

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**RESOLUTION NO. R3-2023-0002**

**CONDEMNING RACISM, XENOPHOBIA, BIGOTRY, AND RACIAL INJUSTICE  
AND STRENGTHENING COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY,  
INCLUSION, ACCESS, AND ANTI-RACISM  
IN THE CENTRAL COAST REGION**

WHEREAS, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board) finds that:

1. As part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the shared mission of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards), collectively Water Boards, is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.
2. The Water Board's mission is strengthened by a commitment to racial equity and environmental justice. The Water Boards acknowledge and condemn inequities, past and present, in water quality, access, and affordability, and are proactively working to eliminate the structures and practices that perpetuate these inequities. The Water Boards are working toward a future where race no longer predicts the access to or quality of water resources a person receives.
3. Because race intersects with many, if not all, other marginalized identities, prioritizing and addressing racial inequities improves outcomes for other marginalized communities (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, immigration status, age, religion, educational background, socioeconomic status, etc.). Accordingly, the Central Coast Water Board aims to improve life outcomes for all marginalized communities in the Central Coast Region through advancing racial equity.
4. On November 16, 2021, the State Water Board adopted Resolution No. 2021-0050, Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism (State Water Board Resolution). The State Water Board Resolution acknowledges the role racism plays in creating inequities in affordability and access to clean and safe water, commits to advancing racial equity within the Water Boards and the communities they serve, directs its staff to develop a racial equity action plan, and encourages the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards to adopt similar resolutions. This Resolution builds upon the

State Water Board Resolution.

5. The Central Coast Water Board hereby acknowledges that findings 1-18 of Resolution No. 2021-0050 are true and correct and incorporates these findings by reference. The Resolution No. 2021-0050 is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Central Coast Water Board provides additional findings below that are relevant specifically to the Central Coast Region.
6. The Central Coast Water Board strives to implement regulatory activities and water quality projects in a manner that treats all people fairly, and that protects historically vulnerable, marginalized, and underrepresented communities from harm. Underrepresented communities include but are not limited to Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, California Native American Tribes, Indigenous and other people of color, disadvantaged communities (DACs), severely disadvantaged communities (SDACs), economically distressed areas (EDAs), environmentally disadvantaged communities, incarcerated and unsheltered populations, and members of fringe communities.

### **Acknowledging the Central Coast Region's Diverse History**

7. The Central Coast Water Board serves racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities in the Central Coast Region. Based on 2019 US Census Bureau data: 45.1% of the Central Coast Region's residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, 42.8% as white, 5.4% as Asian, 1.6% as Black or African American, 0.3% as American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.2% as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 0.5% as Other Race, as well as those who identify as multi-racial and multi-ethnic (4%).
8. The Central Coast Water Board acknowledges that a diverse workforce is necessary to protect water quality for all communities in the Central Coast Region. A diverse workforce promotes a broad array of life experiences and viewpoints and brings a diverse perspective to resolve the Water Boards' most challenging issues and helps to improve community engagement. The Central Coast Water Board must increase diversity to ensure that staff and leadership reflect the diverse communities that we serve.
9. Hispanic and Latino/a/e peoples and cultures are one of the primary forces that have shaped life on the Central Coast for over three-hundred years. Among notable examples is the work by Dolores Huerta and the late Cesar Chavez in the Salinas Valley to achieve labor and safety protections for farmworkers from exploitation and pesticide exposure.
10. The history and demographics of agriculture in the Central Coast Region are strongly influenced by Asian and Hispanic/Latino/a/e immigrants who work in food processing facilities and in agricultural fields harvesting fruits and vegetables.
11. Asian Americans' role in the Central Coast Region's agricultural prosperity is well documented. In addition, Asian Americans had important historical roles as

miners, fishers, builders of critical infrastructure, and merchants.

12. Black peoples have also had an important part in the Central Coast Region's farming, shipping, civic, and veteran history.
13. Indigenous peoples have protected the lands and waters of California since time immemorial. California Native American Tribes have a long and rich history in the Central Coast Region, which has involved a dynamic and complex relationship with nature and ecological systems. Cultural teachings and significant knowledge about flora, fauna, and natural cycles of life along the coast were passed down over many generations. It is important to recognize that each tribal community is unique, with different customs, traditions, languages, and needs.

