee's level of familiarity with WRMP, the questionnaire was followed consistently overall.

After conducting interviews with thirty participants from 25 different CBOs, community groups, educational organizations, and Tribal organizations (see Appendix A for a full list of organizations interviewed), interview data were coded, analyzed, and incorporated into the Equity and Engagement Strategy.

We also incorporated input from two related engagement sessions held with Tribes and Tribal organizations on environmental concerns (with permission from the Tribes). These included the WRMP meeting with Tribes and Tribal organizations in 2022, facilitated by the California Indian Environmental Alliance, and the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority engagement on improving access for Tribes to grants for SF Bay Shoreline Projects.

All the individuals interviewed were invited to review and comment on the draft report, along with the WRMP People and Wetlands Workgroup and broader WRMP staff. The draft Equity and Engagement Strategy was also presented to the WRMP Steering Committee. We incorporated all provided feedback into the final report recommendations.

Findings and Recommendations

Below, we summarize our findings and identify priority recommendations for the WRMP. These priorities center racial equity, community and Tribal priorities and concerns, and the overall mission of the WRMP.

Key Recommendations for Government Agencies to Have More Equitable Engagement with Communities: Lessons from Nine Bay Area Initiatives

Outreach by Design identified community issues raised in reports and documents from nine Bay Area community engagement and equity planning initiatives[7] (see Appendix F for detailed summaries of each report). Issues typically concerned the following: 1) how public agencies define and act upon equity and environmental justice; 2) how agencies develop methodologies for engaging communities, youth, and Bay Area Tribes; and 3) how agencies summarize engagement outcomes. A summary of recommendations to address these issues (below) was shared during our interviews with community and Tribal leaders for this report, and with environmental justice leaders and public agency staff at the State of the Estuary Conference, *Environmental Justice 2.0 for the Bay-Delta Estuary: Lessons Learned from EJ Expert-Government Agency Partnerships and Models for the Future* on March 11, 2024.

Government Agencies Should...

- Contract with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that have established trust with communities.
- Engage with Tribes to make sure Native communities' concerns are heard, including about traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and Tribal stewardship.
- Join existing meetings within communities rather than request community members attend agency meetings.
- Meet communities where they are, both in terms of priorities and physically to foster relationships and interactions.
- Establish long term funding to support CBOs and community leaders as full partners and leaders. This can be done by:
    - Identifying grants from established partners that have appropriate eligibility requirements and fewer barriers to accessing funds.
    - Identifying and creating workforce development opportunities.
    - Allocating resources for technical assistance and training programs to help smaller CBOs and Tribal organizations navigate funding processes and build their capacity.
- Fund professional development for agency staff to enhance their partnership-building skills, especially in working with historically underrepresented groups and Tribes.
- Promote increased representation of Tribes and community representatives at various levels within agencies, including staff, Advisory Committees, Oversight Committees, and Governing Boards, to ensure their perspectives are included in the decision-making processes.

Findings from Interviews

These findings outline key priorities for the WRMP moving forward, from governance and program structure to community engagement, data utilization, and educational outreach.

Throughout our research, the following six topics were brought up consistently: program structure and governance, trust-building activities and resources, outreach and education, community and Tribal data needs, community and youth data gathering and monitoring, and increased community and Tribal involvement in the WRMP.

From these topics, three major cross-cutting themes emerged strongly and consistently across the interviews and Tribal engagement sessions as follows:

Authentic Relationships and Partnerships

Forming genuine, reciprocal, and sustainable partnerships with communities, Tribes, and CBOs is imperative. Too often, agency initiatives fail to yield long-term community benefits or result in "window dressing" engagement where agencies solicit community input but do not address their issues or incorporate their guidance. Overall, interviewees emphasized meaningful community engagement as essential for the success of environmental programs like the WRMP. They expressed the importance of active community participation in all project phases and the need to value community insights.

Advancing Equity through Accessibility and Inclusivity

Accessibility and inclusivity both emerged as central themes in interviews. The WRMP should remove barriers—both physical and socio-economic—to participating in WRMP projects and welcome historically marginalized and underserved communities into shoreline spaces. Interviewees pointed out the importance of collaborative approaches to ensure that data collection methods and outcomes are respectful of and beneficial to community and Tribal interests. They also noted the importance of empowering communities through targeted

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[7] The full report draws from the following nine initiatives: Regional Water Needs Assessment Report by the Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACTI) Program (2022), Summary of Delta Environmental Justice Interviews by the California Delta Stewardship Council (2022), Plan Bay Area 2050's Equity Analysis, Public Engagement, and Tribal Engagement Reports (2021), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)s' Bay Trail Equity Strategy (2023), Adapting to Rising Tides Community Vulnerability for Current and Future Flood Risk User Guide by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) (2023), Power the People by East Oakland Initiative (2023), Regional Strategy for Rising Bay Joint Platform by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) (2021), Establishing an Equity and Community Engagement Program that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities: Final Recommendations for the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority by EcoEquity Consulting (2019), and Equity Guidelines and Tribal Engagement Recommendations Reports by the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (2023).

environmental education and training, enabling them to effectively engage with local policies and campaigns for environmental justice.

Capacity Building, Resource Sharing, and Workforce Development

Interviewees expressed the need for government agencies to facilitate funding, resource sharing, technical assistance, and capacity building among community-based organizations (CBOs), Tribal groups, educational institutions, and other interested groups. Interviewees stressed the importance of supporting grassroots initiatives through equitable funding models, providing compensation for community contributions, and investing in workforce development opportunities that enable community members, especially youth, to engage meaningfully with environmental science and conservation efforts.

