Alison Kearns, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Alison Kearns is the Risk Analysis Branch Chief for FEMA Region 9 which works with Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the U.S. Pacific Territories – American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam. In this position, Alison manages a talented team of planners, risk analysts, and engineers who implement the Mitigation Planning, Risk MAP, Building Science, Seismic Safety, and Dam Safety Programs. Later this year, Alison will also begin managing grants management specialists who will implement the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), and High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation (HHPD) grant programs. All of these programs will work together to inform communities about their risk from natural hazards, and take action to reduce their impacts. Alison has previously worked with FEMA Region 3, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, and US Army Corps of Engineers. She has degrees in Geography (BS), Environment Studies with a focus in Meteorology (BS), and Emergency Management (Graduate Certificate) from Florida State University.

Amy Hutzel, California State Coastal Conservancy

Amy Hutzel is currently a Deputy Executive Officer at the State Coastal Conservancy after having worked in their San Francisco Bay Area Program for 15 years where she was dedicated to increasing access to natural areas for urban populations, protecting open space, and restoring wetland and riparian habitats. Amy is the current chair of the San Francisco Estuary Partnership and the Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium. She has a bachelor's degree in urban and environmental planning from the University of Virginia and worked previously at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and Save The Bay. Amy told us that “having the opportunity to work on large-scale wetland restoration projects in San Francisco Bay, such as the South Bay Salt Ponds, Napa Sonoma Marshes, and Hamilton has been the highlight of [her] career so far and is "personally proudest of the restoration of Napa Marsh.”

Christina Toms, SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

Christina is an ecological engineer and senior scientist with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board with over 18 years of experience in the protection and restoration of aquatic ecosystems, especially tidal wetlands within the San Francisco Estuary and bar-built estuaries along the Pacific Coast. Her work at the Water Board focuses on the planning, permitting, and regional monitoring of estuarine wetland restoration and climate change adaptation projects. In her “free” time, Christina also serves as a director of the California Native Plant Society and the NorCal Interscholastic Cycling League. She has a BS in Biological Resources Engineering from the University of Maryland and an MS in Civil and Environmental Engineering from UC Berkeley, and lives with her husband Brian and daughter Sierra Grace in Santa Rosa, CA.

Dave Pine, San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority

Dave Pine represents District 1 on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. As chair of the SF Bay Restoration Authority, chair of the San Mateo Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, and a SF Bay Conservation and Development Commissioner, Pine works extensively on the intersecting issues of flood control, sea level rise and tidal land restoration. Supervisor Pine also is the founding chair of Peninsula Clean Energy and serves on the boards of the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain).

James Muller, San Francisco Estuary Partnership

James Muller, Principal Environmental Planner, manages the Integrated Regional Water Management Program, funded by the California Department of Water Resources. The IRWM program is composed of four implementation grants funding 46 projects and one involvement grant working with over 15 Bay Area Community and Tribal partners to conduct water needs assessments and subsequent project development activities with disadvantaged communities and Tribes. The IRWM program is focused on implementing water management solutions on a regional scale to increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. These projects are intended to provide multiple benefits including improved water quality, better flood management, restored and enhanced ecosystems, and more reliable surface and groundwater supplies. James also works to promote and implement the SFEP Estuary Blueprint as well as cross functional work within the Metropolitan Transportation Association.

Jeremy Lowe, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Jeremy Lowe is a coastal geomorphologist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute with 35 years of experience in tidal wetland restoration and sea-level rise adaptation planning on the Pacific Coast and in Europe. Career highlights include designing sea defenses to reduce flooding in Venice, Italy; designing marsh restorations for the Ballona Wetlands in Venice, California; and authoring tidal wetland restoration guidelines for San Francisco Bay, and the Lower Columbia River Estuary. He has lived in the Bay Area since 1999 and is currently working on sea-level rise adaptation planning for the baylands of the Petaluma River, for the city of Sunnyvale, and for Highway 37.

