Association of Bay Area Governments
ABAG Administrative Committee

October 9, 2026 **Agenda Item 7b –26-2121**

Contract with Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) to receive $4,902,578 to implement the Clean Water Together grant, and to enter into a funding agreement not to exceed $800,000 with the The Regents of the University of California

Subject:

Authorization to enter into contract to receive funds in the amount of $4,902,578 from the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) to implement the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) funded Clean Water Together grant, and to enter into a funding agreement with The Regents of the University of California in an amount not to exceed $800,000.

Background:

The Clean Water Together Project is a collaboration between BACWA, the San Francisco Estuary Partnership (Estuary Partnership), and others, for a multi-pronged approach to reducing nutrient loads discharged to San Francisco Bay from publicly-owned treatment works (POTWs). This effort will address the San Francisco Bay Region Water Quality Control Board's region-wide Nutrient Watershed Permit requirements, which took effect October 1, 2024. The Watershed Permit sets forth requirements for an aggregate dry season total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) load reduction from the 40 POTWs that discharge into San Francisco Bay of forty percent, along with a 10-year compliance schedule to achieve those reductions to protect water quality in the Bay. Implementing nature-based solutions (NBS) like horizontal levees and open-water wetlands can help meet nutrient reduction targets.

The Estuary Partnership's role in the Clean Water Together collaboration focuses on resolving key technical challenges and operational uncertainties associated with NBS such as land scarcity, regulatory issues, operations and maintenance, and governance. As a subawardee to BACWA, the Estuary Partnership will partner with the University of California, Berkeley (The Regents of the University of California is the entity that will hold the subawardee contract on behalf of the University of California, Berkeley), the City of San José, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), and the East Bay Dischargers Authority (EBDA). The grant funding will also support the Estuary Partnership to continue its existing One Water network and Transforming

Urban Water collaborative, and to provide project management support for BACWA and the other partners.

Project Scope Overview:

High-strength nutrient research

A team at U.C. Berkeley, led by Professor David Sedlak, will conduct research and data collection on removal of nitrogen (the nutrient of concern) and other contaminants from high-strength nutrient streams generated by POTWs and reverse osmosis concentrate from a recycled water facility.

South Bay NBS feasibility assessment

In partnership with City of San José and Valley Water this project element entails conducting a comprehensive feasibility assessment of siting nature-based solutions near their facilities at the South San Francisco Bay shoreline, and practical matters for long-term management of NBS.

First Mile Project design advancement

The Estuary Partnership will partner with the East Bay Dischargers Authority (EBDA) and community partners to support ongoing community outreach for the First-mile horizontal levee at the Oro Loma Marsh in Hayward.

Strengthen institutional capacity and technology transfer

The grant funds will support the Estuary Partnership's One Water Network and Transforming Urban Water Collaborative

Project Management

The Estuary Partnership will provide project management support to BACWA including managing contracts, tracking budgets, and preparing reports to the U.S. EPA.

Issues:

None

Recommendations:

Staff recommends that the Committee authorize the Executive Director or designee to enter into contract to receive funds in the amount of $4,902,578 from the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) to implement the United States Environmental Protection Agency funded Clean Water Together grant, and to enter into a funding agreement with The Regents of the University of California in an amount not to exceed $800,000.

Attachments:

None.

Andrew B. Fremier

Request for Committee Approval

Summary of Proposed Contract

Work Item No.:	
Consultant:	San Francisco Estuary Partnership
Work Project Title:	Clean Water Together
Purpose of Project:	Provide technical data, and logistical, operational, and governance evaluations and examples to inform the use of nature-based solutions like horizontal levees and open-water wetlands to help reduce nutrient discharges to San Francisco Bay from publicly-owned treatment works and providing other co-benefits including adaptation to rising sea levels.
Brief Scope of Work:	As a subawardee to Bay Area Clean Water Agencies, the Estuary Partnership will partner with the University of California, Berkeley, the City of San José, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), and the East Bay Dischargers Authority (EBDA), to address technical uncertainties and support development of nature-based solutions (NBS) as a method to reduce nutrient mass loads discharged to San Francisco Bay from publicly-owned treatment works and adapt to sea level rise.
Project Cost Not to Exceed:	$4,902,578.00
Funding Source:	United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9, SF Bay Program
Fiscal Impact:	Funds programmed in FY26-27, and subject to approval of FY 27-28, 28-29, 29-30 budgets.
Motion by Committee:	That the Executive Director or designee is authorized to enter into contract to receive funds in the amount of $4,902,578 from the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) to implement the United States Environmental Protection Agency funded Clean Water Together grant

and to enter into a funding agreement with The Regents of the University of California in an amount not to exceed $800,000, subject to approval of future budgets as specified above.

ABAG Administrative Committee:

Susan Adams, President

Approved: October 9, 2026