Recommendations for 5-Year Equity and Engagement Strategy

The Equity and Engagement Strategy serves as a roadmap for the WRMP. It is intended to be adaptable and paired with transparent reporting to track progress. It requires internal capacity-building for WRMP Steering Committee and staff to enhance skills in cultural competency and community engagement with historically underrepresented groups and frontline communities, Tribes and Tribal-serving organizations.

We first present a matrix of six strategic priorities and potential actions below, identifying the most effective options, "low-hanging fruit" opportunities, and work already in progress. Building on these six priority areas, additional tables detail the full list of strategic priorities, potential actions, and implementation measures. Each implementation area indicates where WRMP Steering Committee members or staff would play a lead role, or a supporting role in collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

Strategic Priorities

- Establish Equitable and Collaborative Program Structure and Governance
- Provide Resources to Amplify the Values and Priorities of Community and Tribal Partners to Build Trust
- Engage in Equitable Outreach and Education
- Ensure Community and Tribal Data Needs Reflected in WRMP Monitoring
- Involve Community and Youth in Data Collection and
- Increase Community and Tribal Involvement in WRMP

Prioritizing Actions

Cross-Cutting Themes	Strategic Priorities	Potential Actions	High Impact	Low-Hanging Fruit	Already in Progress
Authentic Relationships & Trust	**Establish Equitable and Collaborative Program Structure and Governance** Builds a powerful base of support and advocates for the WRMP	Form Partnerships with CBOs & Tribes/Tribal Serving Organizations	✔		
		Include Community and Tribal Representatives in WRMP Steering Committee	✔	✔	✔
	Provide Resources to Amplify the Values and Priorities of Community and Tribal Partners to Build Trust Empowers groups to take more active roles in the WRMP.	Show support for advocacy campaigns of CBOs and Tribes		✔	
		Provide technical assistance to CBOs and Tribal organizations	✔		
Accessibility and Inclusivity	**Engage in Equitable Outreach and Education** Builds widespread awareness of WRMP across communities, Tribes, and age groups	Establish regular, open lines of communication with community and Tribal serving organizations		✔	
	Ensure Community and Tribal Data Needs Reflected in WRMP Monitoring Demonstrates that WRMP values community and Tribal knowledge and perspectives	Integrate findings and recommendations of People and Wetlands workgroup in WRMP scientific activities	✔	✔	✔
Capacity Building and Resource Sharing	**Involve Community and Youth in Data Collection and Monitoring** Helps WRMP collect more and distinct types of data.	Community and Tribal Engaged Monitoring	✔		
		Youth Engagement Programs	✔		
	Increase Community and Tribal Involvement in WRMP Ensures programs and activities are inclusive	Seek sustainable funding sources	✔		
		Work with Tribal liaisons	✔	✔	

Establish Equitable and Collaborative Program Structure and Governance

Builds a powerful base of support and advocates for the WRMP

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Form Partnerships with CBOs & Tribes/Tribal Serving Organizations	Establish formal partnership agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) when contracting with CBOs on projects (e.g., WRMP plan implementation, research on the equitable distribution of wetlands benefits, or wetland stewardship, learning, and engagement activities) that specify shared goals, roles, responsibilities, duration, compensation, decision-making, and conflict resolution for specific projects drawing from recognized community partnership agreement and collaborative governance models.	Primary	Use of Partnership Agreements or MOUs in WRMP Projects MOUs	Staff
	Work with Tribal representatives on the WRMP SC, People and Wetlands Workgroup, and Tribal liaisons at sister agencies to establish clear guidelines and protocols for Tribal engagement in WRMP projects and activities, ensuring that the process is respectful, transparent, and aligned with Tribal priorities and values.	Primary	WRMP Tribal engagement guidelines	Staff, SC, PWW, SFBRA, SFBJV
Include Community and Tribal Representatives in WRMP Steering Committee	Continue to ensure representation from CBOs and Tribal organizations on the WRMP Steering Committee to ensure governance structures reflect community and Tribal voices.	Primary	Number of CBO and Tribal Representatives on SC	SC
	Integrate community and Tribal representatives' efforts and lived experience in all aspects of WRMP project phasing (e.g., site monitoring of human dimensions and equity indicators, research studies, and stewardship, learning and engagement activities), from decision-making to outcome realization.	Primary	Document representation, participation, and contributions throughout project phasing.

Implement community and tribal feedback mechanisms (surveys, interviews) linked to project outcomes. | SC, Staff |

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Develop CBPAR Projects	Employ the eight principles of community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) in project development and implementation, ensuring community engagement from the outset.	Primary	Use of CBPAR Principles to co-create and implement projects	Staff, PWW
Integrate Youth in Governance Structures	Ensure there are seats open for youth members to be part of the governance structure for more youth representation and knowledge.	Primary	Number of youths on WRMP SC and committees	SC, EYC
Prioritize Cultural Competence within WRMP	Provide comprehensive cultural competency training for WRMP and SFEP staff and SC, focusing on effective communication, cultural sensitivity, and inclusivity.	Primary	Number of trainings	Staff, SC
	Hire staff from frontline, environmental justice, and underrepresented communities, but also possess relevant language skills and cultural knowledge.	Primary	Number of staff hired from impacted communities	Staff
	Recruit trusted, knowledgeable liaisons who can effectively communicate environmental concerns and WRMP initiatives between communities, Tribes and the WRMP.	Primary	Identify Tribal liaison to work with WRMP	Staff, PWW, SFBRA
Establish Alternative Engagement Models	Establish a practice of earmarking a portion of project budgets to experiment with alternative engagement models, such as partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), innovative virtual meetings using tools that promote interaction and sense of community, and fostering grassroots connections (including allocating funds specifically for hiring a restorative justice and conflict resolution consultant or for staff and SC members to take relevant training to address disputes that arise during program implementation)	Primary	Number of projects, amount of funding earmarked	Staff, SC

