



THE RBRA ROUNDUP

Fall 2023

www.rbra.ca.gov



RBRA SUCCESSFULLY PETITIONS FOR REMOVAL DEADLINE EXTENSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE ANCHOR OUT COMMUNITY

The RBRA has been granted a one-year extension to a deadline requiring that certain individuals living on the water relocate their vessels by October 2023.

The extension, which was approved by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), will allow the RBRA to coordinate with its partner agencies to ensure that the relocated individuals have the opportunity to avail themselves of housing services and other resources to support their move if they choose this option.

Established this year with the backing of a \$3 million grant secured by State Senator Mike McGuire, the Temporary Housing Support Program (THSP) offers a local subsidized housing program for individuals living on the water during an RBRA point-in-time survey.

(Story continued on page 2)

INTRODUCING THE RICHARDSON BAY REGIONAL AGENCY NEWSLETTER!

We are pleased to launch this new quarterly newsletter, which will provide all the latest news, accomplishments and milestones of the Richardson Bay Regional Agency!

The RBRA is a local government agency serving Belvedere, Mill Valley, Tiburon and unincorporated Southern Marin. The RBRA is dedicated to maintaining and improving the navigational waterways, open waters and shoreline of Richardson Bay.



WE HAVE A NEW WEBSITE!

The RBRA recently launched a newly designed website!

This website was designed to promote transparency, provide timely information and be a vehicle for engagement with all those who are interested in Richardson Bay.

Check the new website out at www.rbra.ca.gov.

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Originally, all individuals who began living in boats on Richardson Bay after August 2019 were slated for relocation by October 2023 as part of an agreement with the BCDC, which has jurisdiction over regional coastal matters. The RBRA asked for an extension to October 15, 2024, to allow for further development of the agency's THSP, which provides subsidized support for individuals who agree to remove their vessels from Richardson Bay and move into safe, secure housing on land. The extension applies to 17 individuals.

As part of the program, the Marin Housing Authority (MHA) will provide subsidized housing with a scattered site component for individuals living on the water. MHA will also administer housing assistance payments to local landlords to create new affordable housing opportunities for up to 17 households per year under this three-year contract.

Marin Health and Human Services, working with Episcopal Community Services, will provide a caseworker responsible for administering the program and providing wraparound services for individuals participating in the initiative.

As part of the agreement with the BCDC, a small number of vessels that participated in the Safe and Seaworthy program will be allowed to remain in the anchorage. On October 26, 2026, the anchorage will convert to a 72-hour anchorage for all vessels, regardless of when they arrived.

As of October 15, three people have been housed through the THSP, and two vessels have been purchased through the buyback program, including one floating home.



RBRA BOARD APPROVES CONTRACT FOR EELGRASS MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION WORK

In September, the RBRA Board of Directors unanimously approved a contract with Coastal Policy Solutions to act as Project Manager to help lead its Eelgrass Restoration and Adaptive Management Plan, which will protect and sustain the local ecosystem.

Earlier this year, the RBRA was awarded a \$2.78 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to restore eelgrass in Richardson Bay. That grant will fund the contract with Coastal Policy Solutions, which has a base value of \$1.2 million.

Eelgrass is a vital component of a healthy and vibrant Richardson Bay. It supports herring runs, reduces erosion, sequesters a significant amount of carbon and is a crucial ecological resource for harbor porpoises and sea lions.

When anchors, chains, and other ground tackle scrape along the Bay bottom, they essentially act as a lawn mower for all living plants. This creates "crop circles" or barren areas where no eelgrass can grow. Currently, there is an area four times the size of Alcatraz where eelgrass has been destroyed by anchor scour in Richardson Bay.

To combat those impacts and provide an opportunity for eelgrass to recover, the RBRA created an "Eelgrass Protection Zone" (EPZ) in Richardson Bay where no anchoring will be allowed after October 15, 2024.

While there are still vessels and floating homes anchored in the EPZ, the RBRA and its partners are working on initiatives such as a vessel buyback and temporary supporting housing programs to help encourage vessels to move off the waters and into safe, secure housing on land.

