CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 320 BASE FUNDING GRANT
WORK PLAN & BUDGET
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2027

MORRO BAY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM
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Contents

1. Introduction

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program (Estuary Program) is a locally driven, non-regulatory program established under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and further supported by the Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act (PRAE Act). As one of 28 National Estuary Programs (NEPs) across the country, the Estuary Program works in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as community stakeholders, to protect and restore the health of Morro Bay and its watershed. The program operates under the guidance of its Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) which serves as a strategic framework for addressing key water quality, habitat, and resource management challenges in the region.

This Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) workplan outlines the Estuary Program's priority actions for the coming year for Clean Water Act Section 320 base funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These resources allow the Estuary Program to accelerate progress on its CCMP goals in ways that directly support the objectives of the CWA and PRAE Act.

The proposed work aligns with the federal commitment to improving water infrastructure, supporting coastal and watershed resilience, and ensuring that local communities benefit from sustainable resource management. Through targeted initiatives, the Estuary Program will advance efforts to reduce pollutants, restore critical habitats, and enhance the natural processes that sustain Morro Bay's estuarine ecosystem. This supports the national priorities through the Core Programs of Section 320 of the CWA: establishing water quality standards; identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them; addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution; protecting wetlands; and protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program. These efforts protect water resources and foster collaboration among agencies, industries, and local stakeholders.

The National Estuary Program was originally enacted in 1987 when the CWA was amended to establish the program. As stated in the act, the purpose of the program is to:

- "assess trends in water quality, natural resources, and uses of the estuary";
- "collect, characterize, and assess data on toxics, nutrients, and natural resources within the estuarine zone to identify the cause of environmental problems";
- "develop the relationship between the inplace loads and point and nonpoint loading of pollutants to the estuarine zone and the potential uses of the zone, water quality, and natural resources";
- "develop a comprehensive conservation and management plan that— (A) recommends priority corrective actions and compliance schedules addressing point and nonpoint sources of pollution to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the estuary, including restoration and maintenance of water quality, a balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish and wildlife, and recreational activities in the estuary, and assure that the designated uses of the estuary are protected; (B) addresses the effects of recurring extreme weather events on the estuary, including the identification and assessment of vulnerabilities in the estuary and the development and implementation of adaptation strategies; and (C) increases public education and awareness of the ecological health and water quality conditions of the estuary"; and
- "monitor the effectiveness of actions taken pursuant to the plan."

On January 13, 2021, the PRAE Act was signed into law to recognize the economic and environmental importance of wetlands and coastlines. The purpose of the act is to "address the recurring extreme weather events on the estuary, including the identification and assessment of vulnerabilities in the estuary and the development and implementation of adaption strategies," and "increase public education and awareness of the ecological health and water quality conditions of the estuary."

By supporting science-based management actions and community-driven solutions, the Estuary Program continues to uphold the intent of the Clean Water Act and the PRAE Act, ensuring that Morro Bay remains a thriving natural resource for future generations.

The Estuary Program works to protect and restore the Morro Bay estuary and its watershed through the implementation of our CCMP for Morro Bay, which was updated in 2022. The three Estuary Program programmatic focus areas are: (1) habitat protection and restoration, (2) environmental monitoring and research, and (3) public participation, education, and outreach. This workplan describes the planned efforts for FY27 with an end date of the middle of FY28, covering the period from October 1, 2026 through March 31, 2028. The program is proposing the extended 'rollover' time period on the advice of EPA, in case there are delays in the award of the FY28 base funding grant.

Morro Bay was accepted into the National Estuary Program in 1995 when the Administrator of the EPA accepted Governor Wilson's nomination of the program. With financial support from EPA, Estuary Program staff worked with government agencies, non-profits, businesses, and the local community to develop a watershed-based management plan, the CCMP. This plans defines the priority issues facing the estuary and watershed, and identifies specific Action Plans to address them. It also defines the management structure of the organization, which is based on collaboration and partnerships between the many groups that make up the Estuary Program.

The EPA formally approved the Estuary Program's CCMP in January 2001 and has continued to provide significant grant funding to further the implementation of that plan. Almost every CCMP action plan was initiated, and nearly half are either complete or fully in place and ongoing. The CCMP was revised in 2012 through a public process and approved by the Estuary Program's Management Conference in February 2013. The CCMP was updated in 2022, with approval by the Estuary Program's Management Conference. Various action plans from the CCMP are referenced in this workplan. The Estuary Program works with its many partners to implement these actions in the watershed.

Congress allocates funding for the NEP under Section 320 of the CWA. EPA provides a portion of those funds to each of the 28 National Estuaries. The expected funding available to the Estuary Program through these Section 320 funds for FY27 is $850,000.

The Bay Foundation of Morro Bay, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, will continue to serve as the legal and fiscal agent for the Estuary Program by employing staff, signing contracts, and applying for grants. The Estuary Program Executive Committee (EC) oversees the progress of the annual workplan and is the policy decision-making body for the Estuary Program. The Section 320 base funding requires a non-federal match of at least one-to-one. The Estuary Program will meet that match through direct expenditures of private, local, and state funds awarded directly to the Estuary Program, and through tracking the in-kind match that our many partner organizations are spending to help implement the Management Plan.

The Estuary Program is excited to continue the work to protect and restore the Morro Bay estuary and watershed and are thankful for the financial and technical support of EPA, as well as the ongoing participation of many partners in the Morro Bay watershed and beyond.

Management Conference Structure and Membership

Executive Committee – The EC is the key decision-making body for the Estuary Program. It provides broad policy direction, approves priorities for CCMP implementation, seeks and develops funding sources, and approves CCMP changes, as necessary. Specific responsibilities include: approving funding requests for the Morro Bay Restoration Fund, monitoring and evaluating the performance of the program, approving the annual workplan, and providing leadership and overall direction for the Estuary Program. The EC meets quarterly. Membership

includes representatives from specific agencies that serve at the pleasure of their organization, and interest group seats that are approved through a majority vote of the EC and serve three-year terms.

Bay Foundation Board of Directors – The Bay Foundation is the nonprofit home of the Estuary Program, and its board of directors approves priorities for CCMP implementation, workplans, Community Projects, and other major components of the work of the Estuary Program. The Board of Directors works collaboratively with the EC on strategic direction and priorities of the Estuary Program.

Technical Advisory Committees – The Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) are composed of experts in various areas that provide technical advice and input to the program. They serve in an advisory role on specific technical topics such as Sedimentation, Fisheries Management, Estuarine Habitats, and Education and Outreach. These TACs provide advice to staff in many areas: collaborating and reviewing Community Project options, investigating technical issues, and providing advisory oversight on monitoring, restoration, and education efforts. The TACs meet on an as-needed basis. Membership is not limited to a specific number of seats, and members are invited by staff to join. While providing valuable input that guides policy and decision making, the TACs do not serve in an approval role for workplans, budgets, spending, etc.

2. Goals for CCMP Implementation in Fiscal Year 2027

This workplan describes the Estuary Program's broad goals, specific projects, and planned budget for FY27, which spans from October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027. This workplan will guide Estuary Program efforts in FY27 and provide a mechanism to measure our success over the coming year. It is important to recognize that the nature of a collaborative, non-regulatory program such as the Estuary Program requires flexibility to be successful; just as some planned projects may be delayed, other unforeseen opportunities and partnerships to further implementation of the CCMP will present themselves. The program goals are summarized below.

Water Quality Protection and Enhancement: Water quality in the Morro Bay watershed and estuary supports diverse habitats and wildlife populations, safe recreation, clean drinking water, and well-balanced economic uses.

One of the main tenets of the NEP is to protect and restore water quality, as the NEP is part of the federal Clean Water Act. This goal illustrates the aspiration for clean water that supports a variety of uses by people and wildlife in Morro Bay.

Ecosystem Restoration and Conservation: The Morro Bay watershed and estuary sustain a resilient community with high habitat connectivity, ample biological integrity, proper ecosystem function, and a vibrant economy.

This goal illustrates the Estuary Program's interest in conserving and restoring habitats, biodiversity, and ecosystem processes, all of which affect the local economy. The goal also envisions a healthy ecosystem and economy even in the face of change.

Public Education, Outreach, and Stewardship: Community members and visitors around Morro Bay understand basic estuary science and the impacts of specific actions on estuary health and are engaged stewards of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed.

This goal represents the importance of an informed and engaged community for the future health of Morro Bay and a vision that community members will increasingly become stewards of the estuary.

Fostering Collaboration: The community, local government, nonprofits, state and federal agencies, and public and private landowners collaborate and leverage resources to facilitate effective management and increased scientific knowledge of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed.

Another core tenet of the NEP is collaboration, as described in the Clean Water Act. This goal showcases the Estuary Program's commitment to fostering collaboration to effectively understand and manage the resources of Morro Bay.

Actions to complete these goals are described in detail in Section 4.

3. Budget, Cost Share, and Staff Elements

Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 provide an overview of the budget for FY27.

Table 3.1: Budget Overview for FY27

Category	Subcategory	FY27 Anticipated Request	Match	Total
Personnel	Salaries (payroll taxes, workers comp)	$587,439	$12,244	$599,683
	Fringe (health, retirement)	$87,850	$0	$87,850
	Subtotal	***$675,289***	**$12,244**	***$687,534***
Travel	(includes local mileage)	$0	$0	$0
Equipment	Work truck	$35,000	$5,000	$40,000
Supplies	Computers, software	$27,000	$0	$27,000
	Monitoring supplies	$5,403	$0	$5,403
	Misc. office supplies	$7,688	$0	$7,688
	Subtotal	***$40,091***	***$0***	***$40,091***
Contractual	Audit/Taxes/Accounting	$15,045	$7,980	$23,025
	Education and Outreach	$10,000	$251,695	$261,695
	Monitoring and Research	$10,500	$244,833	$255,333
	Restoration and Protection	$0	$282,180	$282,180
	Community Projects	$0	$15,000	$15,000
	Subtotal	***$35,545***	***$801,687***	***$837,232***
Other	Rent	$34,661	$13,740	$48,401
	Utilities	$3,788	$0	$3,788
	Postage	$0	$0	$0
	Copying, Printing	$2,380	$0	$2,380
	Training, Prof. Dev.	$0	$0	$0
	Telephone, Internet	$5,636	$0	$5,636
	Repairs and Maintenance	$11,049	$0	$11,049
	Insurance	$4,840	$0	$4,840
	Vehicle maintenance, fuel	$1,720	$0	$1,720
	Management Conference Members' Work Time	$0	$17,328	$17,328
	Subtotal	***$64,074***	***$31,068***	***$95,142***
	TOTAL	**$850,000**	**$850,000**	**$1,700,000**

Table 3.2: Budget Detail of Direct Expenses by Program Area

Program Area	Project	320 Grant Request	Match (non-federal)		Total
			MB Restoration Fund	Other	
Education and Outreach **A**	Communications 1	$0	$0	$251,695	$251,695
	Education 2	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Nature Center 3	$10,000	$0	$0	$10,000
	Comm Engagement 4	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Mutts for the Bay 5	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Subtotal	***$10,000***	***$0***	***$251,695***	***$261,695***
Monitoring and Research **B**	Benthic Invertebrate Monitoring	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Eelgrass Monitoring 1	$0	$0	$4,839	$4,839
	Water Quality Monitoring 2	$10,500	$0	$239,994	$250,494
	Subtotal	***$10,500***	***$0***	***$244,833***	***$255,333***
Habitat Protection and Restoration	Restoration Maintenance and Monitoring	$0	$34,500	$247,680	$282,180
	Other Restoration	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Fisheries Management	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Conservation & Restoration Proj Dev	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Subtotal	***$0***	***$34,500***	***$247,680***	***$282,180***
	TOTAL	***$20,500***	***$34,500***	***$744,207***	***$799,207***

Note: Restoration Fund match provides $15,000 for Community Projects and $34,500 for Restoration Maintenance. Expenses shown combined contractual, supplies, and equipment expenses by Program Area to more clearly represent the resources devoted to these aspects of the Estuary Program FY27 workplan. This table does not include Estuary Program staff time or overhead.

