



**DRAFT Public Outreach Plan
for the SAFER Bay Project
January 2022**

SUMMARY

The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority's community outreach and engagement plan to support comprehensive and inclusive consideration of community and environmental impacts of the proposed SAFER Bay Project. It is consistent with the Bay Adapt Platform.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
1 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Purpose.....	2
1.2 Goals and Principles	2
1.3 Public Outreach.....	3
1.4 Public Involvement CEQA/NEPA.....	4
1.5 Indigenous Community.....	5
2 OUTREACH PROGRAM	5
2.1 General Outreach Information	6
2.2 Synchronization of Outreach with Planning Milestones.....	6
2.3 Key Outreach Contacts and Notification List	6
2.4 Community Outreach Tools	7
2.5 Workshops, Public Hearings, and Required Notifications	8
Figure 1	
Figure 1: SAFER Bay Project	10
Table 1	
Table 1: SAFER Bay and CEQA Tentative Project Schedule	11

REVISION HISTORY

Revision #	Revision Date	Revisions Made
0	February 2022	Initial DRAFT Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

The Strategy to Advance Flood protection, Ecosystem restoration and Recreation Project (SAFER Bay) Project addresses sea level rise and tidal flood protection by via a combination of natural and engineered structures along San Francisco Bay within the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA) jurisdiction. This Community Outreach Plan (Outreach Plan) summarizes the strategies the SFCJPA and the SAFER Bay Project consultant planning team will use to engage the public and other interested parties. The Outreach Plan guides and prioritizes engagement efforts, first summarizing goals and guiding principles for public engagement and outreach, followed by summaries of the specific outreach methods that will be used throughout the project.

The SAFER Bay project community outreach plan approach is to collaborate with two respected local community-based organizations: Climate Resilient Communities (CRC) and Nuestra Casa. This plan is a living document and as such will be updated at a minimum on an annual basis and as needed based on community and Advisory Board suggestion.

Public outreach is anticipated to be a sustained effort from planning through construction. The SAFER Bay Project area is shown in Figure 1.

Community and stakeholder engagement around resilience planning is more than a technical exercise. It is an opportunity to connect and build trust, to educate and learn, to consider an issue from new angles, and discover what matters to diverse populations. With the SAFER Bay Project, we continue to prioritize that to ensure that local and regional investment strategies to address flooding and sea-level rise are grounded in local needs, conditions, and plans.

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Outreach Plan is to actively engage local residents, stakeholders, and other affected agencies in developing the SAFER Bay project in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park and evaluating associated environmental issues. Engaging the community in the planning process to solicit meaningful input is essential to ensure that proposed alternatives are feasible, equitable, and can be implemented effectively. The tools and strategies set forth in this Outreach Plan will assist the SFCJPA in engaging with local residents, businesses, community groups, organizations and agencies, and individual community members (referred to as collectively as “stakeholders”). This outreach plan and program may evolve and change to meet the SAFER Bay project’s evolving needs, align and coordinate with other related planning efforts, and accommodate varying circumstances.

1.2 GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

On December 16, 2021, the SFCJPA Board adopted the Guiding Principles from the [Bay Adapt Platform](#) to further the broad collaboration and cooperation necessary to foster and accelerate effective sea level rise climate change adaptation in the San Francisco Bay Area. SFCJPA Resolution 21-12-16-B that adopted the Bay Adapt Platform specifies the following guiding principles:

- Support socially vulnerable communities
- Put nature first whenever possible

- Solve interconnected problems at the same time
- Practice inclusive, community-led governance and decision-making
- Support existing efforts but plan for the long term
- Pick the right strategy for the right place at the right time,

The SFCJPA believes that the above guiding principles are sensible and practicable.

The Bay Adapt platform’s voluntary actions are: –

1. Collaborate on a “One Bay” vision to adapt to rising sea levels.
2. Elevate communities to lead.
3. Broaden public understanding of climate change science and impacts.
4. Base plans and projects on the best science, data, and knowledge.
5. Align local and regional plans into a unified adaptation approach.
6. Figure out how to fund adaptation.
7. Refine and accelerate regulatory approvals processes.
8. Fund and facilitate faster adaptation projects.
9. Track and report progress to guide future actions,

These are included in this plan as they are broadly supportive of all communities and their climate change adaptation needs. Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 are within the SFCJPA’s scope of authority and are already aligned with project planning and implementation practices of the SFCJPA, its members, and applicable regulatory agencies.

