

# NOVATO BAYLANDS



## COMMUNICATION PLAN

June 2011



*Prepared by*  
**Center for Collaborative Policy**  
**California State University, Sacramento**



## Table of Contents

1. Overview.....	1
2. Background and Communication Goals .....	2
3. Communication Principles.....	4
4. Major Audiences.....	5
5. Key Messages for Framing the SCC’s Efforts .....	7
A. Items around which messages should be developed.....	7
B. Suggested messages with example language.....	7
6. Summary of Recommended Communication Strategies and Mechanisms .....	9
A. Six Essential Strategies .....	9
B. Six Secondary, Conditional Strategies .....	10
7. Essential Communication Strategies .....	11
A. Revise the website, including a new project logo .....	11
B. Develop a bi-monthly electronic update memorandum .....	12
C. Institute regular communication with Bel Marin Keys Community Services District .....	15
D. Establish a volunteer coordinator for native plant restoration .....	17
E. Convene a Novato Baylands Advisory Board .....	18
F. Establish an interagency trespassing awareness protocol .....	19
8. Secondary, Conditional Communication Strategies .....	22
A. Create an inexpensive promotional brochure.....	22
B. Develop a strategic media plan .....	22
C. Actively cultivate relationships with local elected officials .....	23
D. Participate in related planning efforts in the local area and region .....	23
E. Create an annual electronic newsletter .....	24
F. Expand the volunteer coordinator position to include other activities, as needed .....	25
9. Table of Strategic Communication .....	27
10. Appendix A: Revision of the Website .....	29

## 1. Overview

This plan is designed to guide California State Coastal Conservancy’s (Conservancy) public outreach and engagement efforts during the upcoming Bel Marin Keys Unit V phase of wetland restoration work and into the future.

The plan first outlines a series of communication principles, major audiences, and key messages. Subsequently the plan identifies a series of core strategic activities and corresponding tools designed to establish and/or improve communication with the identified audiences. The plan also identifies a series of secondary recommended activities that the Conservancy could choose to implement in coming years, depending upon an assessment of future conditions and needs.

## 2. Background and Communication Goals

Over the past eight years, the California State Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy) has supported the work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to recreate diverse wetland habitat and reuse dredged materials from San Francisco Bay on the former Hamilton Army Airfield and adjacent North Antenna Air Field, located near the City of Novato in Marin County. This is known as the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project (HWRP). The Conservancy is also involved in the expansion of this work to include the Bel Marin Keys Unit V (BMKV). The “Novato Baylands” refers to these two areas, as well as former tidelands along Novato Creek.

The HWRP is nearing completion, and the BMKV expansion is being planned. With the Bel Marin Keys community now being drawn into the restoration work, and users from throughout the area anticipating being able to access the completed Hamilton wetlands, this transition period requires a concerted communication effort. Many residents of the Hamilton and Bel Marin Keys communities remain unclear about the basic aims of the restoration work and have different expectations of future access to the wetlands; have a variety of substantive concerns yet have had difficulty accessing desired information and have often felt marginalized; and have had mixed relationships with and low trust in the Corps and Conservancy. At the same time residents have high expectations for government communication, transparency, and collaboration, and desire to be actively involved with the stewardship of the restored wetlands.

In this context a robust, carefully tailored communication plan should advance several goals. These include sharing critical information about the goals and benefits of the restoration work itself, and the associated construction timelines and activities. In doing so it will strengthen and build new relationships with the surrounding communities. This proactive communication is likely to strengthen both community and political support for the restoration work and its outcomes, including community involvement in volunteering and fundraising. The plan will also provide a framework for coordinating activities with existing public agencies and non-government organizations, thereby increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation during an era of severely constrained government resources. In these ways the plan will also serve as a model for public engagement in large-scale wetland restoration efforts in the United States.

With these goals in mind, the Conservancy retained the Center for Collaborative Policy (Center), California State University Sacramento, to develop a new communication plan to guide its public outreach and engagement efforts during the upcoming Bel Marin Keys Unit V phase of wetland restoration work and into the future. Professional, third-party neutral mediators from the Center assessed the issues and conditions involved in such an effort through interviewing a small number of stakeholders representing diverse public interests; an interview with the Bel Marin Keys Community Services District Board of Directors; a public meeting hosted by the Hamilton Community Forum; and a two-month online survey that included 124 respondents. The assessment focused on the types of information people want and how to best communicate with them; how people want to be involved; and existing networks and resources

that can help advance communication. The assessment findings provide the foundation for this communication plan.

### 3. Communication Principles

This plan builds on the following eight communication principles:

1. The Conservancy and partner agencies will communicate regularly, even if activities have not changed, to ensure that residents and members of the public remain informed and supportive of ongoing and upcoming work and activities.
2. The Conservancy will communicate its goals and plans in a transparent and honest way that establishes clear expectations.
3. Residents, members of the public, and other public agencies will be informed in advance of activities to ensure that they can express concerns, have questions answered, and provide recommendations.
4. Residents and members of the public will have access to strategic, planning and technical, and regulatory and permitting documents.
5. The Conservancy will recognize and respect the interests and input of residents and members of the public, and genuinely consider and work to address their questions and concerns about intended or unintended impacts.
6. Residents and members of the public will be actively involved in the planning and development of volunteer activities (e.g., leading interpretive tours).
7. The Conservancy will advance its communication goals by coordinating and partnering with existing government, non-government organization, and community-based communication and engagement networks and resources, rather than reinventing efforts.
8. Communication materials will be tailored to audiences in terms of the key issues covered, the level of policy and technical detail, the balance of graphics and text, and the formats and mechanisms used.

## 4. Major Audiences

The following table lists major audience types and corresponding organizations.

#	NAME
<b>FEDERAL AGENCIES &amp; BOARDS</b>	
1.	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
2.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
3.	Federal Emergency Management Agency
4.	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5.	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
6.	Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board
<b>STATE AGENCIES &amp; BOARDS</b>	
7.	San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
8.	Department of Toxic Substances Control
9.	Department of Fish and Game
10.	San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
11.	State Lands Commission
12.	California Conservation Corps
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES &amp; BOARDS</b>	
13.	Marin County Board of Supervisors, District 5
14.	Novato City Council
15.	Bel Marin Keys Community Service District
16.	Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
17.	Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District
18.	County of Marin Open Space District
19.	Marin Municipal Water District
20.	North Marin Water District
21.	City of Novato Department of Public Works
22.	Novato Sanitation District
23.	Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District
<b>RESIDENTIAL GROUPS</b>	
24.	Hamilton Community Forum
25.	Hamilton Field of Marin Homeowners' Association
26.	Todd's Road Working Group
27.	Bel Marin Keys Home Owners Association
28.	Residents of the Hamilton, Bel Marin Keys, the City of Novato, and Marin County generally