Education and Outreach Expenses (section A):

1. Communications expenses include graphic design work and printing for the annual report; design and printing of pamphlets and publications; and ongoing maintenance expenses for our blog and website.
2. Education expenses include supply and materials costs for teacher training, educational curriculum, and other education focused efforts.
3. Nature Center expenses include display repairs and updates to the facility.
4. Community Engagement includes support for partner education efforts such as cleanup events and local water conservation efforts.
5. Mutts for the Bay includes management of pet waste bag dispensers, coordination of volunteers, and sharing educational curriculum.

Monitoring and Research Expenses (section B):

1. Eelgrass Monitoring expenses includes imagery collection and analysis to track eelgrass extent in the bay and support for eelgrass health monitoring efforts.

2. Water Quality Monitoring expenses include analytical laboratory services (couriers, sample analysis, and data reporting) and data management support (technical support for maintaining our data management system and submitting data to a state-wide data portal).

Table 3.3: Summary of 320 Spending and Match for FY27

FY27 Workplan Task	320 Budget Other Expenses	320 Budget Staff time	Projected match	Total
REST-1: Habitat Protection	$0	$7,376	$0	$7,376
REST-2: Restoration Maintenance	$0	$9,220	$282,180	$291,400
REST-3: Other Restoration	$0	$37,737	$0	$37,737
REST-4: Conservation Proj Dev	$0	$31,845	$0	$31,845
REST-5: Fisheries Management	$0	$13,638	$0	$13,638
MONITORING-1: Coordination	$13,593	$35,746	*$239,994*	$289,333
MONITORING-2: Reporting & Analysis	$0	$29,773	$0	$29,773
MONITORING-3: Data Management	$0	$23,267	$0	$23,267
MONITORING-4: Quality Assurance	$1,375	$20,785	$0	$22,160
MONITORING-5: Project Effectiveness	$935	$15,469	$0	$16,404
MONITORING-6: Eelgrass Monitoring	$0	$10,630	$4,839	$15,469
MONITORING-7: Partner Research	$0	$5,457	$0	$5,457
E&O-1: Communications	$0	$61,510	$251,695	$313,205
E&O-2: Education	$0	$15,834	$0	$15,834
E&O-3: Nature Center	$10,000	$9,658	$0	$19,658
E&O-4: Community Engagement/Stewardship	$0	$15,053	$0	$15,053
E&O-5: Mutts for the Bay	$0	$13,973	$0	$13,973
PM-1: Manage Committees	$0	$39,980	$17,328	$57,308
PM-2: Grants & Contracts	$15,045	$115,396	$7,980	$138,421
PM-3: General Administration	$133,762	$64,592	$30,984	$229,338
PM-4: Tracking Implementation of CCMP	$0	$34,966	$0	$34,966
PM-5: Community Projects Program	$0	$9,554	$15,000	$24,554
PM-6: Management Plan Update	$0	$53,834	$0	$53,834
TOTAL Budget	**$174,710**	**$675,290**	**$850,000**	**$1,700,000**

Sources of Cost Share

The Estuary Program meets a portion of the EPA's one-to-one match requirement using the Estuary Program-managed Morro Bay Restoration Fund. These funds are private, locally controlled, and already committed and available for these projects. Other sources of match funds include local and state funding, private donations, private grants, volunteer time, and contributed services and facilities.

Program Staffing Anticipated for FY27

All personnel are employees of the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay. As in any small organization, the roles of personnel are fluid to change with the needs of the organization.

- Executive Director: Leads the organization and Management Plan implementation. Responsible for CCMP update. Manages CWA 320 base funding and other grant, staffs committees, and nonprofit board.

Oversees general operations – budgeting, accounting, records management, and human resources. Supervises Estuary Program staff. Principal liaison to other agencies and organizations. Principal liaison to EPA. Serves as the public face of the organization. Represents the Estuary Program on local and regional committees. Oversees CCMP tracking, annual report, and workplan. Attends Association of NEP (ANEP)/EPA meetings.

- Associate Director: Responsible for assisting the Executive Director with CCMP implementation, managing CWA 320 base funding and other grants, and staffing committees and nonprofit board. Supports budgeting, accounting, and records management. Assists with CCMP tracking and updates, annual reports, and workplan. Supports project development and grant management across the organization. Supports Education & Outreach efforts. Supports match tracking and National Estuary Program Online Reporting Tool (NEPORT) submission. Attends ANEP/EPA meetings.
- Comptroller: Oversees day-to-day bookkeeping and accounting, financial records, annual audit requirements, and provides administrative support for human resources. Responsible for ensuring all operational accounting and financial support is timely, accurate, and consistent with all organization policies and procedures. Coordinates match tracking and supports NEPORT data collection and synthesis.
- Restoration Program Director: Develops and implements restoration efforts. Oversees restoration projects, including partner agency coordination, grant management, permitting, and outside services procurement. Manages monitoring and maintenance of restoration projects. Manages restoration staff and volunteers. Coordinates a diverse set of external experts to assist with technical aspects of specific projects.
- Education & Outreach Projects Manager: Develops and oversees education and outreach efforts. Manages education and outreach staff and volunteers. Supports budgeting, accounting, contracting, and other administrative support for projects. Collaborates with partners on education and outreach initiatives. Represents the Estuary Program in outreach settings, including relevant local and regional forums.
- Community Engagement Coordinator: Supports organization-wide communications and community engagement efforts, including social media, website content, blog posts, newsletters, and press releases. Assists with planning and implementing public outreach events and campaigns that promote environmental stewardship and community awareness.
- Monitoring Projects Manager: Coordinates Estuary Program monitoring efforts. Assists with staff and volunteer management. Manages budgeting, invoicing, contracting, etc. for monitoring projects. Reviews and updates Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), monitoring protocols, and indicators/baseline work. Coordinates data management and submittal of data to the state. Manages and shares data with partners and the general public.
- Monitoring Coordinator: Conducts Estuary Program monitoring efforts. Completes data analysis, reports, and protocols. Assists with volunteer recruitment, training, and fieldwork. Manages quality assurance functions. Manages and shares data with partners and the general public.
- Intern(s) and Technician(s) (as needed): Assists with field work, data management, analysis, and outreach. These are part-time, temporary positions.

Fringe Details: $87,850

Expenses:

- Health Insurance – Health insurance costs that the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay covers for eligible full-time employees.
- IRA Match – Bay Foundation match payments for eligible employees' IRA contributions.
- Flexible Spending Accounts – A tax-advantaged account to cover eligible health care and dependent care expenses for eligible employees.

Miscellaneous Office Supplies: $7,112
Expenses:

- Office supplies (paper, toner, batteries, etc.)
- Water delivery
- Office furniture
- Meeting space rentals and materials
- Phone, copier, etc. maintenance and repairs
- Document storage
- Forms, checks, and employee policy posters and guides
- First aid supplies and CPR training

Equipment: $35,000
Expenses:

- Work truck – purchase a vehicle to support program fieldwork in monitoring and restoration. See Appendix for additional details and a cost-benefit analysis.

Monitoring Supplies: $5,403
Expenses:

- Monitoring supplies – Reagent, calibration supplies, small equipment (< $10,000 each), batteries, and other ancillary items for monitoring in the estuary and creeks. This includes necessary items for health and safety and for quality assurance procedures.
- Field gear – Protective gear to ensure that staff and volunteers can work effectively and safely.

Compliance with Build America Buy America (BABA) Act Requirements
Congress passed the BABA Act in 2021, concurrently with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). BABA is a domestic preference program to create long-term opportunities for domestic manufacturers and manufacturing jobs and to build resilient domestic supply chains for a wide range of products used in construction and infrastructure, including iron and steel products, manufactured products, and construction materials. The Estuary Program will work with EPA to determine the types of products that may be covered under this new law and will support compliance where necessary. In FY27, no 320 base funding projects will trigger BABA requirements.

4. New and Ongoing Project Information

Where applicable, the estimated budgets include project and staff costs.

The Estuary Program receives funds from the IIJA that funds projects that support CCMP implementation. Although many direct projects costs such as contracting, analysis, and equipment purchases are funded with IIJA money, Estuary Program staff time to manage these projects are funded with both IIJA and EPA 320 base funding. Thus, IIJA-funded projects are listed in the 320 base funding workplan where appropriate due to time spent by 320-funded staff to support those efforts.

Habitat Protection and Restoration Activities

The Estuary Program's habitat and restoration work advances the goals for Section 320 of the CWA and the PRAE Act by protecting water quality, reducing nonpoint source pollution, and conserving critical coastal and

watershed habitats. Through collaborative, locally driven action, these efforts support the long-term health of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed by improving ecosystem function, enhancing natural resource resilience, and maintaining clean water for people and wildlife. This work also aligns with EPA's Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American, reinforcing the Program's commitment to protecting environmental resources that benefit both ecological and community well-being.

Guided by the CCMP, the Estuary Program partners with federal, state, local, academic, and nonprofit organizations to implement projects that address habitat degradation, water quality concerns, invasive species, and barriers to native fish recovery. This section outlines current and emerging restoration activities, including land conservation planning, restoration site maintenance, early-stage project development, fish and invasive species management, and support for partner-led initiatives. Together, these efforts reflect the Estuary Program's commitment to science-based restoration, clean water, and stewardship of the Morro Bay watershed.

REST-1: Land Conservation and Planning
Project Status: *Ongoing*
Objective: Conserve land as opportunities arise.

Description: The CCMP calls for protection of ecologically valuable habitats in part to help minimize nonpoint sources of pollution entering the estuary and to promote clean water in the bay. Over 5,000 acres of land have been protected through conservation easements and fee title acquisitions by the Estuary Program and partners. In FY27, the Estuary Program expects to work with The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (LCSLO) and other partners to develop conservation easements with interested landowners in the watershed. The Estuary Program is participating in community efforts within Morro Bay to support open space preservation around the city. This task represents an anticipated share of staff time to develop these opportunities and support partner efforts.
Partners and Their Roles: LCSLO is experienced in working with landowners to develop easements and acquisitions, obtaining funds for these deals, and overseeing the monitoring and management of the protected lands. Their role is to interface with landowners and the funders to develop easements and acquisitions. Other partners with interest in land conservation in Los Osos and Morro Bay include Morro Bay Open Space Alliance, California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), Wildlife Conservation Board, Morro Coast Audubon Society, California State Parks, Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD), and private landowners.
Output/Deliverables: The deliverable will be a map or similar documentation of acquisitions or easements.
Estimated Milestones: Easement timelines are dependent on landowner and funding timelines.
Estimated Budget: Depends on acquisition and easement opportunities. Staff time: $7,376. Match: $0.
Long-Term Outcomes: Achieve land conservation projects as opportunities arise, with a focus on the Los Osos Valley.
CWA Implementation: Addressing diffuse nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting wetlands. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: LP-1 (Protect Special Habitats/Species), LP-3 (Direct Urban Development)

REST-2: Restoration Maintenance and Monitoring
Project Status: *Ongoing*
Objective: Conduct maintenance and monitoring for conservation easements and restoration projects, as necessary.

