

A large flock of white seabirds, possibly terns, with black caps and orange beaks, are captured in flight over a body of water. The birds are scattered across the frame, with some in the foreground and others further back. The water is dark blue and reflects the birds. An orange diagonal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

# SAVE BAY



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WE ENVISION A CLEAN AND HEALTHY SAN FRANCISCO BAY, FREE FROM  
POLLUTION, RINGED BY 100,000 ACRES OF RESTORED TIDAL MARSH,  
AND SUPPORTED BY COMMUNITIES THAT VALUE AND DEFEND THE  
BAY AS CENTRAL TO THE BAY AREA’S EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE.

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IMAGE COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT NATE KAUFMAN'S LEAP (LIVE EDGE ADAPTATION PROJECT)

# PLANNING FOR NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE ECOLOGICAL FORCES shaping San Francisco Bay are changing rapidly, as is the political and social landscape of the Bay Area. The pace of these changes will only accelerate over the decades ahead.

The Bay and the Bay Area will be greatly impacted by climate change, increasing population, and development. For this reason, Save The Bay's strategy through 2020 is not based on simply responding to current Bay threats and opportunities, but on anticipating and addressing the profound changes that will affect the Bay, its communities, and its environment. We shaped this strategy by examining changes projected for the Bay Area in the coming decades.

Over the past half-century, Save The Bay protected thousands of acres from Bay fill and development, and secured hundreds of miles of trails and parks on a shoreline that had almost no public access in 1961. In recent years, we've won bans on most single-use

plastic shopping bags, secured tough restrictions on trash pollution entering the Bay, and engaged thousands of local residents in hands-on habitat restoration. Many partners shared this work.

Moving forward, we are widening our sights to address upstream geographies and upland issues, working to shape decisions there that affect the Bay. To be even more effective at achieving our mission in times of rapid change, we are building strong new partnerships with community leaders and organizations, embracing new tools for mobilizing residents and influencing public policy, and focusing our scientific expertise on the most innovative and promising restoration projects.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

IN THE DECADES AHEAD, the Bay Area’s population will increase, and grow older and more diverse. Cities will become denser and more interdependent. The Bay shoreline will face more development pressure, but public demand for the Bay’s open space and recreation will increase.

Save The Bay’s habitat restoration and pollution reduction work already has the momentum it needs to succeed, but our region will face new challenges that we must address. We expect the impacts of climate change to intensify with greater extremes and variability, making sudden and severe shocks to the Bay’s ecology and wildlife more likely. Business-as-usual is not an option.

The new threats ahead are no less challenging than those that our founders faced in 1961, when cities planned massive bay fill projects and the Bay’s shorelines were lined with toxic dumps. However, we know we can achieve transformational change within a generation—*because we have done it before.*

We have developed our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan with this landscape in mind, focusing on three Strategic Priorities:

- ▶ We will restore Bay habitat at significant scale, both through sound science and by securing the necessary funding. This is our path to a San Francisco Bay that is resilient to climate change.
- ▶ We will promote Bay Smart communities by leading cities to meet new standards for green infrastructure. This is our path toward a healthy Bay and vibrant Bay Area.
- ▶ We will shape the public agenda, by influencing public opinion and achieving policy victories for a healthy Bay. This is our path to achieving transformational change that benefits the Bay for generations to come.



