Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Draft Strategic Plan

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

DISCLAIMER: *The following FY 2023-24 Draft Strategic Plan, including proposed priorities, goals, and actions, is for discussion by the Central Coast Water Board and should not be construed as commitments or policy statements as presented in this document. Any priorities, goals, and actions herein are subject to change. The draft Strategic Plan is not intended to, and does not, list all Central Coast Water Board activities.*

August 25, 2023 DRAFT

Contents

Introduction

This draft strategic plan provides a general overview of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Central Coast Water Board) authority and mandate, describes the status of our workforce, and sets regional and program specific priorities to guide our work towards achieving meaningful water quality, environmental, and public health outcomes that are aligned with our mission. It affirms our commitment to public service and coordination as a foundational principle of our agency and affirms our mission, vision, and measurable goals. It also discusses how our work environment is changing due to various external factors that are requiring us to reevaluate how we prioritize our work and measure our performance.

This document is intended to set the stage for the annual review of our priorities to ensure we effectively and transparently implement the mission of the Central Coast Water Board.

Mission Statement

The Central Coast Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.

Strategic Narrative – Evolving Work Environment

Our work environment is evolving rapidly in a way that requires us to readjust our priorities and expectations to ensure we can effectively maintain our core programmatic functions and implement our mission. Our workload continues to increase and the work is becoming more technical, complex, and challenging due to an increase in the number and types of facilities and cleanup cases we regulate and the manner we regulate them in response to new regulatory mandates and statewide policies, and due to the emergence of new contaminants that require us to take action to protect public health such as 1,2,3-trichloropropane and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Aging wastewater infrastructure is making regulatory oversight of municipal wastewater facilities and collection systems more imperative and time consuming, particularly with respect to a more hands-on and coordinated approach in support of underrepresented and disadvantaged communities lacking technical, managerial, and financial capacity to operate, maintain, and upgrade failing wastewater systems.

Climate change is also a significant compounding factor that has required more attention from staff across many program areas with respect to fire, drought, and flood impacts and the associated regulatory and emergency response actions to support impacted communities in coordination with multiple Water Board offices and divisions and other local and state agencies. This emergency work often requires us to divert staff resources away from other core programmatic work and requires development of adaptive strategies to address and mitigate climate related impacts and help facilitate water supply resiliency. Although we are developing proactive mitigation and adaptation

strategies, a high level of uncertainty is associated with extreme weather events and associated needs that may require us to pivot our staff resources quickly towards emergency response and post disaster cleanup and restoration regulatory oversight and coordination. Typically, we do not receive additional staff resources to take on this additional and more challenging work.

Concurrent with an increase in the amount and complexity of our work, as noted above, our workload capacity is also decreasing in response to a retiring workforce, recruitment and onboarding new staff, and the extra time and effort it takes to manage a hybrid workplace.[1] Over the last several years we have maintained a vacancy rate of around 10 to 15 percent due to internal rotations and new vacancies (mostly due to retirements). This is likely going to continue for the next several years. Our management team is spending a significant amount of time implementing time consuming recruitment processes and onboarding and training new staff instead of focusing on facilitating programmatic work. Because the retirement wave is an endemic issue, most of our new staff are less experienced, and often fresh out of college. Although these less experienced staff may have more advanced information technology and software skills, it generally takes them time to come up to the same speed and level of technical and regulatory expertise of their more experienced predecessors. Additionally, the rate of these workforce changes is resulting in a significant loss in institutional and historical knowledge, which is a significant challenge when implementing long term strategies and approaches to address complex regional water quality problems. Managing a post-pandemic hybrid telework and multigenerational workforce also requires additional effort to effectively engage, support, and coordinate with staff, and effectively coordinate across programs. We are also observing similar workload capacity issues with the dischargers we regulate and agencies we coordinate with, resulting in additional work implementation inefficiencies.

In response to this evolving work environment, a key component of this strategic plan focuses on rebuilding our organization and culture in balance with maintaining core programmatic functions and managing high priority discretionary initiatives[2] in a way that sets a reasonable and sustainable pace for staff and managers. This strategic plan also focuses on defining our highest priority work and anticipating additional priority tasks and challenges that may require us to redirect staff resources towards different projects that are in alignment with our priorities.

---

[1] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2022/aug/item11_stfrpt.pdf (see Staff Resources Update and Staff Telework Update sections)

[2] Discretionary initiatives include high priority work for which we don't have statewide recognized programmatic structures or dedicated staff resources. Examples include our environmental justice efforts in support of disadvantaged communities and the implementation of the Human Right to Water through coordinated efforts with NGOs, State Water Board programs and other entities, our racial equity resolution and forthcoming action plan, coordination with The Bay Foundation of Morro Bay for the implementation of the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) and Groundwater Assessment and Protection (GAP) programs (e.g., domestic well testing program), Low Impact Development Initiative (LIDI), climate change initiative, etc.

Collaboration and Public Service

Coordination, Leveraging, and Facilitation

Our work and often our success is predicated on building relationships and partnerships with various entities with shared goals. Coordination with and leveraging of other entities expertise and resources can inform and streamline our work to achieve meaningful water quality outcomes. Similarly, we can help facilitate actions implemented by other entities by providing them with supporting expertise and resources to achieve shared goals. To this effect, we actively participate at local, regional, and state levels with other regulatory agencies, cities, counties, special districts, and coordinate with academic and scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, service providers, consultants, regulated entities and individuals, and the general public. And importantly, we coordinate with the State Water Board and the other regional water boards to implement our shared mission.

Public Service

Public engagement is critical to the Central Coast Water Board's success in restoring and protecting water quality and we are dedicated to serving the public as a fundamental component of our mission. We serve the public by building trust and long-term relationships through service excellence, proactive communication, education, transparency, and collaboration. We strive to consistently provide professional, high-quality, timely service to the public.

Regional Priorities and Actions

The following regional priorities apply office-wide and to all programs, with the intent of normalizing and integrating them across our programs and as a foundational component of our office culture and programmatic work. The regional priorities include a mix of specific and general actions and in some cases are also incorporated as part of specific programmatic priorities.

Workforce Planning and Development

As noted in the Evolving Work Environment discussion above, we need to prioritize development and succession planning of our workforce and create space for this work to be done in a meaningful way. To create space for this very important work we need to adjust our priorities in other areas. We need to recruit, hire, and retain high caliber staff, keep them engaged, and facilitate and encourage staff professional and personal growth through implementation of deliberate and consistent applicant vetting processes, staff onboarding, training and mentoring, and succession planning. The following actions are intended to address this priority:

1. Update our internal hiring practices and recruitment strategies.
2. Continue to implement and build on our core curriculum for scientists, engineers, and geologists to support professional growth and development.
3. Create, implement, and support mentoring opportunities for staff.

4. Continue to encourage and provide opportunities for collaboration, teamwork, and leadership growth.
5. Continue to coordinate with the State Water Board to expeditiously implement recruitment processes and to develop budget change proposals in support of additional staff resources.
6. Create a retirement tracking tool and associated succession plans to maximize effective transfer of institutional knowledge and history.

Core Programmatic Functions

Implementation of our mandate to protect and restore water quality and beneficial uses is predicated on effectively implementing our core functions associated with our regulatory programs and planning and assessment programs. Our waste discharge regulatory programs (i.e., Waste Discharge Requirements, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Stormwater, Landfill, 401 Certification, Irrigated Lands) enroll dischargers in various permits/orders.[3] Our Site Cleanup, Underground Storage Tank, and Department of Defense regulatory programs issue orders (e.g., cleanup and abatement orders, California Water Code section 13267 orders, etc.) directing dischargers (i.e., responsible parties), including private parties, corporations, or state and federal agencies, to investigate and cleanup sources of pollution and provide replacement water to affected individuals or communities when needed. Regulatory program staff coordinate with dischargers to facilitate compliance, evaluate and respond to information included in monitoring reports and other submitted documents, conduct compliance verification inspections, coordinate with other agencies to help facilitate compliance or provide technical assistance, pursue progressive enforcement as may be required in response to significant issues of noncompliance, and coordinate with affected communities or individuals. Other regulatory programs are focused more on general oversight roles in coordination with the State Water Board and/or other agencies like that of our Oil and Gas program, or to facilitate wastewater system consolidation, water supply resiliency, vegetation management to reduce fuel load fire risks, implement the state's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, and provide technical support for grant projects. Our planning and assessment programs maintain an up-to-date and effective Basin Plan and conduct water quality assessments through the implementation of ambient water quality monitoring programs, identify sources of water quality impairment, and develop plans (e.g., Total Maximum Daily Loads [TMDLs]) to document and address sources of impairment.