*EYC = Estuary Youth Council, PWW = People & Wetlands Workgroup, SC = WRMP Steering Committee, SFBRA = San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, SFBJV = San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Staff = SFEP/WRMP Staff

Provide Resources to Amplify the Values and Priorities of Community and Tribal Partners to Build Trust

Empowers groups to take more active roles in the WRMP

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Technical Assistance for CBOs	Allocate resources to provide technical assistance and training programs to help CBOs and Tribal organizations contribute to community-engaged monitoring, use monitoring data in programs and advocacy, and to enhance technical skills related to WRMP.	Primary	Amount of funding, Number of trainings	Staff, PWW
Compensation Models	Co-create scope of work and budgets with community and Tribal partners for WRMP community projects	Primary	Number of co-created budgets, Compensation policy	Staff
Funding for Access and Stewardship	Actively seek funding to address barriers to shoreline access and opportunities for environmental and cultural stewardship, including providing safe, accessible, and affordable transportation services to/from parks/shoreline.	Primary	Amount of funding for stewardship projects	Staff
Tribal Liaison Roles	Establish or engage with full-time Tribal liaison roles within state agencies to facilitate communication with Tribes. Staff would preferably either have Tribal affiliation or have ample knowledge in Indigenous history, law, and regulations in California, and be familiar with Tribal issues.	Primary	Identification of Tribal liaison	Staff, SFBRA
Show Support for CBOs and Tribes	Show support for CBO and Tribal campaigns and advocacy for environmental benefits such as carbon sinks and pollution reduction and cultural stewardship and access. This can take form in writing letters of support and public comment letters in support of CBO projects, as well as agency newsletters, social media, joint statements, and public speaking engagements.	Primary	Number and types of WRMP support activities	Staff, SC
Project Lifespan	Communicate effectively with CBOs and Tribes throughout project lifecycles and ensure materials are culturally relevant and accessible.	Primary	Survey CBOs and Tribes on cultural relevance and accessibility of communications	Staff, PWW, SFBRA, SFBJV

*EYC = Estuary Youth Council, PWW = People & Wetlands Workgroup, SC = WRMP Steering Committee, SFBRA = San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, SFBJV = San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Staff = SFEP/WRMP Staff

Engage in Equitable Outreach and Education

Builds widespread awareness of WRMP across communities, Tribes, and age groups

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Regular Communication Channels	Establish regular, open lines of communication with community members, Tribal serving organizations, and other interested groups, utilizing varied communication channels for equitable outreach for the entire project lifespan, such as social media, partnership with K-12 schools to disseminate information, joint community-agency forums/meetings, and dedicated sections of the WRMP website for community-specific information.	Primary	Document communication across social media, number of partnerships, meetings; Establish community section of WRMP website	Staff, PWW
	Send WRMP staff to community events to provide updates and receive guidance on WRMP initiatives.	Primary	Number of community events attended	Staff
	Actively track and evaluate who currently accesses WRMP programs, resources and information both to measure impact and to find out who might be left out in order to target more effective outreach and engagement.	Primary	Survey website visitors, Track discussion with community and Tribal partner organizations	Saff
	With regards to Tribes: • Conduct direct outreach to Tribes or through trusted agencies like departments within EPA, the Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for federally recognized Tribes. • Prioritize Tribal input before material publication, with a clear set of expectations on compensation, capacity, direct engagement alternatives, and project progress communication. • Engage in early consultation during project development. • Tailor outreach efforts to account for the varied capacities and funding streams between federally recognized and non-federally recognized Tribes. • Commit to sharing the findings of environmental monitoring in a manner that respects Tribal contributions. • Be specific about the involvement of Tribes in the process. • Tailor reports to reflect the unique contributions and concerns of each Tribe.	Support	Review Tribal engagement efforts with WRMP SC and sister agencies	SFBRA, SFBJV, Staff

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Education and Marketing Efforts	Invest in environmental education efforts that engage youth and the broader community, including compensating youth to create culturally relevant and impactful content.	Primary	Number of projects, amount of funding	Staff
	Use more personal and engaging communication formats, such as flyers or discussions in community spaces, avoiding technical jargon so that it is easy to understand and relevant to local impacts and lived experience for. Contract with CBOs and Tribal-serving organizations to develop engaging communications materials and meetings.	Primary	Number of communication contracts with CBOs and Tribes, Review materials with community and Tribal partners/ liaison	Staff, PWW
	Develop communication initiatives aimed at teachers, students, and their families that prioritize experiential learning and special activities highlighting the Bay, water quality, wetlands, shoreline access, and resilience to climate change.	Primary	Number of communication initiatives	Staff, PWW, SC
	Partner with existing coalitions, such as the Bayview-Hunters Point Environmental Justice Task Force and Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action to disseminate information about the Bay, water quality, wetland, and shoreline access and protection, especially for frontline communities and those most affected by environmental changes or degradation.	Support	Number of partnerships	Staff, SC
	Collaborate with community centers, churches, libraries, schools and CBOs as vital conduits of information to impacted communities, leveraging their networks and trust.	Support	Track dissemination channels	Staff, SC, PWW
	Develop language and communications accessibility policies using established standards such as US Department of Transportation Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Guidance. Partner with CBOs or hire consultants to provide language access in all communications and WRMP monitoring products to meet the linguistic needs of communities served by WRMP initiatives and to enable diverse community members to fully participate and benefit from WRMP initiatives. This includes languages of large LEP populations in the Bay Area such as Spanish and Chinese, as well as people with hearing, speech, and visual impairments, and ensuring website accessibility.	Primary	Establish language and communication accessibility policy	Staff