Description: The Estuary Program and its partners have implemented multiple complex restoration projects that require ongoing maintenance. This work includes maintenance of Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve (CCER), riparian fencing, rainwater storage, and off-creek water systems as well as best management practice (BMP) projects. At CCER, efforts for 2027 include plant maintenance, monitoring, and a site adaptation management

plan based on modeling to adapt to changes occurring during high flow events. The Estuary Program is also working with Creek Lands Conservation to improve and expand rainwater capture at Escuela Ranch on Cal Poly. Rainwater improvements will support reduced creek water use for ranching. This task could also include efforts such as trash removal in areas where illegal dumping is impacting sensitive habitats.
Partners and Their Roles: Army National Guard Base Camp San Luis Obispo (Camp SLO), CDFW, California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly), Pacific Gas & Electric, California State Parks, and US Forest Service. Their role is to permit land access and maintain project sites.
Outputs/Deliverables: Activities documented in semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Maintenance work is on an as-needed basis.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $9,220. Match: $282,180.
Long-term Outcomes: Work with landowners to maintain restoration projects so that they continue to function as designed and effectively prevent environmental degradation and preserve habitat quality.
CWA Core Program Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: BMP-1 (Agricultural and Grazing BMPs), BMP-2 (Rural Road Erosion), ECR-1 (In-Stream Habitat), ECR-2 (Riparian Corridors), ECR-3 (Wetland Protection and Enhancement)

REST-3: Other Restoration Efforts
Project Status: *Ongoing*
Objective: Engage in other restoration efforts that arise to help achieve CCMP goals.

Description: Additional water quality and habitat restoration opportunities often arise during the year that are worthy of immediate attention. This task reserves some staff time for these opportunities. Some examples include riparian fencing, floodplain restoration, low-tech process-based restoration projects to improve site hydrology and water quality, the San Luis Obispo (SLO) County Integrated Regional Water Management efforts, supporting partner restoration projects on private property, and supporting the city of Morro Bay and stakeholders in habitat management efforts. Staff are working with Cal Poly to enhance floodplain conditions on Walters Creek through low-tech process-based restoration practices and complete outreach efforts. A road crossing improvement will also occur on a tributary to Walters Creek to reduce sediment impacts. The Estuary Program will act as a partner on water conservation, habitat restoration, and steelhead projects as needed. Staff are partnering with University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) and others to conduct invasive plant monitoring and management on the Morro Bay sandspit. Efforts are also underway to work with the partners on synthesizing existing efforts on coastal dune systems on the coast of California to share lessons learned to increase resiliency, develop implementation best practices, and standardize monitoring protocols. Staff conducted a Chorro Creek watershed invasive species survey to inform management of invasives such as giant reed (*Arundo*). Estuary Program staff are implementing invasive removal with SLO County in FY27. The Estuary Program will continue to work with partners such as United States Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct modeling to understand coastal flooding impacts on estuary habitats and develop projects to address protection of the salt marsh, mudflats, eelgrass, sandspit, and transition zones. The Estuary Program will continue to work with State Parks to conduct invasive sea lavender monitoring and removal and to map invasives and special status species. The Estuary Program continues to work with partners to implement its Habitat Protection and Restoration Strategy (HPRS) which identifies the indicators, environmental stressors, projects, and partners involved in protecting and preserving each habitat type. Additionally, staff continue to support several restoration projects including a historical ecological study of the bay and buffering habitats, community habitat restoration events, and invasive iceplant management and monitoring on the sandspit. The Estuary Program is partnering with CSLRCD to enhance a tributary to Chorro Creek on private property through low-tech process-based restoration efforts such as installing beaver dam analogs and completing riparian plantings. CSLRCD is also completing designs and permitting to improve floodplain enhancement on Lower Chorro Creek, which the Estuary Program is supporting through funding and TAC involvement. The Estuary Program is continuing its work with the San Francisco Estuary Institute on a historical ecology study of the estuary and lower watershed to

better understand conditions and inform restoration practices and will be developing further outreach content with project results.
Partners and Their Roles: Potential partners include SLO County, the city of Morro Bay, the LOCSD, CSLRCD, Cal Poly, Camp SLO, the Morro Bay Harbor Advisory Board, CDFW, State Parks, Climate Action Initiative Dune Grant Team (which includes CA Sea Grant, UCSB, Point Blue Conservation Science, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), UC Santa Barbara, USGS, etc.), and others. These are partners in funding, planning, and implementation.
Output/Deliverables: If the opportunity arises and work is conducted for this item, then a description will be provided in the semi-annual progress reports provided to the EPA Project Officer.
Estimated Milestones: As opportunities arise.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $37,7373. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Restoration efforts protect water quality and habitat quality, thus supporting CCMP implementation goals.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, protecting wetlands. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: Depending on project opportunities that arise, work could impact the following Action Plans: BMP-1 (Agricultural and Grazing BMPs), ECR-1 (In-stream Habitat), ECR-2 (Riparian Corridors), ECR-3 (Wetlands Protection and Enhancement), ECR-14 (Support Recovery Plans), ECR-15 (Steelhead Barriers and Habitat), ECR-16 (Invasive Species Action Plan), FWR-5 (Water Conservation)

REST-4: Conservation and Restoration Project Development
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: To develop project plans and initial scoping for conservation and restoration efforts**.**

Description: Often planning, permitting, and initial monitoring must be conducted before a project is eligible for funding. This task reserves some staff time to work with partners to conduct these initial efforts. Estuary Program staff will continue to support Camp SLO in stormwater management projects. Efforts may also include engaging landowners in implementing water storage and other BMPs on private property throughout the watershed. Initial planning is underway with partners to assess fish passage barrier removal projects in the watershed. CSLRCD and San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) both received state grant funding for planning projects to address riverine and coastal flooding in lower Chorro Creek and along South Bay Boulevard, respectively. The Estuary Program is involved with project coordination and will participate in technical advisory committee efforts for both projects. Additionally, studies or implementation projects may also be completed (e.g., identify sediment basins, floodplains, migration space) that were identified in the HPRS. Numerous energy related projects are under development in the watershed and near-shore area that could impact Morro Bay and its watershed. Staff will track these potential projects and provide input where appropriate. Staff will seek opportunities to develop water conservation projects such as groundwater recharge or rainwater catchment efforts. Staff are also in conversation with partners on monitoring of alternative shoreline other than the traditional riprap to support improved invertebrate biodiversity. The Estuary Program staff will work with partners to consider future restoration and public access of the Cuesta Inlet shoreline property, recently acquired by Save Cuesta Inlet, which may include biological and cultural monitoring. With Estuary Program support, the LCSLO will be planning a community trail through the Quail Hallow property to connect the Los Osos Community Center to the Sweet Spring Preserve. With Claremont Graduate University and California Botanic Garden, Estuary Program staff are also developing a genetic study of local salt marsh birds beak population to inform State Parks and USFWS management of this sensitive species.
Partners and Their Roles: The primary partners for landowner best management practices are the CSLRCD and the National Resource Conservation Service. Instream flow projects could potentially include Creek Lands Conservation with the role of winning and managing funding and providing technical expertise; the California Conservation Corps (CCC), who would contribute technical expertise, materials and field support; and potential landowners. The primary partners for the steelhead habitat efforts are the city of SLO, and CDFW with the role of providing technical expertise; the CCC who would contribute technical expertise, materials, and field support;

and the city of SLO who would provide technical expertise. For conservation planning and invasive species management, primary partners include California State Parks, City of Morro Bay, UCSB, and SLO County, who provide technical expertise and field support. Partners for stormwater projects include Camp SLO, SLO County, the CSLRCD, and the CCC. Partners on energy-related projects include the city of Morro Bay, SLO County, and the Coastal Commission. These entities take on the role of providing guidance and oversight as these efforts develop. Partners on oyster restoration projects include Sea Grant, Cal Poly, The Nature Conservancy, and Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve as technical resources, and local oyster farms as research partners. Protecting and restoring habitats at Pasadena Point would involve SLO County (as the landowner and implementation partner) and members of the public who have an interest in protecting the area. Camp SLO, as a landowner and funding partner, will be involved in developing stormwater projects on the base. Potential partners for water conservation efforts include Creek Lands Conservation (technical resource) and Camp SLO and Cal Poly as potential partners and landowners. The non-profit Save Cuesta Inlet will be a partner in developing biological and cultural surveys and a restoration plan for the Cuesta Inlet site.
Output/Deliverables: If this condition arises (need before funding) and work is conducted for this task, then a description will be provided in the annual and semi-annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Depends on funding deadlines. For conservation and steelhead projects, the milestones are to be determined depending on funding and permitting.
Estimated Budget: Staff: $31,845. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Expand steelhead access to areas in the watershed with the habitat and water quality to support sensitive species. Expand landowner water conservation efforts to protect surface flows. Best management practices to address sediment and water quality concerns. Enhance habitat quality through native species restoration. Assist in development of sustainable energy projects while protecting environmental resources.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: Depending on project opportunities that arise, work could impact the following Action Plans: BMP-1 (Agricultural and Grazing BMPs), ECR-1 (In-stream Habitat), ECR-2 (Riparian Corridors), ECR-3 (Wetlands Protection and Enhancement), ECR-14 (Support Recovery Plans), ECR-15 (Steelhead Barriers and Habitat), ECR-16 (Invasive Species Action Plan), FWR-5 (Water Conservation)

REST-5: Fisheries Management
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: To implement projects to benefit native species and other opportunities as they arise.

Description: Steelhead recovery in Choro Creek is inhibited by invasive Sacramento pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus grandis*). The Estuary Program is planning for pikeminnow management work in FY27. A steelhead growth and tracking study in Chorro Creek is currently underway, with antennae tracking the movements of tagged steelhead in Chorro Creek and the estuary. The study is expected to continue into FY27.
Partners and Their Roles: The primary partners for this project will include Stillwater Sciences who hold the permit for implementation. The CCC will provide technical input and field support. CDFW will provide technical support. USFWS offers project oversight and issues the permit for the work. CDFW is a landowner in the watershed and has funded fish-related work in the past.
Output/Deliverables: Data and results to be shared with partners.
Estimated Milestones: A better understanding of steelhead use of the mainstem creek helps target projects to improve habitat, water quality, and water quantity.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $13,638. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Fish habitat improvement supports steelhead recovery and improves habitat for all aquatic life.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: ECR-14 (Support Recovery Plans), ECR-15 (Steelhead Barriers and Habitat), ECR-16 (Invasive Species Action Plan)

Environmental Monitoring and Research

The Estuary Program's environmental monitoring and research efforts advance the goals of Section 320 of the CWA and the PRAE Act by supporting science-based decision-making, evaluating project effectiveness, and maintaining long-term data sets that inform watershed restoration and protection. These efforts are foundational to understanding environmental conditions throughout the Morro Bay watershed and estuary, ensuring that implementation actions are grounded in accurate, high-quality information.

