



League of Women Voters
of the Bay Area



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ACTION ON ISSUES

2010-2012

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA
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The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area believes that government at the regional level should be structured so that it can effectively and responsibly solve those problems that transcend political boundaries.

January, 2011

HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area, first organized in 1959, is one of the oldest organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area dedicated to the concept of regional solutions to area-wide problems.

In the 1940s, concern about the overlapping problems between city and county services resulted in formation of League county councils. In 1953, as urban dwellers moved to the ever-expanding suburbs, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) issued a study outline, *A Guide to a Metropolitan Area Study*, calling attention to the new political and social problems related to economic regions, rather than to existing governmental jurisdictions.

First steps toward an area-wide or regional League in the San Francisco Bay Area came in 1956 and 1957. Enough interest was generated among local League members that a study of Bay Area problems and possible governmental solutions was adopted by 8 local leagues in 1959. In 1960 a follow up study evaluating proposals relating to metropolitan government in the Bay Area was adopted by 10 Leagues. In addition to the steering committee which had formed to guide the studies, an executive committee was created to carry out administrative duties.

April 1961, saw the formal establishment of a permanent organization, the LEAGUES OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA (LWVBA). An "Inter-League Organization," an ILO, was the official title given to such a group of Leagues organized to address area-wide or regional problems.

In 1970, standards developed by the League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) were used to prepare new bylaws. The major change was that LWVBA program would be adopted at annual conventions, similar to state and national programs and each League would be expected to participate in the program. Local League representation at conventions would be on a proportional basis, and delegates would come informed, not instructed. Funding would be provided by a per member dues assessment, paid by local Leagues. At the LWVBA annual meeting in May 1970, delegates adopted the new bylaws, and the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA, a League, not a group of Leagues, was established.

During the early development of LWVBA, the state and national League boards were permissive and interested observers, allowing the organizers of LWVBA to pioneer and make their own rules. After early attempts to gain voting status for Inter-League Organizations (ILOs) had failed, state bylaws were amended in 1971 to permit each ILO to send one voting delegate to state convention and council; LWVUS bylaws were similarly amended in 1972 to allow ILOs a voting delegate at national convention and council. Recognition standards for ILOs were adopted by both LWVC and LWVUS.

In 1974, LWVBA bylaws were amended to provide for a biennial convention, with a council meeting of board and local League presidents in alternate years.

Thus, the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA emerged, not as a directive from state and national Leagues, but at the instigation of local Leagues and their members, seeking to form a level of League structure to manage studies of regional problems and to take action at the regional level of government to attain the goals of League program, adopted through traditional procedures.

LWV BAY AREA STUDIES AND PROJECTS 1959-2010

- 1959-1960 Eight Leagues, with a temporary steering committee, adopted as program “A Study of Bay Area Problems and Their Possible Governmental Solutions.”
- 1960-1961 Evaluation of current proposals relating to metropolitan government in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- 1962-1963 Evaluation of area-wide transportation facilities.
- 1963-1964 Evaluation of land use with focus on parks, open space and shorelines.
- 1964-1965 Examination of all government structures, present or proposed, concerned with developing and implementing a Bay Area regional plan.
- 1966-1968 A study of governmental solutions to environmental pollution, water pollution and solid waste disposal.
- 1968-1970 Evaluation of current proposals relative to regional government.
- 1970-1972 A comprehensive study of transportation systems in the Bay Area.
- 1972-1974 Evaluation of regional land use policies and procedures and their relationship to human needs, population trends, and ecological and socio-economic factors in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- 1974-1976 Evaluation of ABAG’s Regional Plan 1970-1990. Action and education to implement the regional government position. The Bay Area Monitor Project (BAMP), an ongoing educational activity of LWVBA began in 1974, with EPA funding. BAMP began producing the *Bay Area Monitor*, a newsletter giving an overview of such regional issues as transportation, air quality, water supply and quality, land use and regional parks.
- 1976-1978 Update of regional agencies with emphasis on some, or all, of the following: ABAG, MTC, BCDC, BASSA, BAAQMD, and SFRWQCB. MTC began funding BAMP in 1976.
- 1978-1980 Evaluation of mechanisms to implement a comprehensive regional plan for the Bay Area.
- 1980-1982 Airport planning in the Bay Area and its relationship to other transportation and the environment.
- 1982-1984 Emphasis on member understanding of LWVBA positions and action to implement.
- 1984-1986 A study of hazardous materials management in the Bay Area. BAAQMD and BCDC become BAMP funders. (For Acronyms see Glossary on page 11)