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Prioritize youth involvement in environmental initiatives	Create pathways for engagement with the WRMP through partnerships with schools, integrating environmental science and justice into educational pathways, and offering experiential learning opportunities like field trips supported by grants from agencies such as California State Parks.	Primary	Number of school partnerships	Staff, EYC
	Support student capstone projects related to shoreline and wetlands monitoring.	Support	Number of student capstone projects	Staff, EYC
	Provide guest speakers for schools and community colleges.	Support	Number of guest speakers provided	Staff, SC, PWW, EYC
	Create field trip opportunities by hosting sites for practical learning, including case study assignments in community college and K-12 classrooms, on-site visits to waterways, wetlands, and other environmentally significant locations, offering students tangible connection to the topics of study, from water sampling to gardening and composting.	Primary	Number of field trips	Staff, EYC, PWW
	Create internship, externship (shadowing), mentorship, or volunteer opportunities specifically tailored for high school students interested in environmental science and activism, providing pathways for deeper involvement beyond initial field experiences. Utilize funding within WRMP and its partner organizations to offer paid internships or part-time positions for students engaged in environmental studies.	Primary	Number of paid internships or part-time positions for high school students	Staff, SC, PWW, EYC, SFBRA, SBJVP
School Partnerships	Develop a suite of comprehensive engagement tools specifically tailored for student involvement to enhance educational impact and foster a deeper connection with the subject matter.	Support	Development of student-facing WRMP educational materials	Staff, EYC, PWW
	Hire or contract with an educational liaison familiar with the school system, e.g., school calendars and schedules, to foster two-way knowledge exchange.	Primary	Hire or contract with education liaison	Staff, EYC
	Use flexible engagement models, such as online Zoom sessions for guest speakers, as a lead-in to more involved activities like field trips.	Primary		Staff, EYC

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Leverage community college networks	Engage with Merritt College and similar institutions through its job board, website, and newsletter to advertise opportunities for students interested in environmental careers to actively participate in monitoring, data collection, and public education/outreach related to environmental restoration, share data and educational resources, and cultivate a collaborative relationship that benefits both WRMP initiatives and student learning outcomes.	Support	Track conversations with community colleges	Staff, EYC
	Collaborate with Merritt College and similar institutions to identify and articulate clear pathways from coursework and internships to careers in environmental restoration, shoreline adaptation, and related fields. Addressing financial realities and making career paths concrete for students should be a priority.	Support	Develop environmental restoration pathway guide	Staff, EYC
	Make WRMP's open-source environmental data available as a resource for course development, case studies, and practical training to programs such as Merritt College's Natural History and Sustainability (NHS) program and similar programs in the region. Partner with or use WRMP's influence to encourage private environmental consulting firms and related businesses to provide internship opportunities or consider graduates from community college programs.	Primary	Track usage of WRMP monitoring data	Staff, PWW, EYC
Engaging with Community	Schedule hybrid community engagement meetings in community projects, acknowledging varied work time hours. Provide language interpreters for information sharing and eliminate scientific jargon for easily accessible data. Send technical experts who have experience in community meetings so that information is interactive, engaging and informative. Develop and implement engagement training for agency staff, focusing on Tribal consultation practices.	Primary	Number of projects, Number of meetings with CBOs, Number of community engagement training	Staff
	Host events and field activities that celebrate cultural diversity, including the incorporation of cultural foods and practices, to create a more inviting and inclusive environment for community members with diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage. This could include facilitating the involvement of groups like Latino Outdoors and other community organizations in volunteer-driven initiatives, from monitoring wetlands to hosting culturally enriching events, leveraging the interests of these groups to enhance WRMP's mission.	Primary	Track outreach activities and hosting organizations	Staff, SC, PWW

*EYC = Estuary Youth Council, PWW = People & Wetlands Workgroup, SC = WRMP Steering Committee, SFBRA = San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, SFBJV = San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Staff = SFEP/WRMP Staff

Ensure Community and Tribal Data Needs Reflected in WRMP Monitoring

Demonstrates that WRMP values community and Tribal knowledge and perspectives

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Monitoring Priorities	Ensure monitoring indicators and/or analyses reflect community and Tribal needs and priorities that cover environmental justice, water justice, risk of flooding for vulnerable communities, public health, impact of green spaces on community-well-being, shoreline accessibility and belonging, stewardship, and economic benefits.	Primary	Track implementation of human dimensions and equity indicators	PWW, SC
	With regards to Tribes: include priorities such as environmental health metrics, edibility of traditional wetland plant and animal foods, documenting accessibility (e.g., easements, signage) for Native people to use culturally important wetland resources, and access for Native people to have gathering spaces and ceremonies at the shoreline. Produce data through partnerships between Tribal communities and WRMP-affiliated scientists.	Primary	Track implementation of Tribal related indicators	PWW, SC, SFBRA
Tribal Data Protocols	Establish clear guidelines and protocols for Tribal engagement in WRMP, ensuring the process respects Tribal priorities and values, and integrates Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK), respecting that each Tribal entity has their own processes and sovereignty over their own data.	Primary	Establish protocols for data monitoring and analyses relevant to Tribes and Tribal organizations	PWW, SC, SFBRA, SFBJV
	Integrate Tribal data ownership guidelines and protocols in early project development stages.	Primary	Establish protocols for Tribal data ownership	Staff, SC, SFBRA
People and Wetlands Workgroup	Continue integrating findings and recommendations from the People and Wetlands Workgroup into WRMP's scientific activities.	Primary	Track progress PWW work implementation	PWW, Staff, SC

*EYC = Estuary Youth Council, PWW = People & Wetlands Workgroup, SC = WRMP Steering Committee, SFBRA = San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, SFBJV = San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Staff = SFEP/WRMP Staff

Involve Community and Youth in Data Collection and Monitoring

Helps WRMP collect more and distinct types of data and analyze it in a way that is more relevant and accessible to local communities.