The SAFER Bay specific goals of outreach and engagement are to (1) raise awareness of the issues of tidal flooding and sea level rise and the SAFER Bay Project; (2) provide education on the basic science of climate change and the need for proactive climate change adaptation planning and projects; (3) provide opportunities for stakeholder input at the various steps of the CEQA process; (4) provide opportunities to influence decision-making on the SAFER Bay Project ; and (5) provide a public process that facilitates compliance with CEQA Guidelines’ requirements and other expectations for community involvement. The rationale for each of these goals includes the following principles:

- *Awareness* – Stakeholders must be aware of the SAFER Bay project and the CEQA/NEPA process before they can participate.
- *Education* – Stakeholders must be educated and knowledgeable about the need for the SAFER Bay Project and the project itself to participate effectively.
- *Input* – Stakeholders’ knowledge and perspectives help the planning team verify or expand on available information.
- *Decision-making* – Stakeholders are encouraged to engage in the decision-making process.

1.3 Public Outreach

Our overall strategy for community engagement on the SAFER Bay Project is to reach representative members of the affected community, use their input to inform design, costs, sequencing of project elements and temporary construction impacts. The SFCJPA and partners will use a collaborative, transparent and equitable engagement process in bringing diverse community groups to gather community input, inspire buy-in and ownership of proposed solutions and promote a culture of dialogue. Our goals for the outcome of community engagement are local stakeholders who are

invested in the SAFER Bay Project, with local pride, community ownership and enhanced sense of place.

Advisory Council

We will solicit input on the formation of an Advisory Council to ensure that the local community has direct input to create the project that they want to have built. SAFER Bay directly benefits the disadvantaged community, and there are environmental justice issues in the area. Engaging the East Palo Alto community and all community partners in a way that establishes trust and builds long-term relationships is imperative to the future resilience of the community. A substantive education component is an integral part of this process as we expand awareness of the project and climate resilience challenges and build capacity for community-led solutions. Empowering community partners to shape the outreach process is a critical step in fostering democratic participation and community-driven civic leadership.

Other Types of Engagement

Engagement activities will include a mix of in-person and online engagement. Workshops (in person or digital) will be conducted in Spanish, Tongan/ Samoan and English. We recognize that people feel more welcome when the meetings or trainings are conducted in their own language without translation equipment. We strive to be inclusive to all communities. Part of that is providing them with the space to have conversations, share their stories and have a deeper understanding of the issues in a way that language won't be a barrier. Going the extra mile is important. In addition to language access, we will provide lunch or dinner, childcare, and other incentives that demonstrate to our community that their time is valuable to us.

Surveys and social media engagement will provide alternatives to conventional meetings as we hope to expand community outreach and hear more voices. We plan to utilize communications tools and platforms that appeal to people with a wide range of technical proficiencies and platform preferences and to offer content in multiple languages. We will add targeted mailing and other remote communications approaches if state and federal social distancing restrictions are still in place.

If we find that we have not engaged the community in a significant manner, we will evaluate and supplement the above activities with other targeted actions to ensure the local community has meaningful opportunities to shape the SAFER Bay project.

1.4 Public Involvement CEQA/NEPA

Public involvement as part of defined processes under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) begins when an agency develops a proposal to take a major action. This process is not just a mechanism to receive and consider public comments under CEQA and NEPA. It is also there to inform the public of a proposed action and address both its benefits and problems. Major actions involve many complex technical issues and the public outreach processes prescribed by CEQA/NEPA will be followed for SAFER Bay.

CEQA

CEQA requires the SFCJPA, as the lead agency, to notify the public at distinct stages of the CEQA process. CEQA also requires the lead agency to provide opportunities for public comment. The goal of

these requirements is to fully inform the public, affected government agencies, and other interested parties of the environmental effects of the project and to provide opportunities to the public to comment on the impact conclusions, mitigation measures, and alternatives analysis. Public involvement in the CEQA process aims to ensure that the public has a voice in the decision-making process; specifically, that public concerns about environmental issues and the potential effects of the project on the physical environment are addressed prior to project approval.

