

August 24th, 2021



Protecting Marin Since 1934

Marie Gilmore, Chair of the BCDC Enforcement Committee
Bay Conservation and Development Commission
375 Beale Street, Suite 510
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: Marin Conservation League (MCL) Comments on the Richardson Bay Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan and Agreement with BCDC

Dear Chairperson Marie Gilmore and the BCDC Enforcement Committee:

Marin Conservation League (MCL) has reviewed the Richardson Bay Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan, which is an important document to implementing the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan (RBSAP), which MCL supports. Page 8 of the RBSAP states in Policy #1 *Eelgrass beds, important to herring spawning and to the protection of detritus, should also receive maximum protection.*"

The Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) recommended a boundary (Alternative A) of protection for only 90% of the existing eelgrass in order to make the boundary easier for boaters to understand. The Alternative B boundary protects 100% of the eelgrass. Therefore, the approved boundary did not allow the eelgrass to *receive maximum protection*. MCL believes the Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan must protect 100% of the existing eelgrass (Alternative B) in Richardson Bay in order to follow the RBSAP and allow for future possible restoration of damaged areas and for new migration of eelgrass populations.

MCL has also reviewed the *Agreement between the Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)* and has the following comments regarding eelgrass protection, management and restoration:

- 1) #3 in the BCDC Agreement states that *"If RBRA selects a boundary for the Eelgrass Protection Zone that is less protective of eelgrass than the alternatives presented in the RBRA's Draft EPMP then BCDC will consider the new boundary and inform RBRA if this Agreement must be amended to prevent the need for further BCDC oversight.*

It is clear that by selecting Alternative A, RBRA has selected a less protective boundary than other alternatives in the EPMP as only protects 90 % of the eelgrass and Alternative B protects 100 %. The change in the boundary is best made now to avoid confusion.

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Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.

- 2) #5 in the BCDC Agreement states that “*During 2022, RBRA will initiate active eelgrass restoration studies within the Eelgrass Protection Zone...*”

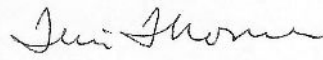
If 10% of the eelgrass is outside the Eelgrass Protection Zone then that area will not be able to be considered for restoration. It is important to protect all areas that have eelgrass in order for the areas to be eligible for restoration. We understand the identified boundary for Alternative B follows a topography line which is cumbersome. We suggest the line be adjusted so it is easier to enforce.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,



Robert Miller
President



Terri Thomas
Vice President

cc: Adrienne Klein adrienne.klein@bcdc.ca.gov