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Youth Engagement Programs	Engage and partner with high schools, community colleges, and CBOS to develop programs related to wetlands monitoring, analysis, and public engagement to provide learning and professional development opportunities for youth in environmental data collection, conservation, and climate change initiatives, highlighting potential career paths within environmental fields.	Primary	Track number of partnerships, programs created	Staff, SC, EYC
Community-engaged Monitoring	Develop a paid community-engaged monitoring element of the WRMP, with a focus on workforce development for people from underrepresented groups and frontline and environmental justice communities.	Primary	Number of projects funding community engaged monitors	PWW, SC, Staff
Community Data Collection	Empower communities to collect their own shoreline data as part of community-based science initiatives, providing training and compensating community members for their contributions to the WRMP Monitoring Matrix, especially Human Dimensions and Equity indicators.	Support	Number of trainings, Number of projects, Amount of funding for community-based science initiatives	PWW, Staff
Tribal Engaged Monitoring	Engage with Tribal organizations to determine interests and opportunities to participate in monitoring processes. Provide opportunities for Native people to learn about wetland ecosystems and spend time in wetland spaces.	Primary	Number of meetings with Tribes and Tribal organizations	PWW, Staff, SFBRA
	Focus on paid opportunities for Native youth, including workforce development around environmental data collection and opportunities to experience and learn about wetland habitats and traditional uses of wetland areas.	Primary	Number of Native youth involved in WRMP projects, Amount of funding for Native youth	SFBRA, SFBJV, Staff, EYC
	Monitor the health and abundance of wetlands cultural resources essential for Tribal communities. This includes natural and constructed features such as trails, gathering spaces, culturally important plant and animal species, ceremonial spaces, and clean water sources that support traditional practices, ceremonies, and daily life.	Support	Identify and track cultural resources relevant to Tribes and Tribal organizations	SFBRA, SFBJV, Staff

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Increase Community and Tribal Involvement in WRMP

Ensures programs and activities are inclusive

Potential Actions	Implementation	WRMP Role	Tracking	Relevant Groups*
Seek Sustainable Funding Sources	Actively seek and allocate long-term funding to support CBOs, Tribes, and community leaders as full partners and leaders.	Primary	Amount of funding for CBOs and Tribal involvement in WRMP activities	Staff, PWW
	Contract with communities through CBOs to build capacity and influence in government decision-making, providing compensation for time and expertise. For example, contracting with community members vis a vis CBOs who have a track record of connecting directly with communities of color as trusted partners.	Primary	Number of contracts with CBOs representing communities of color and other underserved and impacted communities	Staff, PWW
Establish Funding Model for Long-term Contracting	Compensate CBOs or Tribes serving as independent contractors fairly, e.g. paying the same rate as consultants, ensuring that those who contribute their expertise and labor to the WRMP receive appropriate remuneration.	Primary	Track the rate of CBO compensation relative to consultant compensation	Staff
	Reduce bureaucratic barriers for CBOs and Tribes in funding processes, offering upfront grant opportunities where possible.	Primary	Number of CBO grants	Staff
	Create a dedicated fund to support the hiring of translators for community meetings and field events.	Primary	Use of translator in community meetings, Amount of funding for translation	Staff, SC
Work with Tribal Liaisons	Contract or work with existing Tribal liaisons within WRMP and partner agencies who are Indigenous or possess Tribal cultural competency, ensuring consistent communication with clear and accessible information, and facilitating direct funding opportunities for Tribal youth and environmental stewardship activities.	Primary	Number of Tribal liaison contracts or engagements	SFBRA, SFBJV, Staff, SC
Building Connections and Relationships	Continue to build new connections and relationships with community-based and Tribal organizations and community members.	Primary	Number of CBO and Tribal contacts	Staff, PWW, EYC

*EYC = Estuary Youth Council, PWW = People & Wetlands Workgroup, SC = WRMP Steering Committee, SFBRA = San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, SFBJV = San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Staff = SFEP/WRMP Staff

Plan Implementation

The authors intend for this 5-year Equity and Engagement Plan to be a living document that is actively implemented and continuously adapted by the people invested in its success. To advance racial equity and community outreach in WRMP operations, programs, and activities, progress on achieving goals adopted should align with the Estuary Blueprint. Implementation should be reviewed and discussed annually with WRMP staff, Steering Committee, People and Wetlands Workgroup, Estuary Youth Council, and community partners with priority actions agreed upon each quarter. For accountability, progress on WRMP 5-year goals and potential actions in this plan should be clearly communicated internally with WRMP staff and governance, and externally with other interested groups (community organizations, partner agencies, the public) using established best practices and those identified in the interviews (ensuring communications are accessible, easy to understand, and relevant to impacted communities).

The Vital Role of the People & Wetlands Workgroup

The People & Wetlands Workgroup plays a vital role in implementing this Equity and Engagement Strategy. Approved by the Steering Committee in March 2022, it was established to identify priority monitoring questions and indicators for understanding the connections between people and wetlands, determine metrics and data collection protocols and standards for monitoring the priority indicators, increase the inclusion of different forms and sources of knowledge, identify ways to serve the information needs of different groups, and identify how indicators important to frontline communities and Tribes can be effectively communicated to those audiences.

The People & Wetlands Workgroup Management Questions Proposal presented to WRMP Steering Committee by staff on June 15, 2023, clearly called attention to the importance of adding indicators relevant to frontline communities and Tribes.

Adding indicators to measure wetland benefits that communities and Tribes value can enable the WRMP to evaluate whether these benefits are being provided equitably. Furthermore, community and Tribal knowledge will help us better understand the Estuary's wetlands. An increasing focus on equity and human connections to wetlands aligns with the more holistic ways that other regional entities and programs are beginning to view restoration and management, such as the inclusion of benefits to economically disadvantaged communities and involvement by youth and volunteers in the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority's Performance Measures for restoration projects.