Monitoring activities focus on collecting and analyzing key environmental indicators, maintaining rigorous quality assurance standards, supporting partner-led research, and coordinating data management to inform state and regional planning efforts. These tasks are implemented in close coordination with agencies, academic institutions, and local organizations, reflecting the collaborative spirit of EPA's Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership. By contributing science to regional permitting processes and streamlining information sharing among agencies and landowners, the Estuary Program helps advance well-informed projects that protect environmental resources while supporting sustainable investment and community priorities.

This work also supports Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American by strengthening watershed health through data-driven actions that reduce nonpoint source pollution, protect coastal waters, and improve understanding of waterbody status, especially for 303(d) listed waters and total maximum daily load (TMDL) implementation. Program data are used by local governments, shellfish managers, restoration practitioners, and the public to guide planning, improve outcomes, and track progress toward cleaner water and healthier ecosystems.

Work for all environmental monitoring and research tasks is aimed at achieving results for the following outcomes:

1. Project effectiveness evaluations conducted in partnership with relevant agencies and parties are shared broadly.
2. Understanding of TMDL effectiveness and the actions needed to eventually de-list local waterbodies is improved.
3. Overall understanding of waterbody status for 303(d) listed waterbodies in the watershed is improved.
4. Increase understanding of the effectiveness of stormwater management efforts.
5. Understand the impact of implementation actions on long-term, watershed-wide trends.
6. Strengthen collaboration among watershed partners while implementing actions laid out in the CCMP.

MONITORING-1: Monitoring Program Coordination
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Continue coordination of Monitoring Program and collect data that meets Quality Assurance Project Plan guidelines.

Description: The Estuary Program conducts monitoring throughout the watershed and estuary with the goal of tracking changes in ambient conditions and assessing impacts of implementation efforts. This work is supported by a dedicated corps of volunteers, which allow for expanded monitoring efforts. Staff will continue to coordinate the Volunteer Monitoring Program (VMP) to continue ongoing monitoring, track key environmental indicators, and develop new efforts to monitor effectiveness of implementation projects. This task includes monitoring coordination, volunteer recruitment and training, equipment maintenance, and program management tasks. The Estuary Program also serves as a co-placement site for the CCC's Watershed Stewards Program (WSP) Corpsmembers. These are individuals at the start of their careers in the environmental field, and staff provide training, mentorship, and professional development opportunities.

Partners and Their Roles: Primary partners in the Estuary Program monitoring effort include the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB), whose Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) lends technical advice, monitoring equipment, and field support. Landowners such as California State Parks, Cal Poly, Camp SLO, SLO County, the City of Morro Bay, and numerous private landowners are also partners, allowing access on their land for monitoring. Cuesta College provides technical support, access to their property, and lab space. The Estuary Program works with partners on WSP coordination, including the CCC, Creek Lands Conservation, the City of SLO, and WSP staff. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is responsible for water quality in shellfish growing areas, and the programs utilizes Estuary Program data to support their work. Program coordination follows the approved QAPP (a deliverable under Task MONITORING-4) and data is submitted to the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) database (a deliverable under Task MONITORING-3).
Outputs/Deliverables: A summary of work conducted for this item will be provided in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: As appropriate. Monitoring protocols are updated to reflect changes to sites, monitoring methodologies, etc.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $35,746. Project costs: $13,593. Match: $239,994.
Long-Term Outcomes: An increase in understanding of the long-term trends in ambient water quality in the watershed and estuary. Identification of potential projects and assessment of existing projects. Assessment of recreational visitation at common estuary access points, including an estimate of economic value of natural resources.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them (TMDLs). Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities)

MONITORING-2: Monitoring Program Reporting and Analysis
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objectives: Analyze data and share results with grantors, partners, local landowners, and the public.

Description: The Estuary Program continuously compiles and analyzes program-generated data to assess long-term trends and project-specific effects on water quality and other indicators of environmental quality. These analyses are shared with program partners, local landowners, and the general public to help inform decision-making. A series of data summary memos and reports will be completed in FY27. This includes an analysis of the sediment impacts to macroinvertebrate populations and overviews of bay and creek health. The task also includes responding to data requests from partners, landowners, and others.
Partners and Their Roles: Primary partners in the reporting and analysis of monitoring data include the CCRWQCB, whose CCAMP lends technical advice to the program. Public and private landowners make use of the data in their own land management and monitoring efforts. Cal Poly also lends technical expertise.
Outputs/Deliverables: When work occurs for this item, a summary will be provided in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Monitoring updates for bioassessment, creek health, eelgrass, and bay health are expected in FY27.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $29,773. Match: $0.
Long-Term Outcomes: Outcomes include making data and analysis available for agencies, project partners, and others throughout the state to inform and improve their own efforts to protect and restore waterways.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them (TMDLs). Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.

CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities)

MONITORING-3: Monitoring Program Data Management
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objectives: Maintain data in SWAMP-compatible format.

Description: This task includes the on-going maintenance of program-generated data in a state-compatible data format. The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) is a State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) program to increase usability and compatibility of water quality data from various sources. Data is quality controlled and entered into a SWAMP-compatible database to increase access for groups, including the general public, throughout the state. Estuary Program data will be submitted to the California Envirionmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) for inclusion in the next Integrated Report for the Central Coast Region.
Partners and Their Roles: Primary partners in the Estuary Program monitoring effort include the CCRWQCB, whose CCAMP lends technical advice and data management support to the program. The SWRCB is a partner, providing support for the state's CEDEN data portal.
Outputs/Deliverables: When work is conducted for this item, a summary will be provided in the semi-annual and reports. Program data available on the CEDEN website. Note that most data submitted to CEDEN between 2020 and 2026 is currently available via the CA Open Data Portal.
Estimated Milestones: Input of data into SWAMP-compatible database throughout the year. Semi-annual submittals of data to the CEDEN and/or SWAMP system.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $23,267. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: A high-quality dataset available to the public and the state for use in TMDL analysis, 303(d) assessment, land management, etc. can result in projects, land protection, and other efforts that ultimately improve water quality
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them (TMDLs).
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities)

MONITORING-4: Monitoring Program Quality Assurance
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Maintain an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan and implement necessary quality assurance methods.

Description: The monitoring program maintains a QAPP, approved by EPA, which documents the program's monitoring methodologies, sites, and equipment. This task includes laboratory sample analysis to aid in assessment of quality assurance. In addition, staff time is necessary to keep the QAPP up-to-date and conduct quality control tasks to ensure data quality. The monitoring program collects scientifically rigorous data valued by many of our partners, and the QAPP ensures that the data collection and analysis methods maintain this high level of scientific quality. In order for data to be submitted to CEDEN, the state requires that an accompanying QAPP be included to document the data quality.
Partners and Their Roles: The EPA Region 9 Office of Quality Assurance is the primary partner, providing oversight of the QAPP and technical assistance. The SWRCB Quality Assurance Officer also provides review and oversight of the QAPP. Other partners include laboratories that analyze Estuary Program samples and partners conducting monitoring in the area such as the CCRWQCB's CCAMP, Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc., the Stream Pollution Trends Monitoring Program, and others.
Output/Deliverables: The deliverable will be an EPA-approved QAPP document.

Estimated Milestones: The updated document is submitted on an annual basis. The timing is dependent upon the EPA approval schedule.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $20,785. Project costs: $1,375. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: A high-quality data set with data supporting land management efforts and project identification throughout the watershed. The data supports the efforts of agencies, nonprofits, land managers and others in their work to protect and restore the watershed.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them (TMDLs).
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities)

MONITORING-5: Project Effectiveness Monitoring
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Complete monitoring to show project effectiveness for various restoration projects.

Description: Many monitoring efforts to demonstrate effectiveness of restoration or other projects are conducted by program staff (rather than volunteers) due to safety concerns, technical challenges, or a landowner's request. This task encompasses protocol development and monitoring work that falls into this category. This task will include monitoring of restoration projects and monitoring the freshwater seeps in Los Osos. The seeps are expected to demonstrate reduced nitrate contamination of groundwater by septic systems since the Los Osos Water Reclamation Facility came online in 2016. Monitoring data will be compiled to support restoration projects, partner data requests, etc. Staff monitor flows on Walters Creek to assess the impacts of a recently completed low-tech process-based restoration effort. Staff partners with CDPH on water quality monitoring to support management of shellfish growing waters. These activities will continue in FY27.
Partners and Their Roles: Project partners include landowners or responsible entities such as Cal Poly, Camp SLO, and the SLO County Office of Education. Project partners lending expertise and funding include Trout Unlimited, Creek Lands Conservation, Stillwater Sciences, CDPH, local oyster farms, and others.
Output/Deliverables: When work is conducted for this item, a summary will be provided in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Monitoring and data reports will be compiled as needed.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $15,469. Project costs: $935. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Conduct monitoring and develop analysis that informs future management and restoration efforts. Conservation easement monitoring is completed annually and landowner communications are ongoing.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Identifying polluted waters and developing plans to restore them (TMDLs).
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities)

MONITORING-6: Eelgrass Monitoring and Research
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Conduct research and monitoring efforts for eelgrass to determine distribution in the bay as well as bed health.

Description: Seasonal eelgrass monitoring is conducted to aid efforts to protect and restore eelgrass habitat. In FY27, the Estuary Program will continue to monitor according to the robust approach designed to maximize data quality. The effort is engaging experts and agency participants to help inform the monitoring approach and to seek funding to support research and monitoring (see more information under Task MONITORING-7). This task

also involves a component of research collaboration with partners to understand eelgrass stressors. Partner efforts include water quality monitoring, analysis related to ocean water quality, and other efforts. In FY27, the Estuary Program will conduct monitoring of eelgrass to track changes in eelgrass acreage, condition, and location over time. The Estuary Program will also continue annual monitoring of macroalgae in the bay, which may pose a threat to eelgrass success in certain areas.
Partners and Their Roles: Project partners include Cal Poly, whose expertise is supporting expanded monitoring and research efforts to study eelgrass, sedimentation, circulation, and water quality. Cuesta College, the local community college, conducts research related to wasting disease and eelgrass health with technical and funding support from the Estuary Program. Other partners include CDFW, a potential funder for the effort. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USFWS, and others have provided funding and technical support for the effort. EPA provides both funding and technical support. Secondary partners with an interest in eelgrass in Morro Bay include the SCC, Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership, the city of Morro Bay, State Parks, local oyster farms, the Black Brant Group, and local businesses.
Output/Deliverables: The deliverables include an annual eelgrass monitoring report.
Estimated Milestones: Provide a summary in the semi-annual and annual reports when work is conducted for this item.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $10,630. Match: $4,839.
Long-term Outcomes: The work supports a better understanding of eelgrass dynamics and stressors, thus enabling the Estuary Program to track eelgrass health in the bay and better respond to threats to the bay's eelgrass population. This ultimately protects this valuable habitat type within the bay.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities), ECR-7 (Eelgrass Data and Research), ECR-8 (Eelgrass Restoration)

MONITORING-7: Partner Research Efforts
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Support science partners in pursuing research efforts relevant to the goals of the Estuary Program.

