



# **Flooding and Sea Level Rise Interagency MOU Annual Report, Year One: August 2024 – September 2025**

## **Interagency Flooding and Sea Level Rise MOU Context/Summary**

This report updates the progress in implementing the [\*Interagency Memorandum of Understanding for Flooding and Sea Level Rise\*](#) (Interagency MOU) since it was executed by the BARC member and adjunct agencies<sup>1</sup> in July 2024. The Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC) adopted a Shared Work Plan in 2022 that began a sustained collaborative effort among BARC member agencies and partners towards creating a Regional Climate Hazard Plan and a Regional Climate Resilience Technical Assistance Program. Both on-going initiatives seek to better organize the varied, complex, interrelated activities of governmental agencies to more effectively meet the accelerating challenges of climate change.

In October 2023, BARC released its report, *Regional System Assessment for Adapting to Climate Change*, to better understand the existing climate adaptation activities and roles of its member and partner agencies and their relationship to efforts at other levels of government. Not surprisingly, sea level rise is the hazard with the most regional activity occurring, including BCDC's earlier work on the *Bay Adapt Joint Platform* (2021) which identifies strategies and actions to advance this work across agencies. MTC, ABAG and BCDC had also collaborated on the *Sea Level Rise Adaptation Funding and Investment Framework* that identified over \$110B in needed adaptation or risk over \$230B in projected damages.

The purpose of the Interagency MOU is to coordinate agencies' respective roles and authorities to align efforts, expertise, and core functions to support delivery of priority, multi-benefit, flood risk management projects across the Bay Area. Its stated

---

<sup>1</sup> BARC Member agencies are the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Association of Bay Area Government/San Francisco Estuary Partnership (ABAG/SFEP), the Bay Area Air District (Air District), and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). BARC adjunct member agencies are the California Department of Transportation, District 4 (Caltrans D4), the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board), and the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC).

intent is to:

- accelerate implementation of projects
- increase the Bay Area’s competitiveness for state and federal funding
- establish structure and process for
  - coordinated multi-jurisdictional planning
  - project prioritization
  - project delivery at scale while reducing interjurisdictional competition
- help expand planning and project funding.

The Interagency MOU creates greater clarity of responsibilities across five functional areas to create a cooperative, coordinated environment. It also calls for multiple actions under the functions of Planning, Fund Management, Technical Assistance, Regulatory Alignment, and Structures for Collaborative Decision-Making. Each agency plays a role in advancing the Interagency MOU with specific leads and supporting partners identified. These assignments build on existing roles and planned activities identified by the agencies themselves.

## At a Glance: Roles and Responsibilities

	ABAG/ SFEP	Air District	BARC	BCDC	Caltrans D4	MTC	SCC	Water Board
Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fund Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regulatory Alignment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

 Prime
  Responsible
  Involved

## Interagency MOU Progress

Over the past year, the partner agencies have made progress on the SLR MOU, and most importantly, remain committed to its success. Flooding and sea level rise adaptation is complex. Results do not happen overnight. Changes at the federal level have altered not just the funding landscape, but the ways that data, science and federal/local partnership occur. At the same time, new state revenue streams, like the Climate Bond, are opening other opportunities. Despite these changes, BARC member agencies remain engaged and active in advancing policy, projects and coordination at all levels.

### PLANNING AREA

This section of the MOU focuses on establishing plans, policies, and project priorities to foster an enabling environment to support the wide-scale advancement of equitable, multi-benefit climate adaptation projects. There has been significant progress on this element of the MOU. This includes BCDC’s adoption of the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan at the end of 2024, with the focus now shifting to implementation and local government planning support. For the first time, Plan Bay Area 2050+ incorporates a Resilient Projects List, comprised of hundreds of projects that adapt the nine-county Bay Area shoreline to sea level rise in the decades ahead. In addition, BCDC with MTC/ABAG, have made advancements on a strategy to better align and organize projects and funding, with the goal of completion in 2026.