#	NAME
<b>NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS</b>	
29.	Friends of Novato Creek
30.	Sustainable Novato
31.	Sustainable Marin
32.	Marin Audubon Society
33.	Marin Conservation League
34.	Sierra Club Marin Group, San Francisco Bay Chapter
35.	Ducks Unlimited
36.	San Francisco Bay Trail
<b>REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	
37.	North Bay Watershed Association, including N. Bay Watershed Council and N. Bay Water Reuse Authority
38.	North Bay Water Reuse Authority (includes Novato Sanitary District, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, and North Marin Water District)
39.	San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
40.	Bay Planning Coalition
<b>SCHOOLS &amp; EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	
41.	Wildcare's Terwilliger Nature Education Programs
42.	College of Marin Indian Valley Campus
43.	The Bay Institute's Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed Project
44.	Friends of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge's Nursery
45.	Hamilton Elementary School
46.	Loma Verde Elementary School
47.	San Jose Middle School
48.	Novato High School

## 5. Key Messages for Framing the SCC's Efforts

The messages used to frame the State Coastal Conservancy's wetland restoration efforts are critical to ensuring that people understand and are comfortable with the goals and approaches of the work. During the assessment, interviewees recommended a few key topics that they felt needed to have clearer, consistent, and more prominent messaging; these are the first two items below. Interviewees also in many cases suggested language that could be used; this is captured in the last four items below.

### A. Items around which messages should be developed

1. **GOALS AND BENEFITS:** What are the desired outcomes of the restoration work? What are the secondary goals? How will the community benefit from this work? How will the environment be changed and benefit from this work?
2. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT:** What significance does the project have for local, San Pablo/North Bay, west coast, and national communities? Why is this work being done here? How does it fit with and complement a larger regional picture of restoration efforts? Exactly how large is it compared with other similar regional and national efforts?

### B. Suggested messages with example language

3. **COMMITMENT TO SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES:** "The Conservancy recognizes the investment and effort put into creating and maintaining surrounding communities. The Conservancy cares and is concerned about potential impacts on the surrounding communities, and will work proactively and thoughtfully to anticipate, avoid and mitigate these."
4. **BENEFITS OF COASTAL WETLANDS:** "The Conservancy is committed to completing the work and ensuring that it provides long-term value for the ecosystem and flood protection. The project will put sediment from the Flood Control District and recycled water from Novato Sanitation District to beneficial use. As a result, local ecology will be restored and sensitive wildlife will have more habitat. Furthermore the wetlands will contribute to a natural flood protection system that disperses flood flows, protects low-lying communities from sea level rise, and allows for adaptation to climate change. This approach to protecting coastal development takes advantage of natural processes and is significantly less costly to taxpayers than a series of engineered levees."
5. **THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERING:** "The Conservancy respects the role of local government, including the Bel Marin Keys Community Services District, and believes

that partnering with local government – as well as local community leaders and groups – will create a better project and save money and resources.”

6. **THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:** “The Conservancy is coordinating its efforts with other public agencies operating in the area, including the Bel Marin Keys Community Services District. This is to ensure that initiatives complement each other, that the limited resources and time of a single agency accomplish more than they could alone, and that existing networks are leveraged rather than needlessly recreated.”

## **6. Summary of Recommended Communication Strategies and Mechanisms**

A successful communication effort will integrate several strategies and mechanisms to address different needs and engage corresponding audiences (including federal, state, and local government agencies and boards; residential groups; non-government organizations; regional organizations; and schools and education organizations).

The next section of this communication plan first identifies a series of core strategic activities and corresponding tools designed to establish and/or improve communication with the identified audiences. The final section identifies a series of secondary recommended activities that the Conservancy could choose to implement in coming years, depending upon an assessment of future conditions and needs.

### **A. Six Essential Strategies**

The six essential strategic activities, approximate timelines, and approximate levels of effort for implementation include:

- (1) Revise the website, including a new project logo (June through August, 2011; approximately 60 hours)
- (2) Develop a bi-monthly electronic update memorandum (beginning in June, 2011, and ending at time determined by Conservancy; approximately 2-4 hours per update, with 3 hours for the initial design, and 3 hours for assembling the initial list of contacts for distribution)
- (3) Institute regular communication with Bel Marin Keys Community Services District (beginning in June, 2011; approximately 2-4 hours per month)
- (4) Establish a volunteer coordinator for native plant revegetation (July 2011; approximately 8 hours per month)
- (5) Convene a Novato Baylands Advisory Board (first meeting in September, 2011; approximately 45 hours to assemble members and hold the first meeting, approximately 25 hours per additional meeting)
- (6) Establish an interagency trespassing awareness protocol (October, 2011; approximately 15 hours to establish protocol, 3 hours per notification/request, and 15 hours to develop and post limited signage)

## B. Six Secondary, Conditional Strategies

The six secondary, conditional strategic activities, approximate timelines, and approximate levels of effort for implementation include:

- (1) Create an inexpensive promotional brochure (December, 2011; approximately 30 hours)
- (2) Develop a strategic media plan (January through April, 2012; approximately 15 hours to develop, with additional hours contingent upon the event)
- (3) Actively cultivate relationships with local elected officials (beginning in January, 2012; approximately 4 hours per month)
- (4) Participate in related planning efforts in the local area and region (beginning in January, 2012; approximately 8 hours per month)
- (5) Create an annual electronic newsletter (May through July, 2012; approximately 40 hours)
- (6) Expand the volunteer coordinator position to include other activities, as needed (beginning in July 2012; approximately 25 hours per month at maximum)

## 7. Essential Communication Strategies

This section describes the intent and core components of each of the six essential communication strategies.

### A. Revise the website, including a new project logo

**Approximate timeframe:** June through August, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** 60 hours

The website should serve as the project's primary communication tool. This means serving as an information nexus for all aspects of the wetland restoration work and the associated public involvement activities, including how to reach affiliated agencies and efforts.

The **home page** would include a new, distinctive logo for the project, as well as critical updates and links to other high-traffic parts of the website. Critical sections of the website would include planning, construction, key issues & questions, events & volunteering, and partner agencies. The types of information included would involve the status of work, public notices, funding, historical and current documents, and visual representations.

The **section on key issues & questions** would be particularly important because it would address the twelve major concerns that arose repeatedly during the assessment, each of which had a series of sub-issues.

Assessment participants repeatedly expressed frustration with not being able to find out what agency had responsibility for an issue and who to contact there. The partner agencies webpage would be designed to address this, and complement an **interagency point of contact** from the State Coastal Conservancy. This person would be responsible for fielding questions and requests for information from interested parties, and routing inquiries to the appropriate responsible party.

Each of the website pages would also have some **standardized information** to help people understand what is current and how to get more information. This would include a standardized "Last Updated – xx/xx/xx" label near the top of each page; a standardized "Comment or Question?" link; and a standardized "Contact Us" link at the bottom. In cases where more specific contact persons are identified, such entries would include: their name, position, agency, email, and telephone.

The website would require a plan for regular updating and information validation.

Given the critical role of the website, Appendix A provides a detailed explanation of the recommended website structure and corresponding elements.