As a regulatory agency, our public service roles and responsibilities are multifaceted, including the provision of technical and regulatory oversight and associated support to

[3] Key examples include individual and general Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for various types of discharges to land (and in turn groundwater) and surface water (in the form of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits that are also WDRs), including municipal (wastewater and solid waste), industrial and agricultural discharges, municipal, industrial and construction stormwater discharges, federal Clean Water Act 401 certifications for dredge and fill work or other activities with surface water bodies, etc.

regulated dischargers and responsible parties, as well as engaging with the general public in response to inquiries or complaints, and ongoing coordination with other local, state, and federal agencies. Our regulatory and non-regulatory programs are also constantly evaluating program areas where we can implement new strategies to maximize resources and gain efficiencies. One example of this is the development of general orders to increase permitting efficiency, while also providing consistency of regulation for similar types of discharges. Another example is the development of TMDLs at a broader watershed or river-basin scale to address multiple stream reaches in a single project. Prioritizing our core regulatory work is often an iterative process in response to discharger, public, or other agency needs, requests, issues of noncompliance, emergency response, etc. This may sometimes require us to redirect resources from previously identified priority work to emergent tasks based on need. This strategic plan is intended to highlight the priority core programmatic functions we must continue to focus on to achieve our mission. Each of our programs are described briefly in the Program Priorities section below and include a list of priority actions for fiscal year 23-24.

Our primary actions associated with this priority are:

1. Continue to have our programs identify priorities and implement actions to address those priorities, as well as identify and implement program efficiencies as defined in the attached program priorities documents.
2. Continue to conduct regular programmatic workload updates during weekly management meetings to adjust priority actions and workload as needed in response to emerging or emergency issues and engage with upper management when changes in priorities are needed.
3. Continue to provide periodic program updates during regularly scheduled public meetings to inform the board and public about priorities, accomplishments, and emerging issues.
4. Continue to consider climate change and environmental justice with respect to how we evaluate, prioritize, and implement our work.
5. Continue to coordinate with the State Water Board to identify and track various annual core regulatory performance targets (e.g., numbers of inspections conducted, permits issued/updated, etc.) and align them to the extent possible with our regional priority actions.
6. Continue to coordinate with State Water Board and other agencies to conduct outreach to impacted or in-need underrepresented and disadvantaged communities and identify and facilitate funding and technical assistance opportunities in support of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure needs.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Climate change related issues are becoming increasingly prevalent, and it is a priority for Central Coast Water Board staff to engage both on reactive and proactive levels with respect to adaptation and mitigation strategies. The increased frequency and magnitude of climate change related disasters associated with droughts, severe storms, floods,

and fires affecting communities and regulated entities,[4] requires increased levels of local and statewide coordination to develop various strategies or otherwise help facilitate the implementation of statewide efforts and guidance. A key example of this is implementation of various components of the Governor's Office 2020 Water Resiliency Portfolio and 2022 Water Supply Strategy in response to ongoing drought conditions in California.[5] With the exception of two new and forthcoming positions to support the technical and regulatory permitting oversight of an increasing number of water supply resiliency projects (e.g., desalination, recycled water advanced treatment and associated indirect and direct potable reuse, aquifer storage and recovery, and other recycled water uses), we do not have dedicated resources to address the increasing coordination and regulatory needs created by climate change. As such, this work will need be triaged by our existing programs and through creative capacity building strategies; this will impact our ability to address other high priority core programmatic work. The following includes our proposed actions associated with this priority:

1. Continue to evaluate how climate change affects our region, communities, regulated entities, and water quality in coordination with others.
2. Continue to include climate change adaptation provisions in our individual and general WDRs (including NPDES permits).
3. Continue to identify and leverage climate change related capacity building opportunities.
4. Continue to coordinate with the State Water Board to fund, advertise for, and hire CivicSpark fellows and pursue additional staff resources to implement regionally specific climate change focused projects.
5. Continue to coordinate with the State Water Board, California Coastal Commission, and local agencies, as well as other entities (e.g., California Association of Sanitary Agencies, Association of California Water Agencies, and CalReuse) to develop and leverage coordinated strategies and funding to implement projects that result in water supply resiliency and coastal/flooding retreat, wastewater consolidation, recycling, etc.

Environmental Justice

One of our historical values dating back over a decade is a focus on environmental justice through the development of strategies to identify and address water quality related issues impacting underrepresented and disadvantaged communities in the central coast region. A primary focus of our environmental justice efforts has been on implementing the state's human right to water policy and associated State Water Board and Central Coast Water Board resolutions.[6] Although we have been successful through

[4] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2023/feb/item11_stfrpt.pdf (see Flood Incident Response section of the report)
[5] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2022/oct/item13_stfrpt.pdf
[6] State Water Board Resolution No. 2016-0010 (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/2016/rs2016_0010.pdf)

creative and coordinated strategies to leverage the work of community partners and other agencies to increase environmental justice capacity in the region and facilitate the development of programs like the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program,[7] this discretionary effort (i.e., with no dedicated staff resources) has come at the expense of not being able to implement as much core programmatic work. Over the last several years we have become more focused on evaluating and aligning our core programmatic work with respect to environmental justice (and climate change as noted above) to address environmental justice issues at an agency level, while focusing limited staff resources on leveraging the work of other entities and a manageable number of specific high priority projects like the recent development of our region-specific Racial Equity Resolution. We will continue to implement this strategy in support of this priority with the following actions:

1. Implement the human right to water pursuant to our regionally specific Human Right to Water Resolution No. R3-2017-0004.[8]
2. Prepare and implement a Racial Equity Action Plan pursuant to our regionally specific Racial Equity Resolution No. R3-2023-0002.[9]
3. Revise our staff report and order findings and associated outreach strategies (e.g., using internal outreach and community engagement resource materials) to incorporate Assembly Bill (AB) 2108[10] provisions and associated State Water Board guidance.
4. Continue to identify and leverage environmental justice related capacity building opportunities.
5. Continue to engage with tribal governments and tribal communities, consistent with the State Water Board's Tribal Consultation Policy[11] and Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-15-19.[12]
6. Continue to identify and leverage technical and financial assistance programs for underrepresented and disadvantaged communities.
7. Continue to coordinate with and leverage the State Water Board Office of Public Participation and others (e.g., local agencies, community-based partners, nongovernmental organizations) to develop and implement effective and equitable outreach strategies.

---

and Central Coast Water Board Resolution No. R3-2017-0004 (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2017/2017-0004_hrtw_fnl.pdf)

[7] https://sites.google.com/view/ccgroundwater

[8] Central Coast Water Board Resolution No. R3-2017-0004 (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2017/2017-0004_hrtw_fnl.pdf)

[9] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2023/r3-2023-0002.pdf

[10] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB2108

[11] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/public_participation/tribal_affairs/docs/california_water_board_tribal_consultation_policy.pdf

[12] https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/6.18.19-Executive-Order.pdf

8. Continue to improve public transparency, outreach, and engagement, particularly with respect to the most impacted and difficult to reach communities and individuals to improve awareness of and participation in our public decision-making processes.
9. Continue to support the implementation of the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay's Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program through the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection (CCAMP-GAP) Program and associated replacement water efforts, to ensure all communities have access to safe drinking water.

Program Priorities

This section includes descriptions of our programs along with specific program priorities and tasks. For some of our programs we also develop program performance targets in coordination with the State Water Board that are primarily focused on the number of permits issued or updated, and inspections conduction.