Description: The Estuary Program collaborates with partners such as Cal Poly and Cuesta College to facilitate research projects through data sharing, the pursuit of project development, and contributed time. Potential efforts include extreme weather event impact mitigation around the bay, bay water quality, bay sediment characteristics, native oyster restoration, eelgrass wasting disease, phytoplankton, and others. Reports and results will be compiled and stored by the Estuary Program. Staff support Estuary Marine Protected Area (EMPA) monitoring efforts in the bay, which contribute to the CA Estuary Monitoring Program's efforts to assess the quality and condition of estuaries statewide. Staff participate in the California Estuary Monitoring Workgroup to coordinate and standardize coastal monitoring efforts throughout the state. Staff participate in annual sampling for the Pacific eDNA Coastal Observatory (PECO), which aims to track biogeographical distributions of marine fish across the west coast. Estuary Program staff will participate in the effort to share program data and learn from other program's monitoring efforts.
Partners and Their Roles: Cal Poly and Cuesta College are primary partners in most joint efforts. Cal Poly will conduct monitoring of water quality parameters, eelgrass mapping, and analysis. Cuesta College supports eelgrass wasting disease research with technical and funding support from the Estuary Program. Central Coast Wetlands Group is the lead for the EMPA project and serves as a technical resource. McGill University and the Hakai Institute are the leads for the PECO project. Other research collaboration partners have included Southern California Coastal Water Research Program, USGS, and others.
Output/Deliverables: Deliverables are dependent on partner projects and vary by funding sources. A list will be provided in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Variable, depending on funding sources.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $5,457. Match: $0.

Long-term Outcomes: Improve collaboration of efforts and resources to better coordinate monitoring and restoration work.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: MON-1 (Support Development of TMDLs), MON-2 (Monitor Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitor Project Effectiveness), MON-4 (Maintain VMP), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities), ECR-7 (Eelgrass Data and Research), ECR-8 (Eelgrass Restoration)

Public Participation, Education and Outreach

Public engagement is a cornerstone of the Estuary Program's mission and a critical component of implementing the CCMP. The Program's education and outreach work advances the goals for Section 320 of the CWA and the PRAE Act by fostering environmental stewardship, raising awareness of nonpoint source pollution, and encouraging behaviors that protect coastal and watershed health. The Estuary Program empowers individuals and communities to play an active role in the long-term protection of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed through accessible communications and programming.

This work supports EPA's Pillar 1 by ensuring that clean water messages and science-based environmental information are shared widely with the public, landowners, and partners. Through both formal education efforts and informal public outreach, the Estuary Program communicates the connection between actions and estuary health, promoting shared responsibility for clean water. These efforts also contribute to Pillar 3 by engaging stakeholders early, improving transparency, and providing shared platforms for environmental education across multiple jurisdictions.

Education and outreach tasks include communications and media, formal education partnerships, maintenance and update of the Estuary Program's Nature Center, community stewardship events, targeted pollution prevention campaigns such as Mutts for the Bay, and the triennial public engagement events associated with the State of the Bay report. Together, these efforts create meaningful connections between residents, visitors, and the estuary, ensuring that conservation actions are informed by community values and grounded in locally relevant science.

E&O-1: Communications
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Communicate with a variety of audiences using presentations, printed materials, online presence, social media, and other venues.

Description: The Estuary Program's Education and Outreach program conducts regular communication with a variety of audiences. Several approaches will be employed during FY27 to reach these audiences with meaningful information on the program's efforts. These approaches include the following:

- Website: The Estuary Program website (www.mbnep.org) will be updated and maintained.
- Blog: The Estuary Program will continue the Estuary Program blog, with regular posts that can be viewed on the website or by free subscription. They are also shared via social media.
- Social media: The Estuary Program utilizes Facebook and Instagram extensively. These have proven to be important tools to communicate with the community. Photos and status updates are posted to the Facebook page multiple times a week (https://www.facebook.com/mbestuary), and Instagram posts (https://www.instagram.com/morrobaynep/) are made at least once per week. Posts are strategic and integrated with the messaging on our website and blog. Messages cover a variety of topics, such as project and fieldwork highlights, volunteer opportunities, community events, presentations given by Estuary Program staff, and other information related to the Estuary Program mission. Currently, the Estuary Program has more

than 3,682 Facebook followers, 4,260 Instagram followers, and 588 LinkedIn followers. In FY27, the Estuary Program will continue to increase two-way communication using social media tools.

- Annual report: The annual report summarizes the reach and impact made by the Estuary Program across all programs. The report is created annually and is available online and in limited print.
- Newsletter: A quarterly newsletter presents program highlights and promotes upcoming events. This is distributed to email subscribers and posted on the website.
- News releases: News releases will be distributed to promote upcoming events or share the program highlights. Key messages will be drafted and incorporated into the news releases. These key messages will be integrated into other communication channels.
- Events: Host and participate in events to share science and research results with the public.
- Brochures and other print materials: Brochures and other print materials about the Estuary Program, issues related to the health and stewardship of the Morro Bay estuary, volunteer opportunities, and formal educational opportunities will be developed and updated for distribution at the Estuary Nature Center, community events, and presentations. They will also be made available online when possible.

Partners and Their Roles: Partners in Estuary Program communication efforts include the city of Morro Bay, SLO County, the Morro Bay Natural History Museum, California State Parks, the Morro Coast Audubon Society, and others. These partners provide resources and expertise, promote Estuary Program events, and share our materials and message with the public.
Output/Deliverables: A summary of work conducted for this item will be included in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: The Estuary Program maintains a website (ongoing), blog (twice monthly), newsletter (quarterly), press releases, reports, brochures, and other products that share program highlights and updates.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $61,510. Project costs: $0. Match: $251,695.
Long-term Outcomes: Residents and visitors better understand their roles as stewards of the Morro Bay estuary. Behavioral changes that help keep our waters clean.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Programs.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: EO-1 (Public Education and Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-3 (Nature Center), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs)

E&O-2: Education
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Develop formal education partnerships and services, and continue other education efforts.

Description: In FY27, the Estuary Program will continue working with partners to integrate estuary and watershed-focused activities into existing formal educational programming. The Estuary Program is partnering with Camp Ocean Pines, One Cool Earth, Cal Poly, California State Parks, and other education partners to support expanded field trip and environmental education opportunities. Potential educational activities include hosting field trips for student groups within the Morro Bay watershed and supporting other estuary or watershed education efforts by partners. The Estuary Program will also continue to provide online educational resources and a select number of educational opportunities that are unique to the program (e.g., Mutts for the Bay education efforts). Staff are planning the 2026 educator workshop in partnership with the Cal Poly Central Coast Science Project, which is providing valuable knowledge and financial support to help expand this program. Estuary Program staff will also continue to provide presentations and talks as requested for local undergraduate and graduate classes. In addition, Estuary Program staff and guest speakers present research and projects that relate to the health of the Morro Bay estuary through public events. The goal of these events is to educate the general public about issues facing the Morro Bay estuary, research and monitoring projects being performed by the Estuary Program, and stewardship actions that people can take to help protect it. In FY27, the Estuary Program will host recurring science talk events throughout the year.
Partners and Their Roles: Partners include Camp Ocean Pines, which brings students to Morro Bay for field trips. Cal Poly and Cuesta College faculty are partners, bringing classes to the estuary and watershed to conduct

research and field trips, as well as hosting Estuary Program staff for classroom visits. Cal Poly is also a major partner in our educator workshop series. One Cool Earth, a local school garden nonprofit, works closely with the Estuary Program to develop lesson plans relating gardens to watersheds and our local estuary. The SLO County Environmental Education Coalition, which is managed by One Cool Earth, is another important education partner. The Coalition brings together educators, school administrators, and local nonprofits to centralize and promote high-quality, place-based environmental education in SLO County. The Estuary Program also continues to work with local nonprofits such as Sea Otter Savvy and Morro Coast Audubon Society, both of which monitor the health of local wildlife and encourage public stewardship. Both organizations also support Estuary Program field trips and other educational efforts.
Outputs/Deliverables: The deliverables are presentation and field trip statistics. Included in semi-annual and annual reports to EPA.
Estimated Milestones: The statistics on speaking engagements and field trips will be included in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $15,834. Project costs: $0. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Formal educational partnerships effectively disseminate estuary-related messages to students of all ages. This enhances estuary science knowledge among the general public, enhancing stewardship and resource protection.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: EO-1 (Public Education and Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-3 (Nature Center), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs)

E&O-3: Nature Center Operations & Updates
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Maintain and update the content and displays in the Nature Center.

Description: The Estuary Program's Nature Center was established in 2005 and hosts approximately 2,500 visitors a month during the high season. The center features a watershed mural, a wildlife viewing station with a high-power viewing scope, a touch-screen educational kiosk, and a dynamic watershed model. To keep the center running smoothly, Estuary Program staff conduct regular maintenance, cleaning, and coordination. In FY26, Estuary Program staff continued to replace outdated displays and worked with USFWS to design, fabricate, and install a new eelgrass-themed exhibit. Staff will continue to host education and outreach events in the Nature Center, utilize the space for field trip opportunities, and update the digital poster kiosk with new content on a regular basis. Both minor and major improvements will continue being made to the Nature Center, including ongoing maintenance and design and installation of new exhibits.
Partners and Their Roles: The Morro Bay Museum of Natural History will be a partner in this effort, helping direct visitors to the center and lending their expertise. Partners such as Sea Otter Savvy and Morro Coast Audubon Society will also lend their knowledge to assist with the design of new exhibits.
Output/Deliverables: A summary description of work conducted for this item will be included in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Maintain operations at the Nature Center, ongoing. Update Nature Center content by end of FY27.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $9,658. Project costs: $10,000. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: The Estuary Nature Center serves as a hub of learning about the estuary, with modern and engaging exhibits that increase the understanding of the environment. Ultimately this knowledge can shape behavior, increase stewardship, and help protect the resource.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: EO-1 (Public Education and Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-3 (Nature Center), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs)

E&O-4: Community Engagement and Stewardship
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Provide community engagement and stewardship opportunities by hosting events and partnering with other environmental organizations to further the Management Plan goals.

Description: The Estuary Program hosts and attends a variety of events to engage with the community. This includes speaking engagements, tabling at events, hosting volunteer cleanup events, and supporting community partner projects. Opportunities for projects with partners will be considered throughout the year as they arise. Community engagement events and community partner projects in FY27 include:

- Speaking engagements: Estuary Program staff present watershed and estuarine information for interested groups throughout the area, such as service clubs and outdoor hobby groups. Staff also present ongoing projects and results at events and conferences.
- Recurring science talk events: Estuary Program staff and guest speakers present research and projects that relate to the health of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed at free, public-facing science talk events. The goal of these events is to educate the general public about issues facing the Morro Bay estuary, and how the Estuary Program works to protect and restore the local waters and lands.
- Tabling at community events: Estuary Program staff will host a table at various community events including farmers markets, festivals, Creeks to Coast Cleanup, and other opportunities as they arise.
- Volunteer events: Estuary Program staff and partners will host volunteer events to engage with the community throughout the year. This typically includes cleanup events but may also include habitat restoration field day events if opportunities arise.
- Sewage pumpout monitoring: The Estuary Program tests the bay's pumpout units three times a year to monitor their efficacy, provides signage for pumpout stations, and facilitates any needed repairs. The program also promotes pumpout use through educational messaging targeted to the boating community to help protect the bay's waters.
- Outdoor Signage: Estuary Program staff will work with partners to update outdated educational signage in the watershed to provide engaging information on watershed and estuary science.