- 1986-1988 A study of guidelines for mitigation of negative impacts as prescribed by CEQA within the EIR process and the use of mitigation by governmental bodies in the Bay Area. EBMUD, EBRPD, and BART added to BAMP funding; BCDC drops out.
- 1988-1990 Evaluation of all LWVBA positions. GGBHD added to BAMP funders.
- 1990-1992 Update of the transportation position. Evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the current framework of regional governance in the Bay Area. Survey Summary Report published. Policy for reconciling competing positions developed.
- 1992-1994 Economic project, undertaken to enhance the understanding of economics in the Bay Area by LWV members and the general public, produced videotapes on State and Local Finances to dovetail with LWVC restudy.
- 1994-1996 Seven local Leagues produced reports on the economic health of their communities as part of the Economics Project. Local Leagues interviewed executive directors of Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) and Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs). Responses were summarized and analyzed in a report. "Women Lead the Way," an exhibit based on oral histories of some outstanding League members from around the region, was produced to celebrate the 75th anniversary of women suffrage and of LWVUS, in 1995. The Bay Area exhibit was presented in conjunction with a national League Exhibit, "Women in Action: Rebels and Reformers," shown for three weeks each, at Mills College, Oakland, and at Stanford University. A facsimile of the exhibit and the recorded oral histories are preserved in the Bancroft Library archives.
- 1996-1998 Notable Bay Area League Day programs were presented: "Integrating the Environment and the Economy" in 1997 and "Will Transportation "Fixes" Work---for all the People---for the Environment---for the Economy. The LAFCO/CMA report was updated to 1997 and copies given to local Leagues for delivery to local officials serving on these agencies. Reports were sent to all libraries in the nine counties.
- 1998-2000 Local Decisions/Regional Impacts, a 2-year study to update and strengthen positions on Regional Governance, Regional Planning, Environment, Housing and Surface Transportation, reached consensus and was adopted at May 2000 Convention. BALD 2000 celebrated the 35th anniversary of LWVBA and the 25th anniversary of the Bay Area Monitor project, with a symposium "the State of the Region: State/Local Finance" A special issue of the Bay Area Monitor on the subject of Water Transit recognized its 25 years of balanced coverage of regional issues.
- 2000-2002 The Inter-League Network (IN) was formed to serve as a vehicle for communication and exchange of information among local Leagues and between them and the LWVBA on local issues with regional impacts where regional and local positions and perspectives to not always coincide. The draft "Transit Hubs for the San Francisco Bay Area", IN's first of a series of Issue Papers to explore regional issues from many perspectives, has been

posted on the LWVBA website. Housing “Starter Kits” with “fair share” numbers and background materials were distributed to local Leagues to assist their involvement in their communities’ state-mandated Housing Element updates. LWVBA website was inaugurated.

- 2002-2004 September, 2002, Know Your Bay Area (KYBA) Day in Palo Alto “Housing: Successes and Setbacks” also a presentation on the Valley Transportation Agency’s station design criteria. January 2003 Bay Area League Day with speakers on Bay Area Transportation Financing, in anticipation of Regional Measure 2 (RM2) that raised bridge tolls in 7 counties by \$1. LWVBA actively supported RM2. September 2003 KYBA in San Jose “Urban Limit Lines/Open Space Zoning” on the proposed planned development in San Jose’s Coyote Valley. January 2004 Bay Area League Day in Oakland “State and Local Finances.” September 2003 publication “LAFCo Revisited” summarizing the LWVBA Task Force findings on implementation of AB 2838, Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Reorganization Act of 2000.