Waste Discharge Requirements Program

***Program Narrative*:** The Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Program protects the region's groundwater quality and public health by providing regulatory oversight of many of the region's waste discharges to land. The WDR Program covers various wastewater types including domestic, municipal, vegetable processing, and wineries, and also covers recycled water, aquifer storage and recovery, and collection systems through the issuance and enforcement of order/permit requirements including water quality and other monitoring and reporting requirements, and through the implementation of periodic inspections, compliance evaluations and assistance, and progressive enforcement actions as may be appropriate. Currently, the WDR Program manages oversight of 160 individual facility WDR orders and 550 enrollments under various statewide and regional general WDRs. The WDR Program prioritizes tasks and projects by considering threat to groundwater quality and beneficial uses, age of existing requirements, environmental justice, climate change related risk, and legal requirements.

Staff Resources: The WDR Program currently consists of 5.8 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Enroll facilities into current applicable updated permits and monitoring programs. Share funding resources for facility improvements.
2. Implement efficiencies including the statewide WDR data management strategy enhancements (e.g., transition facilities to reporting to GeoTracker, develop electronic application tools).
3. Conduct permit oversight (e.g., inspections, compliance assistance, enforcement).
4. Support recycled water, septic to sewer conversion, climate change adaptation plans, and actions addressing water quality issues/threats.
5. Support staff development.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Pure Water Soquel indirect potable reuse permit adoption
2. Big Basin Woods Subdivision wastewater plant enforcement
3. Transition remaining facilities to GeoTracker reporting
4. Updated wastewater permits for larger wastewater facilities including:
    - City of Hollister
    - Meadowbrook Templeton CSD
    - Nipomo Southland
    - Las Palmas Ranch
    - City of Soledad
    - King City
    - San Miguel CSD
    - Cambria
    - San Miguelito Mutual
    - Woodlands Mutual
5. Updated wastewater permits for many smaller wastewater facilities. For example:
    - Live Oak Camp
    - Jalama Beach
    - Ocean Mesa RV Park
    - El Capitan Private Camp
    - Costanoa
    - Mission Springs
    - Santa Cruz KOA
    - San Juan Golf Course
6. Continued support of San Ardo Wastewater Plant 2023 winter storm recovery
7. Moonglow Dairy site closure review
8. Moving unpermitted wineries into the Statewide general permit
9. San Benito County Local Agency Management Program approval

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of WDR facility inspections: 25
2. Number of individual orders adopted: 0[13]

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program

Program Narrative: The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program issues and enforces permits to protect surface water quality and beneficial uses from point source discharges to waters of the United States. USEPA has

[13] WDR program focus is on enrolling existing and new facilities under regional or statewide general orders.

authorized the State and Regional Water Boards to implement the NPDES program in California to protect inland surface waters and the Pacific Ocean.

Permittees in the Central Coast Region include 33 individual facilities (20 major facilities[14] and 13 minor facilities[15]), over 30 dischargers enrolled in two regional general permits, over 80 dischargers enrolled in various statewide general permits, and several dozen sanitary sewer systems that discharge to NPDES facilities. Individual NPDES permits provide coverage to a variety of facility and discharge types, including domestic waste from publicly owned treatment works (POTW) and privately owned facilities; industrial waste from power plants, refineries, quarries and mining operations, and manufacturing and food processing facilities; and discharges associated with desalination and recycled water projects. Development of individual permits presents additional complexity by incorporating outreach, coordination, and requirements related to pretreatment, biosolids, climate change adaptation, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) monitoring, and updates to statewide policies such as the Ocean Plan and the Policy for Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (SIP).

Staff prioritize permit reissuance based on threat to water quality, opportunities to encourage and facilitate recycled water projects, climate change adaptation needs, and impacts to underrepresented and disadvantaged communities. Staff conduct enforcement activities including assisting with mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) when dischargers exceed their effluent limitations, responding to spills and sanitary sewer overflows, responding to complaints, developing time schedule orders (TSOs), and coordinating with the enforcement unit on additional enforcement actions when needed. Additionally, staff inspect facilities, review technical reports, provide compliance assistance to dischargers with various questions related to their permits, planning, and monitoring and reporting, and provide outreach related to funding opportunities.

Staff Resources: The NPDES Program consists of 3 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Permit renewals for facilities that are undergoing substantial upgrades, particularly related to recycled water capacity.
2. Facilities facing risks related to climate change and that need to begin climate change adaptation planning efforts.
3. Making progress on permit update/renewal backlog and performing inspections.
4. Providing compliance assistance and conducting enforcement actions when necessary.

[14] Major facilities include municipal dischargers with design flows of greater than one million gallons per day and facilities with approved industrial pretreatment programs. Major industrial facilities are determined based on specific ratings criteria developed by US EPA/State.

[15] A minor facility is a discharge with a design flow of less than one million gallons per day (MGD) that has not been determined to have an actual or potential adverse environmental impact classifying the discharge as major.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Renew or terminate six permits.
2. Include recycling and climate change adaptation provisions and consider impacts to underrepresented communities in all applicable proposed permits.
3. Inspect facilities and review reports to identify area of non-compliance.
4. Coordinate with State Water Board on pretreatment program implementation.
5. Leverage CivicSpark program to implement climate change adaptation efforts and host a Climate Change Adaptation Roundtable.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Renew or terminate 4 major facility permits, renew 1 minor facility permit, and adopt 1 general permit.
2. Inspect 13 major facilities.
3. Inspect 6 minor facilities.

Wastewater Consolidation Program

Program Narrative: The Wastewater Consolidation (WWC) Program is a relatively new program developed pursuant to Senate Bill 1215 (Hertzberg, 2018) that facilitates the consolidation of inadequate onsite wastewater treatment systems with centralized wastewater treatment systems, with a focus on assisting disadvantaged communities (DACs). Inadequate onsite wastewater treatment systems are a source of bacteria and nitrate pollution to surface water and groundwater. Disadvantaged communities may lack the resources necessary to treat or secure alternate sources of domestic water supply and are particularly vulnerable to public health impacts from bacteria and nitrate in groundwater.

Program staff identify and prioritize potential consolidation opportunities through geospatial and water quality analysis, leveraging current drinking water consolidation projects, and increasingly through community outreach and engagement. Staff coordinate closely with key program partners including sewer providers, city and county public works departments, city and county environmental health departments, consultants, environmental justice groups, and communities. Staff also coordinate closely with the State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance (DFA).

Staff Resources: The WWC Program currently consists of 2 staff. One staff is housed in the NPDES program and the other is housed in the WDR program.

General Program Priorities:

1. Increase outreach to and engagement with communities, sewer system entities/municipalities, nonprofit partners, and partnering local and state agencies.
2. Increase coordination with the Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) and Office of Public Participation (OPP).
3. Continue to identify and prioritize new projects and make progress on current projects.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Hacienda Apartments consolidation into City of Soledad sewer system.
2. Bear Creek Estates consolidation into Santa Cruz County Community Service Area 7.
3. Outreach meetings to increase community engagement in support of Bolsa Knolls consolidation efforts.
4. Chualar Wastewater Treatment Plant consolidation with Monterey One Water's regional treatment and recycling facility.
5. Listening sessions throughout the region to identify additional consolidation projects.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Site Cleanup Program

Program Narrative: The Site Cleanup Program (SCP) regulates and oversees the investigation and cleanup of sites where recent or historical unauthorized releases of pollutants to the environment, including soil, groundwater, surface water, and sediment, have occurred. SCP sites are varied and include, but are not limited to, dry cleaners, pesticide and fertilizer facilities, rail yards, ports, airports, equipment supply facilities, metals facilities, industrial manufacturing and maintenance sites, bulk petroleum transfer facilities, and refineries. Pollutants encountered at SCP sites are diverse and commonly include solvents (e.g., trichloroethylene [TCE] and perchloroethylene [PCE]), petroleum hydrocarbons (e.g., gasoline, diesel, crude oil), pesticides, and heavy metals. The SCP also addresses emerging contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Most SCP sites are focused on addressing groundwater contamination issues that often take years or decades to clean up.