### **Acknowledging Racism and Racial Inequities in the Central Coast Region**

14. Many federal, state, and local laws and policies were designed explicitly to prevent people of color from fully participating and receiving benefits. Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities, as well as multi-ethnic and multi-racial groups have suffered nature deprivation, exposure to pollution, forced labor or isolation, segregation and/or exclusion, unequal access to health, economic, and social services, and other injustices.
15. California Native American Tribes have endured systemic and institutional racism, starting with the establishment of the Spanish Missions in the late 18th century, followed by Mexican ranchos, and as California became a state in 1850. European settlers and their governing authorities took Indigenous land and resources by unjust and inequitable means resulting in the loss of land and resources essential to their spiritual, cultural, and economic well-being and livelihoods. The Central Coast Water Board acknowledges that conditions for California Native American Tribes remain inequitable due to bias, prejudice, systemic, and institutional racism that continues to (a) prevent equal access to resources and institutions, (b) undermine cultural, governmental, and natural resources sovereignty, and (c) limit protection from harms and injustices.
16. Hispanic and Latino/a/e peoples have been subjected to racism, marginalization, displacement, and injustices that persist today.
17. Many Asian Americans faced institutionalized discrimination in the form of forced displacement, expulsion, exclusion, and controlled migration. During World War II, people of Japanese ancestry in the Central Coast were relocated to internment camps. After release from internment, some returned to the Central Coast to continue their livelihood in farming or other industries, only to discover their property and personal belongings had been taken unlawfully without compensation or agreement.
18. Twentieth-century zoning policies were the result of institutional and systemic racism that continues to impact and disadvantage urban and rural communities in the Central Coast. The Central Coast Water Board recognizes these policies'

lasting effects in the forms of exclusion, under-investment, unequal development, and unequal protection from harm.

19. The effects of institutional and systemic racism are compounded when considering marginalized and vulnerable populations such as the youth, incarcerated, and unsheltered, making economic, social, and environmental equity increasingly unobtainable for various individuals and groups.

### **Race as a Determinant of Racial and Environmental Inequities**

20. The California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA's) 2021 Pollution and Prejudice Story Map demonstrates that historically redlined and unincorporated neighborhoods are "generally associated with worse environmental conditions and greater population vulnerability to the effects of pollution today." Due to redlining, deed covenants, county and city General Plans, and other racist land-use policies, Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Asian, and other people of color are overrepresented in environmentally degraded neighborhoods and continue to experience severe racial wealth gaps. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's (OEHHA's) CalEnviroScreen mapping tool identifies communities that are disproportionately impacted by a combination of environmental stressors and socioeconomic disadvantages further exacerbating persistent inequities. Contaminated drinking water sources disproportionately burden low-income, Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities throughout California, including the Central Coast Region.
21. Farmworkers in the Central Coast Region, who are often people of color, face significant socioeconomic and civic obstacles that increases their vulnerability to impacts from environmental harms including exposure to poor water and air quality, pesticides, and other chemicals. Additionally, farmworker communities often face significant challenges to achieve racial equity and inclusion in the communities where they live and work.
22. Direct and indirect risks and harms to ecosystems, public health, economies, and infrastructure from climate change have fallen disproportionately upon underrepresented communities who are least able to prepare for and recover from these impacts such as heat waves, drought, and flooding.
23. Underrepresented communities, especially Indigenous, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino/a/e communities in the Central Coast Region use water resources to conduct tribal traditional and cultural activities, tribal subsistence fishing, and subsistence fishing for fish and shellfish. Limited access to piers, activities that reduce or restrict surface water flows and fish migration, and pollution from pesticides, oil drilling, and mining can impact access to healthy and safe subsistence fishing, resulting in higher risk of exposure to contaminants through higher rates of use of natural aquatic resources to meet subsistence needs.

24. Longstanding racial and ethnic inequities regarding access to nature further excludes these communities from direct and indirect health and environmental benefits of natural spaces. Many Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities lack accessibility to parks, open spaces, greenways, and green infrastructure, which provide natural flood protection, water treatment, and groundwater recharge, and offer opportunities for recreation, improved health and quality of life. Moreover, the destruction, degradation and pollution predominantly occur in natural spaces in or near communities of color.