RESTORE BAY HABITAT



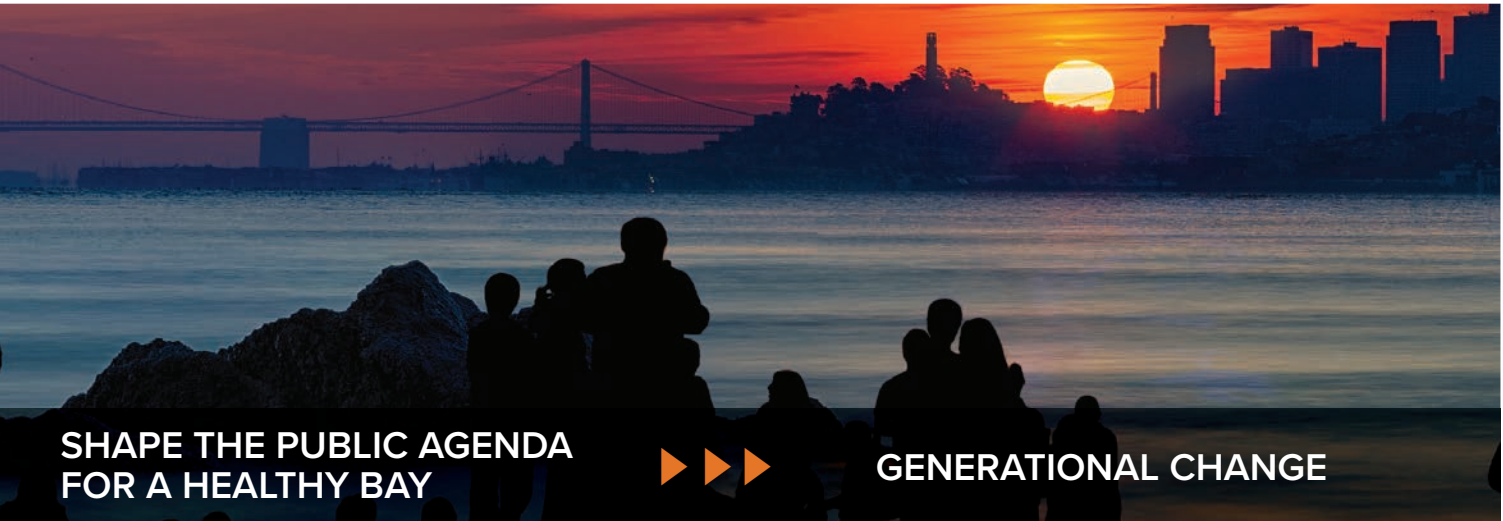
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION



PROMOTE BAY SMART INFRASTRUCTURE



A HEALTHY BAY AND VIBRANT BAY AREA



SHAPE THE PUBLIC AGENDA FOR A HEALTHY BAY



GENERATIONAL CHANGE



**RESTORE BAY  
HABITAT for  
Climate Change  
Adaptation and  
Resilience**



TIDAL MARSH WETLANDS ARE THE LUNGS OF THE BAY, giving life to hundreds of fish and wildlife species, cleansing pollutants from the Bay, preventing erosion, and creating a vibrant, beautiful shoreline. We need 100,000 acres of these wetlands for a healthy Bay, and the potentially devastating impacts of climate change make this need all the more urgent. Restoring tidal marshes helps our region prepare for the sea level rise we anticipate by 2050. We urgently need to invest in new scientific approaches and large-scale restoration.

# RESTORE BAY HABITAT

CLIMATE CHANGE IS ALTERING SAN FRANCISCO BAY at an accelerating pace, a trend that will continue over coming decades if sea level rises faster than shoreline habitat can adapt. Climate change will also alter weather patterns, creating more extreme storms or super storms that will increase the frequency of major floods. Healthy tidal wetlands have the potential to

significantly mitigate many of the problems facing the Bay Area's people and wildlife. Tidal wetlands can accrete sediment, adapt to rising water levels, and provide habitat access as shoreline wildlife is pushed upland. Tidal wetlands can also act like a natural sponge, providing a strong measure of natural flood protection for shoreline communities.

Even without climate change, the Bay needs 100,000 acres of tidal marsh to support a healthy ecosystem. Since the 1800's, the Bay has lost 90 percent of its historic wetlands, leaving only about 40,000 acres of tidal marsh.

Over the past 20 years, more than 36,000 acres of shoreline sites have been returned to the public to be restored, with about 4,000 of those since reconnected to the Bay's tides. Inadequate funding is the major impediment to completing restoration. Save The Bay's report, *Greening The Bay* outlined the need for 100,000 acres of tidal marsh habitat around the Bay and identified local funding



Restoring Bay habitat will require new funding sources and innovative adaptation approaches.

as key to creating a healthy Bay for future generations. Additional bay-land acquisitions will be needed to reach this goal.

Save The Bay's strategy for restoring San Francisco Bay champions the funding of landscape-scale tidal marsh restoration on more than 30,000 acres already acquired for that purpose, and cutting-edge demonstration projects to provide new adaptation approaches.

### What we need to succeed

In the next phase of our work to secure large-scale funding for Bay restoration, Save The Bay will **add Washington, D.C.-based lobbying expertise**. Historically, restoration projects benefiting San Francisco Bay have been dramatically underfunded at the federal level, especially compared to projects benefiting other nationally important estuaries. Working with the many partners we've gained through our work to secure a robust regional source of Bay restoration funding, we'll leverage our local success to give the Bay a louder voice in the U.S. Capitol and pursue dramatic increases in federal funding for the Bay.

As we expand our portfolio of projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to transition zone habitat restoration, we will **add a staff scientist and a project specialist**, growing our habitat restoration team from six to eight full time positions. We will also need to **replace aging field vehicles and to upgrade our nursery facilities and equipment**.