The SCP prioritizes its work using a ranking system that emphasizes site risk, complexity, and need for public outreach. Currently, the Central Coast Water Board is the lead oversight agency for approximately 136 open cases, including 32 high priority cases and 46 medium priority cases with the remaining cases being low or very low priority. The SCP staff oversee the dischargers' (i.e., responsible parties') activities pertaining to the assessment and cleanup of pollution at sites to ensure that the dischargers clean up and abate the effects of discharges in a manner that promotes attainment of either background water quality, or the best water quality which is reasonable if background levels of water quality cannot be restored. All SCP data,

including site information, case management and regulatory information and groundwater monitoring data is managed in GeoTracker and is available to the public online.

Staff Resources: The SCP currently consists of 5.4 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Protect human health and the environment by reducing risk through the investigation and cleanup of SCP cases that threaten water quality.
2. Ensure safe drinking water by evaluating impacts to drinking water and requiring the provision of replacement water or treatment for impacted drinking water supply wells, if appropriate.
3. Reduce and mitigate chemical vapor intrusion risks to indoor air for residential and commercial buildings.
4. Provide technical review and quality assurance to ensure that proposed plans for investigation and remediation will succeed.
5. Support responsible parties in obtaining grants.
6. Recommend enforcement actions for significant non-compliant cases.
7. Conduct community outreach; Identify high-risk SCP sites that may affect underrepresented communities.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport Area – PFAS Water Replacement implementation oversight.
2. PFAS investigations at three other airports, bulk fuel/refinery facilities, and other PFAS sources.
3. Buckley Road Area, San Luis Obispo County, TCE Cleanup and Abatement Order implementation oversight.
4. Dutch Maid Cleaners, Santa Barbara – PCE
5. Scotts Valley Dry Cleaners, Scotts Valley – PCE
6. Fairway Cleaners, Santa Cruz – PCE
7. TSP Filters, Goleta – 1,4 dioxane

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of sites new into active remediation: 4
2. Number of cases closed: 6

Department Of Defense Program

Program Narrative: The Department of Defense (DoD) Program oversees the investigation and cleanup of DoD sites where historical releases of pollutants to the environment (including soil, groundwater, surface water, soil gas, indoor air, and sediment) have occurred at active and former military facilities. The DoD Program follows the investigation, cleanup, and closure process laid out by the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

The former U.S. Army Fort Ord facility in Monterey County is a DoD Superfund site in the Central Coast Region and DoD Program staff coordinate with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to oversee investigation and remediation. In addition to former Fort Ord, DoD Program staff oversee investigation and cleanup activities at U.S. Space Force Vandenberg Space Force Base and former Lompoc U.S. Army Disciplinary Barracks (Santa Barbara County), U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett (San Luis Obispo County/Monterey County), and California Army National Guard Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Roberts (San Luis Obispo County). Pollutants encountered at DoD facilities include petroleum hydrocarbons (gasoline, diesel, aviation gas, motor oil), various solvents such (trichloroethene [TCE], tetrachloroethene [PCE], carbon tetrachloride), heavy metals, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, perchlorate, unexploded ordinance, and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). All DoD data, including military facility information, investigation and remediation documents, and groundwater monitoring data is managed in GeoTracker and is available to the public online.

Staff Resources: The DoD Program currently consists of 2.9 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Support the federal government's efforts to reduce risks to public health and the environment and minimize environmental liability.
2. Ensure safe drinking water by evaluating impacts to drinking water wells.
3. Mitigate soil vapors potentially impacting human health via indoor air.
4. Remove wastes affecting soil or sediment to prevent negative impacts to human health or aquatic or terrestrial habitat.
5. Clean up wastes in all media so that property owner(s) and occupant(s) will have unrestricted site use, or appropriately restricted site use with protective land use controls.
6. Clean up groundwater and surface water pollution that in some cases will take decades or centuries to reach water quality objectives due to site complexity, release type, and magnitude.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Former Fort Ord – Review and evaluate remediation progress at Sites 2 and 12, former Operable Unit Landfill, and former Operable Unit Carbon Tetrachloride Plume.
2. Vandenberg Space Force Base - Close two open, underground storage tank cleanup cases (TU130 and TU578).
3. Vandenberg Space Force Base – Review and evaluate remediation progress at sites DC142, PL351, SD015, SDo19, SD024, SD025, SD032, SS003, SS004, SS029, SS050, ST142, TU077, TU670, WP005, WP008, WP013, MY255, SA217, and SA545.

4. Vandenberg Space Force Base – Review the 5-Year Report for all cases, including those in long-term monitoring (sites FT021, LF18, LF20, LF22, and LF23).
5. Vandenberg Space Force Base – Provide technical support for Munitions Response Area Water Ranges (a 305-acre water site located off the coastline, including Point Sal Area, Minuteman Beach, Purisima Point, and Surf Beach).
6. Former Lompoc U.S. Army Disciplinary Barracks - Review and evaluate remediation progress at the Washrack, Former Army Landfill, and Wood Dump.
7. Former Fort Ord, Fort Hunter Liggett, Vandenberg Space Force Base, Camp San Luis Obispo, and Camp Roberts – Review and evaluate PFAS investigation reports the DoD has submitted or plans to submit for each installation.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Number of sites new into active remediation: 0

Underground Storage Tank Program

Program Narrative: The Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program provides technical and regulatory oversight for the investigation and cleanup of sites with leaks from USTs. Leaking USTs are a significant threat to groundwater and pose a potential threat to human health, safety, and the environment. The pollutants encountered at UST sites include petroleum hydrocarbons (e.g., gasoline, diesel, heating oils, jet fuels, and waste oils) and their constituents like benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, naphthalene, fuel oxygenates, 1,2-dichloroethane, and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Most UST sites are focused on addressing groundwater contamination issues that often take years or decades to clean up. Over time, the number of UST cases is decreasing statewide, with the most complex sites remaining.

USTs have a long history of environmental regulation. California has been regulating USTs containing hazardous substances since 1983, applying federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. The UST Program has four main program elements: Leak Prevention Program (including tank integrity testing), UST enforcement, UST cleanup, and the UST Cleanup Fund. In addition, the UST Program implements a Low Threat Policy, which is a streamlined process that uses established criteria to close UST cases that present a low threat to human health, safety, and the environment.

The Central Coast Water Board coordinates with local agencies that implement a certified local oversight program (LOP) to oversee corrective action for leaking USTs. In the Central Coast Region, the State Water Board has certified Santa Clara and Santa Barbara Counties as qualified LOPs. Santa Barbara County's LOP terminated on June 30, 2023, due to a shrinking caseload and staff are coordinating with Santa Barbara County Environmental Health staff to ensure a smooth transition of these cases to the Central Coast Water Board. Santa Clara County Environmental Health's LOP is certified through June 30, 2025. All UST data, including site information, case management and regulatory information, and groundwater monitoring data is managed in GeoTracker and is available to the public online.

Currently, there are approximately 37 leaking UST sites actively managed in the Central Coast Region. The UST Program manages 34 cases and Santa Clara County LOP manages 3 cases.

Staff Resources: The UST Program currently consists of 2 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Require site investigation and remediation associated with petroleum releases by the issuance of administrative orders and informal directives.
2. Ensure safe drinking water and mitigate chemical vapor intrusion into residential and commercial buildings.
3. Provide technical review and quality assurance to ensure that proposed plans for investigation and remediation will succeed.
4. Provide logistical support to consultants and responsible parties, such as helping to obtain access at neighboring properties to perform investigation.
5. Recommend enforcement actions for significant non-compliant cases.
6. Conduct community outreach and implement public noticing requirements; Identify high-risk SCP sites that may affect underrepresented communities.
7. Coordinate with State Water Board and LOPs.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Coordinate with the State Water Board on “stalled cases” initiative to gain progress on cases that have not had significant movement for various reasons (e.g., complexity, lack of resources).
2. Engage on new cases recently transitioned from Santa Barbara County due to the termination of their LOP.
3. Review and potentially establish new cases as remaining single-walled underground tank systems are upgraded.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of sites new into active remediation: 2
2. Number of cases closed: 7

Land Disposal Program

Program Narrative: The Land Disposal Program regulates landfills, surface impoundments, and other waste disposal to land operations including compost operations. This includes both active and closed facilities. The primary goal of the Land Disposal Program is to ensure that wastes contained in these facilities do not impact surface or groundwater. The Land Disposal Program regulates landfills using prescriptive technical design standards for liners, covers, leachate collection and removal systems, stormwater drainage systems, and gas collection systems.

