



Memo

Date: September 23, 2021

To: Members of the State Coastal Conservancy

From: Mary Small, Interim Executive Officer

Brenda Buxton, Deputy San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program Manager

CC: Oversight Members

RE: Update Regarding 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: [March 27, 2014 Staff Recommendation Adopting IRWM Plan](#)

Exhibit B: [Final 2019 IRWM Plan](#)

Exhibit C: [2019 IRWM Plan Appendices](#)

Background

The San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWM Plan) is a multi-stakeholder, nine-county effort to coordinate a strategic approach to regional water management. The IRWM Plan builds on water resources needs and planning strategies identified throughout the Bay Area, leveraging regional cooperation to plan and implement projects more effectively. Adoption of the plan is required for the Conservancy and other stakeholders in the Bay Area to be eligible for project funding through the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Adoption signifies concurrence with the regional goals and objectives of the Plan but does not eliminate the discretion of the Conservancy to determine what project or projects to fund or whether to fund a particular project.

The Conservancy has been involved in the development of the Bay Area IRWM Plan since its inception, adopting the original plan in 2006 and an updated IRWM Plan in 2014 (see attached March 27, 2014 staff recommendation in Exhibit A for additional details). Since adoption of the original plan, the Bay Area IRWM Plan has been carried out through implementation of priority projects identified in the Plan by various project proponents. The Conservancy has received \$15.4 million in IRWM grants since 2008. The Conservancy has expended or granted these funds for projects pursuant to its authority under Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. IRWM Plans are intended to provide a new model for water

resources management in California. The Bay Area IRWM Plan is managed by the IRWM Coordinating Committee (IRWM CC) which includes Conservancy staff.

Updated Bay Area IRWM Plan

DWR's IRWM Plan guidelines are periodically updated to reflect the priorities for funding from statewide propositions, such as, most recently, Proposition 1. In 2016 DWR adopted its 2016 Guidelines, which state that regions must update their IRWM Plans to be consistent with the 2016 IRWM Plan Standards and the plans must be reviewed and accepted by DWR. In order to fulfill this requirement, the IRWM CC conducted a comprehensive review of the original 2006 Bay Area IRWM Plan and its 2014 update for consistency with the updated 2016 IRWM Plan Standards and made appropriate edits and additions. This review and update included:

- Discussing climate change vulnerabilities in the Bay Area;
- Identifying how regional water management strategies can help address climate change challenges;
- Outlining specific processes and strategies used to engage and include underrepresented populations, such as Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Communities, in regional planning;
- Including additional details on the work performed under the Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Involvement Program ("DACTIP");
- Adding detail related to regional groundwater contaminants and management plans; and
- Other minor changes to conform to 2016 IRWM Plan Guidelines.

A draft of the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan was circulated to the Bay Area IRWM Region listserv in advance of the September 23, 2019 IRWM CC meeting. Comments were received from East Bay Municipal Utility District, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, the SFPUC, the Coastal Conservancy staff, and the City of Hayward. Most comments either added or corrected information related to the commenting agency; all comments were addressed and incorporated into the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan.

The IRWM CC finalized and unanimously approved the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan at its October 28, 2019 meeting. The Plan was then forwarded to DWR for review and comment. After an additional round of public comment (no comments were received), DWR issued its approval on April 14, 2020.

Executive Officer Findings

At its March 27, 2014 meeting, the Conservancy approved the updated 2014 Bay Area IRWM Plan with the following resolution:

The adoption by the Conservancy of the updated IRWMP... is hereby deemed adoption of the updated IRWMP as it may subsequently be revised as a result of the DWR acceptance process, provided that the Executive Officer of the Conservancy determines in writing that the revisions do not materially or substantially alter the updated Plan and do not result in changes adverse to the Conservancy's interests. The Executive Officer will provide a copy of any such determination to the Conservancy.

Pursuant to that resolution, the Interim Executive Officer has determined that the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan consists of the 2014 Bay Area IRWM Plan with revisions that were required by DWR's acceptance process, described above. The revisions do not materially or substantially alter the Plan and the Plan

remains consistent with the original purpose of improving the management of water resources in the Bay Area. Furthermore, the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan does not contain changes adverse to the Conservancy's interests because plan changes that address the impacts of climate change and increase participation by traditionally overlooked communities are consistent with the Conservancy's programs and policies.

Accordingly, under the March 27, 2014 resolution, the 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan is deemed adopted by the Conservancy. This will maintain the Conservancy's eligibility for future IRWM grant rounds. The 2019 Bay Area IRWM Plan is attached as Exhibit B; its appendices are attached as Exhibit C.