## B. Develop a bi-monthly electronic update memorandum

**Approximate timeframe:** beginning in June, 2011, and ending at time determined by Conservancy

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 2-4 hours per update, with 3 hours for the initial design, and 3 hours for assembling the initial list of contacts for distribution

One of the key issues and recommendations from the assessment concerned the need for regular, consistent communication and updates regarding the restoration work. Numerous interviewees and survey respondents stressed the need for this even in situations when no significant developments have occurred; indeed, they felt these were the most important times to communicate, because in the absence of information people begin to speculate that something is being planned or implemented with their knowledge. Regular, proactive communication can avoid this dilemma and help people feel like they have some knowledge and input into the work.

### 1. Content

In coordination with the Center for Collaborative Policy, the Conservancy has already taken initial steps toward developing a standard update memorandum. The existing memo has a simple format that covers the following topics:

1. Planning Activities, including recently completed, in progress, and upcoming activities
2. Construction Activities, including recently completed, in progress, and upcoming activities
3. Communication Activities
4. Events and Volunteer Activities
5. Other Items of Interest

As the work evolves, new items could be added to the standard list of update topics, to help highlight their importance (for example, an event like an annual forum, or an ongoing activity like native vegetation planting).

- As applicable specific items should have an estimated timeline and a designated point of contact, including the person's position, email, and telephone.
- The interagency project lead, along with other program staff and in consultation with the public information officer as needed, would develop the information content for the memorandum.
- As needed the lead would also communicate with other agencies to develop content and messages for joint efforts (for example, on different construction activities).

The length of the memorandum is less important than the content. This activity is meant to be a manageable bi-monthly task that takes two to four hours from start to finish. The final product should be one to two pages in length, and provide a succinct summary of the issue discussed, as well as links for further information if people want this, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

## **2. Design**

A simple yet elegant design and layout for the memorandum should be developed professionally and then used for each update; this would take approximately three hours. This should include the dedicated Novato Baylands project logo and the interagency contact person's information. The intent is to have something simple and high-level that is suitable for broad public distribution, and depicts the Conservancy's commitment in a positive light.

## **3. Distribution Schedule and Channels**

A new update should be issued at the start of every other month. A standard distribution list should be developed and updated as new contact information or outlets become available; initial development would take approximately three hours. It would focus on community residents, as well as public agencies, elected officials, non-government organizations, community email listserves, local media outlets, and other interested parties.

The distribution list should be of a second order – that is, rather than recreating the large distribution lists of existing public agency and non-government programs, this communication effort should provide the update to the program points of contact, and ask for their assistance in sending the material along to their constituents. Most agencies and organizations already have listserves and regular newsletters of their own (e.g., Friends of Novato Creek, Novato Sanitation District), and the update memo would provide information that is readily for distribution or repackaging as part of a larger newsletter. This approach has the benefits of avoiding the need to compile and manage large lists; building the working relationship and trust between the Conservancy and agencies and organizations; having a greater likelihood that target audiences will read the material (since it comes from a source that they have opted into); and improving the content and packaging of the information (since agencies and organizations will be asked to provide feedback to the Conservancy).

The memorandum would be distributed electronically only.

The latest updates would be posted prominently on the website home page, as well as on the "In the News" page (which would also provide access to archived memoranda).

In addition to the Major Audiences listed above, other key outlets would include the following:

- Marin Independent Journal (newspaper)
- Novato Advance (newspaper)

- Novato Patch (online newspaper)
- City of Novato weekly e-news (electronic listserve news)  
<http://www.ci.novato.ca.us/Index.aspx?page=1392>
- County of Marin’s GovLive Twitter feed  
<http://www.govlive.com/us/ca/marin/marin-county-ca>

An initial list of the appropriate contacts (i.e., contacts that have been verified to be the right person within a larger agency to help with this function) could be developed with approximately three hours of staff time, and would likely then take perhaps five hours a year to keep current or add new outlets.

#### **4. Possible Replacement of the Memo by the Novato Baylands Advisory Board**

Once the Novato Baylands Advisory Board (see strategy E below) has started meeting regularly on a quarterly basis, the meetings will provide an opportunity for regular in-person updates, questions and discussions, and recommendations for different actions. The Board will include a broad range of public interests and hence be able to advise the Conservancy from a variety of perspectives, and in many cases will likely be able to provide consensus-based recommendations to the Conservancy. Once the Board has established itself and developed a solid working relationship, it may largely supercede the role of the bi-monthly electronic update memorandum, and the Conservancy will have to determine whether the memo continues to have enough value to be continued.

#### **5. A Note on Public Access Television and Other Communication Mechanisms**

The communication assessment had over 100 respondents from Bel Marin Keys, Hamilton, and the surrounding area. Only 5% of respondents indicated that they preferred to obtain information through public access television. While some individuals have offered to provide the Conservancy with services for developing a public access program, this communication plan does not recommend investing resources in that communication strategy given the extremely low rating indicated by survey respondents.

For reference, survey respondents indicated the following preferences for receiving information:

1. email newsletters – 74% of respondents
2. BMKCSO meetings – 45% (note this may be partly an effect of survey bias – about 1/3 of respondents were from Hamilton, and 2/3 from Bel Marin Keys; if this bias were removed, both forums would likely have around 40-50% of respondents indicating this venue as a preference)
3. Hard copy newsletters – 35%
4. Agency webpages – 21%
5. Hamilton Community Forum meetings – 19% (note this may be partly an effect of survey bias – about 1/3 of respondents were from Hamilton, and 2/3 from Bel Marin Keys; if

this bias were removed, both forums would likely have around 40-50% of respondents indicating this venue as a preference)

6. Online videos – 18%
7. Hard copy newspapers – 17%
8. Online newspapers – 17%
9. Hamilton Restoration Advisory Board meetings – 10%

Communication mechanisms that fewer than 10% of respondents indicated as a preference include: Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, public access television, personal blogs, brochures and local offices, in-home meetings with agency representatives, physical signs in the restoration areas, Novato City Council Meetings, and Marin County Board of Supervisors meetings. Mechanisms not surveyed include podcasts, Facebook posts, and Twitter feeds.

## C. Institute regular communication with Bel Marin Keys Community Services District

**Approximate timeframe:** beginning in June, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 2-4 hours per month

Bel Marin Keys Community Service District (BMKCS D) plays a critical role in formally representing residents, with its board members being publicly elected officials; in serving as a source of information for residents; and in serving as an intermediary between residents and public agencies. In the communication assessment, BMKCS D board members expressed that they felt public agencies, including the Conservancy and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, have not recognized their statutory authority and obligations. They strongly criticized an approach to communication that is intermittent and often only informs them of activity once something is in progress or already completed. They strongly recommended that the Conservancy develop a new, proactive, regular approach to communicating with the board. In return BMKCS D offered to engage in constructive dialogue with the Conservancy about the planning and implementation of the restoration work; to help distribute information to residents, and in turn share key concerns with the Conservancy, thus developing a two-way channel for fostering mutual understanding and respect; and to support the activities of the Conservancy with its own resources, when appropriate.