IMAGE COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT NATE KAUFMAN'S LEAP LIVE EDGE ADAPTATION PROJECT

PLAN OF ACTION		
Restore Bay Habitat for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience		
ACTION PLAN	FIVE-YEAR OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Win new regional funding for Bay restoration	Bay Area voters approve regional Measure AA, a 9-county, \$12 parcel tax that will generate \$500 million over 20 years and pave the way to additional funding opportunities	Raise new public/private funds to restore tidal marsh on more than 30,000 acres already acquired for wetland restoration  Establish 100,000 acres of restored wetland habitat as detailed in the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals
Secure new federal funding for Bay restoration	Establish \$100–250 million of dedicated annual federal funding to accelerate restoration of Bay tidal marsh and support other Bay restoration and protection measures	Lead on cutting-edge demonstration projects to address regional climate change and sea level rise impacts  Demonstrate new approaches to tidal marsh restoration and transition zone habitat creation that address challenges posed by rising sea levels from climate change
Lead transition zone habitat demonstration projects	Support and enhance 5–7 leading-edge transition zone restoration demonstration projects that incorporate sea level rise and climate change adaption	



**PROMOTE  
BAY SMART  
COMMUNITIES**  
for Bay health and  
Bay Area quality  
of life



THE BAY AREA'S POPULATION WILL GROW dramatically in the decades ahead, and the choices we make today will determine how this growth will affect the environment and quality of life of our children and grandchildren. For our communities to thrive, we need to make smart choices for our Bay, embracing green infrastructure and development standards and ensuring access to the Bay for all residents. Creating Bay Smart communities is essential to a healthy, sustainable future.

# PROMOTE BAY SMART COMMUNITIES

SAVE THE BAY’S HISTORIC WORK has firmly established a regional political consensus and policies that contain Bay fill and regulate pollution, the largest historic threats to the Bay. While we will remain vigilant against these threats, our new strategic priority is upstream from the Bay shoreline.

The Bay Area’s population is projected to grow 30 percent from 2000 to 2040. This will spur housing, transit, and other development throughout the region.

These new projects and upgrades to existing infrastructure could damage the Bay if designed and implemented poorly, or could enhance the Bay, if designed to use water efficiently, minimize the flow of polluted stormwater, and reduce emission of greenhouse gases that fuel climate change. Development could limit enjoyment of the Bay to wealthier residents of the region and weaken the broad support the Bay needs to survive, or it could improve public access to the Bay and parks for underserved communities and enhance our investment in its health.

Save The Bay will pursue ecologically sound and equitable policies to meet the challenge of a growing Bay Area in ways that benefit the Bay and build support for the Bay among the region’s fastest growing populations.



Our region must adopt Bay Smart solutions to meet the pressures of a growing population.

## What we need to succeed

Our Bay Smart Communities program will require that Save The Bay substantially expand the focus of our upstream work to develop more comprehensive, *Bay Smart* solutions for sustainable development that decrease water use and stormwater runoff; increase water recycling, water storage, natural stormwater filtration, and groundwater recharge; diminish greenhouse gas emissions and urban heat island effects that worsen global warming and damage our

local environment; and enhance public access to the Bay shoreline for our region’s diverse communities.

To achieve these objectives, Save The Bay will need to **acquire technical assistance to strengthen our expertise in policy development** focused on sustainability and climate change resilience, and **hire new advocacy staff** focused on developing Save The Bay’s grassroots activist base and building and maintaining partnerships with a broad group of stakeholders concerned with green infrastructure.

IMAGE COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT NATE KAUFFMAN’S LEAP (LIVE EDGE ADAPTATION PROJECT)

## PLAN OF ACTION

Bay Smart Communities for Bay health and Bay Area quality of life

ACTION PLAN	FIVE-YEAR OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Enforce first-in-the-nation regional standards to achieve Zero Trash	Secure funded plans with two large Bay Area cities to achieve the 2022 regulatory requirement of Zero Trash flow into San Francisco Bay  Create models of best practices and plans to replicate in additional municipalities within the region	Advance a Bay Smart communities agenda with an initial menu of best practices, leveraging and building upon our pollution prevention policy wins  Build strategic alliances with local and regional smart growth, environmental justice, public health, and neighborhood improvement groups to increase support for comprehensive pollution prevention strategies and an emerging Bay Smart Communities agenda
Promote Bay Smart communities by establishing green infrastructure standards and support diverse Bay Area communities by shaping local, state, and federal policies	Secure Bay Smart development policies from targeted municipalities and agencies; secure regulatory changes and public funding to support these approaches  Integrate key elements of the Bay Smart communities agenda into development initiatives across the region to demonstrate state-of-the-art techniques and technologies	Maximize low-impact access to the Bay, particularly for groups that have historically had less direct interaction with the Bay and its shoreline
Prevent destructive Bay development and respond to “shocks and spills”	Respond quickly and effectively to new and emerging threats to the Bay	



