

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: Tahsa Sturgis & Katie Hart  
MEETING DATE: December 16, 2020

**ITEM 5.B**

**Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Stream Maintenance Program, Napa County; San Mateo County, Routine Maintenance Program, San Mateo County; and Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and Contra Costa County Public Works Department, Routine Maintenance Program, Contra Costa County—Amended Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Quality Certification**

**DISCUSSION:**

The attached Revised Tentative Order (Appendix A) would amend Order No. 2019-0023 (Napa SMP Order), waste discharge requirements and water quality certification, to incorporate the San Mateo County (San Mateo) and the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and Contra Costa County Public Works Department (Contra Costa) Routine Maintenance Programs (RMPs).

The Board adopted the Napa SMP Order in July 2019 to authorize the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District's Stream Maintenance Program. The Napa SMP Order provides a multi-year authorization for certain routine stream maintenance activities and was written to allow other routine stream maintenance programs to be added via amendment. This item would add the San Mateo and Contra Costa programs. The Napa SMP Order is similar to the stream maintenance program requirements adopted by the Board in May 2020 for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Similar programs are being implemented under separate authorizations by the Sonoma County Water Agency, Marin County, and City of Livermore, and we intend to add them to the order in the future as those current authorizations expire.

The Revised Tentative Order would authorize San Mateo and Contra Costa to perform routine stream maintenance activities, consistent with their programs' respective RMP Manuals, and would continue without change the previous authorization for Napa's program. Although the programs are similar in that each has been designed to perform maintenance in a manner most protective of beneficial uses, each program has been tailored to address local conditions and needs as described in the program's Manual.

Management of sediment and vegetation in streams, including flood control channels, is a primary program activity. As an example of local differences, under the Revised Tentative Order, Contra Costa would manage over 70 miles of engineered channels, including 18 miles of concrete-lined channels, in an urbanized setting. By contrast, the San Mateo program would manage large flood control facilities, but also complete work to address roadside ditches, ditch relief culverts, bridges, green stormwater infrastructure, and flood control and other facilities throughout urban and rural county areas.

Each RMP Manual describes authorized routine stream and related maintenance activities, including: vegetation management, sediment removal, culvert maintenance or replacement, and other minor maintenance, conducted to provide flood protection and maintain the functional integrity and operational capacity of the streams and other program elements. A key aspect of each program is to maintain channel conveyance capacity and other facility functions based on quantitative assessments, while protecting natural resources with avoidance and minimization measures. This stream maintenance approach is expected to result in long-term benefits to riparian and aquatic habitat by identifying those areas where

routine maintenance is necessary, and areas where stream habitat can be enhanced or restored, and using quantitative analysis to better frame needed maintenance and identify opportunities for restoration.

While each program that would be authorized by the Revised Tentative Order is designed to minimize impacts resulting from maintenance activities, some impacts will be unavoidable. Each program will mitigate for these impacts through a variety of approaches including invasive plant management, riparian restoration through planting or other in-stream enhancements, and coordinating with local watershed management partners to implement stream restoration and enhancement projects. The Revised Tentative Order will improve efficiency by reducing the number of separate permits needed for maintenance while allowing the counties to better plan and implement necessary maintenance activities and develop more-comprehensive and sustainable mitigation projects.

The Tentative Order was circulated for a 30-day public comment period ending on November 21, 2020. Staff received comments from both San Mateo and Contra Costa counties. Comments primarily requested minor clarifications regarding terms and identification of impacts and mitigation requirements. As explained in the Response to Comments, we revised the Tentative Order to address comments received, resulting in the Revised Tentative Order.

#### **APPENDICES:**

##### **Attached:**

- A. Revised Tentative Order
- B. Response to Comments

##### **Available on FTP Site:\*\*\***

- C. Order Att. A: Napa County Stream Maintenance Manual and Attachments
- D. Order Att. B: Sediment Monitoring and Reporting Program
- E. Order Att. C: Monitoring and Reporting Schedule
- F. Order Att. D: San Mateo County Routine Maintenance Manual
- G. Order Att. E: Contra Costa County Routine Maintenance Manual
- H. Comment Letters

**\*\*\*To access these appendices on the FTP, go to: <https://ftp.waterboards.ca.gov/>  
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