

Increasing Interagency Coordination: the San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program

H2O Conference
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San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program

- The Program
 - Program History
 - Program Function
 - Recent challenges and progress
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The Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP)

In short:

The WRP is a partnership of public agencies working to implement the wetlands action items of the Estuary's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan and the *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report*.

The Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) (Cont.)

■ General Purposes

- Support the recovery of the Bay Area's wetlands and streams
 - Encourage and guide the implementation of the *Habitat Goals* recommendations
 - Foster closer communication among the regulatory and resource agencies at the top levels
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The Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) (Cont.)

- Specific Objectives
 - Provide a forum for identifying and resolving agency policies and practices that impede authorization of sound habitat projects
 - Assist public and private efforts to plan and design appropriate, high-quality habitat projects
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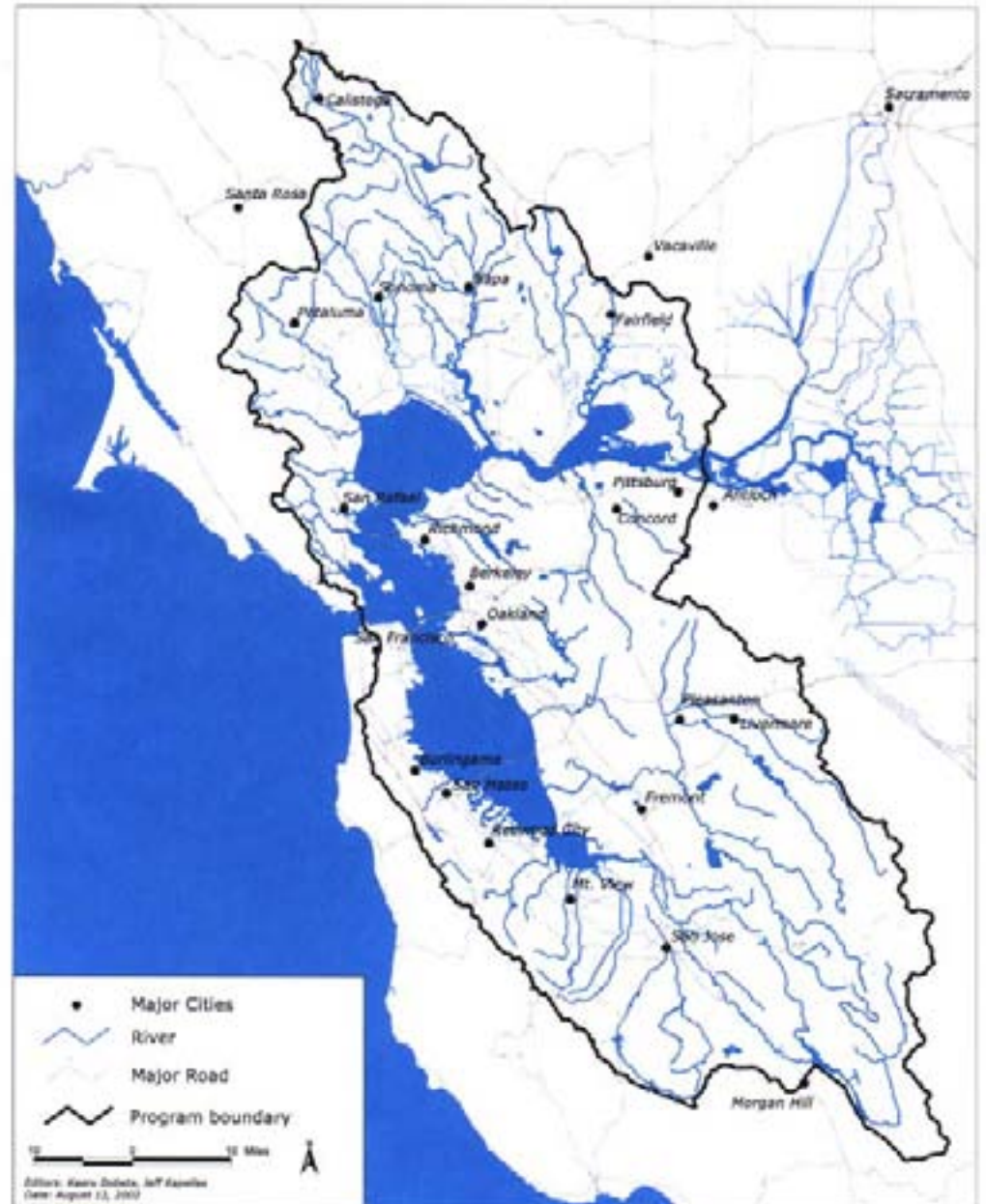
The Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) (Cont.)

