



Foreword

This Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) represents a significant accomplishment in regional water resources planning. Regional associations such as the Bay Area Water Agencies Coalition, Bay Area Clean Water Agencies, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the North Bay Watershed Association, the State Coastal Conservancy, flood protection agencies, environmental organizations, and others have a long history of regional planning efforts encompassing all aspects of water resources planning and management.

With the advent of Proposition 50 and other State bond measures aimed at promoting a new model of integrated regional water management throughout California, San Francisco Bay Area water, wastewater, flood protection and stormwater management agencies; cities and counties represented by the Association of Bay Area Governments; and watershed management interests represented by the State Coastal Conservancy and non-governmental environmental organizations signed a Letter of Mutual Understandings (LOMU) in early 2004, detailing their intent to develop this San Francisco Bay Area IRWMP for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The LOMU is included in Appendix A.

The two primary goals established by the LOMU were to (1) facilitate regional cooperation in the areas of water supply reliability, water recycling, desalination, water conservation, water quality improvements, stormwater capture and management, flood management, recreation and access, wetlands enhancement and creation, and environmental habitat protection and improvement; and (2) foster coordination, collaboration and communication amongst participating agencies to achieve greater efficiencies, enhance public services, and build public support for vital plans and projects.

Given the large geographic scope of the Bay Area region (nine counties serving over six and a half million people) and the wide range of water management strategies being implemented, IRWMP development was approached as a two-step process in which IRWMP development first focused on four functional service areas related to water management, then integrated these four functional service areas into a comprehensive water resources management plan for the region.

Four functional areas were established:

- Water Supply and Water Quality
- Clean Water (Wastewater) and Recycled Water
- Flood Protection and Stormwater Management
- Watershed Management and Habitat Protection and Restoration

These functional areas began compiling information in early 2004, with the goal of developing comprehensive documents (“Functional Area Documents”) for each water resources service area. The purpose of these four Functional Area Documents would be to (1) identify specific needs and challenges relating to the specific functional area; (2) describe water management strategies and approaches to address these needs; and (3) develop a list of potential strategies and implementation projects that would maximize benefits and enhance opportunities for regional cooperation within a given functional area. These Functional Area Documents are included in Appendix B.

By early 2006, the Functional Areas had completed their independent work, and were ready to begin integrating the objectives, priorities, and strategies of each area into a cohesive, integrated water resources



management approach for the entire Bay Area region. Integrating the four Functional Area Documents into an IRWMP for the Bay Area was guided by a Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) comprised of representatives from each of the four functional areas. The Bay Area TCC worked with various stakeholders to identify and develop truly multi-purpose regional projects that transcend functional areas of water management. Through such integration, IRWMP development has achieved the following important steps toward establishing a long-term regional planning process:

- Enabling the region to identify common/related challenges across functional areas and opportunities for collaboration on potential solutions that would achieve multiple benefits
- Facilitating the process of identifying potential synergies between functional areas across the Bay Area
- Promoting coordination between various water management strategies identified so that conflicts and duplication of efforts were minimized
- Establishing a regional framework for evaluating multi-objective projects and water management strategies

While a considerable amount of time, effort and resources have gone into preparation of this IRWMP, the Bay Area IRWMP - like the functional areas it represents - is dynamic, and continues to change and grow with time. The IRWMP is not intended to serve as a static plan, but as a process for ongoing regional planning, and will be updated over time. Regional goals, objectives, and priorities will evolve over time, and the Plan, similarly, will adapt to meet the changing needs of the region. The Bay Area IRWMP, and its continued evolution, are illustrative of the San Francisco Bay Area's commitment to ongoing integrated regional water resources planning.