During a direct discussion involving the BMKCS D Board, the Conservancy, and the Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS, participants identified the following measures as important steps toward building a better communication relationship:

1. **Provide a regular, bi-monthly update to the Board about ongoing and upcoming activities.** This recommendation is consistent with the second strategy recommended above (develop a bi-monthly electronic update memorandum).

- 2. Develop a communication protocol that describes how the Conservancy and the Board will share information.** This responds to a request from the Board to receive information about ongoing or upcoming planning and construction activity, as well as other discussions relevant to the planning work. Along the same lines, the Board also requested receiving advance notice of the release of major planning documents or the start of new activities, so that they can be better prepared to respond to questions from their constituencies; the Board seeks to avoid situations where they hear for the first time about new activities from residents who are upset, which makes the Board appear to not be tracking the restoration work and limits the Board's ability to respond.

Participants recognized that there needs to be some distinction between, for example, every email that occurs in day to day communication, and more significant correspondence that could include things like announcements about meetings and events, report releases, draft documents, and so forth. The protocol would clarify the types of information desired, the appropriate level of detail, the appropriate contact person for the board (i.e., the district manager), and other items necessary to establish common expectations about information sharing as well as a robust process for doing this.

As a best practice, BMKCSD and any other public agencies involved in or directly affected by the restoration work should receive advance notice of the release of key documents, the start of new activities, or major announcements.

- 3. Hold special sessions with the Board as necessary.** Participants agreed that there will be times when they would like to have a detailed conversation on a particular topic, and that a monthly update cannot provide a replacement for this. In this situation the Board would invite the Conservancy to attend one of its meetings and discuss the topic in person. The Board also offered to host special sessions involving residents to help improve communication about the restoration work.
- 4. Conduct a design review meeting or meetings.** The Board expressed several substantive concerns about the restoration work, in particular the potential for levee breaching to impact flows in and out of Novato Creek, and hence scouring and sedimentation in the channel. This in turn could have severe impacts for boat access and egress from the Bel Marin Keys lagoons to San Pablo Bay. The Board explained that they had recent, detailed monitoring data about flows in the channel, and would like to share this with the engineers responsible for revising the design for the Bel Marin Keys Unit V restoration work, particularly the location of the levee breaching. The Conservancy explained that a breach was no longer planned for the north end of the project (i.e., for along the creek), but agreed to set up a conversation between its consultants and those of the Board to share information, review preliminary revised designs, and discuss any concerns or recommendations. The Conservancy suggested to

hold this meeting or meetings once it had a final communication plan and could focus on the designs.

This combination of activities would improve communication between the Conservancy and the Board, and also lay a foundation for establishing additional communication activities if new needs arose.

## **D. Establish a volunteer coordinator for native plant restoration**

**Approximate timeframe:** July, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 8 hours per month

As the Hamilton construction work and eventually the Bel Marin Keys construction work comes to a close, a large amount of cultivating and planting native species of grasses, flowers, shrubs, and other plants will be required to complete the restoration work. In the case of Hamilton, this work will begin in 2011. In the communication assessment online survey, 32% of respondents expressed a preference for volunteering to support this work.

### **1. Volunteer Coordinator**

Given the range of potential simultaneous activities, and the need for consistent communication and for responsiveness to community concerns, the Conservancy should hire a part-time volunteer coordinator. This person would help the project manager to plan how to best involve volunteers and then help to solicit them. When a corps has been developed for the native plant revegetation, this coordinator would then help to ensure clear communication between the project manager and the volunteers with regard to desired support, recommended skills (if any), work times, logistics, and feedback. The coordinator would also have responsibility for helping to maintain a database of volunteers and related contacts for the different initiatives.

### **2. Partnering with Existing Organizations**

A few organizations have already established volunteer programs involving habitat restoration and monitoring in the watershed. When possible and sensible, the Conservancy should partner with existing institutions to benefit from their experience and network, to do more with its limited resources, and to build trust and a strong relationship with locally-based organizations and volunteers.

### 3. Expansion Over Time

In the online survey, respondents expressed a preference for volunteering to support a variety of activities. As the restoration work continues and develops a stronger base within the local communities, the Conservancy can work with local residents and agencies to identify and implement additional volunteer efforts. The Conservancy may choose to support some initiatives directly, while others may be developed and led by the surrounding communities. More details on the expansion of volunteer efforts over time is provided below in the secondary, conditional strategy for expanding the volunteer activities beginning in June 2012.

## E. Convene a Novato Baylands Advisory Board

**Approximate timeframe:** first meeting in September, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 45 hours to assemble members, and to plan and develop materials for and then hold the first meeting; approximately 25 hours per additional meeting

A new advisory board will play a critical role in voicing and addressing the concerns of residents and public agencies as the Novato Baylands project transitions to and sustains work on Bel Marin Keys Unit V. To avoid confusion with the Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board, known as the “RAB”, the suggested name for the new board would be the Novato Baylands Advisory Board or “NBAB.”

### 1. Charge

The Board would be convened by the Conservancy and provided with a straightforward charge:

1. Provide review and comments on the planning, construction, and post-construction restoration work at Hamilton, Bel Marin Keys Unit V, and, eventually, lower Novato Creek.
2. Serve as a liaison to the Hamilton and Bel Marin Keys communities for the purpose of sharing information, addressing concerns, and organizing public events.

The group would have a formal charter, develop an annual work plan, and meet quarterly. The group would seek consensus in its decisions and recommendations. The group’s meetings would be facilitated in their first year to establish a non-partisan, effective process that fosters balanced participation, mutual understanding, inclusive solutions, and shared responsibility.

### 2. Composition

The Board would consist of a small number of representatives from each the following interests, with a maximum of 25 members including the Conservancy:

1. **Residential groups** (e.g., Bel Marin Keys Home Owners Association, the Hamilton Community Forum, Todd’s Road Working Group, the Hamilton Airfield of Marin’s Homeowner Association, plus one resident-at-large from Hamilton and one from Bel Marin Keys)
2. **Local government** (e.g., Bel Marin Keys Community Service District, City of Novato Department of Public Works, Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District, County of Marin Open Space District, Novato Sanitation District)
3. **State government** (e.g., Department of Toxic Substances Control, Department of Fish and Game, State Lands Commission)
4. **Federal government** (e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
5. **Non-government organizations** (e.g., Friends of Novato Creek, Sustainable Novato, Marin Audubon Society)
6. **Regional organizations** (e.g., San Francisco Bay Joint Venture)
7. **Schools and educational organizations** (e.g., The Bay Institute’s STRAW Project, Novato High School)

## F. Establish an interagency trespassing awareness protocol

**Approximate timeframe:** October, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 15 hours to establish protocol, 3 hours per notification/request, and 15 hours to develop and post limited signage

People who trespass on the land during construction risk significant physical harm associated with pits, unstable soils, heavy equipment and machinery, and other hazards. Local residents, particularly youth, do not seem to take the danger seriously, and signs posted by Conservancy contractors have been vandalized and removed. Nonetheless the Conservancy and its contractors remain liable for injury.