- 2004-2006 September 2004 KYBA in Sausalito “Ocean Water On Tap” on the subject of desalination. January 2005 Bay Area League Day “Bay Area Regional Planning – From Vision to Reality” and took a tour of the Fruitvale Transit Village in Oakland. September 2005 KYBA in Fremont “Reforming CEQA: How has it worked, does it need to be changed?” January 2006 Bay Area League Day on the topic of “The State of the Bay”, reviewing 40 years of progress since the founding of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. Surveys were conducted by local Leagues of specific transit connection points to determine existing land use policies near transit.

- 2006-2008 Regional meetings: September 2006: Challenges of our Interdependent Water Systems in San Francisco; January, 2007, Bay Area League Day: Vision for the Future of the Bay Area; Focus on Housing; February 2008: Transportation Solutions to Climate Change inOakland. Posted results of “Survey of Land Use Policy near Transit Hubs”, 2007.

- 2008-2010 Bay Area League Days: Water: California’s New Gold, 2009; Big Steps, Little Steps to Addressing Climate Change, 2010 at ABAG’s Conference Area in the Metro Center. Monitoring and commenting on implementation of SB375, Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Regional Transportation Plan, 2035, BART’s Oakland Airport Connector, and other water and transportation issues.

LWVBA MEMBER LEAGUES

Alameda	North & Central San Mateo
Benicia	Oakland
Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville	Palo Alto
Cupertino/Sunnyvale	Piedmont
Diablo Valley	San Francisco
Eden Area	San Jose/Santa Clara
Fremont/Newark/Union City	Sonoma
Livermore/Amador Valley	South San Mateo
Los Altos/Mt. View Area	South West Santa Clara Valley
Marin	West Contra Costa

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS, 2006-2010

(text of action letters is posted on website: www.lwvbayarea.org)

Regional Planning

- Monitor Joint Policy Committee meetings focusing on Sustainable Communities Strategy, SB375
 - Monitor implementation of SB375, urging local Leagues to monitor issues in their areas.
 - Letter to Joint Policy Committee on greenhouse gas target goals, July 1, 2010
 - Letter to Joint Policy Committee on its scope and future issues, October 28, 2008
 - Letter to Joint Policy Committee on Bay Area Regional Position on CEQA Reforms, July 21, 2006
- Represented on ABAG Regional Planning Committee
- Participated in Envision Bay Area which was developing an interactive web site to enable citizens to make choices in the Sustainable Communities process
- Published (on website) Survey Of Land Use Policy Near Transit Hubs, 2007.

Air

- Monitored and participated in the numerous public workshops and meetings on the 2010 Clean Air Plan and the CEQA Air Quality Guidelines update.
- Co-hosted with the Air District the 2008 forum on the health problems from wood smoke from residential stoves and fireplaces.

Water

- Monitored issues in the SF Estuary to include the delta issues, wetlands, trails and creeks
- Letter on Calaveras Dam (San Francisco Planning Department), November 18, 2009.
- Monitored the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Authority

Transportation

- Monitored BART, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and various committees of the MTC, High Speed Rail for the Peninsula, the Dumbarton Rail Policy Advisory Committee, San Mateo County transit, Contra Costa County's Congestion Management Agency, and the Bay Area Toll Authority, among others.
- Letters to Metropolitan Transportation Commission
 - Public participation plan, August 23, 2010
 - Transparency in Public Financing of Oakland Airport Connector, July 27, 2010
 - Regional Transportation Plan 2035, April 19, 2010
 - Regional Climate Action Initiatives, November 2, 2009
 - Draft Transportation Plan, March 2, 2009.
 - MTC recertification, 2007, August 17, 2007
 - MTC Funding Proposal for Measure 1B Transit Funding, May 8, 2007
 - Regional Rail Plan Alternatives, July 26, 2006
- Letter to Bay Area Toll Authority on Bridge Tolls, December 8, 2009.
- Letter to BART Board on Oakland Airport Connector, September 13, 2010.
- AC Transit
 - Supported November 2008 parcel tax measure in support of AC Transit
 - Sent letter on proposed Fare Increase, February 24, 2009
- Dumbarton Rail Corridor Project, Sent letters on July 22, 2008 and November 29, 2006