- Specific Objectives (cont.):
 - Foster development of a regional wetlands monitoring program
 - Collaborate with existing Bay Area organizations involved in habitat restoration programs and efforts



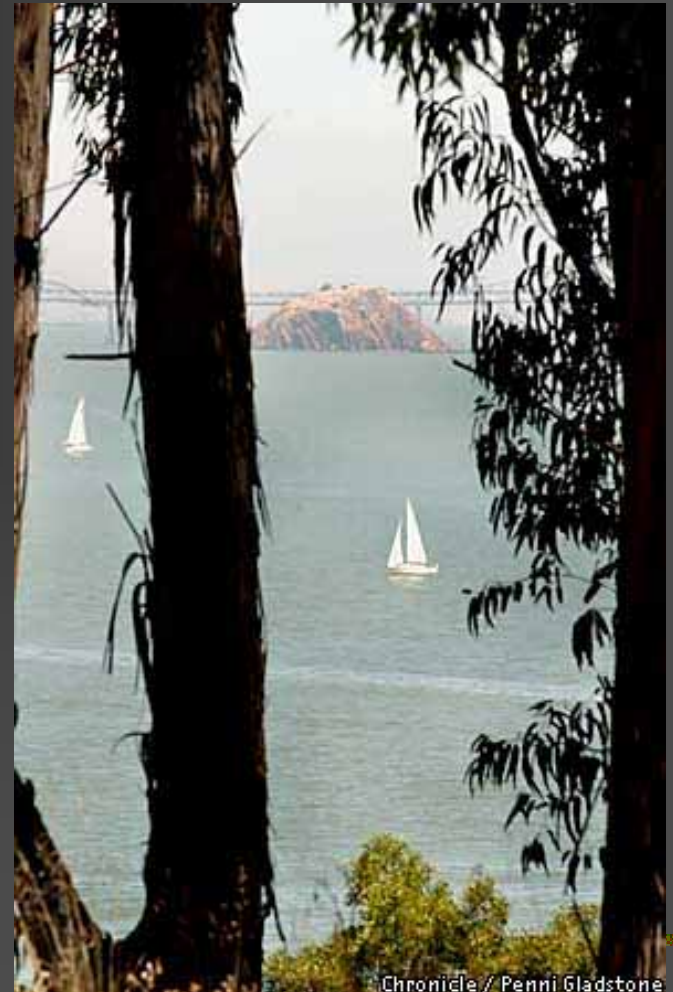
Program Boundary

San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program Boundary



Open to?

- Members of the public
- Private landowners
- Consultants
- Non-Profits
- Local agencies
- State agencies
- Federal agencies



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The Origins of the Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP)

- Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for the Bay-Delta (1993)
 - Estuary-wide
 - Wetlands action items



The Origins of the Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) (Cont.)

