

A New Regional Coalition

MISSION, VISION, VALUES, PROGRAMS

November 2019

The following comes from the plan approved by the Board of Directors on October 24, 2019 with the understanding that this is a living document. Our plans will evolve as the coalition grows.

Questions? Contact Annie Burke, annie@openspacecouncil.org

What we are

We are a large and diverse coalition of nonprofits, agencies, and Indigenous Tribes that directly or indirectly serve all 8 million Bay Area residents living in the 10 counties of the greater Bay Area. Members, partners, affiliates, and participants in this coalition are committed to creating a healthy and resilient Bay Area for land and people.

We will use “resilient lands and people” to express our coalition’s goals of a) preventing the loss and/or degradation of land, b) supporting ecological functioning, and c) connecting people to the land. We focus on resilience – *an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change* ([Mirriam Webster](#)) – because it is essential in the 21st century. We include public parks, public lands, private lands, working lands like ranches and forests, rural, urban, trails, open space, preserves, and other similar natural spaces. We include acquisition, stewardship, maintenance, restoration, preservation, conservation, cultural resources and activities, outdoor recreation, public access to nature, active living as part of public health, and programs that connect people to nature.

We are the only Bay Area coalition of nonprofits, agencies, and Tribes focused on resilient lands and people, and we are unique in how we work because:

- We work *together* to secure significant public funds and engage in regional policy for climate resilience and equitable access to nature.
- We *leverage* coalition members' local work at the regional scale.
- We *deliver* more impactful outcomes for resilient land and people than any local organization or agency could.

The BAOSC will to lead and support this new regional coalition that champions and works together to be the regional voice of the resilient lands that are integral to a thriving Bay Area and all people who live here. The BAOSC is the glue that binds this regional coalition.

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Our mission

We are the champion and regional voice of the resilient lands and waters that are integral to a thriving Bay Area and all people who live here.

Our vision

The Bay Area is home to healthy lands, healthy people, and healthy communities where we address the causes of and impacts of climate change through collaboration. We live in a just and equitable society where we live in relationship with the land that sustains us now and will sustain future generations.

Our Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles serve as the organization's foundation for this new regional coalition. They are what we believe and they guide our collective and organizational actions and our organizational culture.

- **People have stewarded the land for thousands of years.** We acknowledge that these are the ancestral lands of Indigenous People who live here today. We respect that Indigenous People are knowledgeable about land stewardship and have demonstrated tremendous resiliency over the past 400+ years of colonization.
- **All lands need to be stewarded.** In the face of climate change, we need to take care of all lands: public, private, urban, and rural. Our definition of stewardship includes a wide range of activities that prevent destruction of the land, promote ecological function on the land, and connect people to the land. We recognize that there are many ways to have a relationship with the land, and that one way is not absolutely or globally better than another.
- **All people can be land stewards.** Anyone - regardless of race, ethnicity, class, age, gender, or physical ability - can participate in and contribute to the work of stewarding the land upon which human life depends. From community gardens to street trees to major restoration projects, there is a plethora of opportunities for all people to engage and connect to this work.

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- **Together as one region.** We believe that building relationships and fostering collaboration are critical to affecting change in our region. We are stronger together than we are apart, and we invest in relationships so that we can adapt to change.
- **Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.** We are committed to creating a more just and equitable world. We will define, as a coalition, A critical first step for the BAOSC will be to define, with our members, how we want to engage in this work.
- **Intersectional solutions.** We know that the problems we seek to address are multi-disciplinary and intersectional. We cannot look at environmental problems as separate from other issues we face today. We must work across geographies, nonprofits, agencies, and divisions to address the interconnected problems of the 21st century.
- **Collaboration.** Partnership and collaboration are key elements of the BAOSC's DNA. We build relationships with people in order to understand our differences, work towards common goals, and support each other when needed. We are open-minded and work towards mutually beneficial solutions.
- **Accountability Accountability and transparency.** We will steward this organization's mission and resources with transparency with our members and funders. T, and the Board and staff will hold themselves accountable to the responsibilities vested in them by the members.

Our Programs

We will lead two programs: 1) Advocacy and 2) Convening. The Advocacy Program is the highest priority of the organization. The Convening Program is one way we will achieve our public funding and policy goals, as well as a key strategy to build the relationships necessary to work collaboratively as a region. Both programs build on the organization's 29-year track record, but will move forward with new and more focused goals.

Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) will be woven throughout the two programs and the organization's operations. Guidelines will need to be developed in order to guide how the organization operationalizes JEDI in an ongoing manner.

Advocacy Program: Public Funding and Policy for Resilient Lands and People

This program will be led by the Policy Director and guided by the Funding and Policy Committee composed of staff from our members. The goal of this program is to transform how we as a

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region create resilient lands and people in the face of climate change while working towards justice and equity. The Funding and Policy Advocacy Program will:

- Develop and implement public policy engagement guidelines that transparently guide the organization's decision-making on what opportunities and issues the organization pursues. Annually establish a shared platform that advances policies for resilient lands and people.
- Secure public funding for member-led projects and programs that improve the resilience of lands and people in the region. Potential sources include regional or state-wide bond measures, the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, and other regional, state, and federal opportunities.
- Advocate for regional policies that improve the members' ability to create resilient lands and people. Potential regional policies include the update to Plan Bay Area.
- Tell stories and share credible data that make the case for funding and policies through projects like the science-based Conservation Lands Network and a potential State of the Bay Area Lands Report.

Convening Program: Building a Powerful Coalition

The goal of this program is to build the relationships that support the environmental and social changes required for resilient lands and people. This program will be led by the Coalition Manager and will:

- Convene an annual Summit where coalition members identify goals for collective impact and set a shared agenda for the coming year. The Summit will provide opportunities for attendees to build relationships across issue areas, organizations, jurisdictions and geographies, and share updates from committees and working groups.
- Support and connect member-led working groups that promote collaboration on priority regional issues including equity and inclusion, land stewardship, and climate adaptation. We will develop guidelines for working groups and how they relate to the coalition's programs and committees.
- Partner with members to co-host events like breakfasts and/or outings that allow for relationship-building and information-sharing between coalition members.
- Communicate regularly with members to share information and opportunities for action.

Coalition Members

The purpose of the BAOSC is to lead a coalition that champions and works together to be the regional voice of the resilient lands that are integral to a thriving Bay Area and all people who live here. This organization cannot operate without its coalition of member nonprofits, agencies, and Tribes. In this plan, we aim to clearly articulate who members are, how they participate in

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the coalition, how they benefit from the coalition's work, and how they support the coalition financially.

Members

Members are nonprofits, agencies, and Tribes who work to improve the resilience of Bay Area lands and people. We will invite the following types of nonprofits, agencies, and Tribes to join the coalition in helping to realize the vision. As the coalition grows and evolves, there could be other nonprofits, agencies and Indigenous groups who might be interested in joining the coalition.

- Open space districts
- Land trusts
- Nonprofit friends' groups and advocacy organizations
- Resource conservation districts
- Water agencies
- Federal, state, county, and city park agencies
- Cities and counties as a whole entity or a department within them
- State, county, and city public health departments
- Environmental justice organizations
- Indigenous Tribes, Bands, and Organizations
- Agriculture, food systems, forestry, and ranching-focused groups
- Research, science and wildlife-focused organizations
- Outdoor recreation and public access-focused groups
- Outdoor education and youth service organizations
- Public health and active living organizations

Coalition members will:

- Be committed to the coalition's mission, vision and guiding principles, including potential collaborations and working groups
- Pay annual membership dues according to the member organization's budget
- Actively work in the 10 counties of the Bay Area including Santa Cruz. The organization can be local, regional, state, federal, or international.
- Be a nonprofit organization; public agency; or an Indigenous Tribe, band or organization.
- Work to support resilient lands and people, which may include one or more of the following:
 - o Management, stewardship, restoration, research, or acquisition of natural or working lands, including climate change adaptation and mitigation
 - o Equitable access to the land, including
 - § Outdoor recreation
 - § Outdoor or environmental education
 - § Cultural resources and practices
 - § Active living as part of public health or health care

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§ Rights of people to experience nature and the land

- o Regional land use planning, which may focus primarily on smart growth development or transportation provided that it incorporates elements of conservation planning, including climate change adaption and mitigation
- o May focus primarily on the bay or the ocean, provided that their organization includes some affiliated upland or watershed areas in the region.