Staff will continue to seek opportunities for partnership on water conservation, marine debris, and efforts to protect bay waters.
Partners and Their Roles: Stewardship partners include California State Parks through their SeaLife Stewards program, the city of Morro Bay's Harbor Department, the Morro Bay Yacht Club, the Bay Foundation of Santa Monica, the LOCSD, and local recreational boating business owners. This effort also includes supporting ECOSLO, a local nonprofit organization, in executing annual cleanups within the Morro Bay watershed, California State Parks, and others.
Outputs/Deliverables: Materials completed as projects develop. Activities documented in semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Projects are conducted as opportunities arise.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $15,053. Project costs: $0. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Collaborate with partner organizations on key messages associated with each community project. Improves environmental science knowledge, leading to increased stewardship and behavior change.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: EO-1 (Public Education and Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-3 (Nature Center), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs)

E&O-5: Mutts for the Bay
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Manage pet waste management program to prevent bacterial contamination in the bay.

Description: The Estuary Program has managed the Mutts for the Bay Program since 2008. This effort involves

accepting and managing donations, installing pet waste bag dispensers, coordinating volunteers, and keeping dispensers stocked with bags. Through proper use of waste bags, pet owners prevent bacteria from reaching the estuary, where wildlife, shellfish farms, and recreational bay users require clean water. The programs distributes approximately 350,000 bags per years, preventing large amounts of bacteria from reaching the bay. In FY27, Estuary Program staff will continue the outreach components of the Mutts for the Bay program. This includes partnering with Woods Humane Society, SLO County Animal Services, and local pet-related businesses/organizations to promote the program. Estuary Program staff will attend tabling events to share information about environmentally friendly pet ownership, including local farmers markets, the Woods Humane Society Fall Festival, and other opportunities as they arise.
Partners and Their Roles: Partners include the City of Morro Bay, the entity responsible for stormwater management efforts in much of the Morro Bay watershed. A portion of the effort involves public education to share a clean water message and encourage responsible, eco-friendly pet owner behavior. A private foundation has awarded the Estuary Program multiple years of funding to support operational and educational costs related to the effort, with potential opportunities for additional funding in the future.
Outputs/Deliverables: Program statistics and milestones will be provided in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: Program statistics will be ongoing.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $13,973. Project costs: $0. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Responsible behavior by pet owners reduces bacterial loading to the estuary, protecting beneficial uses such as shellfish farming, ecosystem health, and recreation. This protects the environment, protects human health, and supports the economic value of the estuary.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution. Protecting wetlands. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: EO-1 (Public Education and Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-3 (Nature Center), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs), BMP-6 (Reduce Pet Waste)

Program Management

Effective program management is foundational to achieving the goals of the CCMP and ensuring the continued success of the Estuary Program as a trusted leader in protecting and restoring the Morro Bay estuary and watershed. Under Section 320 of the CWA and the PRAE Act, the Estuary Program is responsible for implementing locally driven, science-based actions in coordination with a wide range of partners. Strong organizational management ensures that this work is delivered transparently, efficiently, and in alignment with federal, state, and local priorities.

Program management tasks include oversight of committees and partnerships, grants and financial administration, staff and organizational operations, progress tracking, and community-based project support. These functions enable the Estuary Program to manage resources responsibly, meet all grant and reporting requirements, and ensure that implementation of the CCMP remains coordinated, adaptive, and measurable over time.

This work also supports EPA's Pillar 1 by ensuring that the Estuary Program's infrastructure can deliver clean water outcomes through well-managed restoration, education, and monitoring efforts. In addition, it contributes to Pillar 3 by strengthening stakeholder relationships, facilitating transparent oversight, and creating the administrative foundation needed to advance environmental projects efficiently and in collaboration with multiple jurisdictions.

Work for all program management tasks is aimed at achieving results for the following outcomes:

1. Maintain good standing with the EPA and ANEP.

2. Improve administration and program management to successfully support environmental goals and manage resources in a fiscally responsible manner.
3. Facilitate effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement in implementation of the CCMP.

PM-1: Manage Committees and Build Partnerships
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Facilitate quarterly committee meetings and support partnerships.

Description: The Estuary Program will continue to coordinate the Executive Committee (EC) on a quarterly basis and the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay board of directors on a monthly basis. Staff create meeting materials and facilitate the meetings. TACs will be convened as needed to support program areas such as monitoring, restoration, and outreach. Staff will also participate in regional and statewide collaborations that help build partnerships, exchange information, and support effective implementation of the CCMP. These collaborative efforts strengthen coordination across agencies and organizations, improve project development, and ensure that local perspectives inform broader resource management efforts.
Partners and Their Roles: The Management Conference committees are made up of representatives from various governmental, economic, environmental, and educational organizations. The all-volunteer Bay Foundation board is made up of community members with varied backgrounds in science, finance, education, and other relevant areas. The TACs that support monitoring, restoration, and education are made up of experts who can advise the Estuary Program in these various programmatic areas.
Outputs/Deliverables: Deliverables include EC meeting minutes, agendas, staff reports, and other materials.
Estimated Milestones: These deliverables are produced quarterly.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $39,980. Match: $17,328.
Long-term Outcomes: Committees provide input and direction for the Estuary Program and ensure that other partnerships are well supported. This in turn supports achievement of Management Plan goals.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Support contribution toward all CWA core programs.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task supports all Action Plans.

PM-2: Grants and Contracts Administration and Financial Management
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Develop workplan, administer grants, and complete annual financial management tasks.

Description: Each year, the Estuary Program evaluates the prior year's progress, anticipates the upcoming year's potential, and develops a workplan, budget, and federal grant application. The workplan for FY27 and grant application are due to EPA Region 9 in May 2026. Other grants and financial management tasks include applying for grants, reporting and tracking for grants, preparing financial reports for the Bay Foundation and management committees, and completing year-end financial statements and an annual audit. Estuary Program staff will attend the fall 2026 and spring 2027 NEP/EPA Tech Transfer meetings. Staff will develop projects, administer contracts, and conduct reporting related to the IIJA funding for FY25 and FY26.
Partners and Their Roles: Partners include the Bay Foundation, the board that serves as the bursar for the Estuary Program. EPA is a primary partner, providing oversight and guidance for the program.
Outputs/Deliverables: The deliverables include the 320 base funding workplan and budget (spring 2026), semi-annual EPA grant report (spring 2027), an annual/end of year report (fall 2027), annual financial statements submitted to the federal clearinghouse (spring 2027), and annual state and federal tax submissions to the State of California and the IRS (spring 2027).
Estimated Milestones: See above.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $115,396. Project costs: $15,045. Match: $7,980.
Long-term Outcomes: Grant administration and financial management tasks are completed in a timely and accurate manner to support programmatic operations and meeting organization goals.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Support contribution toward all CWA core programs.

CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task supports all Action Plans.

PM-3: General Administration and Human Resources Management
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Maintain accurate financial and human resource records and manage personnel.

Description: The Estuary Program requires ongoing financial and administrative functions, including recordkeeping and filing, bookkeeping, preparing audited financial statements, maintaining equipment and office space, and interacting with the general public. In addition, the Director spends time managing staff performance and workplan progress. Other human resources tasks include training and professional development, recruitment, managing staff, and keeping all personnel policies and procedures current, such as those related to emergency preparedness for operations. Staff maintain up-to-date bookkeeping records, office space, orderly and properly operating office and field equipment, annual staff performance reviews, and updated policies and procedures. Regular staff meetings will be conducted.
Partners and Their Roles: The primary partner for this task is the Bay Foundation board which sets the policies and procedures for the organization.
Outputs/Deliverables: The Estuary Program provides program management updates in the EPA semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Milestones: See above.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $64,592. Operational expenses: $133,762. Match: $30.984.
Long-term Outcomes: Policies and procedures must remain up to date so that the organization can function smoothly, allowing staff to focus on attaining the goals of the organization.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Support contribution toward all CWA core programs.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task supports all Action Plans.

PM-4: Tracking Implementation of the Management Plan and Workplan
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Track workplan and CCMP implementation.

Description: The Estuary Program tracks progress on the CCMP Action Plans on a biannual basis. Workplan implementation is tracked with biannual reports on deliverables. Tracking project and program effectiveness is ongoing and includes semi-annual and annual reports, NEPORT reporting, grant reporting, monitoring, and general project management. Staff are responding to any areas for improvement that were raised during the Program Evaluation process with EPA in FY25.
Partners and Their Roles: The primary partners are the Bay Foundation board who oversees the organization's finances and EPA who provides guidance on CCMP and workplan implementation.
Outputs/Deliverables: The deliverables include semi-annual report to EPA (spring 2027), annual reports to EPA (fall 2027), and NEPORT data (summer 2027).
Estimated Milestones: See above.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $34,966. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Management Plan and workplan tracking occurs to ensure that tasks are completed in a timely and accurate manner. This supports the assessment of Management Plan success and helps staff ensure that the plan remains relevant.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Support contribution toward all CWA core programs.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task supports all Action Plans.

PM-5: Community Projects Program
Project Status: ***Ongoing***
Objective: Provide support for community projects that further the goals of the Management Plan and engage the community.

Description: Community Projects allow community members to be active participants in conservation efforts by helping to implement the Management Plan. The Community Projects Program has a special focus on projects that engage the community. The Estuary Program staff collaborates with community members to develop projects, prepare contracts, and monitor and evaluate products. The Estuary Program will continue to oversee current projects and develop new projects in FY27.
Partners and Their Roles: Partners for past Community Projects have included the City of Morro Bay Harbor Department, Cal Poly and Cuesta College researchers, California State Parks, SLO County, One Cool Earth, and SLO Beaver Brigade.
Outputs/Deliverables: The semi-annual and annual reports will detail the status of projects in FY27.
Estimated Milestones: Project ideas are considered twice a year, dependent on budget, and will be listed in the semi-annual and annual reports.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $9,554. Match: $15,000.
Long-term Outcomes: All projects enhance community involvement and support Management Plan goals.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution**.** Protecting wetlands. Protecting coastal waters through the National Estuary Program.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task can support all Action Plans, depending on the project type and partners involved.

PM-6: Management Plan Update
Project Status: ***New***
Objective: Review and update CCMP to guide actions of the program.

Description: The CCMP defines the Estuary Program goals and the specific action plans to achieve them. The latest version of the document was approved in 2022, and the program is planning for a 2028 update. The effort involves a thorough review of the document to remove, update, or add action plans. Staff will collaborate with partners and the community for input on the update. The updated plan will be reviewed and approved by the Management Committee. Throughout the process, staff will coordinate with EPA.
Partners and Their Roles: Estuary Program staff serve the primary role of managing the plan update. Partners such as State Parks, the CSLRCD, the CCRWQCB, and many others will weigh in on the update, providing their expertise, and insights into their organizations' work and goals.
Outputs/Deliverables: The deliverables include a draft and final CCMP report, approved by the Management Committee and EPA.
Estimated Milestones: Final CCMP expected to be completed in spring 2028, with interim drafts created at appropriate intervals to allow for adequate review.
Estimated Budget: Staff time: $53,834. Match: $0.
Long-term Outcomes: Management Plan updates ensure that program efforts align with the latest science and meet the needs of partners throughout the watershed. This collaborative approach ultimately results in protection of the estuary and its watershed for people and wildlife.
CWA Core Programs the Project Supports: Support contribution toward all CWA core programs.
CCMP Action Plans Addressed: This task supports all Action Plans.

5. Accomplishments

This section reports on major projects that were recently completed. These accomplishments are also included in the semi-annual reports submitted to the EPA in October 2025 and April 2026.

