

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
RESOLUTION NO. 2016-0009**

APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE NORTH COAST REGION (BASIN PLAN) TO MAKE NONSUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO SECTION 1 (INTRODUCTION) AND SECTION 5 (PLANS AND POLICIES) AND UPDATE SECTION 3 (WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES)

WHEREAS:

1. On June 18, 2015, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (North Coast Water Board) adopted [Resolutions No. R1-2015-0018](#), amending the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan) to update Section 3 (Water Quality Objectives) and [Resolution No. R1-2015-0013](#), amending the Basin Plan to make nonsubstantive editorial revisions to Section 1 (Introduction) and Section 5 (Plans and Policies). The proposed Water Quality Objective Update Amendment to the Basin Plan includes the following: revision to the water quality objectives for chemical constituents in surface waters and groundwaters; clarifying revisions to the water quality objectives for pesticide, radioactivity, taste and odor, and toxicity in surface waters; addition of a narrative water quality objective for toxicity in groundwaters; revision to the water quality objective for dissolved oxygen (DO) in surface waters; and revisions to improve clarity on the application of water quality objectives, and readability and organization through nonsubstantive editorial changes. A clean copy and strikeout/underline version of the revisions to Section 3 (Water Quality Objectives) are contained in Resolution No. R1-2015-0018, [Attachments 1](#) and [2](#), respectively.
2. The revisions to the surface and ground water objectives for chemical constituents include: applying the objectives to the protection of all relevant beneficial uses, not just Agricultural Supply (AGR); adding language regarding the prevention of nuisance, as required in Porter-Cologne; deleting the outdated Table 3-2, *Inorganic, Organic, and Fluoride Concentrations Not to be Exceeded in Domestic or Municipal Supply*; and prospectively incorporating the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) listed in California Code of Regulations, title 22 as the minimum water quality objectives for chemical constituents to protect the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) beneficial use.
3. The newly adopted narrative groundwater toxicity objective is designed to protect the municipal and domestic beneficial uses of groundwater, and to provide an explicit objective for groundwater cleanups, discharges of waste to land, and other activities that threaten groundwater. The objective ensures adequate consideration of toxicity, in all cases, and it also is useful for establishing permit limits or cleanup levels in the absence of specific numeric water quality objectives.

4. The revisions to the water quality objective for DO are designed for the protection of sensitive aquatic organisms in fresh, free-flowing waters and include revision of the aquatic life-based DO objectives, to include prevention of both acute and chronic effects. Further, revision includes the deletion of waterbody specific DO objectives in Table 3-2 to be replaced by the updated aquatic life based objectives, unless attainment is prevented by natural conditions. In those waterbodies, the Executive Officer can approve the calculation of natural background DO as applicable water quality objectives. Natural background DO concentrations are derived from minimum percent DO saturation criteria for wet and dry periods and estimates of natural temperatures.
5. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.5, the Resources Agency has approved the Regional Water Boards' basin planning process as a "certified regulatory program" that adequately satisfies California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) requirements for preparing environmental documents. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15251, subd. (g); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3782.) The Substitute Environmental Documents (SED) include the Final Staff Report for the Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region to Update Water Quality Objectives, dated June 18, 2015, the environmental checklist and analyses, the comments and responses to comments, and the Basin Plan amendment language.
6. In preparing the accompanying SED, the Regional Water Board has considered the requirements of Public Resources Code section 21159 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15187, and intends the SED to serve as a programmatic review. Many of the compliance obligations will be undertaken or approved by public agencies that will have separate obligations under CEQA. Project-level impacts may need to be considered in any subsequent environmental analysis performed by other public agencies, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21159.2. Consistent with the requirements of that section, the CEQA Environmental Checklist includes an analysis of environmental impacts, mitigation measures to avoid or minimize those impacts, and alternative means of compliance that would avoid or mitigate environmental impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21159, subd. (a)(1)-(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15187, subds. (b), (c)(1)-(3), 15189.) The analysis takes into account a reasonable range of environmental, economic, and technical factors.
7. Consistent with Public Resources Code section 21081(b), specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits may outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts. The State Water Board has reviewed the SED for the Basin Plan amendment and concurs with the North Coast Water Board's findings and determinations including the programmatic Statement of Overriding Considerations. The CEQA findings for the Water Quality Objective Update Amendment pursuant to California Code of Regulations, tit. 14, § 15091 are presented in Resolution No. R1-2015-0018, [Attachment 3](#).