The legal public notification and commenting requirements associated with the CEQA/NEPA are outlined in section 2.5 of this Plan.

NEPA

As with CEQA, public involvement is one of the most important steps in the NEPA process. The NEPA process provides a formal way for the public to engage regarding the proposed action. It is important to note that the NEPA public involvement process is the *preferred mechanism* through which Federal agencies comply with public involvement requirements in their own operating statutes. For example, the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge managed by US Fish and Wildlife Services needs to have NEPA completed for formal involvement.

1.5 Indigenous Communities

The SAFER Bay Project sits on the traditional territory and unceded homeland of Ramaytush Ohlone peoples who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As the indigenous stewards of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have acted as caretakers of this place for millennia. We recognize the benefit of living and working in their traditional homeland. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment for a process that recognizes the sovereign rights of First Peoples. The SFCJPA has engaged tribal communities for consultation on our work on the San Francisquito Creek and have discussed the SAFER Bay project with interested tribal representatives. We received feedback that their interest in the shoreline area is very strong due to the number of currently known sacred artifacts in the vicinity. We will create a cultural resource plan that will include pre-project testing and tribal representative onsite during earth moving activities. Additional consultation through an updated list from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be conducted to ensure that all interested tribes are invited to consult on the SAFER Bay Project.

2 OUTREACH PROGRAM

2.1 General Outreach Information

The SFCJPA Senior Project Manager will serve as a central contact for the public and stakeholders for the SAFER Bay Project Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Senior Project Manager will participate in and help coordinate all facets of the implementation of the SAFER Bay Project Programmatic and Project Level EIR and NEPA EIS Public Outreach and Engagement Plan.

Tess Byler, Sr. Project Manager
San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
2100 Geng Road, Suite 210
Palo Alto, CA 94303

(650) 484-0859
Tbyler@sfcjpa.org

2.2 Synchronization of Outreach with Planning Milestones

The SFCJPA is committed to listening and responding to the community's input at each step in the SAFER Bay Project EIR and EIS process. As technical information and draft recommendations become available, they will be presented on the SFCJPA's website, in e-newsletters and fact sheets, and at public workshops to allow participants to provide input and feedback. This input and feedback will be synthesized and used to guide the final recommendations. Through the CEQA and NEPA process, the public will be given the opportunity to review and comment as described in 2.5 below.

Table 1 provides the current schedule for environmental documentation.

2.3 Key Outreach Contacts and Notification List

The SAFER Bay Project intersects with many local, regional, and state interests. The following is a list of the stakeholders the SFCJPA, Climate Resilient Communities and Nuestra Casa are aware of and with whom we will be communicating. Additional organizations and individuals may be identified during our outreach.

Army Corps of Engineers
Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)
Bay Area Flood Protection Agencies, CHARG
Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC)
Bay Area Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT)
City of East Palo Alto
City of Menlo Park
Cargill
County of San Mateo
Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC)
San Mateo County C/CAG
California Department of Transportation
Federal Emergency Management Agency
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
San Mateo Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District
Santa Clara Valley Water District
SPUR
California State Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Office of Emergency Management
California Department of Water Resources
South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2
Tribal representatives including Ohlone and Amah Mutsun
Save the Bay
San Francisco Estuary Institute
San Francisco Bay Trail

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Belle Haven Action
North Fair Oaks Community Council
East Palo Alto Climate Change Community Team
Ravenswood Shores Business District
The Nature Conservancy
Audubon Society
Committee for Green Foothills
Canopy
Center for Biological Diversity
Youth United for Community Action
The Wildlands Network

2.4 Community Outreach Tools

Media - The SFCJPA will alert appropriate media outlets with SAFER Bay Programmatic EIR announcements and updates at applicable milestones throughout the Programmatic EIR process. Media announcements will be circulated to announce public workshops and hearings, and the SFCJPA will work with local media outlets and encourage them to follow the planning process and include features in local publications. All media outreach will be led by the SFCJPA's Executive Director.

Media inquiries should be addressed to:

Margaret Bruce, Executive Director
San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
2100 Geng Road, Suite 210
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650)
Mbruce@sfcjpa.org

Project Webpage - The [SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project](#) has a dedicated page on the SFCJPA website. This webpage will be used to post current project information, documents, FAQs, and other resources.

