BCDC's Sediment and Beneficial Reuse Working Group members met on July 21, 2023 for a virtual public meeting at 10 am.

The Chair, Commissioner Andrew Gunther, began the meeting by welcoming attendees before turning to Maya McInerney, an Environmental Scientist at BCDC, who will be leading the Sediment for Wetlands Adaptation Project (SWAP). Maya began by providing a brief recap of the past meetings and a quick overview of the topics to be discussed in the next two meetings. Maya then shifted to explain the upcoming phase of the SWAP and the stakeholder workshop. The Catalyst Group has been chosen as the facilitator for the workshops. These workshops will help the project team identify roles, responsibilities, and actions, and create a strategic roadmap that will guide project going forward. BCDC staff will be preparing for these workshops by writing issue papers on various topics central to the beneficial reuse of sediment and soil.

Maya then turned the meeting over to Jeremy Lowe of the San Francisco Estuary Institute, who then gave a presentation on the necessary considerations for the beneficial reuse of sediment in wetland restoration projects. The primary considerations Jeremy identified were elevation, required to keep pace with sea-level rise; space, as wetlands will need room migrate inland; sediment, a resource in high demand and short supply as various restoration projects require large amounts; and time, necessary for the buildup of sediment and vegetation in restored wetlands, yet dwindling as sea levels rise. Jeremy ended his presentation by explaining that these considerations must guide future discussions about how to prioritize restoration efforts and the best ways to capitalize on these limited resources.

Evyan Borgnis Sloane, Deputy Bay Program Manager with the California State Coastal Conservancy, then picked up where Jeremy left off and gave a presentation on sediment challenges in Bay Area restoration projects. Evyan began with an overview of sediment and soil sources, focusing primarily on excavated upland soils, dredged sediment from navigation projects, streambed maintenance sediment, and coarse sediment. She then went on to discuss the different considerations required for each type of material and their application in beneficial reuse projects. Evyan concluded her presentation by pointing to regulatory change, local support, and increased funding as essential to achieving the region's restoration and adaptation goals.

The meeting then entered the public commented period. The discussion centered around construction projects and the feasibility of using the sediment from these projects in beneficial reuse initiatives. Renee Spenst of Ducks Unlimited stepped in to explain the various factors in getting sediment from construction sites to restoration sites, including considerations of location, timing, and cost.

The next Sediment and Beneficial Reuse Commissioner Working Group will be held on September 15th and will focus on the beneficial reuse of dredged sediment, and flood control projects as a source of sediment.

For additional information, please visit https://bcdc.ca.gov/swap/Sediment-for-Wetland-Adaptation-Project.html