## **Advancing Racial Equity and Environmental Justice in the Central Coast Region**

### *Prioritizing Safe, Clean, Affordable and Accessible Drinking Water*

25. The Central Coast Water Board has a long history of prioritizing environmental justice issues and engaging underrepresented communities, especially related to protecting groundwater drinking water beneficial uses.
26. In 2010, the Central Coast Water Board prioritized evaluating the impacts of waste discharges from irrigated agricultural operations, including nitrate pollution of drinking water, to underrepresented communities in rural agricultural areas of the Central Coast Region.
27. In 2012, the Central Coast Water Board participated in the Governor's Drinking Water Stakeholder Group to develop recommendations to address communities' challenges in dealing with nitrate contamination of drinking water supplies in the Tulare Lake Basin and Salinas Valley.
28. In 2014, Central Coast Water Board staff established the Safe Drinking Water Grant Project to assist individuals and small communities affected by nitrate contamination in the Salinas Valley by providing interim replacement drinking water to underrepresented communities in the Royal Oaks/Las Lomas area, as long-term drinking water solution are identified.
29. Between 2014 and 2017, the Central Coast Water Board convened a series of environmental justice tours to engage directly with underrepresented communities in the Salinas Valley and to hear from community members affected by water quality impairments, especially impacted sources of drinking water.
30. On January 26, 2017, the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R3-2017-0004<sup>1</sup>, Adopting the Human Right to Water as a Core Value and Directing Its Implementation in Central Coast Water Board Programs and Activities. Consistent with California Water Code section 106.3, subdivision (a), Resolution R3-2017-0004 adopts the human right to water as a core value and affirms the realization of the human right to water and protecting human health as the Central Coast Water Board's top priorities. In Resolution R3-2017-0004, the Central Coast Water Board committed to promote policies that advance the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board decisions/adopted orders/2017/2017-0004\\_hrtw\\_fnl.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board%20decisions/adopted%20orders/2017/2017-0004_hrtw_fnl.pdf)

human right to water and to discourage actions that delay or impede opportunities for communities to secure safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.

31. In 2018, the Central Coast Water Board's Central Coast Ambient Monitoring and Assessment Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection (CCAMP-GAP) Program coordinated with the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay (Bay Foundation) to establish the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program to provide free well testing to domestic well users and small water systems in the Central Coast Region to ensure safe drinking water.
32. In 2018, CCAMP-GAP coordinated with the Bay Foundation to prioritize grant funds to increase environmental justice capacity and community engagement in the Central Coast Region. The funds helped support the Community Water Center to establish a local office in the Central Coast Region to engage underrepresented communities and provide technical assistance to address inadequate source water protections, and to increase technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity for community drinking water and wastewater providers.
33. In 2019, the Central Coast Water Board coordinated with the State Water Board and Community Water Center to establish a Central Coast Region Bottled Water Program. The program works in close collaboration with the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program to conduct outreach to underrepresented communities and provide interim replacement drinking water to communities whose groundwater source of drinking water does not meet safe drinking water standards.

*Prioritizing Tribal and Subsistence Fishing Beneficial Uses*

34. Between 2020 - 2022, the Central Coast Water Board's Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) coordinated with the State Water Board to conduct fish tissue monitoring studies to evaluate contaminants in fish, focusing on areas used by underrepresented communities for tribal, subsistence, and sportfishing.
35. The Central Coast Water Board's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program assesses surface water quality and determines whether beneficial uses are supported through the federal Clean Water Sections 303(d) and 305(b) Integrated Report. The TMDL Program prioritizes projects that address threats to human health and protect the human right to water, including impacts to underrepresented communities. To increase protection of tribal tradition and culture, tribal subsistence fishing, and subsistence fishing beneficial uses of Central Coast water bodies, the Central Coast Water Board included these beneficial uses in the 2017 and 2021 Triennial Review.

*Prioritizing Water Quality Impacts Due to Climate Change*

36. The Central Coast Water Board is implementing a climate change initiative to anticipate changes and identify risks to water quality associated with climate change and to adapt water quality programs to minimize impacts, such as:

adding permit requirements for wastewater treatment facilities, landfills, and stormwater facilities; addressing water quality effects of wildfire fuel reduction activities; monitoring for harmful algal blooms; and implementing a wastewater consolidation program to support underrepresented communities.