Community Colleagues - The SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project will engage local Community-Based Organizations to conduct community outreach, engagement, and education on behalf of the SFCJPA and the SAFER Bay Project.

Community Events - Where possible, the SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project team may set up a booth or table at community events (following all applicable COVID safety precautions) such as street fairs, farmer's markets, festivals, concerts, etc. to disseminate information about the SAFER Bay Project and Programmatic EIR/EIS.

Organizational Events - The SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project team may attend the regular meetings or events of other organizations (live or virtually), such as City Council meetings, regular monthly meetings, or relevant special-topic meetings, to disseminate information about the SAFER Bay Project and the Programmatic EIR/EIS.

Pre-recorded Informational Webinars - The SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project team may record and post to the SFCJPA website informational webinar presentations as a source of general information about

the SAFER Bay Project. Where possible, materials will be translated into multiple languages relevant to the East Palo Alto and Menlo Park communities.

Newsletters and Electronic Distribution lists – The SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project team will utilize its electronic distribution lists for newsletters and other communications to provide regular updates on the SAFER Bay Project Programmatic EIR/EIS, including announcements of official CEQA and NEPA meetings, workshops, and public hearings.

Online and Paper Surveys – The SFCJPA SAFER Bay Project team and/or our community outreach partners at Neustra Casa and Climate Resilient Communities may utilize tools such as surveys (either online or in hard-copy format) to gather input from community members.

2.5 Workshops, Public Hearings and Required Notifications

This section describes outreach as part of the CEQA/NEPA process, which goes beyond the legal requirements. The SFCJPA is planning a Program level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the entirety of the SAFER Bay project area in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park, that will also include project level evaluation for a portion of East Palo Alto, located between O'Connor Street and Bay Road.

The SFCJPA believes it would be ideal to conduct a dual CEQA/NEPA process due to the diversity of interests for the SAFER Bay Project. For NEPA, the SFCJPA is currently discussing federal sponsorship with the US Army Corps of Engineers.