# BAY DAY

## PROGRESSIVE AGENDA

### FUTURE GENERATIONS

**SHAPE THE  
AGENDA  
FOR THE BAY**  
with Decision  
Makers and the  
General Public



THE FUTURE OF OUR BAY DEPENDS on how we, as a region, value and steward this natural resource. The challenges to the Bay's health are daunting, and the competing priorities are many. First and foremost, we must give the Bay a voice. Citizens must speak it. Regulators must uphold it. Political leaders must heed it. We must empower the next generation to carry it forward.



# SHAPE THE AGENDA FOR THE BAY

THE BAY AND THE BAY AREA ARE TRANSFORMING rapidly due to climate change, growing population, changing demographics, increasing income inequality, and new, large-scale development. Our challenge is to advance a progressive agenda for the Bay that is relevant for the future and compelling to decision makers and the general public.

For more than half a century, Save The Bay has taken great pride—and found significant power—in giving voice to individuals and communities on behalf of the Bay. By 2020, we will sharpen and focus our outreach and engagement to make maximum impact, and put our resources where they can build more power for us to benefit the Bay. We will reach beyond our traditional constituency and bring more communities into the regional dialogue about why a healthy Bay is important to our lives and values. We will lift up the voices of the Bay Area’s younger residents and diverse communities in advancing an agenda for the Bay, and find new ways to partner for a better Bay Area.

Much of Save The Bay’s existing strength comes from person-to-person education of and advocacy with elected officials and key agency personnel. Moving forward, we will increase our political influence with additional 501(c)(4) political activity;



Building a progressive agenda for the Bay and inspiring the next generation of advocates.

nurture leaders to have more impact for the Bay; ally with powerful organizations and individuals around mutual and complementary goals; strategically mobilize grassroots activists; and galvanize more residents to appreciate and steward the Bay.

We will also leverage our public and student education programs to focus resources on deepening public awareness of the Bay and its needs.

### What we need to succeed

Save The Bay’s expanded reliance on grassroots mobilization to win changes in local and regional development policies will require increased **staff capacity for intensive organizing** on the ground.

We will launch and grow an annual Bay Day to foster a region-wide celebration of the Bay, and will need **corporate and institutional sponsors to partner with us** to amplify our outreach, education and advocacy.

The Save The Bay Action Fund will need to build a durable base of policy and political partners, as well as major institutional and individual donors to pursue new opportunities and challenges for political advocacy on a broader policy agenda benefiting the Bay.

Finally, we will partner with our funders, schools, and community leaders to leverage our high-impact education programs in new ways that address the changing landscape of the Bay.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VIVIAN REED

## PLAN OF ACTION

Shape the Agenda for the Bay with Decision Makers and the General Public

ACTION PLAN	FIVE-YEAR OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
<b>Build out the 501(c)(4) Save the Bay Action Fund plan and leverage for political outcomes</b>	Establish Save The Bay Action Fund’s endorsement as a sought-after brand for candidates and initiatives looking to enhance their environmental credentials with voters  Establish the Action Fund’s ability to credibly move votes in close elections  Raise 501(c)(4) funds to advance this strategy	Increased political influence with elected and agency officials, leading to more beneficial policies and actions for the Bay  Broader and deeper public appreciation for Bay threats and opportunities, especially among more diverse constituencies, producing even higher participation in actions to protect and restore the Bay
<b>Nurture a stronger grassroots constituency and leverage strategic partnerships for political outcomes</b>	Develop deeper volunteer mobilization in highly targeted geographic and demographic communities critical to advancing our program objectives, giving special priority to engage groups underrepresented in Save The Bay’s existing constituency  Create at least three strategic partnerships with organizations we identify that have complementary assets and shared objectives	Broader brand recognition and affinity for Save The Bay, translating to tangible grassroots advocacy and donor support
<b>Launch and grow a public initiative known as Bay Day to educate the public &amp; galvanize engagement</b>	Establish an annual opportunity for large-scale public outreach and involvement on Bay issues  Annually reach 100,000 individuals	Broader awareness and understanding among the next generation of Bay Stewards about San Francisco Bay
<b>Promote the Bay Area community interests in extreme weather response and preparation</b>	Become a leading advocate for Bay Smart drought response and flood protection	
<b>Educate the next generation to protect and restore the Bay</b>	Connect Bay Area youth to San Francisco Bay, educating and empowering them to take action on the biggest issue impacting their generation—climate change	