Monitoring Accomplishment: Morro Bay - an Important Transition Zone in Partner Research

Project Objective: Support partner research and broader understanding of fish distribution across the West Coast.

Since 2023, the Estuary Program has been collecting eDNA samples at two locations in Morro Bay to support partner research led by the Pacific eDNA Coastal Observatory (PECO). PECO is an inter-organizational partnership that relies on a wide collaboration of nonprofits, state and federal agencies, tribes, and universities. The project was piloted by the Sunday Lab at McGill University in collaboration with the Hakai Institute. The project is endorsed by the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The monitoring sites, ranging from the Gulf of Alaska to San Diego, offer a broad geographic coverage that ensures that a wide variety of latitudes and environmental conditions are assessed.

At each study location, water samples are collected and filtered to capture small fragments of DNA left behind by organisms. The filter is preserved and sent to PECO for analysis using a process called eDNA metabarcoding, which helps to determine which species were present in immediate area where the water sample was collected. The resulting data helps the Estuary Program and PECO better understand estuarine fish distribution in Morro Bay and beyond.

In 2025, the PECO team shared findings from their preliminary analysis. Their research showed that Morro Bay acted as a biogeographical break in fish populations, serving as an important transition zone between northern-affinity species and southern-affinity species. Morro Bay provides a key dataset to understanding species shifts along the West Coast. Given expected transitions in factors such as water temperatures and weather patterns, the dataset supports the tracking of biodiversity changes over time. The project also involves developing tools to predict range shifts in these fish communities.

The Estuary Program plans to continue involvement in the collaborative research effort which runs through 2029. Estuary Program staff will also contribute to future publication efforts that utilize Morro Bay's results. This project is an example of the value of involvement in collaborative research.

The efforts supported the following CCMP Action Plans: MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities), ECR-9 (Regional and National Collaboration)

Restoration Accomplishment: Morro Bay Historical Ecology Study

Project Objective: The Estuary Program partnered with the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) to complete a historical ecology study within the Morro Bay watershed and estuary.

The historical ecology research documents landscape conditions prior to recent Euro-American modification (ca. 1850). SFEI assembled diverse historical data from numerous archives and online databases. Historical data included maps (e.g., Mexican land grant maps, General Land Office plats, U.S. Coast Survey T-sheets and charts), photographs, and textual accounts (e.g., Spanish explorer descriptions, newspaper articles, botanical records, etc.). Relevant 20th century sources were also used such as aerial photographs, soil maps, and water resources reports.

Based on these data sources, SFEI created a map of historical habitat types and channels within the estuary, alluvial portions of Chorro and Los Osos valleys, the sandspit, and paleodunes south of the estuary. Results were summarized into a 70-page report with numerous maps and key data sources.

Summary of main findings:

- Morro Bay was historically dominated by shallow open water, extensive intertidal mudflats, and a mix of salt and brackish tidal marsh.
- Morro Bay sandspit supported a mix of sparsely vegetated mobile dunes and denser coastal dune scrub.
- Creeks in Chorro and Los Osos Valleys were generally characterized by single-threaded channels and were lined by riparian forests. Some channels such as Chorro and San Bernardo Creeks likely supported perennial streamflow, while others such as Warden and Los Osos Creeks may have experienced intermittent flow.
- Several large willow groves bordered lower Morro Creek, Warden Creek, and the lower portion of Chorro Creek.
- Chorro and Los Osos Valleys were characterized by expansive prairie across most of the valley floor. Northen Chumash managed prairie and other habitat types in the area through cultural burning and other practices.
- A large freshwater marsh known as Warden Lake occupied the floor of Los Osos Valley at the confluence of Warden and Los Osos Creeks, while a smaller freshwater marsh known as the "Cienega de Romualdo" existed just south of the Chorro Creek channel near the present-day SLO County Kansas Avenue facilities.

This study helps the Estuary Program better understand historical landscape patterns (e.g., habitat distribution and channel configuration), processes (e.g., streamflow variability), and functions (e.g., wildlife use), and provides the basis for evaluating landscape change over time. The project also provides foundational information to inform contemporary management opportunities and restoration planning.

These efforts support the following CCMP Action Plans: LP-1 (Protect Special Habitats/Species), ECR-1 (Instream Habitat), ECR-3 (Wetland Protection & Enhancement), ECR-11 (Conserve Ecosystem Functions), ECR-12 (Upland Habitats), ECR-14 (Support Recovery Plans), ECR-16 (Invasive Species Action Plan)

Education & Outreach Accomplishment: State of the Bay 2026

Project Objective: To share results with partners and the public on the health of the estuary and its watershed. This knowledge expands stewardship and ultimately supports protection of the resource.

Every three years, the Estuary Program gathers the latest research and monitoring data from the watershed and conducts analysis to create a public-friendly environmental report card called the State of the Bay (SOTB) Report. The report is structured to answer a series of questions that are often received from the public, such as "Is it safe to swim in the bay?" and "How is the eelgrass doing?" The report includes data collected by the Estuary Program and by partners such as Cal Poly, Cuesta College, EPA, CDPH, USGS, the Morro Coast Audubon Society, SLO County, the CSLRCD, and SLOCOG, among others.

Estuary Program staff analyzed the data, compiled the report, created a print version, and developed an online version with expanded content. Throughout spring 2026, about 500 printed reports were distributed to the public, and the SOTB webpage had nearly 400 views. To promote the results of the report, the Estuary Program will be hosting a series of events throughout the spring, including beach clean-ups, science talks, field visits to restoration sites, a birding outing, a dog "pack walk," and many others. The outreach statistics from this series of events will be shared in the upcoming FY26 annual report.

In 2026, the program embarked on a brand new effort for SOTB – the development of a SOTB data dashboard. The dashboard includes additional analysis and visualizations of the data beyond what was included in the printed report. It also allows for the downloading of raw data. The data dashboard has had 150 views to date and illustrates the public's interest in access to more in-depth data. The program has received an enthusiastic response from partners such as the Water Board, and a statistics professor at the local university will work with

the dashboard with his upper division statistics class. This method of sharing our work is innovative and helps us connect with new demographics.

The SOTB report and accompanying events are a flagship project for the program, providing additional opportunities to get out into the community and share the results of the work that we do. We continue to expand our reach through the SOTB effort.

These efforts support the following CCMP Action Plans: MON-2 (Monitoring Environmental Indicators), MON-3 (Monitoring Project Effectiveness), MON-5 (Support Partners), MON-6 (Support Research Activities), CLIM-3 (Climate and Adaptation Education), EO-1 (Public Education & Outreach), EO-2 (State of the Bay), EO-4 (Formal Education Programs)

6. Recurring Extreme Weather Event Risk(s) Considered

The development of the workplan was consistent with the CCMP, Vulnerability Assessment, HPRS, and other planning and management documents developed by the Estuary Program and approved by the Management Conference.

For example, there are a number of local planning projects focusing on future extreme weather events. The Estuary Program is participating in the City of Moro Bay's community led Waterfront Master Plan focusing on future development, shoreline protection, and enhancement projects. SLOCOG is also conducting a preliminary study to enhance critical transportation and public access from Los Osos to Morro Bay, to which the Estuary Program is providing input. The Estuary Program's study with USGS to evaluate future tidal marsh habitat resiliency is also analyzing extreme coastal weather events.

7. EPA Priorities

The EPA's Office of Water has several priority areas of interest relevant to the NEPs. The following summarizes Estuary Program and partner activities in these four areas.

Reductions in Nutrient Pollution to Protect Water Quality and Public Health
The issue of elevated nutrients is one of the priority problems facing the Morro Bay estuary and its watershed. The monitoring, restoration, and education efforts of the Estuary Program and its partners often focus on this issue. Multiple efforts are on-going and planned to specifically address nutrient management.

- Resource Conservation District Partnerships to Address Nutrients: The Estuary Program previously worked with the CSLRCD through a grant to develop plans for BMPs on private property. The Estuary Program supported CSLRCD efforts to apply for a Water Board grant to fund the identified projects. The CSLRCD is currently managing the Water Board grant to implement these efforts throughout the watershed, and many projects target a reduction in nutrient and sediment pollution.
- Monitoring Data Support for Regulators: The Estuary Program and partners collect nutrient data from throughout the watershed, bay, and bay shoreline freshwater seeps. The data is submitted to the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN), where it is then available to the CCRWQCB and SWRCB to support TMDL assessment, 303(d) review, implementation of a new Agricultural Order, etc. The bay nutrient monitoring is conducted in partnership with Cal Poly.

- Los Osos Water Reclamation Facility Effectiveness: The Estuary Program collects nutrient data from the bay shoreline seeps in the community of Los Osos to track changes in nitrate concentrations in the shallow groundwater.
- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Irrigated Lands Program: The CCRWQCB regulates discharges from irrigated agricultural lands to protect surface water and groundwater. Also known as the Agricultural Order, it applies to owners and operators of irrigated land used for commercial crops. The effort focuses on priority water quality issues such as pesticides and toxicity, nutrients, and sediment. Nitrate impacts to drinking water is a particular focus area. For more information, visit https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/ The Estuary Program conducts monitoring in waterways that are likely impacted by agriculture. This data is submitted to the state's CEDEN data portal for use in assessing the health of California's waterways.
- The CCRWQCB Groundwater Assessment Program: This Water Board efforts utilizes Supplemental Environmental Projects funding to support free well testing for low income communities that rely on wells for their drinking water. Components of the program provide bottled water for affected communities and work to provide more long-term solutions to these safe drinking water issues.

Make Investments to Address Recurring Extreme Weather Events and Increase Resilience

- Sea Level Rise Modeling to Protect Sensitive Habitats: The Estuary Program has partnered with USGS to model bay hydrodynamics under various sea level rise and sediment availability scenarios to envision potential impacts to sensitive habitats such as tidal marshes and eelgrass. These fragile areas provide unique habitat for specially adapted plants and animals, as well as ecosystem service benefits such as flood prevention and wave impact reduction. The collaborative project involved sediment, vegetation, and flow monitoring in the Morro Bay estuary to inform the model. The resulting model will be used to inform timing and adaptation strategies, which could include applying a thin layer of sediment to the marsh, sediment trapping, and migration space to allow the marsh area to migrate upland as rising seas encroach on its historic range.
- Threats to Infrastructure from Extreme Weather Events: The heavy storms of 2023 demonstrated the vulnerability of infrastructure in the watershed. The community of Los Osos was completely cut off due to flooding of roadways, and the damage to crops was extensive. SLOCOG launched a program with funding from Caltrans to develop solutions to improve vehicle and bicycle transportation between Morro Bay and Los Osos while also protecting natural habitats. The project created an inventory of transportation infrastructure and habitats and modeled future extreme weather events to predict the length of water inundation under a range of future predicted scenarios. SLOCOG is creating a summary of coastal hazards and vulnerability assessments to better understand risks in the area and develop solutions to address these challenges.
- Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve Floodplain Adaptive Management: In 2019, the Estuary Program completed a floodplain restoration project on the Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve (CCER) to improve habitat and reduce sedimentation to the bay. While the site performed well in following winters that were wetter than normal, the heavy storms of 2023 caused large changes at the site. Subsequent analysis and assessment indicate that adaptive management is needed to restore the site to its intended functions. Planning is underway to identify the preferred solution and begin project implementation. Developing floodplain capacity at this site and future areas will support reduced impacts to downstream flooding on infrastructure and agriculture.
- Nature-Based Solutions to Reduce Flooding: With match funding by the Estuary Program, the CSLRCD led another effort to address flooding on a number of properties along lower Chorro Creek and parts of San Bernardo Creek. The floodplains adjacent to the lower Chorro Creek flooded during the 2023 storms. The CSLRCD is looking at nature-based solutions to increase floodplain capacity. Potential solutions include land acquisition and floodplain restoration.