The Land Disposal Program oversees 63 waste disposal sites (i.e., landfills, solid waste management units and historical dumps) throughout the region. Disposal sites in the region range in size from active, hundred-acre, multi-cell, state-of-the-art facilities to

small, unpermitted one- to two-acre closed sites. To improve programmatic efficiency and allow limited staff resources to focus on landfill activities with the greatest potential impact on water quality and help dischargers maintain compliance with requirements, the Land Disposal Program regulates active landfills using a general order for active Class III landfills (Order No. R3-2020-0001). The program also oversees eight compost facilities enrolled in the statewide general compost order. All Land Disposal Program data, including facility information, case management and regulatory information, and groundwater monitoring data is managed in GeoTracker and is available to the public online.

Staff Resources: The Land Disposal Program currently consists of 2.3 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Address water quality impacts that affect human health and minimize impacts to surface waters and groundwater.
2. Regulate facilities to ensure proper waste disposal and handling.
3. Review all land disposal monitoring reports and data.
4. Review all land disposal design reports (liner and cover projects) and conduct inspections during landfill project construction.
5. Conduct outreach and engage with external stakeholders (CalRecycle, County Environmental Health Departments, Air Districts), interested parties, and internal stakeholders (Stormwater, WDR, 401 Certification).

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Develop a general order for closed landfills.
2. Review emerging contaminant (e.g., PFAS) data for landfills and evaluate priority sites for follow-up.
3. Review Joint Technical Document (JTD) update for Tajiguas Landfill (Santa Barbara County)
4. Conduct construction oversight (e.g., new modules, final covers, etc.)
5. Cemex Davenport Cement Plant Landfills Closure Project (Santa Cruz County)
6. City of Watsonville Landfill Closure and New Module Project (Santa Cruz County)
7. Santa Maria Regional Landfill Module Extension Project (Santa Barbara County)]
8. Casmalia Liner Project (Santa Barbara County)
9. Monterey Peninsula Landfill Module Extension (Monterey County)
10. Chevron Guadalupe Landfill Liner Project (San Luis Obispo County)
11. Cold Canyon Landfill Liner Project (San Luis Obispo County)
12. Paso Robles Landfill Cover Project (San Luis Obispo County)
13. Chicago Grade Landfill Liner Project (San Luis Obispo County)
14. Review wet weather preparedness plans for landfills and composting facilities, and conduct inspections to verify implementation.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Land Disposal permits updated: 1
2. Land disposal inspections: 60

Active Oilfields Program

Program Narrative: The Active Oilfields Program regulates oilfield activities that have the potential to impact surface or groundwater, in close coordination with the State Water Board, California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) and US EPA. Specifically, the Active Oilfields Program protects groundwater and surface water beneficial uses, especially underground sources of drinking water (USDW), by reviewing aquifer exemption applications, reviewing, and regulating underground injection control (UIC) projects and produced water ponds. In addition, the Active Oilfields Program administers General Order No. R3-2020-0006 to regulate the management and beneficial reuse of petroleum-impacted soils produced at active oilfields.

There are twenty-two active onshore oilfields in the Central Coast Region. The Active Oilfields Program has reviewed aquifer exemption applications for ten oilfields, in close coordination with the State Water Board and CalGEM. Of these, five have been forwarded to the US EPA for review with three subsequently approved by the US EPA. The Active Oilfields Program reviews an average of six UIC non-expansion projects per month, reviews aquifer exemption projects including conduit analysis and well-casing failure reports as needed and manages seven facilities enrolled in General Order No. R3-2020- 0006. All Active Oilfield Program data, including facility information, case management and regulatory information, and groundwater monitoring data is managed in GeoTracker and is available to the public online.

Staff Resources: The Active Oilfields Program currently consists of 5 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Address water quality impacts from active oilfield activities that affect human health and minimize impacts to surface waters and groundwater, especially sources of drinking water.
2. Review all aquifer exemption applications and UIC projects to evaluate the protection of sources of drinking water, including conduit analysis.
3. Review all well casing failures for potential impacts to groundwater and conduct follow-up as needed.
4. Support oilfield lease restoration and pond decommissioning of orphaned oilfield assets.
5. Coordinate with State Water Board and CalGEM staff on all active oilfield projects and participate in public meetings.
6. Protect surface water and groundwater resources from wastepile and produced water pond facilities and inspect facilities at least twice per year.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Cat Canyon Aquifer Exemption (Santa Barbara County) – in conjunction with State Water Board and CalGEM staff, complete the list of all wells that are potential conduits, and finalize remediation, monitoring and reporting requirements.
2. Cat Canyon Resources Cyclic Steam UIC Project, Cat Canyon Oilfield (Santa Barbara County) – Evaluate area of review (AOR) submittals for proposed cyclic steam wells.
3. Aera Energy Water Disposal Project, Sections 17 & 30, San Ardo Oilfield (Monterey County) – Review UIC project including potential release of produced water to groundwater.
4. Vaquero Energy Cat Canyon Oilfield Non-USDW Proposal (Santa Barbara County) – Review and evaluate pending resubmittal of the non-USDW proposal.
5. Support CalGEM and other agencies with well abandonment, facility decommissioning, and lease restoration of former oilfield leases.
6. Review and provide feedback to CalGEM on new aquifer exemption applications, including the associated conduit analysis.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification Program

Program Narrative: The Clean Water Act section 401 Water Quality Certification Program (401 Program) regulates projects placing dredged or fill material in waters of the state. The discharge of fill material is essentially any activity that alters the bottom elevation of a waterbody or otherwise substantially relocates sediment and other material within a waterbody. Typical types of projects regulated by the 401 Program include transportation, drainage culvert, flood control, restoration, and development projects. The primary goal of the 401 Program is to protect beneficial uses from impacts resulting from projects occurring within waterbodies, with a focus on protection of wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat. Staff achieves this goal by working with applicants to first avoid and minimize direct impacts to waterbodies, since leaving waterbodies unaltered is generally the most effective way to protect them. Once impacts have been avoided and/or minimized, staff focuses on mitigation of remaining impacts, typically requiring establishment or restoration of waterbody habitat equivalent to that which was impacted.

Staff Resources: The 401 Program consists of 4 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Protect beneficial uses of waters of the state by minimizing project-related direct impacts.
2. Optimize mitigation for project-related direct impacts to waters of the state.
3. Ensure projects are implemented in compliance with permit conditions.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Issue water quality certifications that are protective of beneficial uses of waters of the state.
2. Conduct regulatory oversight of high priority projects to confirm or attain compliance with water quality certifications and the Basin Plan.
3. Issue a general order to regulate large scale flood and wildfire risk reduction projects within waters of the state.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

Not applicable.

Stormwater Program

Program Narrative: The Stormwater Program addresses water quality effects of stormwater runoff from urbanized areas, construction and industrial sites, and the state highway system. The overall goal of the program is to protect water quality from stormwater discharges, prevent alteration of watershed processes resulting from stormwater management, and facilitate use of stormwater as a resource.

Construction and industrial sites produce water quality impacts when they are not adequately protected to control pollutant discharges during rain events or when discharges of non-stormwater occur. To eliminate or reduce these impacts, the program regulates construction and industrial sites through general permits that require site-specific pollution prevention plan implementation, discharge monitoring, and annual reporting.

Stormwater runoff from urbanized areas can contribute to receiving water impacts, alteration of watershed processes, and impairment of beneficial uses. To manage these issues, the program regulates municipal stormwater management programs, which include management of stormwater runoff from construction projects, new development, and municipal facilities, development of public education campaigns, and implementation of Total Maximum Daily Load plans. Stormwater capture and use represents a multi-benefit approach to addressing municipal stormwater runoff issues.

Staff Resources: The Stormwater Program currently consists of 4 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater.
2. Preserve, restore, and enhance natural watershed processes.
3. Facilitate use of stormwater capture and use.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Inspect construction and industrial sites and review site reports to ensure compliance with pollutant discharge reduction requirements.
2. Conduct audits of municipal execution of Total Maximum Daily Load implementation plans to ensure compliance with pollutant discharge reduction requirements.