John Bourgeois, Valley Water (previously South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project)

John Bourgeois is currently Deputy Operating Officer, Watershed Stewardship and Planning at Valley Water. John Bourgeois became Executive Project Manager of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project in 2009 and oversaw that exensive restoration for over a decade. Previously, John was a restoration ecologist with the Bay Area ecological consulting firm H. T. Harvey & Associates where he worked on numerous San Francisco Bay wetlands projects, including the programmatic phase of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration project and the original restoration plan for Bair Island.
Originally from south Louisiana, John grew up in a region that understands the cultural, economic and ecological value of large wetland systems. John earned a Master of Science degree in Biology from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and a Bachelor of Science degree in Ecological, Evolutionary and Organismal Biology from Tulane University.

Josh Bradt, San Francisco Estuary Partnership

Josh Bradt, Watershed Specialist & Project Manager, specializes in Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Watershed Management issues. He also oversees the Bay Area Watershed Network for the Partnership. Before joining the Partnership, Josh spearheaded the creation of a citywide Watershed Management Plan for the City of Berkeley. He has been the Executive Director and Restoration Director of the non-profit Urban Creeks Council. He has also worked as a Watershed Specialist for the Contra Costa Countywide Clean Water Program. Josh has a B.A. in Political Science from the University of North Carolina.

Julian Wood Point Blue Conservation Science

Julian Wood is the San Francisco Bay Program Leader at Point Blue Conservation Science & works to advance wetland-dependent bird conservation by leading innovative research and informing on-the-ground restoration and management with an emphasis on bird response to habitat restoration and climate change.
His work at Point Blue has taken him from Montana to Mexico studying bird ecology in grassland, riparian, and wetland habitats. After spending six years supervising projects in the San Joaquin Valley focused on bird response to riparian restoration, I now develop and lead projects focused on understanding bird response to wetland restoration and developing and promoting conservation actions that result in healthy bird communities and wetland ecosystems within the context of a rapidly changing environment.

Julie Beagle, United States Army Corp of Engineers

Julie Beagle has recently joined the San Francisco District of the Army Corps of Engineers as the Environmental Planning Team Lead, focusing on integrating nature-based approaches into large-scale Corps planning projects. Until the end of 2020, she was the San Francisco Estuary Institute's Deputy Program Director of the Resilient Landscapes Program, and a lead scientist for the organization's climate adaptation efforts. She has worked as a geomorphologist throughout the rivers and wetlands of California for the last 15 years, and has a masters degree in environmental planning from UC Berkeley.

Hon. Kevin Mullin, Assembly Speaker pro-Tem, District 22

Kevin Mullin was first elected in 2012 and re-elected in 2014, 2016 and 2018 to the California State Assembly representing the 22nd District in San Mateo County. He served as Assembly Speaker pro Tem for the 2016-17 legislative session. Elections reform and strengthening our democracy is Kevin's top legislative priority. Through 2018, there have been 52 Mullin authored bills signed into law. Kevin has authored laws reforming the recount process for statewide elections, ensuring legitimate votes are counted by enhancing vote-by-mail ballot signature verification, and enabling San Mateo County to be the first county in the San Francisco Bay Area to conduct a regularly scheduled off-year election entirely by mail. He was also a co-author of the landmark law automatically registering Californians to vote.

Another landmark elections bill Kevin authored, AB 249 (The CA DISCLOSE Act), was signed into law by Governor Brown in 2017, giving California the strongest campaign disclosure law in the nation. His other legislative priorities focus on transportation infrastructure and congestion relief, affordable housing, economic opportunity for all, maintaining a balanced budget with a healthy rainy day fund, clean tech and nurturing our innovation economy as Chair of the Select Committee on Biotechnology and as a member of the Tech Caucus.

Letitia Grenier, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Letitia Grenier co-directs SFEI's Resilient Landscapes Program. She is the science lead for the 2015 State of the Estuary Report (a SF Estuary Partnership project) and the 2015 update to the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals (a California Coastal Conservancy project), heading a team of over 200 environmental scientists, managers, and regulators to develop science based recommendations for restoring and maintaining the health the Bay's tidal wetlands in the face of rising sea levels and other stressors. Letitia holds a PhD in Conservation Biology from the University of California at Berkeley and has previously worked on investigating bioaccumulation of contaminants in estuarine food webs, the condition of California's wetlands, and other ecological questions about the Bay and Delta. Her focus now is to work with partners to conserve California's living resources by developing landscape-scale, collaborative, science based visions and solutions.

