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## State Water Resources Control Board

# NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP FOR THE STATE WATER BOARD'S DRAFT RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN

## PUBLIC COMMENT INFORMATION

### NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will receive public comments on the draft Racial Equity Action Plan, a compilation of actions intended to advance the State Water Board's efforts to create a future where we equitably preserve, enhance, and restore California's water resources and drinking water for all Californians, regardless of race, and where race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for Water Boards employees. The Racial Equity Action Plan sets goals for the State Water Board to address racial inequities and identifies metrics to measure progress.

### LANGUAGE ACCESS

If you require language interpretation, translation, or sign language services, please contact us at (916) 322-4265, or [languageservices@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:languageservices@waterboards.ca.gov), before October 10, 2022.

### DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The draft Racial Equity Action Plan will be posted on the State Water Board's website on or before September 23, 2022 at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/racial\\_equity](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/racial_equity). You may request a paper copy of the draft Racial Equity Action Plan by contacting [racialequity@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:racialequity@waterboards.ca.gov).

### SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The State Water Board will accept written comments on the draft Racial Equity Action Plan. All written comments must be received no later than **5:00 pm on Monday, October 24, 2022**. Written comments may be submitted as follows:

1. By email to: [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov) with subject line: **"Comment Letter – Racial Equity Action Plan."**
2. By fax transmission to: (916) 341-5620.

3. By mail to: Clerk to the Board, Ms. Jeanine Townsend, State Water Resources Control Board, P.O. Box 997377, MS 7400, Sacramento, CA 95899-7377.
4. Hand-delivered to: Clerk to the Board, Ms. Jeanine Townsend, State Water Resources Control Board, 1001 I Street, 24th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814.

If you would like to request a copy of public comments submitted on this item, please send a request to [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov), identifying "Racial Equity Action Plan" in your request.

## **PUBLIC WORKSHOP INFORMATION**

**NOTICE IS ADDITIONALLY HEREBY GIVEN** that the State Water Board will hold a public workshop to provide the public and stakeholders information regarding the draft Racial Equity Action Plan and solicit verbal feedback. A quorum of the Board members may attend this meeting; however, the State Water Board will not take action at the public workshop.

The date, time and location of the public workshop is:

**Wednesday, October 19, 2022 (5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.)**

Coastal Hearing Room, Second Floor  
Joe Serna Jr. CalEPA Headquarters Building  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**And via video and teleconference**  
(Gov. Code, § 11133)

## **PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

This meeting will occur with both a physical meeting location and an option for the public to participate from a remote location.

### **VIDEO AND TELECONFERENCE OPTION:**

To watch the meeting WITHOUT commenting, view webcast at:

<https://video.calepa.ca.gov/>

For members of the public who wish to comment on an agenda item or are presenting to the Board, additional information about participating virtually or via telephone are available here:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_info/remote\\_meeting/#provide\\_comments](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/remote_meeting/#provide_comments)

## **PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY**

For directions to the Joe Serna, Jr. (CalEPA) Building and public parking information, please refer to the map on the State Water Board website:

<https://calepa.ca.gov/headquarters-sacramento/location/>

The CalEPA Building is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to call (916) 341-5254 at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

All visitors to the CalEPA Building are required to sign in and obtain a badge at the Visitor Services Center located just inside the main entrance (10th Street entrance). Valid picture identification may be required. Please allow up to 15 minutes for receiving security clearance.

## **PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the workshop is to receive public comments to inform the development of the State Water Board's draft Racial Equity Action Plan. The draft Racial Equity Action Plan is a compilation of actions intended to advance the State Water Board's efforts to create a future where we equitably preserve, enhance, and restore California's water resources and drinking water for all Californians, regardless of race, and where race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for Water Boards employees. The Racial Equity Action Plan sets goals for the State Water Board to address racial inequities and identifies metrics to measure progress.

On August 18, 2020, State Water Board staff presented an informational item to the State Water Board on a framework for addressing racial equity. The State Water Board acknowledged the historic effects of institutional racism that must be confronted throughout government and directed staff to develop a priority plan of action.

In fall 2020, Water Boards Executive Director, Eileen Sobeck, convened a Water Boards Racial Equity Team with the purpose of advancing racial equity both for the communities that the Water Boards serve, and internally, within the organization. The Water Boards Racial Equity Team is comprised of Water Boards staff representing all levels of the organization and includes support staff, engineers, scientists, technologists, and executives. The Racial Equity Team has been tasked with three major priorities 1) establish a foundation of internal and external engagement that values listening and collaboration to drive action; 2) draft a resolution on racial equity to be considered for adoption by the State Water Board and leveraged by the nine Regional Water Boards to adopt their own resolutions; and 3) develop racial equity strategies and action plans to drive efforts for the coming years.

The Water Boards reached a major milestone on November 16, 2021, when the State Water Board adopted the Racial Equity Resolution, "Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism" ([Resolution No. 2021-0050](#)). The Resolution

directs staff to develop a plan of action to advance racial equity within the Water Boards.

In March 2022, the Water Boards Racial Equity Team began working with a diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant to articulate a vision and strategic directions that serve as the framework for our action planning.

Throughout spring 2022, Water Boards staff, community partners, tribes, and communities impacted by racial inequities began to identify draft actions to incorporate into a Racial Equity Action Plan. Also, in April 2022, the Water Boards began soliciting requests for government-to-government tribal consultations. The Water Boards Racial Equity Team compiled draft actions that reflect feedback from these discussions and hosted four public workshops in July 2022 to present the draft action ideas.

The Racial Equity Team aims to bring this plan to the State Water Board as an informational item in January 2023. The Board will not approve or deny the Racial Equity Action Plan. However, staff will update the Board on its implementation periodically.

The plan is a living document intended to be adjusted and modified over time. Although this is an Action Plan for the State Water Board, the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards, which are semi-autonomous, have strongly supported the State Water Board's racial equity efforts and will leverage this plan to inform their own racial equity work, as they have the State Water Board's racial equity resolution.

### **POTENTIAL FUTURE CHANGES TO THE NOTICED ITEMS**

The State Water Board intends to make the draft Racial Equity Action Plan available, provide an opportunity for public comment, and hold the public workshop at the times and place noted above. Any change to the items noticed above will be noticed through the below-identified list serve e-mail distribution lists, and on the State Water Board's webpages.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

To receive future notices, please subscribe to the list serve e-mail distribution lists by:

- Visiting subscription form: <https://bit.ly/SubscribeSWRCB>
- Under "General Interest" select "Racial Equity Initiative"

For questions regarding this notice, the public workshop, or the draft Racial Equity Action Plan please email: [racialequity@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:racialequity@waterboards.ca.gov).

September 16, 2022  
Date

  
Jeanine Townsend for  
Clerk to the Board