# THEORY of CHANGE

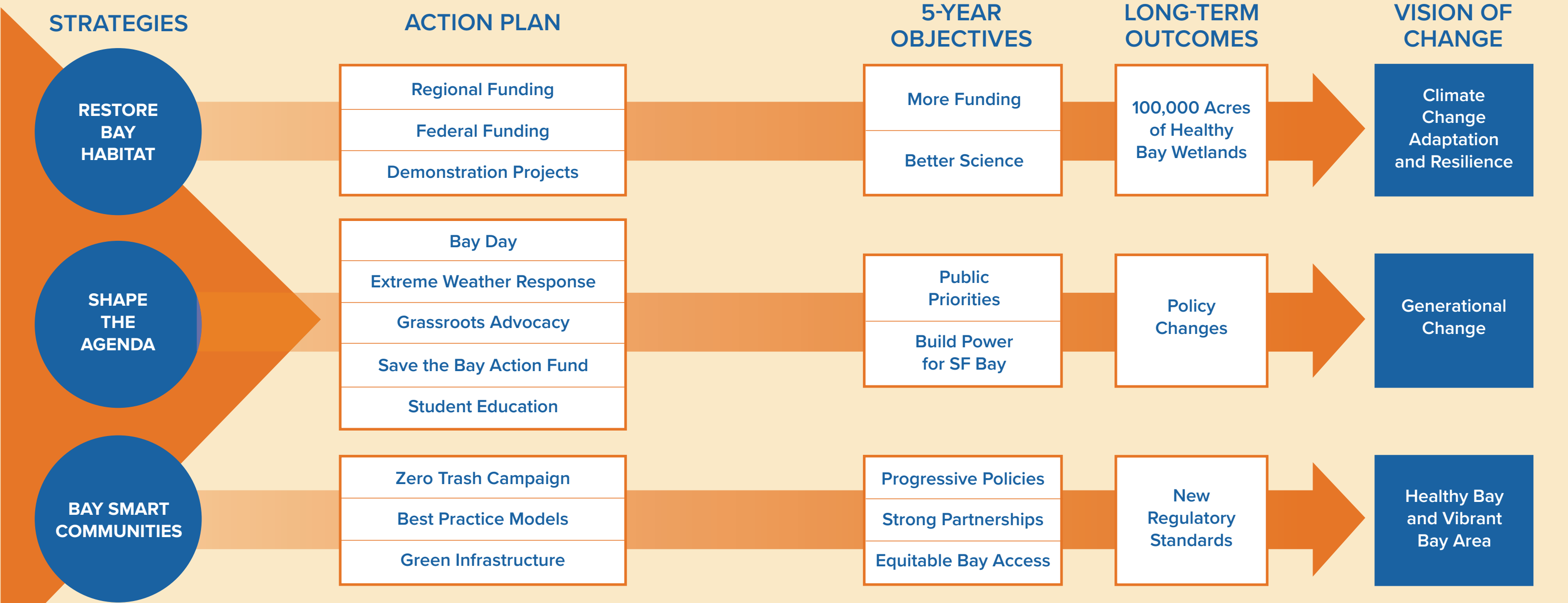






PHOTO COURTESY KAREN EUL

# DISCOVERING OUR NEW DIRECTION



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DAVID LEWIS

Save The Bay’s staff and Board of Directors dedicated much of 2015 to a deep examination of our mission, programs, and constituency, and to analyzing the likely changes that can be expected within the political, social, and environmental landscape where we operate.

We began our process using a Matrix Map framework to evaluate both program impact and financial

sustainability. We worked with consultants to evaluate the state of our constituency and outreach, and to lead us through a penetrating analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. And we listened carefully to the generous feedback from our funders and other stakeholders.

This process led us in new and unexpected directions, ultimately illuminating the fact that, because of Save The Bay’s extraordinary historical success, much of our work saving the Bay from traditional development

threats has been accomplished—but that vast new, uncharted challenges lie ahead.

Although our strategic priorities will always be evolving, the mission of Save The Bay remains constant, and our vision is unchanged: A clean and healthy San Francisco Bay, free from pollution, ringed by 100,000 acres of restored tidal marsh, and supported by communities that value and defend the Bay as central to the Bay Area’s exceptional quality of life.





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