ACTIVITY	LEAD	DESCRIPTION
Establish RSAP guidelines by end of 2024	BCDC	Offers regional vision for a resilient shoreline and guides local jurisdictions’ creation of Sub-regional Shoreline Adaptation Plans aligned with local planning and regional goals, as required by SB 272. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed on schedule</li> </ul>
Create SLR Investment Strategy (2026)	BCDC (Lead), MTC/ABAG	Develop Strategy to guide investment decisions by 2026, update every 4 years. Strategy informed by stakeholders, public processes, and projects from RSAP to categorize projects; develop cost estimates; analyze fund sources & shortfalls. Based on science, risk-management, equity frameworks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BCDC and MTC/ABAG organized an Investment Strategy Steering Committee, met twice to introduce the project and hone the desired outcomes and approach</li> <li>Based on feedback, revised the project scope, analyzed existing data, and identified the technical platform the project will be built in.</li> </ul>
Inventory and Map of SLR projects and plans	BCDC	Maintain inventory and map of SLR projects and plans used to track the Investment Framework Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched <a href="#">Bay Adapts Currents</a>, a visual metric dashboard tracking project implementation, information, and planning.</li> <li>Funded technical user enhancements to EcoAtlas/ Project Tracker</li> <li>Convened EcoAtlas/Project Tracker administrative group twice to finalize materials and workflow for the annual coordinated project update outreach.</li> <li>Sent requests to 200+ local project leads to update existing projects or add new ones to the regional database.</li> </ul>

## FUND MANAGEMENT AREA

This section focuses on agency collaboration to secure and award federal, state and regional funding to support the delivery of equitable, multi-benefit adaptation projects at the scale and speed needed to address flooding and sea level rise risks. Over the past year, SCC has convened both a Funding Working Group to explore federal, state, and even private sector funding opportunities and hosted several webinars on state funding programs including anticipated programmatic allocations of the voter-approved Prop 4 Climate Bond. Partnerships among MTC, Caltrans, and local transportation authorities have successfully brought in project development funding for Resilient Highway 37. While SFEP and its regional and local partners broke ground on the Palo Alto Horizontal Levee using federal, state, and other funding. SCC is pursuing non-federal matching funds to initiate a US Army Corps of Engineers’ sea level rise study under a Planning Assistance to the States authority.

ACTIVITY	LEAD	DESCRIPTION	STATUS/NEXT STEPS
Develop & submit federal funding proposals	SCC, BCDC	<p>Advance the US Army Corps of Engineers’ SF Bay Flood Study &amp; provided non-federal match</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Corps secured \$200K under its Planning Assistance to States authority to lay the groundwork for local jurisdictions to seek federal partnership and funding for flood protection projects along the shoreline of SF Bay</li> <li>SCC staff are preparing a recommendation for \$150K in non-federal match that the SCC Board will consider on Nov 20, 2025. The work will be implemented in partnership with BCDC staff.</li> </ul>	
Track federal, state, and local grant opportunities	SCC, BARC	<p>Convene interested partners to coordinate, collaborate, determine proposal lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convened Funding Working Group fall of 2024</li> <li>Convened 1<sup>st</sup> annual regional SLR public funding meeting on Jan 7, 2025</li> <li>Held State Funding webinar on May 12, 2025</li> <li>Planning for 2<sup>nd</sup> annual regional SLR public funding meeting in late 2025 or early 2026.</li> </ul>	
Manage and distribute federal grants	SCC	<p>Manage and distribute federal funds as outlined in proposal(s) unless role designated elsewhere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined based on award of federal funding</li> </ul>	

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The goal of this functional area of the MOU is to establish and deliver a Collaborative Regional Technical Assistance (TA) Program that augments the capacity of local governments, special districts, and local organizations to support project development and delivery. BARC staff is leading the effort to build a Flooding and Sea Level Rise Technical Assistance (TA) Directory of offerings that can match and refer a TA seeker with the appropriate TA provider. Through the MTC Leadership Academy, BARC housed a summer intern (mentee) who helped organize and vet the inventory of 90+ distinct TA offerings (from both the public sector and non-governmental organizations in the region) that can help users anywhere along the land use planning-project

development-project delivery spectrum. BARC is collaborating with the Bay Area Climate Adaptation Network (BayCAN) to determine the appropriate software platform for a shared, filterable, and sortable database that will distill a seeker’s needs to a manageable subset of returned recommendations for referrals. BayCAN has a parallel project that aims to promote peer-to-peer TA among community-based organizations.

