



**Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting  
Via Video Conference Call**

**May 17, 2023  
4:00 pm**

### **Staff Report**

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1. Introductions and Updates
2. Public Comment
3. Agenda Revisions
4. **ACTION:** Consider Approval of February 15, 2023 Executive Committee (EC) minutes (see attached)
5. **ACTION:** Approval of BIL Equity Strategy and Long-Term Strategy (see attached)

As required as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding, the Estuary Program is required to complete two plans: 1) Equity Strategy describing how we will ensure that the impacts of the funding benefit disadvantaged communities and how we will track that, and 2) a Long-Term Strategy describing our overall vision and plan for the remaining BIL funding.

Staff recommends EC approval of the Equity Strategy and Long-Term Strategy.

6. **ACTION:** Approval of Workplan for 320 Grant for Fiscal Year 2024 (see attached)

At the February EC meeting, the group discussed potential changes to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 workplan. We are expecting \$850,000 in 320 funding for next year. Major changes to the workplan include removal of eelgrass restoration work and the addition of a fisheries management project to track steelhead use of Chorro Creek and a focus on Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP) progress tracking. Additional funding will also support stipends for student fellowships, increasing laboratory costs, and staff compensation.

Staff recommends EC approval of the FY24 320 grant workplan and budget.

7. **ACTION:** Recommendations on Community Project Application (see attached)

There is one Community Project application available for our consideration in this spring round. While we typically do not have funding available for this program at this time of year, the Camp KEEP watershed education project approved for FY22 was not able to proceed, leaving \$10,000 of Community Project budget unspent.

Staff worked with One Cool Earth (OCE), a local nonprofit focused on environmental education. They are proposing support of Baywood Elementary with school garden with curriculum, teacher support, and lessons for the school's 500 students in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

While the maximum project amount is usually \$10,000, this year we are in the position of having the unspent funding from the FY22 Community Project budget. Support for OCE for a year at a school is \$20,000. We worked with OCE to develop a one-year plan and budget for Baywood Elementary and

propose funding at an amount beyond our typical \$10,000. The additional \$10,000 of funding would come from the FY24 Community Project budget. The proposed project would start in August.

Staff recommends EC approval of the proposed project.

**8. DISCUSSION:** BIL and 320 Semi-annual reports (see attached)

Twice a year, the Estuary Program submits a semi-annual report to EPA, which provides the program status on budgets and tasks laid out in our workplan. As we are now managing funding from our 320 and BIL grants, two separate semi-annual reports are now required.

For our 320 funding, we have expended 60% of our funding since the cumulative grant began October 1, 2021 and met 245% of our match requirement.

For our BIL funding, we have expended 20% of our funding since the cumulative grant began, although the contracting was not completed and funds were not available until January 2023. The BIL funding for FY22 and FY23 does not have a match requirement.

**9. DISCUSSION:** Program Highlights

- **Community Project Updates:** Both projects for FY23 are underway. The Cal Poly professor and students working on monitoring Morro Bay phytoplankton are conducting analysis on samples from two locations in the bay. The Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSO) completed permitting and are poised to purchase and install trash receptacles for the Baywood area. We are working with the LOCSO on the educational signage for the project. The Harbor Department's spill response project is complete, and final project reporting is wrapping up.
- **Administrative Updates:** The BIL workplan timeline is different from that of the 320 funding due to contracting delays at EPA. The timeline for the FY24 BIL workplan is to hold discussions with the EC at the August meeting regarding potential new projects, with the group voting on the workplan in November. We have plans to hire additional Administrative support in the near future.
- **National Marine Sanctuary Updates:** Although designation documents and the public comment period were expected to occur late last year, delays pushed this back to the spring. NOAA is still reviewing public comments on the proposal documents and preparing the draft management plan, regulations, and boundaries.

**10. Adjourn to next meeting of August 16, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., to be held remotely via Zoom.**

**Attachments:**

- Minutes from February 15, 2023 EC meeting
- Draft FY24 workplan for 320 grant
- Community Project summary
- Semi-annual reports for BIL and 320
- Draft BIL Long-Term Strategy
- Draft BIL Equity Strategy