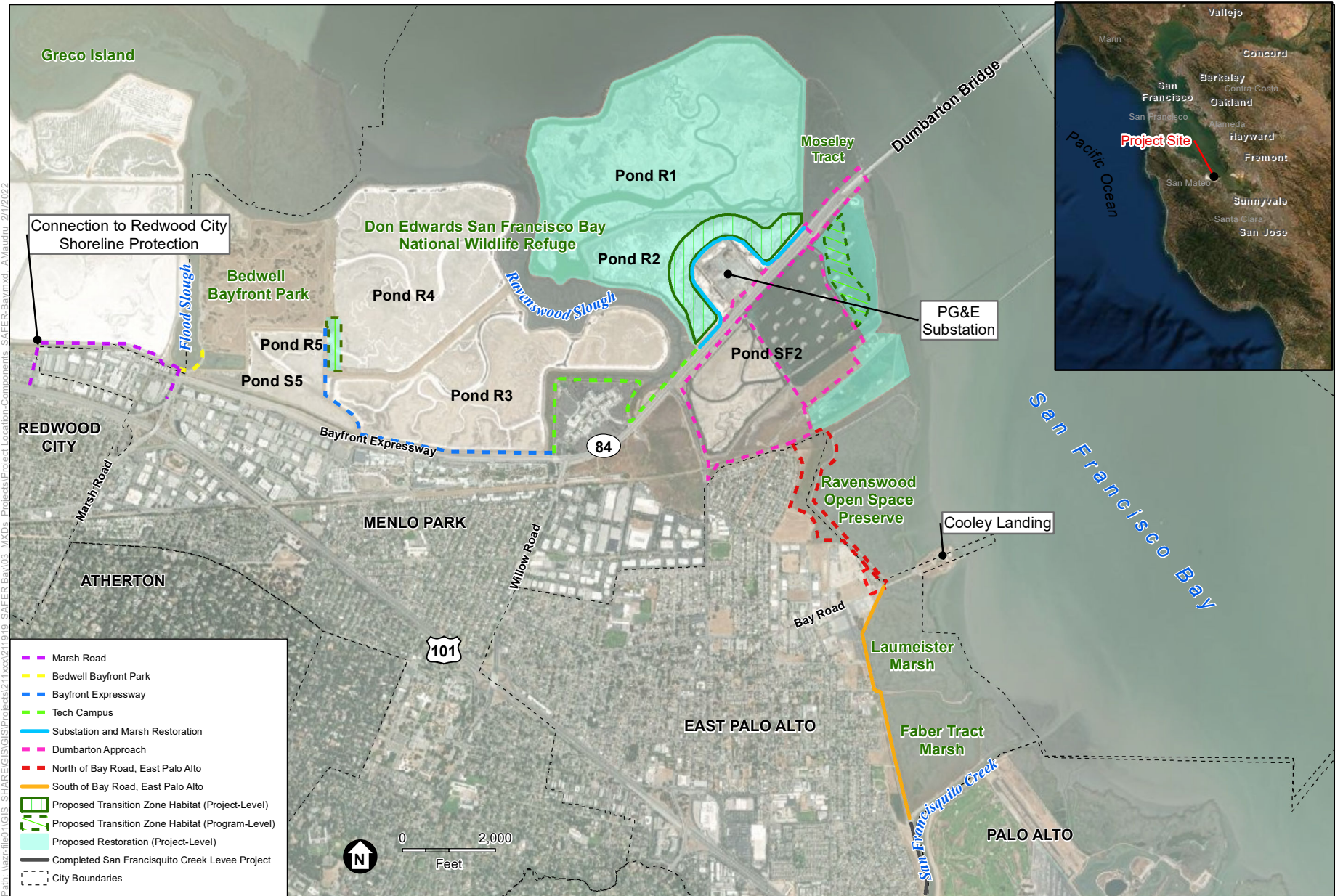
For the Notice of Preparation (NOP), the SFCJPA will conduct two (2) public scoping meetings- one focused on work planned in East Palo Alto and one focused on work planned in Menlo Park. We may convene additional workshops at strategic times during the EIR process. Workshops will focus on East Palo Alto, and Menlo Park's Belle Haven community. Members of the public will be able to receive up-to-date information on the CEQA Programmatic EIR and NEPA EIS process and provide input. Public comments received at the workshop(s) will be reviewed and used to inform the EIR/EIS. To maximize participation of the diverse target audience, Spanish language translation services will be provided, and workshops will be designed so that they are interactive and allow for small group discussions.

Following the release of the Draft EIR/EIS, the SFCJPA will hold two public Meetings – Notification for these hearings will be in accordance with the SFCJPA meeting notice requirements. In addition, the project team will announce the public hearings on the project's web page and will send an email notification to the stakeholder notification mailing list. The public will be invited to comment during the public hearings. These public hearings may be in-person, virtual, or a combination.

Required Notifications - The SFCJPA will prepare the required CEQA and NEPA environmental process notices to alert the public and stakeholders at critical points in the SAFER Bay EIR/EIS process. The notices shall comply with CEQA and will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. The State Clearinghouse sends notices to State agencies, departments, boards, and commissions for review and comment; however, the SFCJPA may have specific agency contacts when agency representatives have been working more closely with the SFCJPA. Where possible, the SFCJPA will send the notices

directly to these specific contacts. The EIR notices include the following: NOP, Notice of Completion (NOC), Notice of Availability (NOA), and Notice of Determination (NOD).

DRAFT



SOURCES: ESA, 2021; HDR, 2021; HT Harvey & Associates, 2021; ESRI World Imagery, 2021

SAFER Bay Project

- NOTES:
1. Reaches to be evaluated at a project-level of detail are shown in solid lines; reaches to be evaluated at a program-level of detail are shown as dashed lines.
 2. While program-level transition zones are indicated, additional areas that are not yet determined will be evaluated in the EIR. This figure does not reflect proposed improvements to western snowy plover habitat in Pond R3.
 3. Water control structures will affect ecotone levee arrangement. Water control structures are/will be located between Ponds R5 and S5 and S5 and R3.

Figure 1
Project Location and Components





Table 1.
Preliminary Schedule SAFER Bay Project

#	Task	Estimated Completion Date
1	Environmental Permitting and CEQA/NEPA	2024
2	Engineering Design	2024
3	Public outreach	2030*
4	Right-of-Way Acquisition and Agreements for O&M	2025
*Community engagement will continue through construction.		