*Prioritizing Technical and Financial Assistance for Underrepresented Communities*

37. The Central Coast Water Board's Grants Program has supported environmental justice by prioritizing grant solicitations, assisting applicants with scope development and project design, participating with proposal reviews and selection, and facilitating funding for projects that benefit underrepresented communities. In the past twenty years, over \$500 million dollars in grants have been awarded to projects that benefit underrepresented communities in the Central Coast Region. Projects include stormwater runoff and capture, wastewater and recycled water treatment that increase water resiliency and the reliability of local groundwater, low impact development to enhance urban spaces, groundwater contamination clean-up and protection to ensure safe drinking water, irrigated agriculture runoff and tailwater treatment, nonpoint source pollution control, and wetland restoration and habitat enhancement to mitigate climate change and reduce surface water impacts to creeks and lakes.

*Supporting Racial Equity at the Central Coast Water Board*

38. From August 2020 to February 2022, the Central Coast Water Board participated on the State-wide Racial Equity Working Group, assisted in the implementation of internal and external listening sessions, and assisted in the development of the State Water Board's Racial Equity Resolution No. 2021-0050.
39. The Central Coast Water Board prioritizes staff's participation in implicit bias and racial equity trainings conducted by the State Water Board's Training Academy.
40. In July 2021, the Central Coast Water Board convened a staff-led regional Racial Equity Working Group. The Working Group's goals are to increase employee awareness, conduct internal and external engagement to identify and prioritize opportunities to integrate racial equity into Water Board programs and practices, and develop a regional Racial Equity Resolution.
41. December 2021 through February 2022, Racial Equity Working Group members conducted internal engagement, gathered staff feedback through anonymous surveys, conducted racial equity discussions at program meetings, and identified opportunities to integrate racial equity into the Central Coast Water Board's workplace culture, programs, and practices. Results from internal engagement included the following:
  - a. Central Coast Water Board staff appreciate the open and inclusive work culture and opportunity to celebrate diversity and culture. Staff appreciate that the organization prioritizes environmental justice and racial equity training for all staff.

- b. Central Coast Water Board staff recognize that stakeholders from underrepresented communities have less access and resources to participate in decision-making due to ineffective outreach, lack of information and understanding, lack of translation services, and lack of time and resources to participate.
- c. Central Coast Water Board staff recognize that dischargers from underrepresented communities have increased challenges to comply with requirements, due to lack of information and understanding, lack of translation services, lack of capacity and technical and financial assistance, and inability to pay the cost of compliance.
- d. Central Coast Water Board staff also stated that the organization must improve workforce diversity to be representative of the communities in the Central Coast Region.
- e. Central Coast Water Board staff emphasized the need to resolve continuing inequities related to access to safe and affordable drinking water, and the disparities related to drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Staff also described that water quality programs must prioritize protecting and restoring beneficial uses in or by underrepresented communities so that creeks, rivers, and other waterbodies are swimmable and fishable for all residents of the Central Coast Region.
- f. Central Coast Water Board staff emphasized that it is critical to improve outreach to engage underrepresented communities more effectively, especially related to translation services and accessibility to public meetings, so that all communities have a meaningful opportunity to provide input to decision-making.

#### *Community Outreach and Public Process*

- 42. On April 21, 2022, staff provided a preliminary draft Racial Equity Resolution to the Central Coast Water Board, as part of the 2022 Environmental Justice and Racial Equity Annual Update, to invite input from the Board Members and public.
- 43. June 2022 through September 2022, Racial Equity Working Group members conducted external engagement by inviting organizations and the public to meet and discuss racial equity, gathering feedback, and identifying opportunities to integrate racial equity into the Central Coast Water Board's programs, projects, and practices. The Working Group met with representatives from environmental justice organizations, environmental and sustainability organizations, watershed and agricultural organizations, healthcare and climate justice advocates, tribal representatives, and local agencies. Results from external engagement repeated many of the themes described in Finding 41(a-f) above, as well as the following:
  - a. Prioritize underrepresented communities impacted by pollution (e.g., reduce exposure, provide interim and long-term relief, and minimize financial



