

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Gualala River Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load



Figure 1: South Fork Gualala River looking north (June 27, 2023)

Background

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) established the Gualala River Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) in December 2001. The TMDL determined how much sediment the streams could handle and still be healthy. It also calculated how much sediment was being delivered to the streams and where those sources of sediment are in the watershed. It is the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Regional Board) responsibility to develop a plan to restore stream health and water quality in the Gualala River watershed.

Status of Gualala River Sediment TMDL

In 2022, a lawsuit was filed against the Regional Board by Friends of the Gualala River (FoGR), contending that the 2001 Gualala River Sediment TMDL had not been incorporated into the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (Basin Plan) as required by the Clean Water Act. The Regional Board and FoGR came to an agreement that the Regional Board will adopt the Gualala River TMDL into the Basin Plan and create a plan to improve water quality conditions in the watershed.

Next Steps and Schedule

The agreement to incorporate the Gualala River TMDL into the Basin Plan includes the following actions and timelines:

- Within 26 months of the settlement agreement (June, 2025), the Regional Board will prepare a Basin Plan amendment and an accompanying environmental staff report which will go out for public review and comment;
- Within 35 months of the settlement agreement (March, 2026), the Regional Board shall consider adoption of the Basin Plan amendment.

Public Process

Information will be provided to the public throughout the project by posting quarterly fact sheets and relevant information, including notices of public meetings and other water quality information, on the Regional Board's Gualala River TMDL project webpage: [Gualala River | California Northcoast Regional Water Quality Control Board](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/) https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/ and by notification to stakeholders on the email subscription list.

To be placed on the mailing list for this project, sign up on the Gualala River TMDL project webpage (above) or with your email address at [GovDelivery Sign-up](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRCB/subscriber/new?topic_id=r1_tmdl_gualala_river_watershed) https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRCB/subscriber/new?topic_id=r1_tmdl_gualala_river_watershed

If you have questions regarding the TMDL process, public process, or information posted on the project web pages, please contact Nick Fetherston (Project Manager), at (707) 570-3761, or by email at Nicholas.Fetherston@waterboards.ca.gov or Lisa Bernard (Program Manager), at (707) 576-2677, or by email at Lisa.Bernard@waterboards.ca.gov