Better ways of informing residents of the dangers of trespassing, and how to properly report trespassing, are needed. Similarly, responsible agencies also need better information about construction schedules and the danger to the public.

### 1. Notification to Residents

- At least two weeks prior to starting a new phase of construction, or on a regular period, a short letter and parallel email notice should be mailed to each residence in the surrounding community.

- The notice should specify the date that the new phase of construction will begin, the location of activity, and the estimated date when the construction will end.
- The letter/notice should explain the dangers of trespassing during construction, explain how best to report trespassing, and provide the contact information for responsible law enforcement agencies.
- In case people have questions, the letter should specify the name, position, agency, email, and telephone for a contact person at the Conservancy, as well as the same information for a contact person at the contractor conducting the work in the field.
- This notice could be revised to make sure all the information is current and then used again when a new construction phase is scheduled to begin.

## **2. Trespassing Enforcement Request to Law Enforcement Agencies**

- At least two weeks prior to starting a new phase of construction, or on a regular period, a short letter should be mailed to appropriate law enforcement agencies in Hamilton, Bel Marin Keys, the City of Novato, and Marin County.
- The notice should specify the date that the new phase of construction will begin, the location of activity, and the estimated date when the construction will end.
- The letter/notice should explain the public safety concerns associated with construction, let each agency know it has been identified as a contact for residents to report trespassing, and request their assistance in responding to reports.
- The letter should direct questions to a contact person at the Conservancy (including their name, position, agency, email, and telephone), as well as provide the same information for the contractor, as reference information.
- This notice could be revised to make sure all the information is current and then used again when a new construction phase is scheduled to begin.

## **3. Limited Signage**

- An easy-to-read, medium-sized, prominently colored poster (e.g., 11"x17") should be developed prior to the start of any new phase of construction, and then posted in a series of strategic locations when construction begins.
- The sign should provide a simple map of the construction area, and the location of the sign on that map, so people can understand where they are and where access is restricted.
- It should also specify the date that construction has begun and the estimated date when it will end.
- The sign would explain the dangers of trespassing, note that trespassing is prohibited (and cite the appropriate government code), and note that removing the sign is an act of vandalism.
- It would also explain how best to report trespassing, and provide the contact information for responsible law enforcement agencies, along with the name, position,

agency, email, and telephone for a contact person with the Conservancy and another with the contractor.

## 8. Secondary, Conditional Communication Strategies

This section describes the intent and core components of each of the six secondary, conditional communication strategies. They are denoted as “secondary” because they have value and would address concerns and needs identified in the assessment, but the project’s success does not depend upon them. They are denoted as “conditional” to indicate that the Conservancy should evaluate their value down the road, once the essential strategies have been implemented, and the need and capacity for these additional strategies can be better assessed.

### A. Create an inexpensive promotional brochure

**Approximate timeframe:** December, 2011

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 25 hours

A simple tri-fold or four-page brochure would provide basic information on the project, including goals and mission, major activities and milestones, agencies involved in the work, and a single interagency point of contact. The brochure could be distributed to major agency offices and used at public meetings. The a professional designer could be used to develop the layout, while the content would be developed by the Conservancy; design and development would take approximately 10 hours. This would be followed by five hours for a small in-house print run (e.g., 250 copies), and an additional 10 hours for distribution.

### B. Develop a strategic media plan

**Approximate timeframe:** January through April, 2012

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 12 hours to develop, with additional hours contingent upon the event

The project should develop a strategic media plan to promote project milestones and inform the public about changes taking place at the site. The plan should include list of key media outlets and reporters to notify of key developments (whether in-person briefings or text announcements), a calendar of potential media events associated with key project milestones, a schedule of one-on-one meetings and/or tours for key reporters, a list of potential feature stories that could highlight interesting aspects of the project that might not be covered by news events (i.e. the movement of dredge material and sediment in the Bay, real estate stories about the value of living next to protected natural areas,etc.) A media consultant could be hired to assist with this task and/or to implement the plan.

## C. Actively cultivate relationships with local elected officials

**Approximate timeframe:** beginning January, 2012

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 4 hours per month

Many elected officials in the area are supportive of the wetland restoration work, and expressed a willingness to support communication efforts. At the same time, they noted the need to be kept abreast of major developments in the schedule or significant public concerns that arise.

The Conservancy should therefore identify and continue to cultivate relationships with local elected leaders. In some cases this would involve including the elected on the Novato Baylands Advisory Board, while in other cases it might involve tailored cover letters that accompany the release of key documents or new promotional materials (like the inexpensive brochure strategy above), or periodic telephone calls to check-in directly.

Conversely, these officials could then advance communication efforts by participating in special events like press conferences, volunteer celebrations, or special interviews. Such efforts would dovetail with the development of a strategic media plan (the preceding strategy).

## D. Participate in related planning efforts in the local area and region

**Approximate timeframe:** beginning January, 2012

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 8 hours per month

Several regional planning forums exist, dealing variously with water, land use, and habitat initiatives. For example, Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District recently initiated a Flood Protection and Watershed Program, including a Technical Work Group. These efforts provide an opportunity for the Conservancy to communicate its upcoming work and success stories to critical audiences conducting related work. The Conservancy should use these venues as a communication mechanism, as well as an opportunity to learn about parallel efforts that may support and build upon the Novato Baylands work, and build relationships with other agencies.

By the same token, in the future the Conservancy could consider convening an annual Novato Baylands Public Forum that invites regional and local agencies to participate in public education, showcase the ongoing work, and improve community relations.

## E. Create an annual electronic newsletter

**Approximate timeframe:** May through July, 2012

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 40 hours per year

The annual electronic newsletter would focus on getting people excited about and involved in the restoration work, and highlighting milestones and success stories. It would also advance regular, consistent communication and messaging.

### 1. Content

Each electronic newsletter would highlight a small number of recent major accomplishments or activities, including volunteer activities, and be expressed through the narrative prose of a story rather than more objective journalistic account of the memorandums. The newsletter could draw on the meeting summaries from the Novato Baylands Advisory Board meetings to identify potential stories.

The electronic newsletter stories draw on interviews with people, or have guest writers who are not affiliated with the Conservancy. The latter approach would help communicate that the restoration work embodies a partnership.

The newsletter would also emphasize visual elements. This would include photographs of people, fieldwork, public events, wildlife, landscapes, etc., as well as graphics and diagrams and illustrations. To build in a participatory element and help make this a “people’s newsletter,” residents or visitors could be invited to submit pictures for use in the newsletter, and share a short story behind the picture.