- burdens).
- b. Prioritize actions to streamline requirements, provide compliance assistance, and reduce costs for underrepresented communities regulated by the Water Boards.
  - c. Improve outreach and engagement to underrepresented communities to increase accessibility to decision-making process; increase flexibility related to the time, place, and method of public meetings to increase opportunities for participation; Invite decision makers to the community (e.g., attend community talks or “platicas”, site meetings, and events at local clinics, schools and churches).
  - d. Increase partnerships with local environmental health agencies, local health professionals and advocates, and community health workers or “promotores” to support education and awareness of how water quality issues relate to public health.
  - e. Provide grant funds and resources to support community engagement, education and outreach, and participation in water quality decision-making processes.
  - f. Ensure that all staff are trained in tribal history and culture.
44. On November 21, 2022, staff publicly noticed the draft Racial Equity Resolution, distributed it to interested persons and tribal communities in English and Spanish, and provided a 57-day public comment period. The draft Racial Equity Resolution incorporated feedback received during internal and external engagement.
45. On November 21, 2022, staff invited California Native American tribal contacts in the Central Coast Region to engage in consultations on the draft Racial Equity Resolution, and on December 12, 2022, staff participated in a tribal consultation with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians.
46. On December 14, 2022, Central Coast Water Board staff held a public listening session to discuss the draft Racial Equity Resolution and provide additional opportunity to receive public input.
47. On February 16, 2023, the Central Coast Water Board held a public hearing to consider the proposed Racial Equity Resolution and heard and considered public comments. The proposed Racial Equity Resolution incorporated feedback received during the public comment period.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Central Coast Water Board:

1. Condemns acts of racism, xenophobia, bigotry, white supremacy, and institutional and systemic racism; adopts racial equity, diversity, and inclusion as core values; and acknowledges the role of government agencies—including the Water Boards—in addressing racial inequities and dismantling institutional and systemic racism.
2. Commits to making racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental justice central to our work as we implement our mission so that the access the Central Coast Water Board creates, and outcomes we influence, are not determined by a person's race and the benefits are shared equitably by all people.
3. Commits to ensuring our work and decision-making address the disproportionate impacts on Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e and Indigenous communities and other people of color who are disproportionately represented in the most vulnerable communities and incarcerated and unsheltered populations, while ensuring the full benefits of the Water Boards' programs for all people.
4. Commits to implementing employee recruitment and retention actions to improve workforce diversity, consistent with the State Water Board's "Immediate Hiring Practices Action Plan for Advancing Workforce Diversity at the Water Boards," and to work toward a future where race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for our employees at the Central Coast Water Board.
5. Encourages the governor to consider Water Board member appointments that are representative of the communities served and that have demonstrated commitment to racial equity, environmental justice, and deep experience working directly with California Native American tribes, or Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e and Indigenous communities, or other people of color and underrepresented communities.
6. Commits to supporting racial equity training for Central Coast Water Board staff to create and maintain a workforce culture that is inclusive and actively anti-racist, mitigates bias, and has competency around issues of race and equity. Internal engagement training activities will prioritize community outreach and engagement and include education on tribal history and culture.
7. Reaffirms our commitment to upholding California's human right to water law, upholding the Central Coast Water Board's human right to water resolution, and demonstrating that every human being in California—including people from Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e and Indigenous communities and other people of color and underrepresented communities—deserves safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitation purposes.

8. Reaffirms our commitment to the protection of public health, natural resources, and beneficial uses of waterbodies in all communities, including Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e and Indigenous communities and other people of color and underrepresented communities disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution through actions including, but not limited to:
  - a. Cleanup of contaminated soil, soil vapor and groundwater.
  - b. Control of wastes discharged to land and surface water.
  - c. Restoration of impaired surface waters and degraded aquifers.
  - d. Promotion of multi-benefit water quality projects to increase access to parks, recreational and open spaces, greenways, and other green infrastructure.
9. Commits to implementation of climate change initiative projects, including components of the State Water Board's Resolution No. 2017-0012, Comprehensive Response to Climate Change, that involves the Central Coast Water Board to address, in part, the disproportionate effects of extreme hydrologic conditions and sea-level rise on Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities, prioritizing:
  - a. The right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible drinking water and sanitation.
  - b. Sustainable management and protection of local surface water and groundwater resources.
  - c. Access to surface waters that support subsistence fishing and other Tribal Beneficial Uses.
10. Reaffirms our commitment to consultation with California Native American Tribes on projects within the Central Coast Region that may affect their regional or ancestral lands and consistent with the principles described in the 2020 California Environmental Protection Agency's Tribal Consultation Protocol 10 and the 2019 California Water Boards' Tribal Consultation Policy 11.
11. Commits to improving communication, working relationships, and co-management practices with California Native American Tribes, including seeking input and consultation on the Central Coast Water Board's programs to better protect California's water resources. The Central Coast Water Board recognizes our parallel relationship to the people we serve and values tribes' traditional ecological knowledge and historic experience with managing California's water resources since time immemorial.