- Management Questions Proposal, People & Wetlands Workgroup

Next Steps and Summary

Prioritize the implementation of key recommendations identified in the Equity and Engagement Plan, starting with actions that are most feasible and impactful. We recommend the following:

- **Goal 1: Establish Equitable Collaborative Program Structure and Governance.** Fill the two vacant spots for representatives from community-based organizations on the WRMP Steering Committee.
- **Goal 2: Provide Resources to Amplify the Values and Priorities of Community and Tribal Partners to Build Trust.** Pursue grant opportunities to partner with CBOS that address barriers to shoreline access and environmental and cultural stewardship for people from underserved and environmental justice communities.
- **Goal 3: Equitable Outreach and Education.** Establish regular, open lines of communication with community members, Tribal-serving organizations, and other interested groups, particularly those consulted in this report who expressed interest in continued dialogue or collaboration with the WRMP. Allocate resources to foster accessible communications and build trust-based relationships with community-based organizations, Tribal groups, and individuals.
- **Goal 4: Ensure Community and Tribal Data Needs Reflected in WRMP Monitoring.** Continue the work of the People and Wetlands Workgroup on human dimension and equity indicators in the Monitoring Matrix to institutionalize a genuine commitment to understanding community perspectives about wetlands and collaborating on solutions that address their specific environmental justice and equity concerns.
- **Goal 5: Involve Community and Youth in Data Collection and Monitoring.** Develop a paid, community-engaged monitoring element within the WRMP, with a specific focus on workforce development for people from underrepresented groups and frontline and environmental justice communities.
- **Goal 6: Increase Community and Tribal Involvement in WRMP.** Partner with community-based organizations and educational institutions to conduct outreach and education related to WRMP information products for youth and other individuals from underserved communities.

We strongly recommend establishing a transparent reporting mechanism to publicly communicate progress towards implementing the recommendations and achieving equity and engagement goals. Regular reassessment of these goals, informed by progress reports and ongoing community input, will be vital to ensuring the WRMP's responsiveness and accountability.

The WRMP Equity and Engagement Strategy represents a critical step forward in addressing and ameliorating the historical injustices, structural racism, and systemic barriers that have marred the landscape of environmental stewardship and community engagement. By acknowledging the multifaceted nature of these challenges, the WRMP embarks on a robust journey toward fostering

an inclusive, equity-centered approach that places community empowerment, scientific engagement, equitable compensation, and effective communication at the heart of its mission.

This plan, developed with insights from Outreach by Design LLC, not only seeks to highlightt the pressing issues faced by communities disproportionately impacted by discriminatory land use decision-making, but also underscores the WRMP's commitment to advancing racial equity and meaningful participation in environmental conservation efforts.

The recommendations presented challenge the WRMP to confront and redress historical injustices — from inadequate access to recreational spaces and environmental stewardship roles to the marginalization of Tribal communities and exclusion of low-income communities of color from impactful decision-making and funding opportunities. The plan is a resounding call for transformative change, urging a collective reevaluation of policies and practices to prioritize environmental justice and social equity.

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Appendices

A. List of Interviewed Organizations
*Starred entries indicate multiple interviewees from that organization

- Abraham Lincoln High School

- Amah Mutsun Land Trust

- Association of Ramaytush Ohlone

- Build It Green

- Causa Justa Just Cause*

- Climate Resilient Communities

- Communities for a Better Environment

- Downtown Streets Team

- Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice*

- Greenlining Institute

- Groundwork Richmond

- Hood Planning Group

- Latino Outdoors*

- Life Learning Academy

- Literacy for Environmental Justice

- Merritt Community College

- Multicultural Center of Marin

- NAACP Richmond

- Nuestra Casa

- Saint Vincent Hill Neighborhood Coalition*

- Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action

- Sogorea Té Land Trust

- Suscol Intertribal Council

- Watershed Project

- Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program People and Wetlands Workgroup*

B. Key Terms and Definitions

- **Community-Based Organization:** "A Community–Based Organization is one that is driven by community residents in all aspects of its existence. By that we mean: (1) The majority of the governing body and staff consists of local residents, (2) The main operating offices are in the community, (3) Priority issue areas are identified and defined by residents, (4) Solutions to address priority issues are developed with residents, and (5) Program design, implementation, and evaluation components have residents intimately involved, in leadership positions."[8]- University of Michigan's School of Public Health
- **Disadvantaged Communities**

Senate Bill 535 (De León, Statutes of 2012) defines Disadvantaged Communities as: "In this designation, CalEPA formally designated four categories of geographic areas as disadvantaged[9]:

- Census tracts receiving the highest 25 percent of overall scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 (1,984 tracts).
- Census tracts lacking overall scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 due to data gaps, but receiving the highest 5 percent of CalEnviroScreen 4.0 cumulative pollution burden scores (19 tracts).
- Census tracts identified in the 2017 DAC designation as disadvantaged, regardless of their scores in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 (307 tracts).
- Lands under the control of federally recognized Tribes. For purposes of this designation, a Tribe may establish that a particular area of land is under its control even if not represented as such on CalEPA's DAC map and therefore should be considered a DAC by requesting a consultation with the CalEPA Deputy Secretary for Environmental Justice, Tribal Affairs and Border Relations at TribalAffairs@calepa.ca.gov."

