



**Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting
Estuary Program Offices, Morro Bay, CA
and via Video Conferencing**

**November 19, 2025
4:00 pm**

Minutes

Attendees: Jason Curtis, *Bay Foundation*; Becka Kelly, *Morro Bay Harbor Department*; John Flaherty, *Central Coast Outdoors*; Kate Ballantyne, *SLO County Public Works*; Ethan Bell, *Stillwater Sciences*; Marshall Ochylski, *Los Osos CSD*; Chris Womack, *Los Osos CSD*; Lisen Bonnier, *organic farmer*; Zara Landrum, *Morro Bay City Council*; Trudy O'Brien, *Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization*; Crow White, *Cal Poly*; Vivian Lopez, *USEPA*; Ann Kitajima, *MBNEP Staff*; Melodie Grubbs, *MBNEP Staff*; Jodi Marfia, *MBNEP Staff*

1. Introductions and Updates

- Becka: Lighted boat parade December 13 – start time is 6 pm. Event might start earlier since it's challenging to line up the boats. Annual dredging is still funded for 2026, and future funding is not in jeopardy. The inner channel dredging scheduled for this winter has been delayed due to government shutdowns. The funding for the project will be awarded in April or May of 2026, and the work will take place at the end of summer and into next winter. They don't yet have the permit for this work due to delays caused by the government shutdown. The work will be done with a dredging scow so that it doesn't impact the beach. There has been confusion on whose responsibility it was to do repairs on revetments, and it has been determined it is that of the Army Corps, so the Harbor Department is working with them to prioritize sites.
- Ethan: Chorro Creek pikeminnow population management is ongoing. Removed 700 pikeminnow from the Chorro watershed this fall. Carolyn will co-author a paper on the effort over the last five years. Stillwater is interested in possibly introducing a genetic trait that sterilizes the female fish to manage the population using Chorro Creek as a test case.
- Trudy: Crab season is gearing up, and rockfish season is going great. The salmon season is still closed until at least May. It's been a good albacore season.
- Marshall: No updates
- Chris: The poll on acquiring the Sunnyside School property was 64% yes, 29% no, 7% undecided. The next step is to put a proposition on the ballot, so community groups are collecting signatures. Negotiations with San Luis Coastal Unified School District have been going well. The Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSO) awarded a contract to a consultant to start the project to connect Los Osos to State Water. The LOCSO is starting the search for a new General Manager, as Ron Munds' contract is nearly up and he wants to retire.
- Jodi: No updates
- Jason: No updates
- Zara: Morro Bay has hired a new City Manager. They are just waiting for background checks for it to be finalized and announced. The first Waterfront Master Plan community meeting went well, with 85 to 90 attendees. This was the first of the five meetings currently scheduled. The city also approved emergency road repairs near Morro Creek.
- Ann: No updates
- John: The new partnership with Grassy Bar Oyster Company (GBOC) has been great, and the kayaking and oyster tasting outings are very popular. GBOC has had a change in ownership, in partnership with Holdfast Aquaculture. The annual Bird Festival will be held over the MLK holiday weekend and is anticipated to be a very successful event.

- Lisen: Her farm received 5.25” of rain during most recent rains. There was some runoff but no major soil movement.
- Crow: Working on Cal Poly transition from quarters to semesters.
- Kate: The South Bay Boulevard bridge replacement project has been awarded to a contractor. Mitigation work will take place this winter, and the bridge will be built next summer. Development of the regional de-salination project is underway. From an initial list of 12 sites, four have been selected for further analysis.

2. Public comment

None.

3. Agenda revisions

None.

4. **ACTION:** Consider approval of August 20, 2025 Executive Committee (EC) minutes (see attached)

Vote: Crow moved to approve. Lisen seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

5. **ACTION:** Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Workplan and Budget

Staff described the updates to the IIJA workplan for FY26. Because this is our last year of IIJA funding, the projects are similar to workplans from previous years, and the focus is on wrapping up multi-year projects. The Bay Foundation board approved the workplan and budget at their November meeting.

Vote: Marshall moved to approve. Zara seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

6. **ACTION:** Consider approval of Consent Decree request for tidal prism analysis

Staff described the importance of tidal prism in tracking sedimentation in the bay and the additional analysis to potentially be conducted by Dr. Stefan Talke of Cal Poly. The project requires \$20,000 of Consent Decree funding for the first phase of the work, with a second phase to be funded through the FY26 IIJA grant.

Vote: Ethan moved to approve. Zara seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

7. **ACTION:** Consider approval of Community Project (see attached)

For the proposed Community Project for FY26, the nonprofit SLO Beaver Brigade (SLOBB) would host an all-day workshop and four field tours to teach practitioners, landowners, regulators, local nonprofits, and community members about low-tech process-based restoration techniques. The project budget is \$8,055. Some EC members expressed an interest in attending, and staff will invite the EC and Bay Foundation members.

Vote: Becka moved to approve. John seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

8. **DISCUSSION:** 320 Base Funding and IIJA Annual Reports

Staff presented the highlights of the annual reports for the FY25 IJJA and 320 Base Funding grants.

9. **DISCUSSION:** Program Highlights

No updates beyond the staff report other than the government shutdown update no longer applies.

10. Adjourn to next meeting of February 18 at 4 p.m., which will be hybrid with some attendees participating via Zoom and others meeting in the Estuary Program office.

Vote: Becka moved to adjourn, Zara seconded. All in favor. None opposed.