3. Conduct audits of municipal programs to ensure new development and redevelopment projects incorporate features to preserve, restore, and/or enhance watershed processes.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Number of municipal stormwater program audits/program element reviews: 0
2. Number of municipal stormwater program inspections: 6
3. Number of construction stormwater inspections: 69
4. Number of industrial stormwater inspections: 85

Wildfire Resiliency Program

Program Narrative: The Wildfire Resiliency Program is focused on oversight of three primary wildfire-related activity types: wildfire fuel (vegetation) management, emergency wildfire response, and post-wildfire assessment and recovery. Regarding wildfire fuel management, staff focuses on reviewing projects being conducted under existing regulatory frameworks, while also developing a new general order to address fire fuel reduction projects occurring in waters of the state that fall outside existing regulatory frameworks. Staff's role during wildfire emergencies includes providing timely responses to inquiries about regulatory requirements affecting first responders' operations, with an emphasis on facilitating emergency response. As emergency conditions transition into the wildfire recovery phase, staff expedite permitting that is needed to address impacts of the fire. In the aftermath of a wildfire, staff provides compliance assistance to regulated parties affected by the fire and facilitates coordination between affected stakeholders and other state and local agencies to address watershed recovery in a timely manner.

Staff Resources: The Wildfire Resiliency Program consists of 1 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:
1. Minimize impacts to waters of the state resulting from fire-related activities.
2. Minimize pollutant generation and transport from fire-related activities.
3. Increase best management practice implementation and effectiveness for fire-related activities.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Conduct regulatory oversight of fire-related activities.
2. Develop vegetation treatment general order and participate in development of statewide wildfire-related orders.
3. Provide prompt facilitation activities for wildfire response and recovery.
4. Review 100% of submitted vegetation treatment project plans.
5. Conduct 10 inspections annually of vegetation treatment projects.
6. Issue the vegetation treatment general order in fiscal year 2023-2024.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Irrigated Lands Program

Program Narrative: The Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) regulates discharges from irrigated agricultural lands to protect surface water and groundwater through the development and implementation of Agricultural Order requirements. The ILP has been in place for many years since the issuance of the first Agricultural Order in 2004 and subsequent Agricultural Orders in 2012, 2017, and 2021. The requirements in the Agricultural Order protect human health, protect and restore the beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater, and achieve the water quality objectives specified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin by minimizing nitrogen discharges to groundwater, and minimizing nutrient, pesticide, and sediment discharges to surface water. The Agricultural Order also requires the protection of riparian and wetland habitat to prevent the loss or degradation of these habitats and the physical, chemical, and biological watershed functions they provide.

The ILP regulates both landowners and operators of commercial irrigated lands on or from which there are discharges of waste or activities that could affect the quality of any surface water or groundwater or result in the impairment of beneficial uses. Landowners and operators may choose to comply with portions of the Agricultural Order by participating in approved third-party groups or programs, such as Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. (also called Preservation, Inc.). As of August 2023, 1,625 agricultural operations and 4,048 ranches are enrolled in the Agricultural Order No. R3-2021-0040, covering more than 413,800 acres of agricultural land.

Staff Resources: The ILP consists of 6.8 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:
1. Implement the Agricultural Order.
2. Increase enrollment in the Agricultural Order.
3. Track and increase compliance with the Agricultural Order requirements.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Coordinate with the approved third-party program, conduct outreach and education efforts to landowners, operators, and technical assistance providers.
2. Develop and maintain compliance assessment tools (e.g., dashboards, compliance checklists, YouTube tutorials, and guidance documents), and contact information for staff, the third-party program, and technical assistance providers on the ILP website (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/).
3. Prioritize enrollment in areas with disadvantaged communities and/or surface water and groundwater impairments. Target outreach to non-filers to increase enrollment (internal performance targets: enroll at least 50 operations and 5,000 acres this fiscal year).

4. Assess compliance with requirements, track violations, follow-up using progressive enforcement as needed to increase compliance.
5. Revise Agricultural Order as necessary.

***State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24*:**
Not applicable.

Cannabis Regulatory Program

Program Narrative: The Cannabis Regulatory Program protects water quality and beneficial uses by regulating discharges of waste associated with cannabis cultivation operations. In the Central Coast Region, there are currently 215 outdoor sites and 134 indoor sites enrolled in the statewide Cannabis General Order. The order includes requirements related to riparian area management and restoration, winterization, sediment and erosion control, chemical storage and use, domestic waste, and trash. Program staff perform site inspections, review technical reports and remediation plans, provide compliance assistance, and pursue progressive enforcement actions as necessary. Staff also identify and assess other discharges of waste including reverse osmosis concentrate. The program coordinates closely with many other agencies including counties, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Department of Cannabis Control (DCC), district attorneys, and local law enforcement.

Currently, the program prioritizes unenrolled sites for enforcement actions as part of a statewide approach. Staff assist law enforcement with obtaining warrants by performing enrollment checks. Staff also attend warrant inspections to identify threats to water quality and issue notices of violation and require remedial actions when needed. Unenrolled sites are identified through coordination with other agencies, aerial imagery analyses, and complaints.

Staff Resources: The Cannabis Program currently consists of 4 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:
1. Enforcement actions for unenrolled sites.
2. Compliance assistance for enrolled sites.
3. Outreach and education to cultivators, consultants, other agencies, and the public.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Assist law enforcement with at least 10 warrant operations. Issue notice of violation letters for lack of enrollment and coordinate with other agencies on cleanup actions and enforcement as necessary.
2. Coordinate next steps related to cleanup and abatement order R3-2022-0028, issued to an unenrolled site in Santa Barbara County.
3. Coordinate aerial imagery analyses with State Water Board and CDFW to identify additional unenrolled sites.

4. Provide compliance assistance to sites enrolled in the order and designated as high risk due to riparian setback violations.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Nonpoint Source Program

Program Narrative: The Nonpoint Source Program (NPS) is an important component of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) framework to restore and protect our nation's waters. CWA section 319 requires all states to have an approved management program for controlling nonpoint source pollution to waters of the State and for improving the quality of such waters. In addition, the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) of 1990 requires coastal states to have a Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program in partnership with the California Coastal Commission. California's NPS Program works to reduce discharges of NPS pollution to waters of the State and to mitigate impacts from NPS pollution.

Staff Resources: The NPS Program consists of 0 technical staff. The NPS Program is implemented by Irrigated Lands Program staff and the Grants Program.

General Program Priorities:

1. Implement the Irrigated Lands Program to control and reduce nonpoint source pollution to waters of the state.
2. Solicit and fund grant projects that protect and restore water quality and aquatic/riparian habitats.
3. Develop and maintain a NPS annual and 5-year workplan and report to the USEPA on all our actions and progress toward managing NPS pollution priorities as described in the workplans.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Implement the ILP
   - Implement the Agricultural Order
   - Track and report out on total nitrogen applied
   - Enroll non-filers in Ag Order
2. Implement NPS Pollution Control Program actions and report to USEPA

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24*:*
Not Applicable.

Basin Planning Program

***Program Narrative*:** The California Water Code (CWC) directs each regional water board to formulate and adopt water quality control plans for areas within their region (CWC section 13240). The federal Clean Water Act (section 303 (c)) and Water Code require the Basin Plan to be reviewed and updated periodically (CWC section 13240).

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan) is the Central Coast Water Board's master water quality control planning document. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses and water quality objectives for waters of the State, including surface waters and groundwater, and includes programs of implementation to achieve water quality objectives (e.g., Total Maximum Daily Loads and permitting programs). The Basin Plan acts as the primary set of regulatory requirements for our programmatic functions and is primarily implemented through the issuance of waste discharge requirements, site investigation and cleanup orders, and enforcement actions. The focus of the Basin Planning Program is to review and update the Basin Plan to include new water quality standards, improve its effectiveness, and to protect and restore water quality and aquatic habitats.