### 2. Design

Professional review (or design) would be desirable for each issue to ensure the layout is powerful rather than cluttered. Elements should include the dedicated Novato Baylands project logo, images relevant to the stories (as mentioned above), a background watermark, and the lead interagency contact person’s information. Elements could also include hyperlinks to online materials.

The length could be four to eight pages. The newsletter would be in color.

### 3. Distribution Schedule and Channels

The distribution list would be the same as that used for the monthly electronic update memorandums and other materials (see above).

The year’s newsletter would be posted prominently on the website home page as well as on the “In the News” page (which would also provide an archive).

## **F. Expand the volunteer coordinator position to include other activities, as needed**

**Approximate timeframe:** beginning in July, 2012

**Approximate level of effort:** approximately 25 hours per month at maximum

There are some activities, like native plant revegetation, that fall squarely within the scope of the restoration work; without this activity the work will remain incomplete. Other activities of the restoration work involve things that the Conservancy would support in principle but likely would not be able to support financially. For example, the organizing and leading of wetland tours or regular education opportunities for school children. In both cases volunteers will play a critical role in completing the restoration work and then integrating the restored wetlands in the life of their communities. Building a volunteer corps, beginning with but increasing beyond the native plant revegetation work, will increase the ownership and stewardship that people feel for the wetlands, and their support of the work. This strategy focuses on how volunteer efforts and coordination might be expanded beyond the native plant restoration work.

### **1. Conservancy Volunteer Initiative: Trail Creation and Maintenance**

The Conservancy will eventually need to develop a trail through the wetlands once the restoration work is complete and the alignment has been determined (with input from local residents and the Novato Baylands Advisory Board). In the communication assessment online survey, 32% of respondents expressed a preference for volunteering to support the trail initiative.

### **2. Community-Based Volunteer Initiatives**

In the online survey, 37% of respondents expressed a preference for volunteering to help attend or organize tours of the wetlands. While this number may reflect a large interest in attending a tour (one person even suggested having a special tour for residents only, before “opening” to the public), several interviewee respondents in the assessment also suggested that the community would be interested in organizing tours so people could better see and understand the wetlands.

Additionally, 35% expressed a preference for volunteering for wildlife and water quality monitoring; 28% for wetland and creek clean-ups; and 16% for school involvement.

### **3. Partnering with Existing Organizations**

As mentioned when discussing native plant restoration above, a few organizations have already established volunteer programs on similar topics. For instance, Friends of Novato Creek has had a volunteer water quality and benthic macro invertebrate monitoring program since 2006,

while the Bay Institute's Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed project has involved more than 28,000 students in creek restoration since 1992. When possible and sensible, the Conservancy should partner with existing institutions to benefit from their experience and network, to do more with its limited resources, and to build trust and a strong relationship with locally-based organizations and volunteers.

#### **4. An Interpretive Center and Trail**

In the meeting with the Hamilton Community Forum, several participants also suggested creating an interpretive center to serve as a hub for information on the wetlands, as a central site for volunteering, and as a location for sharing the history of the restoration work and the agencies and groups involved. (This idea was proposed after the online survey was developed, so there is no survey data on this potential initiative.) This idea would likely yield significant benefits for residents and visitors, for efforts to organize volunteers, and for establishing community ownership of the wetlands. This is something the Conservancy could choose to support. Regardless, in terms of timing, it may make more sense to advance this effort once all the restoration work has been completed, so that the center could be designed with the entire Novato Baylands landscape in mind. This would not prevent the other volunteer initiatives from going forward much earlier. Indeed, if the other efforts were to be established early on, they likely would provide numerous insights into the goals and design for an interpretive center.

More simply and immediately, participants suggested that an interpretive trail could be developed. This could be linked with the interpretive center, when possible, as well as a wetland tour initiative. Such a trail could have a designated path with corresponding signage designed to educate people about the wetlands and the associated flora and fauna.

#### **5. Volunteer Coordinator**

If several volunteer activities are conducted simultaneously, the need for coordinating people will increase significantly, along with the need for consistent communication with and responsiveness to community concerns. In this situation the Conservancy should expand the time provided for a part-time volunteer coordinator, to provide the same services as for the native plant restoration work except on a larger scale.

## 9. Table of Strategic Communication

#	STRATEGY	PRIMARY AUDIENCE(S)	PRIMARY TOOL(S)	PARTNER(S)
<b>ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES</b>				
1.	Revisit website	Residential; non-government organizations	Website	Partner agencies
2.	Update memo	Federal, state, and local government; non-government organizations; regional groups	Electronic memo	Partner agencies
3.	Regular BMKCSD communication	Local government; residential	Electronic memo, in-person briefings, special sessions	BMKCSD
4.	Plant volunteer coordinator	Residential; non-government organizations; school and educational	Word-of-mouth, electronic communications, telephone, in-person	Local residents, non-government organizations, existing volunteer organizations
5.	Advisory Board	Federal, state, and local government; residential; non-government organizations	In-person meetings	All board members
6.	Trespassing protocol	Federal, state, and local government; residential	Electronic notices, limited signage	Law enforcement agencies, partner agencies
<b>SECONDARY STRATEGIES</b>				
1.	Promotional brochure	Federal, state, and local government; residential	Brochure	Partner agencies
2.	Strategic media plan	Residential	Electronic communications, newspapers, television	Local elected officials, local media
3.	Relationships with local officials	Local government; residential	Telephone, in-person briefings, memos and newsletters	Local elected officials

4.	Related regional planning efforts	Regional groups	In-person meetings	Agencies and groups that are part of these forums
5.	Electronic newsletter	Federal, state, and local government; residential; non-government organizations; regional groups	Electronic newsletter	Partner agencies, local residents, local elected officials
6.	Expanded volunteer coordinator	Residential; non-government organizations; school and educational	Word-of-mouth, electronic communications, telephone, in-person	Local residents, non-government organizations, existing volunteer organizations

## 10. Appendix A: Revision of the Website

A revised website has the potential to serve as the foremost trusted, up-to-date, and accessible source of critical information on the Novato Baylands work and opportunities for public engagement. This work would include:

- (1) Rename the website to be the Novato Baylands Wetland Restoration Project (rather than Hamilton Wetland Restoration Project), to reflect the larger scope. The Hamilton, Bel Marin Keys Unit V, and Lower Novato Creek work should be differentiated throughout the website as needed. The website should also be made consistent with the State Coastal Conservancy webpage layout and format, and be given a prominent link on the SCC homepage (currently it is one link deep and near the bottom of a long list of projects).
- (2) The **Home Page** would include, among other things:
  - a. a new and distinctive logo for the Novato Baylands Wetland Restoration Project
  - b. a brief description of the overarching goals of the project, drawing on the key communication messages (see above)
  - c. the latest monthly electronic update memorandum, including a snapshot of its cover
  - d. the interagency point of contact from the State Coastal Conservancy
  - e. a map of the restoration work areas
  - f. the inexpensive promotional brochure describing the goals, major activities, milestones, agencies involved in the work, and lead interagency point of contact
  - g. highlighted links to the Planning page's Status and Visual Representations sections (see below)
  - h. the latest Construction Public Notices and highlighted links to the Construction page's Status section (see below)
  - i. a series of changing photographs of the community and environment
  - j. links to the latest news stories, and
  - k. a chat space for users to provide comments or notes (the postings could be easily moderated)
- (3) Revise the list of primary topics found on the Home Page to include (in this order): **(A) Planning** (with sub-sections on Status, Funding, Visual Representations, and Documents), **(B) Construction** (with sub-sections on Activity Updates and Notices, Status, Funding, and Dangers of Trespassing), **(C) Key Issues and Questions** (with topic-specific sub-sections), **(D) Events & Volunteering**, **(E) Partner Agencies** (including contact information), **(F) Novato Baylands Advisory Board**, **(G) Background** (with sub-sections on History of the Project and History of the Area), and **(H) In the News**, and **(I) Photo Gallery**.

