

BCDC's Sediment and Beneficial Reuse Working Group members met on November 17, 2023, for a virtual public meeting at 10 am.

After the Chair, Commissioner Andrew Gunther, welcomed attendees, BCDC's Long Range Planning Manager, Erik Buehmann, stepped in to update the group on the state of the Sediment for Wetland Adaptation Project. The project team at BCDC is preparing for the 2-day sediment management stakeholder workshop that will take place this winter. The workshop will present a series of potential pathways to increase beneficial reuse. The invitations for the workshop have been distributed, and the team is finalizing the material for the workshop, including issue papers and draft action pathways.

Chair Gunther then introduced Xavier Fernandez of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Dave Haling of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, as they began their presentation on terrestrial material reuse in restoration and sea level rise adaptation. Xavier began by explaining the necessity of including excavated upland soils in beneficial reuse projects. Whereas dredged material is essential to wetland restoration and long-term adaptation plans to raise the elevation of marshes, excavated upland soils can be used to raise salt pond berms, create habitat transition zones and habitat islands, all of which provide more immediate resistance to sea level rise.

Dave noted the barriers to reusing upland materials, namely the high cost of dirt, hauling distances between sites, timing, and the potentially high levels of contamination in the material. Innovative processes have helped reduce these barriers. The "free dirt model" of beneficial reuse has been successful at reducing the cost of dirt and avoiding landfill disposal. Most beneficial reuse recipient sites also have their own quality assurance project plan (QAPP), which ensures the environmental safety of all material brought to the site. Despite these helpful procedures, challenges still remain. Xavier and Dave recommended new approaches to testing and approval processes, creating ecotone alternatives where appropriate to reduce material demand, and emphasized policy changes to overcome barriers to beneficial reuse.

The next Sediment and Beneficial Reuse Commissioner Working Group will be held on January 19th and will focus on issue paper presentations and the results chain analysis preview.

For additional information and meeting materials, please visit
<https://bcdca.gov/swap/Sediment-for-Wetland-Adaptation-Project.html>