Staff Resources: The Basin Planning Program consists of 1 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Facilitate office wide evaluation of program needs for future Basin Plan amendments (BPAs), incorporate those needs into the Triennial Review (TR) of the Basin Plan, and update and maintain the Basin Plan so that it is aligned with the goals and priorities of the Central Coast Water Board.
2. Conduct TRs and revise or affirm the prioritized list of future BPAs.
3. Develop high priority BPAs identified in the TR, in coordination with technical partners.
4. Develop and maintain appropriate tools to track and share Basin Planning Program information and facilitate staff and interested persons' understanding of Basin Plan information.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

Current projects as defined in the USEPA approved FY 2023-2024 Annual Program Workplan are as follows:

1. Adopt a remediated (web accessibility compliant) Basin Plan that incorporates statewide water quality objectives.
2. Adopt tribal beneficial use definitions (in tandem with #1).
3. Develop a BPA to include specific Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) that protect drinking water.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of Basin Plan Amendments adopted: 1

Total Maximum Daily Load Program

Program Narrative: The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program is an important component of implementing the federal Clean Water Act framework (section 303(d)) to protect and restore our nation's surface waters. The TMDL Program develops watershed-based pollution control strategies in accordance with Code of Federal

Regulations, (title 40, sections 130.6(c)(1) and 130.7) and (California Water Code, section 13242).

TMDL Projects describe how an impaired waterbody will achieve water quality standards and California Water Code requirements, to address surface water quality pollution and protect high quality waters. TMDLs are typically adopted as Basin Plan Amendments by the Central Coast Water Board, and subsequently approved by the State Water Board and USEPA. TMDLs are implemented by regulatory programs (when TMDL allocations are established as limits in permits that regulate pollutant sources) and by non-regulatory actions such as grant project implementation. The TMDL Program staff protect and restore water quality and designated beneficial uses by developing TMDLs and numeric targets for high priority surface water pollution problems (i.e., those impairing human health and/or aquatic life uses) and in coordination with other programs by developing effective implementation strategies. In addition, TMDL Program staff develop water quality data tools that support and inform program staff who develop permits and facilitate nonpoint source control actions.

Staff Resources: The TMDL Program consists of 3.8 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Develop implementation strategies to address and prevent water quality threats to human health and aquatic habitats.
2. Address multiple and related pollution problems (e.g., watershed scale projects for nutrients and biostimulatory effects or toxicity and toxic pollutants).
3. Have multi-benefit outcomes (e.g., coordination with existing work or permits, building upon past work, protection of other beneficial uses such as groundwater recharge, and grant funding opportunities).

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Biostimulatory water quality impairments in the Elkhorn Slough watershed.
2. Nitrogen pollution in the Santa Ynez River watershed.
3. Toxicity and organophosphate pesticide toxicity in the lower Salinas Watershed.
4. Neonicotinoid pesticide aquatic toxicity impairments in the Santa Maria River watershed.
5. Coordinate with programs implementing TMDLs using the web-based TMDL report cards describing water quality status and trends toward TMDL attainment.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of adopted Clean Water Act section 303(d) listings impaired pollutant & waterbody combinations: 23
2. Number of TMDLs adopted: 1

Integrated Report Program

***Program Narrative*:** The Integrated Report Program is an important component of implementing the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) framework to protect and restore our nation's waters. Section 303(d) of the CWA requires states to evaluate all available water quality data and make a list of waterbodies that do not attain water quality standards (the 303(d) List). Section 305(b) requires states to report on the condition of all waters (the 305(b) Report). The California Integrated Report includes both the 303(d) List and the 305(b) Report and is submitted to USEPA every two years. Staff conduct comprehensive water quality data assessments to determine if beneficial uses are supported or impaired by pollutants and update the CWA section 303(d) List accordingly. Staff also report on the status of water quality standards attainment in a timely fashion to inform decision making.

Staff Resources: The Integrated Report Program has 0 technical staff. The Integrated Report resource needs vary depending on the year because the Integrated Report assessments occur on a two-year rotating cycle with three Regional Water Quality Control Board regions being on-cycle for comprehensive assessments once every six years. When on-cycle, up to three TMDL Program technical staff work on the Integrated Report. When off-cycle and conducting limited assessments, 0.25 technical staff are needed for the Program.

General Program Priorities:

1. Develop comprehensive water quality data assessments including the use of numeric evaluation guidelines to interpret narrative water quality objectives (e.g., pesticides, water temperature, turbidity, and nitrate for aquatic life uses).
2. Develop and customize data assessment outputs to inform other program actions.
    - Prioritize 303(d) List for future TMDL development.
    - Use 305(b) Report to inform grant funding priorities.
    - Use 305(b) Report to identify waters in need of protection from degradation.
    - Use 305(b) Report to inform healthy aquatic habitat assessments.
3. Collaborate with State Water Board to continually improve the usefulness of the Integrated Report.
    - Consolidate and update mapping layers and make map layers available in GeoTracker and other databases used by staff and the public.
    - Determine appropriate evaluation guidelines to interpret narrative objectives and evaluate water quality standards attainment.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Off-cycle coordination with State Water Board staff regarding Central Coast Water Board specific information.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

Not Applicable.

Grants Program

Program Narrative: The Grants Program aims to fund and leverage actions that demonstrate water quality and habitat quality improvements aligned with Water Board programs. Utilizing Clean Water Act section 319(h) grant funding, Program staff solicit and prioritize grant project proposals that are aligned with the Central Coast Water Board's Vision, measurable goals, and water quality priorities of the Water Boards and Water Board programs.

Staff Resources: The Grants Program consists of 1 technical staff person with limited additional staff from other programs assisting in grant management.

General Program Priorities:

1. Restore degraded groundwater basins and impaired surface waters by implementing water quality projects (e.g., on-farm irrigation & nutrient management, vegetated grassed diches, carbon filtration, wetlands, etc.) in high priority polluted watersheds.
2. Restore degraded ecosystems by implementing habitat quality improvement projects (e.g., riparian restoration, streambank restoration, post fire rehabilitation, etc.) in high priority polluted watersheds.
3. Prevent and/or correct threats to high quality waters to improve aquatic habitat in watersheds supporting anadromous fisheries and/or Critical Coastal Areas.
4. Support projects that benefit underserved communities and mitigate the effects of climate change to advance environmental justice.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Solicit and fund projects in high priority watersheds in annual grant solicitation notices.
2. Lead solicitation review, selection, and management of 319(h) grant funds.
3. Identify and fund implementation practice projects on irrigated lands in high priority polluted watersheds (e.g., lower Salinas, Santa Maria, and Pajaro), and/or in other irrigated agriculture areas.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program

Program Narrative: The Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) is the central coast's regionally scaled surface water monitoring program. The CCAMP Program is implemented by the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay (Bay Foundation), in close coordination with the Central Coast Water Board. CCAMP has collected tens of thousands of data measurements related to surface water quality since 1998, creating one of the largest water quality data sets in the region. CCAMP's primary goal is to collect, assess, and disseminate scientific information, collected through robust surface water quality monitoring and design, to aid decision-makers and the public in

maintaining, restoring, and enhancing water quality and associated beneficial uses in the Central Coast Region. CCAMP also serves as a regional component of the State Water Board's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

CCAMP's current monitoring strategy is to conduct continuous monitoring at coastal confluence sites, which involves long-term trend monitoring at the lower ends of all the larger coastal streams and rivers in the region. In addition, CCAMP also partners with the State Water Board's Freshwater and Estuarine Harmful Algal Bloom Program (FHAB) to conduct seasonal monitoring for cyanobacteria blooms at inland surface waterbodies prior to high-use recreation weekends, and coordinate with lake managers to share data and provide public health advisories, where appropriate. Due to limited resources and rising laboratory analytical costs, CCAMP will scale back the five-year watershed rotation area monitoring, starting in calendar year 2025.

CCAMP data is available to all users in the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN)[16] and CCAMP's "Data Navigator,"[17] a public web-based interpretive tool that provides easy and informative access to maps, graphs, and charts of regional surface water quality-related data. CCAMP data is routinely used by program staff to inform programmatic implementation and water quality decisions. For example, the TMDL, Irrigated Lands, and Basin Planning Programs all rely on CCAMP data for programmatic surface water quality assessments. In addition, CCAMP is an important data source to inform the 303(d) list and Integrated Report.