- a. The **Planning** page(s) would include sub-sections for **Status, Funding, and Current and Historical Planning Documents**.
  - i. For each branch of the project (Hamilton, BMK Unit V, Lower Novato Creek), the **Status** section would include a graphical planning timeline that
    - 1. focuses on upcoming milestones and the critical path to completion;
    - 2. is regularly updated to indicate changes or delays to the schedule; and
    - 3. visually highlights the current phase (e.g., through the use of color, a circle, etc).
    - 4. The timeline should also have an accordion function whereby users can click on older years to expand that section and find historical information.
  - ii. For each branch of the project, **Funding** would indicate
    - 1. current funding sources; a high-level graphic for the budget components (e.g., pie graph); and an indication of how much of the total work is funded.
    - 2. An explanation of efforts to control costs, as well as an explanation of a contingency plan for completing the planning in case of a loss of funding, would also be provided (requests for this information were expressed repeatedly in the assessment).
    - 3. Lastly, there would be a dedicated section on **Maintenance**; questions about how the retaining levee will be maintained after construction also came up repeatedly in the assessment.
    - 4. A dedicated sub-section should outline the anticipated process, including partnering with local agencies and non-government organizations, for exploring restoration opportunities along lower Novato Creek.
  - iii. **Visual Representations** would include professional drawings or computer renderings of how the planned restoration would look when completed (e.g., vegetation and wildlife, structures and topography, viewsheds), from a variety of views (e.g., from a residence in Bel Marin Keys, from out on the levee, looking north and looking south, from the Bay looking inland). Depictions of proposed Bay Trail alignments should also be included.
  - iv. **Documents** would include planning studies as well as permitting materials, divided as appropriate for Hamilton, Bel Marin Keys, and Lower Novato Creek.
    - 1. In sections for which new documents have not been released in over one year, language would be added to indicate that there are no more recent documents, to help people understand that documents even from several years ago remain valid and current (this is a major source of confusion and speculation).

2. The webpage would serve as a permanent repository for planning information; in the assessment numerous parties criticized the difficulty of accessing historical planning documents.
  3. A dedicated sub-section should address the **Bay Trail Alignment** process and how people can get information and provide comments (this could be linked to the Bay Trail Alignment section under Key Issues, as explained below).
  4. A dedicated sub-section should address the design for **levee breaching** (this could be linked to the Novato Creek Dredging section under Key Issues, as explained below).
- b. The **Construction** page(s) would include:
- i. For each branch of the project (Hamilton, BMK Unit V, Lower Novato Creek, as applicable), prominently marked **Public Notices** at the top of the page, highlighting upcoming as well as ongoing construction activities. Specifically this would include information on
    1. their purpose, fit within the larger construction process, start and end dates;
    2. their specific timing, hours of operation, location, trucking routes;
    3. efforts to control dust and noise, and associated restrictions on activities (e.g., whether people should not eat outside at these times, whether they should planting fruit trees – both questions that came up in the assessment); and
    4. a point of contact from both the agency overseeing the work and the construction firm operating on the ground. This contact information is critical and must be regularly updated.
  - ii. For each branch of the project and just like the Planning page, the **Status** section would also include a graphical planning timeline that
    1. focuses on upcoming milestones and the critical path to completion;
    2. is regularly updated to indicate changes or delays to the schedule;
    3. visually highlights the current phase; and
    4. has an accordion function.
    5. It would also include a simple graphic that illustrates the percent of work completed for the *current* construction phase.
  - iii. For each branch of the project and just like the Planning page, the **Funding** section would indicate
    1. current funding sources, a high-level graphic for the budget, and an indication of how much of the work is funded.
    2. An explanation of efforts to control costs, and an explanation of a contingency plan for completing the *construction* in case of a loss of funding, would also be provided.
    3. Like with Planning, there would also be a dedicated section on Maintenance (or a link to this section on the Planning page).

- iv. The page should also have a prominent section explaining the **Dangers of Trespassing** on the land during construction, and who to contact to report trespassing.
- c. The **Key Issues and Questions** page(s) should have a sub-menu in the left-hand navigation bar or atop the page that is clearly organized by topic (rather than sentence-long questions, which would be addressed within a sub-section).
- i. Topics should include **Planning and Construction and Funding**, all of which would link to the dedicated pages (or page sections, in the case of Funding) for these topics that are identified above.
  - ii. Additional topics should include:
    1. **Public Health and Soil Materials** (addressing toxicity and historical residues and contamination, dust, source materials and their toxicity, water quality and other potential impacts, and protocols for ensuring safety, and the specific agencies and points of contact that are responsible for dredged materials and toxics)
    2. **Noise and Dust** (which links to the Construction page, see above)
    3. **Homeowner Investments** (citing studies or estimates of how wetland restoration is anticipated to add economic value to the region and to homeowners, including the specific benefits it brings – e.g., increased access to public land, increased wildlife viewing opportunities, decreased flood control taxation.
    4. **Mosquito Abatement** (addressing whether the wetlands will increase mosquito populations, and how these will be controlled, and the specific agency and point of contact that are responsible for abatement planning and implementation)
    5. **Recreation and Public Access** (addressing whether and where people can walk their dogs and go out on the land, the use of signage to indicate proper and restricted used, the use of signage to prohibit trespassing on private lands and the responsible agencies and points of contact for this, and how trash from trail users will be controlled and cleaned up)
    6. **Bay Trail Alignment** (addressing the planning process and public involvement, the location of the trail and northern and southern terminus connections, appropriate activities (e.g., bicycling, dog walking), and traffic and parking)
    7. **Wildlife Habitat and Protection** (addressing what types of animals can be expected to populate the new habitat, existing sensitive species in the region, as well as the establishment of wildlife corridors and protection of waterfowl that nest on the ground)
    8. **Novato Creek Dredging** (addressing the current plan for levee breaching, its precise location, anticipated connections with upstream restoration, studies on the expected impacts on flood flows, sedimentation, and dredging)

