

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

SAN DIEGO REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 8, 2021

ITEM 6

SUBJECT

Tentative Resolution in Support of the Update of the San Diego Water Board Practical Vision (Tentative Resolution No. R9-2021-0007). (*David Gibson*)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Adoption of Tentative Resolution No. R9-2021-0007 (Supporting Document No. 1).

KEY ISSUES

- Revises the 2013 Practical Vision to include updates from the previous seven years of implementation and new efforts in the areas of racial equity and environmental justice, Tribal partnership and consultation, and climate change mitigation.
- Provides an opportunity for the Board to formally endorse the allocation of staff resources to implement the updated Practical Vision (Supporting Document No. 1).

DISCUSSION

Resolution No. R9-2021-0007 (Supporting Document No. 1) endorses the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board) Practical Vision Update: *Healthy Waters, People, and Communities*. The Practical Vision is a strategy that guides the San Diego Water Board to achieve environmental outcomes to achieve healthy waters through prioritization on key beneficial uses and areas, collaboration, reliance on the latest science, prioritization of issues and actions based on environmental outcomes rather than programmatic dictates, and prudent use of its authorities in service to the people of California. This update to the Practical Vision includes revisions that reflect the accomplishments from the previous seven years of implementation and new efforts in the areas of racial equity and environmental justice, Tribal partnership and consultation, and climate change mitigation.

The 2013 Practical Vision included five chapters:

- Strategizing for Healthy Waters
- Monitoring and Assessment
- Recovery of Stream, Wetlands, and Riparian Systems
- Proactive Public Outreach and Communication
- A Vision for Achieving a Sustainable Local Water Supply.

The implementation of these chapters over the past 7 years provided guidance to the Water Board that allowed it to match its regulatory and legislative obligations with regional goals and stakeholder participation to achieve environmental outcomes. Key among the environmental outcomes that were considered to set goals, prioritize efforts, and report progress through the Practical Vision are the measures of biological integrity. Biological integrity is the most comprehensive indicator of water body health (e.g. when the biology of a stream is healthy, the chemical and physical components of the stream are also typically in good condition).

The San Diego Water Board has accomplished many of the projects identified in the Practical Vision chapters including:

- Adoption of the City of San Diego Pure Water Project Permit – Supporting the Sustainable Local Water Supply Chapter
- Adoption of the Biological Objectives for Wadeable Rivers and Streams – Supporting the Strategizing for Healthy Waters Chapter
- Adoption of a Resolution to support the use of Key Beneficial Uses and Key Areas to focus our work - Supporting the Strategizing for Healthy Waters Chapter
- Adoption of a Resolution to Support Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems - Supporting the Recovery of Stream, Wetlands, and Riparian Systems Chapter
- Conducted an Environmental Justice Symposium - Supporting the Proactive Public Outreach and Communication Chapter
- Initiated Litigation and Multiple Regulatory Actions to Address the Border Water Quality Issues of the Tijuana River - Supporting the Strategizing for Healthy Waters Chapter

To ensure year to year continuity and provide opportunities for discussion of progress, strategic prioritization, and course corrections, one Water Board meeting per year will continue to be dedicated to the review of the Annual Practical Vision Operational Plan which sets priorities for Water Board programs that help achieve the goals of the Practical Vision. The Annual Operational Plan documents progress on Practical Vision goals and provides a workplan for the next year. Based on the feedback and direction of the Water Board and the public, staff develop the required annual programmatic work plans for the State Water Board.

The Practical Vision is not a task list or set of priorities in and of itself, but rather a tool for culture change necessary to achieve healthy waters consistent with the objectives of the Clean Water Act for chemical, physical, and biological integrity. It has and will continue to enhance our culture of stakeholder collaboration, consideration of costs, and scientific analysis focused on environmental outcomes to restore and maintain the value of our waters and beneficial uses.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Meeting Notice and Agenda for today's meeting was posted on the Board's website and sent to those who subscribed to the email list for Board Meetings

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Tentative Resolution R9-2021-0007.
2. Practical Vision 2021