- **Environmental Justice:**

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)/Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and California Delta Stewardship Council define Environmental Justice as: "The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption,

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[8] Definition from: [University of Michigan, School of Public Health](#)

[9] [SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities | OEHHA (ca.gov)](#)

implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (Gov. Code, § 65040.12, subd. (e))." [10]

Equity: Definition varies across organizations

- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)'s Bay Adapt Report utilizes an Equity Definition by the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Program (WOEIP) and the Pacific Institute, whereby: "Equity is the fair and just distribution of financial and institutional resources to address impacts across communities that stand to be adversely affected by those impacts, and commitment to include those communities in the development, prioritization, and implementation of adaptation policies, programs, and services."
- Bay Area Association of Governments (ABAG)/Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)'s Equity Definition: "just inclusion into a Bay Area where everyone can participate, prosper and reach their full potential." The agencies strive to advance equity through careful consideration of investments and policies — referred to in the Plan Bay Area 2050 context as "strategies" — that affect historically and systemically marginalized, underserved, and excluded groups, including households with low incomes, communities of color, people with disabilities and seniors"[11]

Equity Priority Communities (MTC):[12]

- ○ "Formerly called "Communities of Concern," Equity Priority Communities (EPC) are census tracts that have a significant concentration of underserved populations, such as households with low incomes and people of color. A combination of additional factors helps define these areas... The MTC EPC Framework provides 8 EPC demographic factors. It is based on the 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year tract level data":[13]
  - People of color
  - Low-income (<200% Federal Poverty Level-FPL)

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[10] California State Law Environmental Justice (EJ) Definition. Environmental Justice | State of California - Department of Justice - Office of the Attorney General

[11] Plan_Bay_Area_2050_October_2021.pdf (ca.gov)

[12] Equity Priority Communities | Metropolitan Transportation Commission (ca.gov)

[13]" MTC Plan Bay Area 2050 Equity Priority Communities | Spatial-Analysis-Mapping-Projects (bayareametro.github.io)

- Limited English Proficiency: Person above the age of 5 years, who do not speak English at least "well" as their primary language or had a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English at least "well", as defined by the U.S. Census.
        - Zero-vehicle household
        - Seniors 75 years and over
        - People with disability
        - Single parent families
        - Severely Rent-burdened household
  - **Frontline Communities:** "Frontline Communities are communities that experience continuing injustice—including people of color, immigrants, people with lower incomes, those in rural areas, and indigenous people—and face a legacy of systemic, largely racialized, inequity that influences their living and working places, the quality of their air and water, and their economic opportunities."14-Greenbelt Alliance

Social Vulnerability Socio Economic Characteristics (Adapting to Rising Tides (BCDC)

BCDC's Adapting to Rising Tides Community Vulnerability for Current and Future Flood Risk User Guide definition: The socioeconomic characteristics that may increase vulnerability include:[15]

- Under age 5
- Very low income
- Not U.S. citizens
- Without a vehicle
- People with disability
- Single parent families
- Communities of color
- Sixty-five and over living alone
- Limited English proficiency
- Without a high school degree
- Severe housing cost burdened
  - Rankings of social vulnerability were assigned by looking at the distributions of the data. Block groups labeled "Highest social vulnerability" have:
    - Eight or more social vulnerability indicators with rates in the 70th percentile, relative to nine county Bay Area;

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[14] Definition from Greenbelt Alliance

[15] Adapting to Rising Tides Community Vulnerability for Current and Future Flood Risk User Guide

- and/or 6 or more social vulnerability indicators with rates in the 90th percentile, relative to nine county Bay Area
- Block groups labeled "High social vulnerability" do not meet criteria in "Highest" category, and have:
  - 6-7 indicators in the 70th percentile;
  - 4-5 indicators in the 90th percentile

C. Interview Script and Guidelines

We're in the process of developing an equity and engagement strategy for the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program, and information from this interview will help inform that strategy. This project responds to the call to center community voices and racial equity, and increasing the program's relevance to communities, particularly those that have been disproportionately impacted by land use decisions, pollution, and climate change. Through these interviews, we're hoping to hear your ideas about setting the agenda for equity and engagement for the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program. We also hope to start to build relationships with community-based partners that are interested in collaborating with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership more broadly.

We're conducting about 30 interviews over the next few months. All the information in the interview will be kept anonymous and responses won't be linked to any individual person or organization. You're free to skip any question you don't want to answer. After the interview, I will mail you a $100 Visa gift card to thank you for your participation.

Do you have any questions about the project or the process before we get started?

Is it okay if I record this interview for my notes?

We understand your community organization was consulted as part of the [Project Title], led by [Agency] (for organizations that were consulted as part of one of the 8 equity/EJ/needs assessment reports led by Bay Area agencies reviewed for this project.[16]).

What communities does your organization serve?

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[16]1.) Disadvantaged Community Involvement (DACTI) Program Regional Water Needs Assessment Report, 2.) Delta Stewardship Council Environmental Justice Interviews, 3.) Plan Bay Area 2050 Equity Analysis, Public Engagement, and Tribal Engagement Reports, 4.) MTC/ABAG Bay Trail Equity Strategy, 5.) BCDC Adapting to Rising Tides Community Vulnerability for Current and Future Flood Risk User Guide, 6.) Power the People East Oakland Collective, 7.) BCDC Regional Strategy for Rising Bay Joint Platform, 8.) SF Bay Restoration Authority Establishing an Equity and Community Engagement Program that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities: Final Recommendations

Can you please tell us about your organization's work?

These are equity and community engagement issues identified by people and organizations who have provided public comments in these recent environmental justice/needs assessment efforts by regional agencies [Screen share list of equity and community engagement issues from the [Engagement Insights report]] .

Do you see any important equity or community engagement issues missing from this list?

From your perspective, what are the most pressing environmental issues or equity concerns in the community your organization serves, especially those related to the Bay, water quality, wetlands, shoreline or recreation access, and resilience to climate change?

Tell us a little about how [named issue(s) in 1b] impacts your community, and what communities you focus your work in. [if they named many issues as most important, limit this discussion to 1-2]

If you had to prioritize addressing one issue facing the communities you serve related to the Bay, water quality, wetlands, access or shoreline protection, which one would it be, and why do you consider it the most urgent?

What strengths and assets do you feel the community served by your organization brings to the table when addressing environmental and water-related issues?