9. **Levee and Dike Maintenance** (addressing how the levees and dikes will be monitored, how wind and wave erosion will be mitigated, how underseepage, throughseepage, and impacts on surrounding properties and lagoons will be addressed)
  10. **Flood Control** (referencing the work of the Marin County Flood Control District and the County’s Watershed Program, addressing how the planned work will support flood control efforts by reducing flood risk and providing an outlet for flood flows)
  11. **Sea Level Rise** (addressing the Ocean Protection Council guidelines, current estimates, anticipated stresses on planned levees and dykes, and how restored wetlands will be impacted as well as provide resilience)
  12. **Sanitation District Facilities** (addressing the sewer line alignment, elevation, and maintenance, and the use of recycled water in the restored wetlands)
- iii. Each of these sections would identify key concerns and questions, and respond to them in an empathetic tone.
- d. The **Events and Volunteering** page(s) would include sections that identify and describe any major upcoming events (e.g., an annual Novato Baylands Public Forum), or special sessions at local government public meetings. The page(s) would also identify each of the major opportunities for public involvement, including (A) native plant nursery and planting, and possibly in the future (B) attending or organizing tours, (C) wildlife and water quality monitoring, (D) trail creation and maintenance, (E) wetland and creek clean-ups, (F) school involvement, and (G) development of an interpretive center.
- i. Each opportunity would have a brief description of the intent of the activity, how it supports the larger restoration effort, what types of volunteers are needed, approximate numbers needed, desired skills (if any) or training that will be offered, and recommended minimum ages. If applicable, the description would also describe fundraising needs and progress toward funding goals.
  - ii. For each opportunity an appropriate point of contact, including position, email, and telephone, would be provided. This sub-coordinator would be expected to work closely with the overarching volunteer coordinator.
  - iii. The overarching volunteer coordinator (a hired position, see below) would be listed prominently and responsible for fielding general questions and directing general inquiries to the appropriate persons.
  - iv. The page could also include a color-coded calendar for the upcoming four weeks (and hence would either need to have an automatic update function, or the volunteer coordinator would be responsible for ensuring this information is current). The colors would correspond to different programs, making it easier for users to see a common thread.

1. If the number of activities does not justify a calendar, upcoming dates for all activities in the next four weeks could be displayed as a list at the top. Longer-term dates, when available, could be listed subsequently.
  - v. Information on specific work sessions would include the location and meeting point, the timing and duration of the volunteer periods (e.g., Saturday and Sunday, 4 hour field sessions), how to dress and what to bring, and how and by when to RSVP.
- e. The **Partner Agencies** page(s) would include a list of each of the agencies with directly responsible for, involved in, or potentially impacted by the wetland restoration work. An initial list of agencies can be found in the Major Audiences section of this plan (Section 4, above).
- i. For each agency the page would provide its logo, mission, and jurisdiction; explain its authority over and/or responsibility for specific aspects of the wetland restoration work; and explain its current activities (if any) in the restoration work.
  - ii. Each agency description would also have a designated point of contact, including position, email, and telephone. This contact information is critical and must be regularly updated.
  - iii. **The page and restoration effort as a whole will also have a single, interagency point of contact from the State Coastal Conservancy.** This person would have responsibility for knowing the different agencies involved, their roles and activities, and their corresponding points of contact. This person would in turn be responsible for fielding questions and requests for information from interested parties, and routing inquiries to the appropriate responsible party.
    1. The page would include a short description of the ongoing coordination efforts, including a description of and link to the Novato Baylands Advisory Board, and a description of the State Coastal Conservancy's participation in other local and regional forums on related efforts.
  - iv. This interagency point of contact would also be responsible for ensuring that participating agencies receive the monthly update memorandum, participate in the Novato Baylands Advisory Board meetings and actions. The latter will play a critical role in coordinating agency efforts and establishing consistent public messages.
- f. The **Novato Baylands Advisory Board** page(s) would include
- i. A description of the mission, charge, and deliverables of the Board.
  - ii. A current member roster (including their affiliations and contact information), which could be viewed onscreen for quick access as well as downloaded for reference. This would be critical to keep updated.

- iii. A list of upcoming Board meetings, leading to a page where people can view and/or download meeting materials (agendas, information, and meeting summaries). A short summary of each Board meeting would be created for posting on this webpage as well as for sharing with members and the media for their own distribution purposes.
    - iv. A few photos of recent Board meetings, and activities conducted by the Board.
  - g. The **Background** page(s) would include sub-sections on the History of the Area and the History of the Project.
    - i. The History of the Area section could mimic some of the existing history pages that provide a brief prose description of the historical use of the lands and their transformation over time, augmented by archival photographs. Revisions to this would have to be professionally researched.
      - 1. The section could be augmented by short videos that provide a more active representation of the area's history, providing the same information as the written descriptions but pairing these with professionally edited archival video and photographs. This would like require paying for professional services or finding professional in-kind support to produce these videos. Some interviewees believed that examples already existing for the converted Hamilton Hangers and other buildings.
    - ii. The History of the Project section would have several highlighted links to the current Planning and Construction pages, to make sure people could easily find current information. The remainder of the section would describe the history of the project's formation, early discussions and appropriations and planning, and major milestones accomplished to date.
      - 1. Over time, information from the Planning and Construction pages would be transferred to the Background page(s), reducing the amount of new text needed for the history.
  - h. The **In the News** page(s) would include a list of current news stories (from the past 3 months, approximately), as well as a searchable archive of historical news stories.
    - i. The page would include a dedicated section for Media Inquiries. This would include the appropriate points of contact from the State Coastal Conservancy (e.g., the lead interagency contact and the public information officer).
      - 1. It would also include a "press kit" consisting of the "facts sheet", a short description of the major public involvement activities and points of contact (taken from the Events and Volunteering webpage), and a short description of the Novato Baylands Advisory Board charge, membership, and meeting schedule (with

corresponding links to that webpage, for downloading the most current meeting information).

- ii. Other elements of the website would also be referenced (e.g., the Planning page, the Photo Gallery page).
  - iii. The page would also have a link to a Facebook page for the project, where the same news updates and clips could be posted. Postings by Facebook users could be moderated.
- i. The **Photo Gallery** page(s) would provide a series of Conservancy photos illustrating different aspects of the restoration work, including planning activities, fish and wildlife, field conditions, construction activities, and restored areas and their development over time.
- i. The page would also have an interactive feature that would allow users to upload their favorite photos, provide their name and a caption, for other users to view and download as desired. These photos would be combined with the Conservancy photographs and organized according to the same topics. Photographs would require moderator approval before being posted, to ensure the visual and textual content are appropriate.
- (4) All pages on the website should have a **standardized “Comment or Question?” link and a standardized “Contact” link** clearly marked at the bottom of each page, and a standardized “Last Updated – xx/xx/xx” label at the top of each page. In cases where more specific contact persons are needed for individual topics (e.g., Public Events), the entry must include: their name, position, agency, email, and telephone. These entries are critical to keep updated as personnel change, and the website maintainer should have a plan for regular updating and corresponding information validation.