

## Manager's Corner



by Sergio Ramirez  
District Manager

As we wrap up year two of the COVID-19 pandemic, I'd like to give thanks to all of the West Bay staff for their work and dedication throughout the pandemic, and for serving our community as intended. I'm proud to say that for approximately two years now our staff has never stopped working and continues to provide excellent service to our residents and other customers. As we enter our 120 year anniversary, I realize this has been the second pandemic the District has experienced, the first being in 1918. Through these challenging times, West Bay Sanitary District was recognized by the California Water Environment Association as the "2020 Collection System of the Year" for the entire State of California. The award is in recognition of having an outstanding maintenance and rehabilitation program among other things. With this huge accomplishment one can only hope that 2022 brings a sense of normality.

We have several exciting projects developing in 2022. One of our projects is to raise the levee at the District's flow equalization and resource recovery facility (FERRF) behind Bedwell Bayfront Park in Menlo Park (the site of the District's retired wastewater treatment plant.) The levee around the facility needs to be raised in order to protect the site from a 100 year storm

event. Similar projects around the entire Bay Area are also underway. Fortunately, West Bay Sanitary District recently received a \$3.9 million grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The grant will help build an ecotone levee that will create additional marsh habitat by using a horizontal living shoreline while protecting the site from sea level rise.

We are proud to report that the Board of Directors after several years of positive pension reform efforts, made the decision to pay down its Unfunded Accrued Liability (UAL) to the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), saving over \$4.2 million in interest to CalPERS. As of June 30, 2021 the District was officially debt-free as it pertains to CalPERS unfunded accrued liability. The District will pay any future liability as accrued, saving additional interest expense. [Visit FY 2020-21 Financial Audit for more information.](#)

After being established on December 10, 1902 as one of the first Sanitary Districts in the Bay Area and constructing a sanitary sewer system to promote public health during the Estate Era of Menlo Park and Atherton, West Bay is now entering into its next phase using water reclamation to help in the sustainability of our environment yet again. For more information on these and other exciting projects, please visit our website at [www.westbaysanitary.org](http://www.westbaysanitary.org).



## WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT AND SHARON HEIGHTS GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB PUBLIC/ PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP – RECYCLED WATER TREATMENT PLANT

As the first year of operation for the West Bay – [Sharon Heights Recycled Water Treatment Plant](#) winds down, the District is proud to report delivery of over 50 million gallons of recycled water since January 27th, 2021. This reuse project has been a tremendous asset to both the partnership and local community by relieving the municipal water system of over 50 million gallons of potable drinking water that can be used elsewhere. The partnership has provided a reliable local water supply that reduces vulnerability to droughts and other water supply constraints. The use of recycled water is critical for sustainable management of our long term water supplies. Using treated recycled water instead of potable water for irrigation, street sweeping, and construction dust control will have a significantly positive impact on our regions ability to prosper well into the future. Be on the lookout for future Recycled Water projects to further implement this fantastic resource for irrigation, toilet flushing, and other commercial water needs!



Recycled Water Storage Pond at Sharon Heights

Funding for this \$22.6 million recycled water project has been provided in full or in part by Proposition 1. The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014. Funding has also been provided through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which is capitalized through a variety of funding sources including grants from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and state bond proceeds.

## SALT POND RESTORATION PROJECT

West Bay Sanitary District and Save the Bay have teamed up with the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

The District has designated part of our Flow Equalization and Resource Recovery Facility (FERRF) located behind the Bedwell Bayfront Park as a temporary nursery facility for the Save the Bay organization. Save the Bay is using the site to propagate Salt Marsh type plants for Horizontal Levee Projects. The District's grounds at FERRF are in close proximity to the Salt Pond Restoration Project and serves as a convenient location for a raised bed nursery to propagate these types of plants. The District will be raising its own levee using a horizontal ecotone levee system.



Salt Pond Restoration Project

"We are proud to partner with our friends at Save the Bay to promote a natural and sustainable means to protect the Bay from sea level rise," says Sergio Ramirez, District Manager.

The District envisions the ecotone levee as a community asset and a potential opportunity to expand partnerships with the facility.

## WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT LEVEE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The West Bay Sanitary District (WBSD) owns and operates a Flow Equalization and Resource Recovery Facility (FERRF) on the retired wastewater treatment plant site in Menlo Park. The FERRF site is located at the northern end of Marsh Road in Menlo Park, shown as "Project Site" in the figure to the right. [For more information visit EIR.](#)

Bedwell Bayfront Park borders the site to the south and east. Flood Slough borders the site to the west. Levees protect the site from normal tides on the north and west sides.



Levee Improvement Project

During normal sewer flows, WBSD pumps wastewater via the Menlo Park Pump Station to the Silicon Valley Clean Water (SVCW) treatment plant. On occasion, during high rainfall events, the FERRF is used for flow equalization (temporary storage of wastewater) when the volume of wastewater collected exceeds conveyance capacity to the plant. The FERRF has two ponds that can be used to equalize sanitary sewer flows during high rainfall events. The FERRF has many uses besides flow equalization. A portion of the FERRF is used by Save the Bay for a nursery that grows vegetation that will be planted throughout the San Francisco Baylands. Furthermore, a portion of the FERRF acts as material storage for WBSD operations.

The earthen levees on the north and west sides of the FERRF were originally constructed in the late 1950's and do not protect the FERRF from 100-year tides. Therefore, the facility is located within the FEMA 100-year flood zone and may also flood if a 50-year storm surge coincides with mean high-high water.

The District's [Levee Improvement Project](#) proposes to protect the site from flooding and sea level rise by installing sheet pile walls along the western perimeter of the facility and construction of a structurally supported ecotone levee along the north perimeter to promote shoreline resiliency and marsh habitat after sea level rise. The levees will be raised to Elevation 15 (NAVD88). The ecotone levee will create a wider upland transition zone with approximately 3.5 acres of high-quality native upland refugia habitat for both rare and common wildlife species. A site plan of the improvements can be seen above.



Levee Improvement Site Plan

A portion of the Levee Project will be funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant of \$3.9M. [Visit NFWF for more information.](#)

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The District has completed the North Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue Capital Improvement Project. This project includes the replacement & rehabilitation of over 11,000 feet of sanitary sewer mains in Menlo Park, Atherton, and Unincorporated San Mateo County. Precision Engineering, Inc. of San Francisco was awarded the project, and most recently replaced approximately 2,800 feet of public sewer pipelines on Ringwood Avenue originally installed using terracotta pipe in 1903. This project required considerable coordination with San Mateo County, so that the underground pipe work be constructed before the County's pavement project. The work on Ringwood Ave. was from Bay Road to Toyon Road and included the installation of recycled water pipe for future use. Many residents of the area appreciated the coordination and work being performed. The District will wrap up the project in Menlo Park's Flood Triangle neighborhood. The District has been enforcing the strictest construction protocols in order to safely deal with the current pandemic.