- *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals (1999)*
 - Made specific recommendations for kinds, amounts, and distribution of habitats in and around the Bay
 - Called for major habitat changes to over 100,000 acres of baylands
 - Scientific vision of the region's future habitat needs
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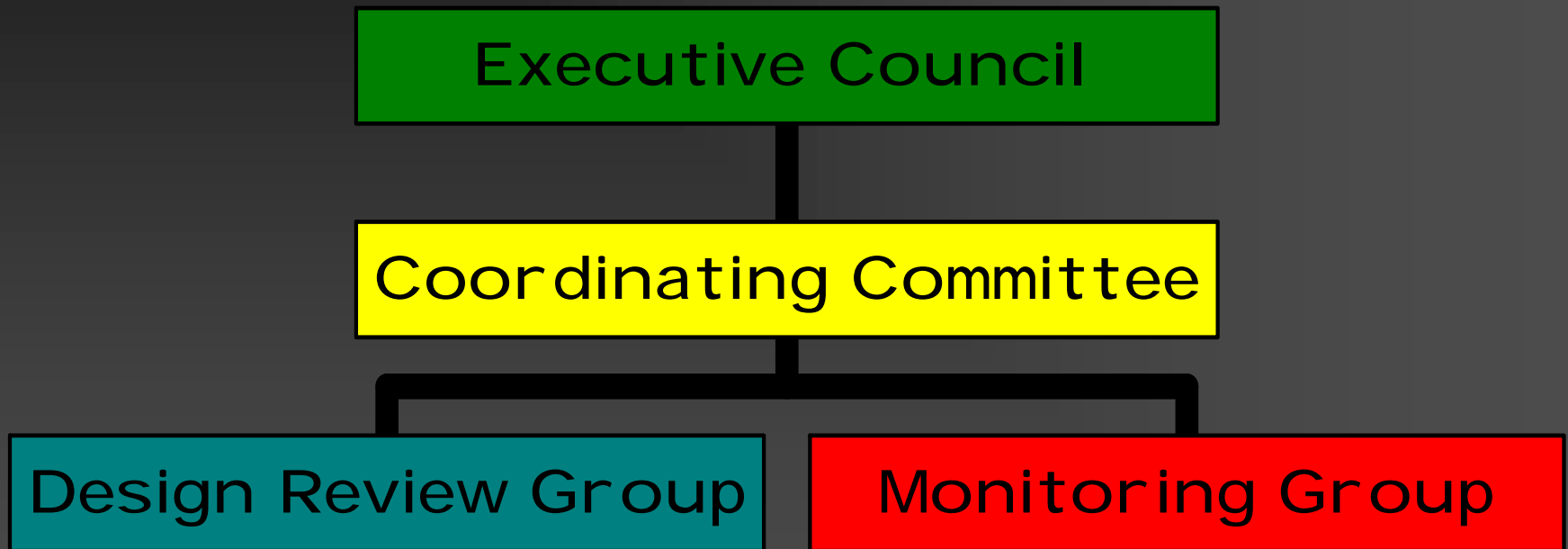
Critical *Habitat Goals* Recommendation

- A process to ensure that the Goals recommendations lead to habitat projects which are:
 - Ecologically appropriate
 - Technically sound
 - Coordinated within a regional context
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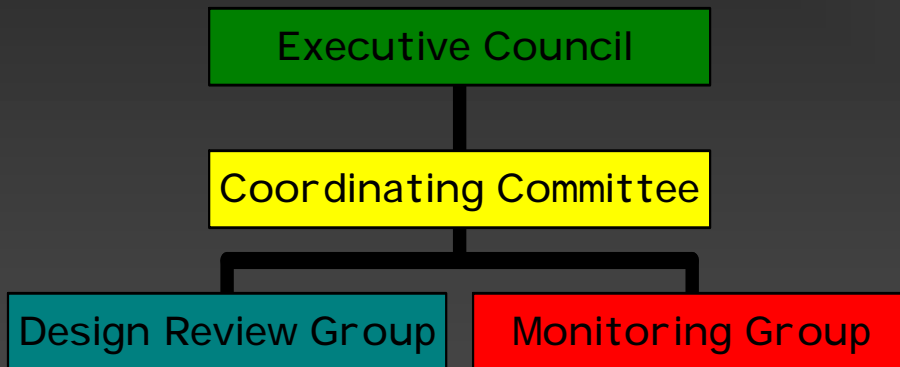
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Program Structure

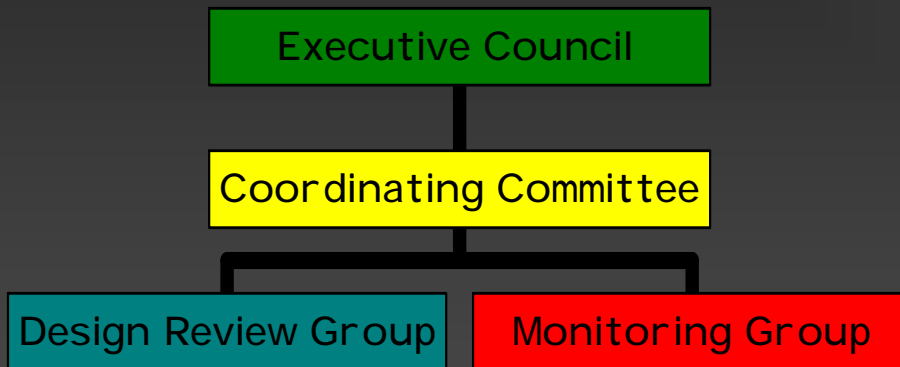


Executive Council



- Role:
 - Provide a forum for resolving impediments to project progress
 - Commit agency to support Program's mission
 - Provide direction and guidance
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Coordinating Committee



