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November 12, 2020

California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) Prop 68 proposal for Phase 1 Implementation of the agency's Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan

Dear Staff and Board of California's Ocean Protection Council,

Audubon California has been working to protect the environment in Richardson Bay for more than 60 years. Our 900-acre waterbird sanctuary in northern Richardson Bay is the largest open water reserve of its kind on the west coast. . Hundreds of thousands of migratory waterbirds rely on Richardson Bay during migration for feeding and resting. And, our ten-acre center in Tiburon provides opportunities for community engagement and volunteer stewardship of the coastlines

All of this rests on the health of the Bay's vital eelgrass beds. For this reason, Audubon California enthusiastically supports RBRA's proposal to OPC for Phase 1 Implementation funding for their Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan.

Audubon California has been working with the RBRA for years as they improved conditions within their anchorage, thereby improving conditions for herring, eelgrass, and the waterbirds that live here. In 2018, our white paper "Eelgrass, Herring, and Waterbirds in San Francisco Bay: Threats and Opportunities" identified key threats to eelgrass in Richardson's Bay from anchor scour on the bay floor. Our 2019 paper, "Quantification of damage to eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) beds and evidence-based management strategies for boats anchoring in San Francisco Bay" identified nearly 80 acres of direct damage to eelgrass from anchors, chains, and other ground tackle within the RBRA anchorage.

The RBRA's development and implementation of an Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan (EPMP) represents the culmination of years of science, advocacy, and community engagement efforts by Audubon and others to encourage RBRA to actively manage their eelgrass resources in Richardson Bay. We have participated in early stakeholder engagement sessions for EPMP development and look forward to supporting the RBRA as they implement recommendations developed in the EPMP in the coming years.

In summary, I encourage you to fully fund RBRA's proposal for finalization and implementation of their EPMP for Richardson's Bay.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Casey Arndt".

Casey Arndt, Center Director
Richardson Bay Audubon Center & Sanctuary
Audubon California



**SAN FRANCISCO
STATE UNIVERSITY**

ESTUARY & OCEAN SCIENCE CENTER
ROMBERG TIBURON CAMPUS

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Tiburon, CA 94920

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November 11, 2020

California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) Prop 68 proposal for Phase 1 Implementation of the agency's Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan

Dear staff and Board of California's Ocean Protection Council (OPC),

I have worked in Richardson's Bay for years, including ongoing eelgrass restoration efforts within the Audubon Sanctuary and upcoming restoration research within the RBRA anchorage. I write today in enthusiastic support of the RBRA's proposal to OPC for Phase 1 implementation of their Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan (EPMP). I have participated in early stakeholder outreach for the EPMP and support the agency's efforts to develop and implement a spatially explicit EPMP to protect eelgrass from the myriad threats it faces in the Bay.

At my research lab at San Francisco State University's Estuary & Ocean Science Center, we are broadly interested in the ecology of coastal habitats, with a focus on tidal marshes and seagrass beds. We work at the interface of basic and applied ecology, with the philosophy that restoration and conservation activities will be most effective when there is understanding of the processes that govern natural communities.

We have recently begun efforts to test strategies for restoration of eelgrass within areas of anchor scour in the Richardson's Bay anchorage. These efforts are focused on anchor scars created by ground tackle from vessels anchored out in the Bay. However, strategies for anchor scar restoration will not be successful without a reduction in ongoing anchor scour to the bay floor. A key component of successful restoration of eelgrass here will be clear delineation of areas where boats can and cannot anchor so that damage is not perpetuated, as well as the community engagement efforts needed to get the word out about the new anchoring areas – all of which is proposed under the RBRA's EPMP Phase 1 Implementation Proposal.



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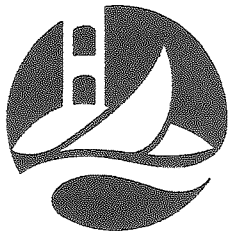
In summary, I encourage you to fully fund RBRA's proposal for finalization and implementation of their EPMP for Richardson's Bay.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katharyn E. Boyer".

Katharyn E. Boyer
Professor of Biology
Estuary & Ocean Science Center
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POLICE DEPARTMENT

November 11, 2020

California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) Prop 68 proposal for Phase 1 Implementation of the agency's Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan

Dear staff and Board of California's Ocean Protection Council (OPC),

The City of Belvedere is located on the Tiburon Peninsula, overlooking Richardson's Bay, and has been a member of the Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) since the agency's inception in 1984. In addition to helping fund day-to-day operations of the RBRA, our City Council is represented on the RBRA Board of Directors and our Police Department works closely with RBRA staff and the Marin County Sheriff to patrol the Bay.

Over the past several years, we have participated in RBRA's development of its Transition Plan, adopted by the RBRA board this past summer. In addition to environmental protection, we are particularly concerned with issues of public health and safety on the anchorage. When compromised vessels drag anchor, which damages the ecology of the bay floor, they are likely to crash into the docks and beaches of Belvedere, jeopardizing the safety of Belvedere residents and visitors.

The EPMP is a critical piece of RBRA's Transition Plan, whose implementation will ensure better protections for people and the environment in Richardson's Bay. By using a spatial planning approach to manage eelgrass resources in the Bay, the EPMP will balance the myriad uses of the bay while protecting the environment.

In summary, I encourage you to fully fund RBRA's proposal for finalization and implementation of their EPMP for Richardson's Bay and I look forward to working with the RBRA staff and board on this project in the years to come.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best,

Jason Wu
Chief of Police
City of Belvedere