Housing

- Supported AB 239 (deSaulnier), with LWVC permission, that would provide funds for housing trusts in San Mateo and Contra Costa Counties

Climate Change (using LWVUS Statement of Concerns)

- Letters to the editor, October 2010, opposing Prop. 23 (delaying implementation of California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32))
- Participated in Global Climate Change Network with the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Communities, including a Communications Working Group for the Bay Area

LWVBA PRIORITIES 2010-2012

- Active Involvement in the Joint Policy Committee (ABAG/MTC/BAAQMD/BCDC) in their guidance of regional land use, transportation and climate solutions (emphasis on transportation)
- Continue to participate in policies and solutions to address Climate Change in the Bay Area, including issues related to water.

LWVBA POSITIONS 2010-2012

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (updated 5/2000)

Support legislative action to establish a multi-purpose regional planning agency for the nine Bay Area counties with directly elected representatives from newly established districts

Support, in the interim, state or local government action to consolidate existing regional agencies

Support measures to make regional decision making bodies representative of the population distribution and region-wide governmental, environmental, social equity, and economic interests

1. Recognition that many regional functions require cooperation between the level of government closest to the people and regional governing bodies
2. Concerted effort to maintain local government identity within the regional framework
3. Authority for the designated regional planning agency (currently ABAG) to prepare and implement a long-term, comprehensive regional plan and capital improvements program according to state policies and guidelines, with:
 - a. power of eminent domain
 - b. authority to review local general plans and major development proposals for consistency with the regional plan
 - c. power to allocate or withhold federal and state funds to implement the comprehensive regional plan and capital improvements program
4. Mandatory local general and special district plan compliance with the comprehensive regional plan
5. Reform of the state/local finance system to provide local governments with sufficient and dependable funding, and adequate funding for comprehensive regional planning and implementation.

REGIONAL PLANNING (updated 5/2000)

Support legislation to establish state/regional/local comprehensive planning criteria that promote compact growth, natural resources protection, and social and economic equity

1. Include as planning considerations: environmental quality, transportation, conservation and environmentally sensitive development of the Bay, its shoreline and tributaries, parks, open space, agricultural lands and natural resources, sewage and waste disposal, housing, seismic hazards, employment, social equity, and economic health
2. Limit future growth to the existing urbanized areas in order to prevent urban sprawl, protect environmental resources, maintain open space around urban centers, utilize existing services, provide workforce housing close to jobs, and promote a regional transportation system, through:
 - a. regional growth framework__that coordinates local growth boundaries and includes:
 - b. land use controls outside the boundaries to protect agricultural lands and natural resources,
 - c. requirements inside the boundaries for more job-related housing and transit-oriented development with. consideration of social equity, and natural resource protection, and
 - d. adherence of LAFCOs to the regional growth framework
 - e. regional capital improvements program for allocating federal, state, and local resources for regional facilities, low-to-moderate income housing, and land acquisition to implement the regional plan
3. Create a sense of regional identity
4. Maintain local and community identity.

ENVIRONMENT Air Land Use Water Solid Waste (Updated 5/2000)

Support regional solutions to environmental pollution that provide effective air and water quality control and regional planning for solid waste management

Support measures for conservation and environmentally sensitive development of San Francisco Bay that promote enhancement and preservation of the Bay and its shoreline, tributaries, native vegetative communities and habitats

Support measures that ensure adequate parks and the protection of natural resources, open space, and agricultural land, both outside urban growth boundaries and in urbanized areas

Support natural resources policies to achieve:

1. Air and water quality standards that adequately protect people and the environment and effective enforcement of these standards
2. Clean air through regulation of motor vehicle emissions
3. Sound long-range planning for sewage, industrial and solid waste disposal
4. Conservation of the Bay's ecology, including tributaries and riparian and other native plant communities and habitats
5. Measures to ensure that public access does not degrade habitats and native plant communities and that economic growth does not adversely impact the environment
6. Requirement that the polluter pay for clean-up costs.