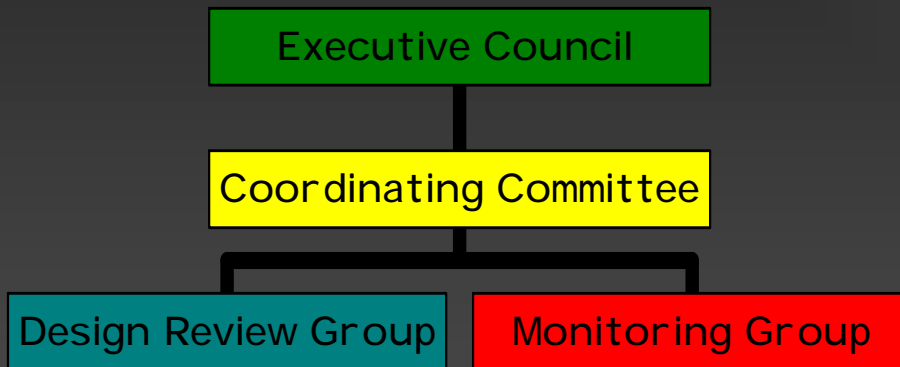
- Role:

- Provide overall Program support and coordination
 - Identify issues and options needing Council action
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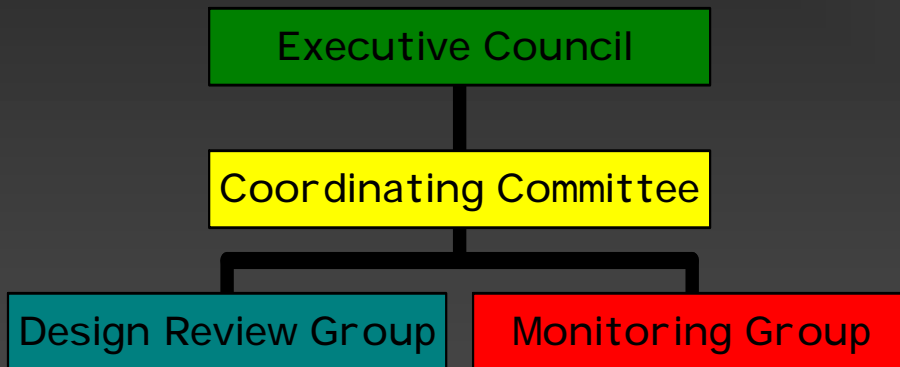
Design Review Group (DRG)

- Role:

- Provide feedback on project designs
- Identify technical issues that may impede a project's success



Wetlands Monitoring Group



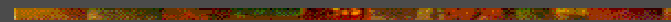
- Role:
 - Identify key components for a regional wetlands monitoring program
 - Provide an online, information management system
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Executive Council and Coordinating Committee

- Discussing issues of a regulatory nature is integral to Program's mission
 - Program will never create enforceable policies
 - Diversity of opinions over consensus
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Design Review Group

- Project review does not guarantee successful permitting
- Hopefully will lead to more successful project design
- Letter of Review
- Diversity of opinions over consensus



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Recent Challenges

- Numerous agencies with differing agency cultures and mantras
 - Regulatory agency vs. resource agency
 - Defining Program's niches and avoiding duplicative efforts
 - Perception and misperception of roles
 - Demonstrating to individuals and organizations that we are working for THEIR self-interest
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Recent Challenges

- Mistrust of government
 - Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)
 - Staff
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Recent Progress

- All working groups meeting regularly
 - Website at www.sfwetlands.ca.gov
 - Working Principles Endorsed (6/10/03)
 - New DRG Mitigation Policy
 - South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Interim Management Structure
 - Regulatory agencies, Outreach and Executive Council
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In Conclusion

- The *Habitat Goals Report* first provided a vision of the Bay's habitat goals
 - The WRP will ensure achievement of that vision and address habitat issues in an informed, coordinated way
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