12. Commits to prioritizing and implementing a process for defining Tribal Tradition and Culture (CUL), Tribal Subsistence Fishing (T-SUB), and Subsistence Fishing (SUB) Beneficial Uses in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin and evaluating methods to identify impairments and effectively protect waterbodies that support these beneficial uses.
13. Commits to improving access to healthy, natural spaces by fostering pollution prevention, water quality improvement, and habitat restoration in Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities. If proposed projects to be conducted within waterbodies are unavoidable in underrepresented communities and will degrade the value and function of these waterbodies within these communities, the Central Coast Water Board will pursue implementation of compensatory mitigation to offset the degradation within that community. The Central Coast Water Board will also prioritize coordination and permitting of proposed projects involving compensatory mitigation, water quality improvements, and habitat restoration within underrepresented communities.
14. Commits to prioritizing financial assistance, increasing technical assistance, and supporting local capacity-building to advance positive water quality outcomes that benefit Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities served by the Central Coast Water Board.
15. Commits to improving outreach and engagement to Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities to increase accessibility and participation in the decision-making process.
16. Directs the Executive Officer to develop and implement a Racial Equity and Environmental Justice Action Plan (Action Plan) that articulates a vision for racial equity, inclusion, diversity, and environmental justice and outlines specific actions the Central Coast Water Board will take to address the Central Coast Water Board systems that perpetuate racial and environmental inequities and establishing just and resilient systems.
  - a. The Action Plan shall engage all Central Coast Water Board units, programs, and staff. The plan shall incorporate and prioritize racial equity, tribal engagement, and environmental justice in all aspects of our work and work planning, including, those detailed above in this resolution as well as basin planning, watershed assessment, permitting, site remediation and cleanup, compliance assurance, enforcement, water quality monitoring, and funding. The plan shall also incorporate actions to promote opportunities for communities to secure safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes throughout the Central Coast Region, as described in Human Right to Water Resolution No. R3-2017-0004.

- b. The Action Plan shall include coordination with the State Water Board's Division of Administrative Services to implement strategies that increase workforce diversity and improve recruitment and retention.
- c. The Action Plan shall include internal engagement activities that address organizational culture and encourage staff to normalize conversations about racial equity, participate in implicit bias and racial equity training and prioritize future trainings in individual development plans, and foster a workforce that competently integrates racial equity in the Central Coast Water Board's programs, projects, and practices.
- d. The Action Plan shall include coordination with internal and external partners to consider strategies for effectively reaching and meaningfully engaging with Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities in our decision-making processes; provide accessible, open and transparent opportunities for the public to participate in board meetings, hearings, and workshops; meeting the public in their communities and spaces to seek out their perspectives; support communities with building capacity to advance racial equity and environmental justice; improve our communications by providing translation and more plain-language materials; and address barriers to public participation, including language, digital, location and time-of-day access.
- e. The Action Plan shall be based on racial equity tools and data that reflects impacts and benefits to Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities.
- f. The Action Plan shall include goals, objectives, actions, timelines, and metrics.
- g. The Action Plan shall advance a framework of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement for our racial equity work by establishing metrics and using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to measure and evaluate the Central Coast Water Board's progress toward achieving those metrics, equitizing our systems, practices, and policies, and diversifying the Central Coast Water Board's workforce.
- h. Staff shall seek out and consider input from the public and in particular Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, Indigenous, and other people of color and underrepresented communities to inform development of the Action Plan. Staff shall include a framework for analyzing the impact of Central Coast Water Board decisions and staff recommendations to the Board through a racial equity and environmental justice lens; asking impacted communities and people of color how the actions the Board is considering may affect them; and incorporating this feedback into the Board's

decision-making processes to address those impacts.

- i. Staff shall report on the progress to develop the Action Plan to the Board no later than one year after the Board adopts this resolution, and staff shall report on implementation progress annually thereafter.

## **CERTIFICATION**

The Executive Officer does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the Central Coast Water Board on February 16, 2023.

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Matthew T. Keeling  
Executive Officer

Exhibit A. State Water Board Resolution No. 2021-0050<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/resolutions/2021/rs2021\\_0050.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/2021/rs2021_0050.pdf)