NATURAL RESOURCES*CEQA MITIGATION

Support effective legislation, guidelines, and criteria for governmental decision making on mitigation of the negative environmental impacts of a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that take into account whether: 1) the decision to proceed or not is environmentally sound and gives particular attention to cumulative impacts; and 2) the mitigation plan is properly implemented under an acceptable process for meeting legal requirements and public need.

1. Strengthen California Environmental Quality Act: clear process for project determination by the lead agency
 - a. early public involvement with emphasis on public hearings
 - b. environmental checklists identifying significant effects for initial study
 - c. assessment of the broad cumulative impacts
 - d. effective implementation of monitoring programs,
 - e. sufficient funding for mitigations
2. Utilize CEQA to inform decision making in consideration of League positions on Regional Planning; Housing and Economics; Environment; Transportation and Hazardous Materials on whether to:
 - a. avoid the project;
 - b. proceed with the project as proposed;
 - c. proceed with appropriate mitigations.
 - d. proceed with an alternative project and appropriate mitigations
3. Apply appropriate criteria to the mitigation decision making to
 - a. determine whether there is an acceptable or unacceptable process for meeting legal requirements and public need;
 - b. identify the comprehensive and realistic environmental impacts of a project under CEQA, including cumulative impacts; and
 - c. prevent or eliminate environmental damage.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

This is a Vertical Position – Local Leagues are authorized to take local action on the basis of it.

Support a hazardous materials management program that protects the public health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials in the Bay Area, including:

1. Identification of the hazardous materials used, stored and disposed of in each locality, including chemical/common name of hazardous material, quantity of substance and location, acute/chronic health effects and other potential risks from exposure, proper response procedures, method of disposal and route of transportation.
2. Disclosure to the lead governmental organization appropriate agencies and the public with proper safeguard for trade secrets and security concerns.
3. Mechanisms for coordination between agencies need to be developed with
 - a. clearly defined agency responsibilities;
 - b. clearly defined notification procedures;
 - c. defined information dissemination procedures
 - d. coordinated data base;
 - e. single body responsible for implementation
 - f. statement of goals, objectives and policies for siting hazardous materials and hazardous waste facilities and for general management of hazardous materials in the foreseen future;
 - g. integration with other local land use planning activities;
 - h. consistency with the applicable general plan; periodic review;
 - i. full and meaningful involvement of the public, environmental groups, civic associations and hazardous waste treatment or disposal facility staffs;
 - j. establishment of an advisory committee with representatives from the above groups;
 - k. incentives to site new hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities; and
 - l. consideration of provisions for public education, enforcement, surveillance, transportation; administration; funding for implementation; coordination between public and private sector; and incentives for waste reduction and recycling.
4. Adequate funding for hazardous materials management programs and public education by a combination of sources including user fees, penalties and fines, County and State General Funds, State Hazardous Waste Account, State and Federal Superfunds as appropriate.

5. Development of a hazardous materials management plan which should include the following elements:
 - a. an analysis of existing and projected hazardous materials use and disposal by type and volume;
 - b. an inventory of existing facilities for storing, handling, recycling, treating and disposal of hazardous materials and estimated capacity of each;
 - c. a program for management of small volumes of hazardous materials and waste; and
 - d. identification of those facilities that can be expanded to accommodate projected needs, and identification of specific sites for new facilities or general areas for locating new facilities, and siting criteria to be used in choosing sites.