8. The North Coast Water Board found the Basin Plan amendment is consistent with the State Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board [Resolution No. 68-16](#)) and the federal Antidegradation Policy (40 C.F.R. § 131.12). The revisions to the water quality objectives do not themselves authorize or permit any activity that will discharge waste into high quality waters. Further analysis of the proposed amendment and the Antidegradation Policy is presented in Chapter 6 of the Staff Report. A full antidegradation analysis is appropriate at the time of permit development and adoption. Site- or activity-specific projects that will cause degradation to existing high quality waters will undergo additional analysis to determine whether the change in water quality is consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the State, and will not unreasonably result in water quality less than that prescribed in the Basin Plan and other Policies.
9. In addition to the substantive revisions to the Basin Plan, the North Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R1-2015-0013 amending the Basin Plan to make nonsubstantive editorial revisions to Section 1 (Introduction) and Section 5 (Plans and Policies). The Basin Plan currently contains minor typographical and grammatical errors and various instances where language is outdated due to changes in regulation or conditions. Revisions to update new information include: a) the full number of board members appointed to the Regional Water Board and b) correction of various regional statistics. Proposed nonsubstantive revisions to Section 5 (Plans and Policies) include replacement of all references to individually named statewide plans and policies with a reference to the State Water Resources Control Board website, instead.
10. The changes shown in R1-2015-0013, Attachment 1 (clean copy version formatted with changes incorporated) are the full new text as proposed for Sections 1 and 5. R1-2015-0013, Attachment 2 shows all of the changes to Section 1 in strikeout/underline, as well as the changes to Section 5 in strikeout/underline. These changes are nonsubstantive revisions for Sections 1 (Introduction) and 5 (Plans and Policies) to the Basin Plan and do not require environmental review under the CEQA.
11. The State Water Board finds that the regulatory action meets the “necessity” standard of the Administrative Procedures Act, Government Code section 11353, subdivision (b). The necessity of the Basin Plan amendment is established in the Staff Report for the amendment.
12. The State Water Board finds that the Basin Plan amendment is in conformance with Water Code section 13240, which specifies that regional water quality control boards may revise basin plans.
13. A Basin Plan amendment does not become effective until approved by the State Water Board and submitted to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). The revised water quality objectives must also receive approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The State Water Board:

1. Approves the amendments to the Basin Plan adopted under Regional Water Board Resolutions No.R1-2015-0013 (Section 1, Introduction and Section 5, Plans and Policies) and No. R1-2015-0018 (Section 3, Water Quality Objectives).
2. Authorizes the Executive Director or designee to submit the amendment adopted under Regional Water Board Resolutions No. R1-2015-0013 (Section 1, Introduction and Section 5, Plans and Policies) and No. R1-2015-0018 (Section 3, Water Quality Objectives) as approved and the administrative record for this action to the Office of Administrative Law for approval of the regulatory provisions and to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval of the water quality objectives.

### CERTIFICATION

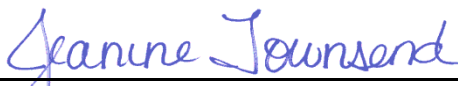
The undersigned Clerk to the Board does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on February 16, 2016.

AYE: Chair Felicia Marcus  
Vice Chair Frances Spivy-Weber  
Board Member Tam M. Doduc  
Board Member Dorene D'Adamo

NAY: None

ABSENT: Board Member Steven Moore

ABSTAIN: None

  
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Jeanine Townsend  
Clerk to the Board