- City of Morro Bay Waterfront Master Plan: The Estuary Program is participating in the City of Morro Bay's planning efforts to consider development, public access, and environmental considerations for the shoreline of Morro Bay. A study of extreme weather events was completed to consider what actions may need to be taken to protect infrastructure and habitats in this area of the bay.

Engage All Communities

- Management Committee Engagement: The Estuary Program's Management Committee is made up of members representing numerous sectors of the community including the city government, county government, community services district, and other agencies and regulators. The committee also has interest seats filled by representatives from agriculture, fishing, tourism/recreation, and science/research. These diverse voices represent wide swaths of the local community, bringing diverse voices to this group. In turn, these representatives bring information from the meetings back to their communities, expanding the reach of Estuary Program communication and initiatives.
- State of the Bay Report and Event Reach: The Estuary Program recently completed its 2026 State of the Bay (SOTB) report, which summarizes available research and monitoring data for a general public audience. The report is widely distributed throughout the community and is available in an online version as well. The program hosts a series of events throughout the spring to share the results of the report. This educates the general public about the efforts of the program and the importance of ecosystem health, which supports stewardship and behavior change that helps protect the resource.
- Education Efforts: The program conducts an annual 'train the trainers' workshop for environmental educators each year. The series provides environmental education curriculum and resources to teachers and other types of educators from throughout the county. The teachers bring this knowledge back to their schools and their classroom, greatly expanding the reach of the Estuary Program's education efforts. This reaches schools throughout the county, some of which are Title I schools.

Reduce Trash

- Marine Debris Education: The Estuary Program developed a reusable coaster that highlights the main types of marine debris and messaging on preventing its spread. These coasters are being handed out at Estuary Program events and will be distributed to local restaurants to share a marine debris prevention message with residents and visitors.
- Community Trash Cleanups: The Estuary Program hosts cleanups throughout the year on local beaches and along the busy Embarcadero in Morro Bay. The area is a popular travel destination in the summer, and the evidence of the visitors is sometimes apparent in the trash they leave behind. These events are conducted with school groups, community organizations, and the general public and spread messaging on why its important to reduce trash.
- Mutts for the Bay: The Estuary Program manages a program to provide free pet waste bags throughout the communities of Morro Bay and Los Osos. The program accepts donations from individuals and sponsors, purchases the bags by the pallet, and coordinates the corps of volunteers that keeps the dispensers stocked. The program gives out on average 350,000 bags per year, reducing bacteria pollution to the bay and nearby coastal areas. The program has education messaging around the importance of picking up after pets and of disposing of the bags properly.

8. Acronym List

The following terms and acronyms are used in this workplan:

Acronym	Definition
ANEP	Association of National Estuary Programs
BABA	Build America Buy America
BMP	Best management practice
Cal Poly	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Acronym	Definition
Camp SLO	Army National Guard Base Camp San Luis Obispo
CCAMP	Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CCER	Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve
CCMP	Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan
CCRWQCB	Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CEDEN	California Environmental Data Exchange Network
CSLRCD	Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District
CWA	Clean Water Act, the enabling legislation for the National Estuary Program
EC	Executive Committee
EMPA	Estuary Marine Protected Area
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
Estuary Program	Morro Bay National Estuary Program
FY	Fiscal Year
HPRS	Habitat Protection & Restoration Strategy
IIJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
LCSLO	The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County
LOCSD	Los Osos Community Services District
NEP	National Estuary Program
NEPORT	National Estuary Program Online Report Tool
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OCE	One Cool Earth
PECO	Pacific eDNA Coastal Observatory
PRAE	Protect & Restore America's Estuaries
QAPP	Quality Assurance Project Plan
SCC	State Coastal Conservancy
SFEI	San Francisco Estuary Institute
SLO	San Luis Obispo
SLOCOG	San Luis Obispo County of Governments
SOTB	State of the Bay
SWAMP	Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	Technical Advisory Committees
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Loads
UCSB	University of California, Santa Barbara
USFWS	United States Fish & Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VMP	Volunteer Monitoring Program
WSP	Americorps Watershed Stewards Program

Appendix A. Work Truck Purchase Justification with FY27 Section 320 Base Funding by the Morro Bay National Estuary Program

Per discussion with the EPA Program Officer, the Estuary Program developed a justification for the purchase of a work truck funded by FY27 320 base funding money.

Background

The program purchased a work vehicle in the late 2000s to support fieldwork. Up until that point, the program had been relying on staff use of their own personal vehicles and reimbursing them at the IRS mileage reimbursement rate. Much of the driving for fieldwork requires hauling oversized and often muddy gear. It also frequently involves driving on unpaved roads, which can require four-wheel drive and high clearance. This presented challenges as not all employees had the appropriate vehicles for safe access.

The purchase of a used pick-up 2001 Toyota Tundra truck in 2008 alleviated these concerns. The program has relied heavily on this work vehicle for fieldwork to support monitoring, restoration, and education and outreach efforts. This includes accessing remote field sites, hauling kayaks and stand-up paddle boards to the bay, hauling over-sized monitoring gear and restoration supplies, and trips to labs, businesses, etc. to directly support program implementation.

The current work vehicle, while still functional, requires more frequent and expensive repairs. The program feels that we're at the point where vehicle replacement makes more sense than repair.

We queried staff to determine our vehicle needs. We feel that a crew or double cab truck is necessary to transport both people and gear to sites, since some sites have limited access and/or limited parking. The truck bed should be around six feet long to accommodate monitoring gear, kayaks, etc. A base-trim vehicle meets program needs. Due to high vehicle prices, a used vehicle is preferable for our requirements.

To support the approval of this budget item, staff researched costs to purchase, rent, or lease a vehicle. Additionally, we compiled a list of impending repairs costs. We did not address options like rideshare services or public transport because we are often traveling to sites off paved roads where high clearance four-wheel drive vehicles are required. We also addressed asset depreciation.

Development of Cost – Purchase

Staff compiled information to identify vehicles that meet our needs. There were three candidates: Toyota Tundra, Toyota Tacoma, and Ford Ranger.

Attribute	Toyota Tacoma (Double Cab 6')	Toyota Tundra (Double Cab 6.5')	Ford Ranger (Crew Cab 6')
Segment	Midsize	Full-size	Midsize
Availability	Yes	Yes	Harder to find
New base MSRP	~$35k–$40k	~$40k–$50k+ (typical SR5)	~$33k–$39k
New realistic (low upgrades)	~$38k–$45k	~$45k–$55k	~$36k–$43k
Used (1–3 yrs old)	~$33k–$40k	~$38k–$50k	~$28k–$38k
Used savings vs new	Small (~$5k–$8k)	Moderate (~$5k–$12k)	Larger (~$6k–$12k)
Fuel cost	Moderate	High	Moderate
Resale value	Very high	High	Moderate

Based on this information, we concluded that the Toyota Tacoma was likely our best choice, in particular because:

- The price for used models fits our budget.
- All Tacoma have six-foot beds and four doors, widening the pool of available used vehicles.

The Toyota Tundra is larger than we need and likely too expensive for our budget. The Ford Ranger is more affordable but will be hard to find in our desired specs (longer bed, four-door).

Budget Overview for Purchase

The estimated costs for purchase of a used Toyota Tacoma:

Item	Cost	Notes
Vehicle (used)	$35,000	Range from $30,000 to $35,000
Sales tax	$2,500	Amount based on where the vehicle is registered, not where it was purchased
DMV registration & licensing fees	~$500	0.65% vehicle license fee, CHP fee of $34, ~$200
Approximate Purchase Total	**$38,000**	

The Estuary Program is requesting $35,000 of funding in the Equipment budget category from the FY27 320 base funding grant. We are including an additional $5,000 as match in the 320 budget in the non-federal unallocated funds category. If the cost slightly exceeds this budget, additional funding would be available from this same non-federal source.

Development of Cost – Rental

We also considered the cost of renting a vehicle versus purchasing one. The approximate costs to rent a truck for a day are as follows:

Item	Details	Expense
Drive to San Luis Obispo to pick up truck at airport	34.6 miles round trip, mileage reimbursement at $0.725/mile. Staff time ~2.5 hrs for driving, vehicle pickup/traffic/cleaning/gassing/drop-off, etc. Assume $25/hr labor. Airport parking at $25/day.	$112.59
Truck rental plus fuel, insurance, clean-up	$112/day rental, $15 gas, $12 insurance, $15 car wash	$154
Total cost for one day of rental		**$267**

In review of the past year of our actual truck use, approximately 130 days of truck rental would be required. As fieldwork often involves early morning starts or late finishes, multi-day rental would sometimes be needed. Based on 130 days/year of rental at $267/day, the total expense to rent a truck would be at least $34,320 for the year.

There are a few other considerations. The limited availability of vehicles in that class would likely mean that a truck would not always be available. Hauling muddy gear in a rental vehicle other than a truck would likely incur damage charges.

Development of Cost – Lease vs. Buy
While this is difficult to quantify, in general it makes more sense to purchase rather than lease if you intend to keep the vehicle for many years. We've had our current truck for nearly 20 years and would keep it if it wasn't starting to require more serious repairs. The benefits of leasing such as frequent upgrades and lower monthly payments don't apply here as we will not be taking out a loan and don't intend to upgrade the vehicle for many years. Many leases have return terms that contain a standard "normal wear and tear," and heavy field use would affect our ability to meet that term.

Development of Cost – Repair vs. Replace
Given the age of our existing work vehicle, numerous repairs are needed. We've spent $7,000 in the past two years on repairs and approximately $6,800 of repairs pending. While it's obviously less expensive to conduct repairs than to replace the vehicle, the advanced age of the vehicle (25+ years) means that we're likely approaching a break-even point when replacement makes more sense than repairs.

Competition in Purchase
If we move forward with the purchase, we will follow our procurement policy which ensures competition for purchases below the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. This process includes obtaining three cost estimates, ensuring there are no conflicts of interest, checking that the vendor is not federally debarred, etc.

Disposition of Property Using Federal Funds
Purchase of an item such as a vehicle requires end-of-life assessment at the "end of the project." Assuming that the National Estuary Program and our program are in existence, we intend to utilize the vehicle until its end of life. A vehicle is key to our monitoring and restoration fieldwork and as it is unlikely that our workplan would not include these types of tasks, we have a continued need for a vehicle. Items of equipment with a per unit fair market value of $5,000 or less may be retained, sold, or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to EPA. Although the truck value will take many years to drop below this threshold, assuming our organization is in existence, our workplan will include tasks that require a work vehicle. If for some reason the program is no longer in existence and the value of the vehicle was greater than $5,000, then we would follow federal guidelines in disposition of the property.

Conclusions
We feel that our analysis supports the purchase of a work vehicle using FY27 320 base grant funds. The success of the purchase is highly likely given that we have additional funding we can tap into if the cost is higher than expected. Additionally, we have adequate funding to support the ancillary costs of vehicle ownership, including insurance, registration, repairs, fuel, etc.