How does your organization engage with community members on environmental and water-related issues?

Could you share examples of successful and less successful approaches to community mobilization and engagement in addressing these issues?

How do you perceive the intersectionality of environmental justice issues with other social and environmental concerns in your community?

Are there specific communities or groups within your community that are disproportionately affected by these environmental issues?

Have you engaged with local, state, or federal agencies on equity or environmental justice issues impacting the communities you serve? If yes, could you share your experiences and outcomes of these engagements? [Encourage respondents to be as specific as they can.]

What role do you envision for public agencies in managing or addressing environmental justice issues, especially those related to community concerns about the Bay, water quality, wetlands, and shoreline access and protection?

What would meaningful community engagement look like to you in the context of addressing equity and environmental justice issues your community faces?

How do you believe science, research, monitoring, or data collection can better support the communities you serve and/or your organization's work in addressing these issues?

Do you think community members served by your organization would like to be directly involved in monitoring and data collection?

What do you think is the best way for a public agency to communicate information about the Bay, water quality, wetlands, and shoreline access and protection to the community your organization serves?

Are there other community-based organizations or environmental justice organizations that your organization collaborates or coordinates with? If so, how do you work together, and what successes have you achieved through these collaborations?

Based on our conversation today, what suggestions or advice could you provide to public agencies/WRMP to help them improve their outreach and engagement, to increase awareness of, and access to available funding or resources in low-income and communities of color?

Are you interested in being involved with the work of the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program or the San Francisco Estuary Partnership going forwards?

Are there specific ways your organization / community would like to be involved with WRMP, or ways that you envision the communities you serve could benefit from the work of/ involvement with the WRMP?

Do you have any recommendations for other individuals or organizations we should reach out to for interviews, or would you be willing to help us connect with your networks to gather more insights?

Anything else you would like to add?

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk today. I'll share the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program's Equity and Engagement Strategy with you when we have a draft ready.

What is the mailing address where I should send your gift card?

D. Bay Area Equity Geographies GIS Map (Online)
https://cal.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=e7eef2efba3c43f3974247ba440a89b4

E. List of CBOs Engaged in Bay Area Planning Processes
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Xt2LpcUdWlmIytwYq8Bip1L2BJtTIgrPwS7dW1n1IRA/edit?gid=400290565#gid=400290565

F. Equity and Engagement Strategies: Insights from Nine San Francisco Bay Area Reports
Equity and Engagement Strategies from Reports_NOV 2023

G. Equity and Community Engagement Best Practices Resources
During our research, interviewees and our team identified several equity and community engagement best practice guides that can inform the WRMP in the implementation of this Equity and Engagement Strategy:

- **Regional Strategy for Rising Bay Joint Platform by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) :** The report includes a range of Bay Area organizations and links to guidebooks on engagement practices.

- **Farther Together: Seven Best Practices for Engaging Communities to Create a Healthy, Resilient region For All by the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)**:[17] BARHII worked with the Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC) and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) as part of the Adapting to Rising Tides project. BARHII asked Nuestra Casa in East Palo Alto to design and implement community engagement efforts. This report identifies seven best practices of engaging with communities in local and regional resilience planning work:

  - Budget Wisely for Effective Community Engagement
  - Expand Engagement through Interagency Partnerships
  - Co-Design Your Process with Community
  - Make Engagement Activities Accessible and Relevant for All

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[17] BARHIIFartherTogether2021.pdf (adaptingtorisingtides.org)

- Identify Locally Meaningful Vulnerabilities and Assets

- Prioritize Community-Supported Resilience Actions

- Collaborate to Bring Equitable Solutions to Fruition

- **Racial Equity Toolkit an Opportunity to Operationalize Equity / Racial Equity Action Plans, A How-to Manual (Local and Regional Government Alliance for Race and Equity [GARE].)** The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) is a national network of governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. These two guides are based on a national scan of promising practices from cities and counties that have developed plans for racial equity and the structures that supported successful planning processes. The Racial Equity Action Plan guide goes into detail about how such action plans can put a theory of change into action to achieve a collective vision of racial equity. The Racial Equity Toolkit is designed to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. Both guides and additional tools for public agencies seeking to advance racial equity can be found online, at https://www.racialequityalliance.org/.

- **Crafting Meaningful MOUs for Collaborative Governance [Toolkit]. 2023. Greenling Institute.** This resource provides printable materials (handouts, facilitation guide, role cards, resource cards) for a 75-to-100-minute interactive session for participants to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines how a multi-party group will work together to advance a community vision. Greenlining staff interviewed emphasized that such MOUs should cover topics like financial relationships, how decisions will be made, and how to resolve conflicts. Is the MOU for a specific project or for how to implement a strategy? https://greenlining.org/publications/inked-with-intent-collaborative-governance-equity-lab/

- **Collaborative Problem-Solving Model. West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project.** For a discussion of why partnership agreements are vital for equitable partnerships, see https://woeip.org/about-woeip/our-approach/ An example agreement of West Oakland's Collaborative Agreement for Partnering on the AB 617 West Oakland Community Action (WOCA) Plan for community emissions reduction can be found here: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-06/collaborative_partnering_agreement_west_oakland.pdf

- **The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation** has been widely used and adapted by practitioners since it was first proposed in the early 2000s to illustrate the levels of shared decision authority in public participation, from informing (one-way communication) to empowerment (deliberative communications). According to Organizing Engagement, the Spectrum shares similarities with other models, notably the Ladder of Citizen Participation, Ladder of Children's

Participation, Ladder of Empowerment, Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment Pyramid, and Youth Engagement Continuum, among others. Organizing Empowerment's discussion of the IAP2 Spectrum also reflects on the forms and consequences of inauthentic and ineffective participatory practices, when promises to the public are broken. See: https://organizingengagement.org/models/spectrum-of-public-participation/