BCDC launched its TA support program for required subregional shoreline adaptation planning, which includes an interactive mapping tool and datasets to help jurisdictions to meet the planning guidelines criteria. MTC, Caltrans, SCC, and SEP are also directly contributing their expertise to local and regional planning efforts such as Resilient 37, HWY 101 in Marin, Living Shorelines, and the Emeryville Crescent respectively. Next steps are for BARC staff to support the roll out of an on-line TA Directory with trained navigators to assist in referring TA seekers to the appropriate resource.

ACTIVITY	LEAD	DESCRIPTION	STATUS/NEXT STEPS
TA Providers Working Group	BARC	Facilitate TA Providers Working Group to coordinate TA methods, priorities, & strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BARC convened 3 TA Working Group meetings to compile an inventory of TA Offerings from agencies and partners across the region. The group identified the end goal as a TA Directory that can help seekers navigate to the appropriate TA providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Since January, this work has been guided by the BARC Cross Agency Resilience Work Group that meets monthly.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BARC plans to work with BayCAN to purchase and populate a software platform with an easily queried and sortable user interface.</li> </ul>	
RSAP Planning TA	BCDC	Provide initial TA to jurisdictions in completing subregional SLR adaptation plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched a TA program to local jurisdictions creating subregional plans. Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ RSAP Atlas, a data &amp; mapping tool for sub-regional planning, with SFEP support</li> <li>○ Website updates with new pages and public tracking of Subregional Plans.</li> <li>○ “Funding Cost Estimates for Developing Subregional Shoreline Adaptation Plans” resource</li> <li>○ Connected (1:1) with 80% of local governments re: SB272 &amp; RSAP requirements</li> <li>○ Held 4 public webinars.</li> <li>○ Coordinated with the Ocean Protection Council and Coastal Quest on SB1 planning grants. \$18 M awarded to date for Sub-regional Plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Regional TA Program Offerings	ABAG/ SFEP	Administer and lead a Regional TA program providing staffing, services and support to local jurisdictions and other key partners to advance from planning to project delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABAG (SFEP and RPP) presented on ABAG Resilience Technical Assistance to the ABAG Executive Board on March 20, 2025</li> <li>• SFEP is expecting additional funding to help advance a regional TA program from US EPA and the State Water Resources Control Board</li> </ul>	
Project Specific Direct Support/ Project Management	MTC, SFEP, SCC, Caltrans	Provide capabilities and experience in managing the planning, design, permitting, and construction of on-the-ground projects in close partnership with local entities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SFEP continued to expand Direct Planning Assistance to local governments, including:</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ submittal of an OPC application to complete an RSAP for the Cities of Emeryville, Berkeley and Albany</li> <li>○ advancing design and implementation of shoreline resilience projects in Emeryville, Hayward/San Lorenzo, Palo Alto and North Richmond.</li> <li>● SCC – Regionally Advancing Living Shoreline Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ developing design guidance</li> <li>○ planning living shoreline projects</li> <li>○ hosting Living Shorelines Collaborative meetings for adaptation practitioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Held Living Shorelines Collaborative meeting, 7/3/25</li> <li>▪ Next meeting on Oct 16, 2025</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ funding and partnering with SFSU to implement related workforce development program with 7 community colleges (curriculum developed)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Caltrans – Marin Hwy 101 Corridor</li> <li>● MTC – Resilient HWY 37</li> </ul>
--	--	--

**REGULATORY ALIGNMENT**

This area of the MOU describes how the agencies will continue to work collaboratively with the regulated community to continually improve and accelerate the permitting process, within the scope of their respective laws. The San Francisco Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) continues to serve as a model for integrated, interagency permitting approaches with several fully permitted projects underway and more in the works. Approved and planned amendments to SFBRWQCB’s Basin Plan and BCDC’s Bay Plan will advance climate change in permitting in new and creative ways. In addition, individual agency actions are implementing efficiency improvements to make the permitting process easier for applicants to navigate.