SOCIAL POLICY * HOUSING (Updated 5/2000)

Support a regional housing plan that provides for balanced and equitable housing throughout the region

Support federal and state legislation that facilitates the implementation of regional housing goals

Support a regional fair share housing plan as part of the broader comprehensive regional plan

1. Place special emphasis, consistent with compact growth principles, on local efforts to meet needs for very-low-to-moderate-income housing
2. State and regional guidelines for local policies that promote:
 - a. higher density housing
 - b. inclusionary zoning
 - c. mixed-use housing
 - d. housing near transit
 - e. incentives for development of affordable housing
 - f. incentives for rehabilitation of existing housing stock
 - g. clarity and consistency in the development process
 - h. emphasis on good design, maintenance and management of subsidized housing
 - i. retention of subsidized housing as affordable housing
3. Requirement that major new commercial and industrial developments assist in providing housing for the jobs created by such developments
4. Establishment of a regional trust fund for the funding of needed housing development throughout the region.

TRANSPORTATION * SURFACE (Updated 5/2000)

Support a long-term, comprehensive planning process consistent with the comprehensive Bay Area plan and growth management framework (currently ABAG's plan) to promote compact, transit-oriented growth patterns served by an efficient, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network

Support multi-modal, efficient, convenient, cost-effective, equitable, safe transportation planned in concert with land use and viable alternatives to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and single-occupancy vehicle use

1. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), as the currently designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), to develop criteria and a process for evaluation of alternative transportation investments (standard rail, light rail, BART rail, express bus, bicycle, ferry, highways, and parking facilities) as a framework for testing County proposals in order to build the most effective regional transportation system
2. The MPO to develop criteria and a rating system for allocating state and federal transportation funds to encourage compact, transit-oriented growth patterns, with:
 - a. analysis of potential transportation investments to include their effect on future land uses in and beyond the Bay Area

- b. criteria to include reasonable fares, environmental effects on health (including air and water quality, noise reduction) and on agriculture and natural resources
 - c. analysis to be presented as public information prior to selection of projects
 - d. distribution of funds to be tied to cooperative local land use planning
3. Bay Area transit systems linked into an efficient, reliable, convenient and affordable regional transit network with attention to reasonable, fares, reduction of travel times, good feeder service, extensive hours of service, and easily comprehended directions for routes, schedules, and transit hubs, and passes for moving between systems. Good service to be encouraged by:
- a. monitoring the relative efficiency of various systems, and
 - b. maintaining transit system options to mitigate interruptions in service (disasters, strikes) or to serve needs of people with special limitations
 - e. Transportation funding more reliably consistent with needs and long-term planning (e.g., annual adjustment of the gas tax to cover costs of road maintenance)

TRANSPORTATION * AIRPORTS

Support coordination between environmental and land use concerns and the need for aviation services in the Bay Area.

1. Prevention of encroachment by incompatible development through far-sighted planning and consistently enforced zoning ordinances
2. Primary consideration for safety
3. Airport planning and operations compatible with neighboring uses
4. Minimizing noise pollution and limiting to levels non-injurious to health and enjoyment of life with continuing monitoring and use of mitigating technical measures
5. Safe, convenient and preferably mass transit access to airports
6. Improvement of existing airports before new ones are considered, with need, demand and cost taken into account
7. Cooperation among jurisdictions in considering regional airport needs.

***Vertical Positions – Local Leagues are authorized to take local action on the basis of these positions.**

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AB 32	Assembly Bill 32, California Global Warming Solutions Act, 2006
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
AC Transit	Alameda-Contra Costa Transit
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BALD	Bay Area League Day (annual event of LWV Bay Area)
BAMP	Bay Area Monitor Project (publishes Bay Area Monitor)
BART	Bay Area Rapid Transit District
BASSA	Bay Area Sewer Service Agency (no long exists)
BCDC	Bay Conservation and Development Commission
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act (1970)
CMA	Congestion Management Agency
EBMUD	East Bay Municipal Utility District
EBRPD	East Bay Regional Park District
EPA	Environment Protection Agency (U.S. agency)
GGBHD	Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District
JPC	Joint Policy Committee
KYBA	Know Your Bay Area
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
SB 375	Senate Bill 375, 2008 law designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
SFRWQCB	San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board