Luisa Valiela, Environmental Protection Specialist, USEPA Region 9, Water Division

As senior staff of EPA Region 9's Water Division, her focus is on integration of Clean Water Act programs, including wetlands and watershed planning, for the nine counties that make up the San Francisco Bay Area region. Implementing watershed management plans entails collaborating with state authorities, local agencies, scientific organizations and interested stakeholders to protect and restore water quality and related habitats. She also oversees the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund, a competitive grant program begun in 2008 to support projects that restore wetlands and watersheds, and reduce polluted runoff. Ms. Valiela has an M.S. in Wildland Resource Science, University of California Berkeley, 1994

Marilyn Latta, California State Coastal Conservancy

Marilyn Latta has been working with the State Coastal Conservancy since 2008 in their San Francisco Bay Program. A fifth generation Bay Area native, Marilyn "loves participating in this kind of collaborative work to restore our incredible estuary." Marilyn graduated from Humboldt State University in 1995 with a degree in Marine Biology and Zoology. After graduating, Marilyn went on to work for a variety of non-profit organizations with a mission to involve people in the protection of the ocean and estuaries. She leads regional collaborative demonstration projects to test living shorelines and nature-based climate adaptation approaches in San Francisco Bay. Marilyn has always loved linking Bay Area residents with science and the estuary because she believes "most people want to get involved in helping their bay, but have literal and/or figurative barriers to it."

Patricia Oikawa, California State University, East Bay

Patty Oikawa is an Assistant Professor in the Earth and Environmental Sciences Department at Cal State East Bay. She is a biogeochemist specializing in greenhouse gas measurements and modeling in Bay-Delta wetlands. Before coming to Cal State, she was a postdoctoral scholar at UC Berkeley where she co-authored a greenhouse gas protocol for wetland restoration in the Bay Delta, which has been adopted and implemented by the American Carbon Registry. She is currently making atmospheric and hydrologic carbon flux measurements at a restored tidal wetland in the Eden Landing Ecological Reserve. She also leads a methane working group within the Coastal Carbon Research Coordination Network currently focused on improving inventories and modeling of methane emissions from tidal wetlands across the U.S. .

Robin Grossinger, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Robin Grossinger is a Senior Scientist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute, where he co-directs, with Letitia Grenier, SFEI's Resilient Landscapes program. For over twenty years, Robin has analyzed how California landscapes have changed since European contact, using these historic data to guide landscape-scale restoration strategies. Robin leads efforts throughout the state to reintegrate natural processes within our highly modified landscapes, creating healthier and more adaptive neighborhoods, cities, and surrounding landscapes. He has advised restoration strategies for San Francisco Bay, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, urban landscapes such as the Google campus, and rivers throughout California.

Roger Leventhal, Marin County Public Works

Roger Leventhal, P.E is a Senior Engineer with the Marin County Flood Control District and oversees many of the technical studies for sea level rise adaptation for the County of Marin. Prior to coming to the County in 2012 he spent almost 25 years in private consulting, including 12 years running his own firm, specializing in the design, permitting and construction of tidal wetland and creek restoration projects around San Francisco Bay. These include several tidal marsh restoration projects using dredged sediments for beneficial reuse to create wetlands including the Montezuma Wetlands Project, the Hamilton Restoration Project, and the Bair Island Project.

He has a BS in Geology from UCSB and a Masters in Hydraulic and Coastal Engineering from UC Berkeley. Mr. Leventhal is an appointed member (now emeritus) of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) Design Review Board primarily to provide guidance on engineering design and construction in ecologically sensitive areas around the San Francisco Bay margin. He is also on the SFBRA advisory committee.

Valary Bloom, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Valary Bloom has worked for USFWS for over 20 years in southern and northern California, focusing primarily on the tidal marsh ecosystem. In 2019, she joined the San Francisco Bay Delta Field Office in downtown Sacramento where she serves as the USFWS member on the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT), which aims to make more efficient the permitting process for large multi-benefit restoration projects in SF Bay. Her greatest professional accomplishment was the 2014 publication of the *Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems of Northern and Central California*, of which she was the primary author. Early on, Valary worked for California Department of Fish and Wildlife and environmental consulting firms, conducting varied field studies.