ACTIVITY	LEAD	DESCRIPTION
Identify Potential Revisions to Regulations and Policies	BCDC, Air District, Caltrans, Water Board	<p>Work collaboratively to assess, interpret and revise environmental regulations and policies to better address multi-benefit project delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The BRRIT continues to improve permitting for multi-benefit habitat restoration projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Two projects fully permitted (Novato Deer Island Tidal Wetlands Restoration and India Basine Shoreline Park Phase 3) and two projects completed construction (Terminal 4 Wharf, Warehouse, and Pilings Removal Project and Pacheco Marsh Public Access Improvements).</li> <li>○ Working closely with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to provide early feedback and guidance on the Beneficial Reuse of BART Silicon Valley Phase II Tunnel Excavated Material in Marsh Restoration at Former Salt Ponds Project.</li> <li>○ Working with the Goat Island Project to pilot how to incorporate the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program into permitting. The goal is to see whether the WRMP can increase permitting efficiency and costs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Water Board – Basin Plan Amendment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completed the Triennial Review of the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin Plan. The highest priority projects included developing a</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<p>climate change and shoreline adaptation policy and developing a climate change and riparian area protection policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCDC – Bay Plan Amendments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Approved an amendment to the San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan which establishes policies for a Rising Sea Level public education program developed and implemented by the Exploratorium in partnership with the Port of San Francisco and BCDC. Amendment also revised rules for approving development on existing piers at Fisherman's Wharf, which will facilitate the permitting of projects that will provide seismic and climate change resilience benefits.</li> <li>○ Scoping an amendment to facilitate beneficial reuse of sediment for wetland adaptation, as part of Phase II of an EPA Wetlands Development Grant, in concert with the Water Board, Coastal Conservancy, SFEI, EPA and stakeholders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BCDC is undertaking a series of activities to improve its permitting program, with a focus on sea level rise adaptation. BCDC launched an improved pre-application process to help foster early engagement that reduces time, effort, and risk for applicants in the application process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In September, BCDC will start a rulemaking process to improve elements of its permitting program, focused on streamlining and improving the Regionwide Permit Program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BCDC has conducted several conversations with other regulatory agencies on enhancing interagency coordination efforts and is currently exploring opportunities to facilitate engagement between local governments and resource agencies to coordinate around development of local adaptation plans and permitting for adaptation projects.</li> <li>• BCDC has held two meetings with its Rising Sea Level Commissioner Working Group on whether and how BCDC's regulatory and planning authority and jurisdiction should be expanded to foster larger scale adaptation efforts</li> </ul>
--	--	---

**COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES**

Because the MOU does not supersede any agency's individual authorities, it is critical to have consistent collaborative gathering opportunities to share information, clarify new roles and responsibilities, and report progress and challenges. The most consistent recurring meeting for BARC members and partners is the monthly Cross Agency Resilience Working Group, comprised of a mix of Executive directors, deputy directors, and high-level staff. This convening offers first-hand looks at emerging initiatives and resources from partners. The BCDC Bay Adapt Implementation Coordinating Group continues to meet quarterly to discuss various themes with a larger group of agency and organizational stakeholders than the Cross Agency Working Group. Up until April 2025, the BARC Governing Board and Executive Leadership Management Team meetings were occurring quarterly, however there is high level discussion happening to determine what the optimal frequency and meeting content should be going forward.