Staff Resources: CCAMP consists of 1 technical staff. The Bay Foundation provides four part-time field technicians and one part-time data manager to implement CCAMP. Resources at the Central Coast Water Board consist of one senior technical specialist to direct field monitoring activities and coordinate with Water Board programs and other partner agencies and organizations.

General Program Priorities:

1. Ongoing CCAMP coordination with the Bay Foundation to evaluate priorities, manage resources, contracts, personnel, and program implementation.
2. Direct CCAMP field activities to ensure robust surface water quality monitoring and results.
3. Manage surface water quality data and maintain Data Navigator to provide access to maps, graphs, and charts of regional surface water quality-related data.
4. Coordinate with Central Coast Water Board programs and State-wide SWAMP.
5. Conduct data sharing and outreach to stakeholders.

[16] http://ceden.org/303d_list.shtml
[17] http://rdc-omega.mlml.calstate.edu/DNMSSQL/view_data.php?org_id=rb3

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Conduct Long-term Trend Monitoring – Coastal Confluences Monitoring
2. Conduct Seasonal Monitoring - Conduct Freshwater Harmful Algal Bloom Pre-Holiday Assessments.
3. Manage CCAMP data and submit to SWAMP for loading into the CEDEN online public database.
4. Improve Data Navigator to share water quality data and tools with program staff, water quality partners, and the public.
5. Support Integrated Report Program.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program

Program Narrative: The Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program (CCAMP-GAP) focuses on regional groundwater monitoring programs and implementation of groundwater-related projects that evaluate, restore, and protect the beneficial uses of groundwater, especially drinking water. The CCAMP-GAP Program is an integral component of CCAMP, and is implemented by the Bay Foundation, in close coordination with the Central Coast Water Board.

Over eighty percent of the people living on the Central Coast rely on groundwater for their drinking water and other uses, and regional groundwater monitoring data is essential to identify areas of potentially unsafe drinking water supply, measure individual groundwater basin health, and determine the effectiveness of efforts to protect and improve groundwater quality. Consistent with the Central Coast Water Board's environmental justice and racial equity goals described in Resolution R3-2023-0002 and human right to water described in Resolution R3-2017-0004, CCAMP-GAP prioritizes water quality monitoring programs and projects that protect safe drinking water, and that provide water quality benefits to underrepresented communities. An important example is the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program. Additionally, CCAMP-GAP also prioritizes projects that implement climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation strategies and projects that develop or implement activities to achieve sustainable water supplies.

CCAMP-GAP data is available online in the State Water Board's GeoTracker and GAMA GIS databases. Stakeholders who routinely use these data include local water agencies and water purveyors, local environmental health agencies, groundwater sustainability agencies, and community organizations, and the public. The Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program data is especially important to identify and evaluate where communities may be exposed to unsafe sources of drinking water. Program staff also use this information to inform program prioritization and implementation.

Staff Resources: The CCAMP-GAP Program consists of 1 technical staff. The Bay Foundation provides administrative resources to implement CCAMP-GAP.

General Program Priorities:

1. Ongoing CCAMP-GAP coordination with the Bay Foundation to evaluate priorities, manage resources, contracts, personnel, and program implementation.
2. Implement regional groundwater monitoring programs and groundwater-related projects that evaluate, restore, and protect the beneficial uses of groundwater, especially drinking water.
3. Implement environmental justice, racial equity, and Human Right to Water goals.
4. Coordinate with Central Coast Water Board programs and State-wide GAMA program.
5. Conduct data sharing and outreach to stakeholders.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Coordinate with the Bay Foundation to implement the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program in two focus areas, in coordination with the Office of Public Participation (OPP), local agencies and community partners.
   a. Santa Cruz County
   b. Santa Barbara County
2. Support Regional Groundwater Monitoring Projects
   a. Technical Assistance for Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Growers to Conduct On-Farm Domestic Well Monitoring and Reporting.
3. Coordinate with the Division of Drinking Water (DDW), Division of Financial Assistance (DFA), Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Program, and community organizations to support safe drinking water programs (e.g., the Central Coast Bottled Water for Households Program, replacement water programs, drinking water pilot projects, etc.).
4. Coordinate with the Rose Foundation to implement the Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Enforcement Program

Program Narrative: The Enforcement Program implements and enforces water quality laws, regulations, policies, and plans (e.g., Basin Plan) to promote compliance, deter future violations, and protect waters of the State. Timely, fair, and consistent enforcement is essential to the success of the Central Coast Water Board programs in restoring and protecting beneficial uses of the central coast region's water resources. Enforcement is an important component of the Water Boards' authority to encourage the regulated community to anticipate, identify, and correct violations and the Water Boards

have a variety of enforcement tools to use in response to non-compliance by dischargers. The Central Coast Water Board follows a progressive enforcement approach and contemplates an escalating series of actions beginning with notification of violations and compliance assistance, followed by enforcement orders compelling compliance, and potentially a complaint for civil liabilities as appropriate and necessary.

Staff Resources: The Enforcement Program consists of 2 technical staff.

General Program Priorities:

1. Address violations that pose an immediate and significant threat to water quality or result in significant detrimental impacts to human health and/or the environment.
2. Address violations associated with discharges that impact water quality in Underrepresented Communities.
3. Address violations associated with discharges that result in drinking water supplies exceeding drinking water standards for individuals and/or small communities.
4. Address violations involving falsification of information and non-compliant dischargers that realize a significant competitive economic advantage over compliant members of the regulated public.

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Coordinate with program staff and management to prepare and implement effective informal enforcement strategies and documentation to get dischargers to correct violations and to build the foundation for formal enforcement, if necessary.
2. Address mandatory enforcement obligations imposed by law.
3. Prioritize enforcement of violations that meet two or more of the general priorities listed above.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:

1. Number of MMPs[18] that require enforcement within 18 months from the date of violation: 54
2. Number of Class A priority violations[19] with formal enforcement or an Investigative Order pursuant to Water Code section 13267 within 18 months of discovery: 1

Administrative Program

Program Narrative: The Administrative Program provides administrative business services, database, and website management support for the staff of the Central Coast Water Board. Administrative Program staff serve a key role in ensuring the success of the Central Coast Water Board's mission by managing day to day operations and providing administrative support to technical staff and management. The program staff

[18] MMPs = mandatory minimum penalties
[19] Class A Priority Violation = violations that potentially pose an immediate and substantial threat to beneficial uses and/or that have the potential to individually or cumulatively cause significant detrimental impacts to human health or the environment.

also act as liaisons between Central Coast Water Board staff and State Water Board Division of Administrative Services staff for administrative and human resources functions.

Staff Resources: The Administrative Program consist of 4 administrative staff.

General Program Priorities:
1. Manage business operations and services
2. Facility maintenance and management
3. Health and safety
4. Human resources
5. Procurement and accounts payable
6. Database management and website support

Project/Task Specific Priorities for Fiscal Year 23-24:
1. Rebuild the administrative program that has newly established staff by focusing on training of all members and backfilling one remaining vacant position.
2. Develop/update procedures to increase efficiency of business operations and services and develop criteria to determine and prioritize work assignments.
3. Update and train staff on health & safety procedures.

State Water Board Program Performance Targets for Fiscal Year 23-24:
Not Applicable.

Metrics of Success

We've accomplished a lot over the last decade with respect to our programmatic work and developing and advancing our environmental justice, climate change, and low impact development initiatives in alignment with our vision and measurable goals (see Background section below). Absent more specific tools to quantitively evaluate our performance in addressing our measurable goals associated with our vision of healthy watersheds, a qualitative evaluation indicates our actions have been focused on our highest priorities and highest priority core programmatic work.[20] In some localized areas we have been able to facilitate and quantitatively documented water quality improvements,[21] available data indicate watershed and associated water quality

[20] Highest priorities associated with core programmatic work include: irrigated agriculture requirements addressing agricultural runoff and nitrogen loading to groundwater, general waste discharge requirements for municipal wastewater facilities and landfills streamlining implementation and creating consistent and meaningful regulatory requirements, drinking water testing and replacement water programs, 401 certifications minimizing and mitigating in-stream impacts, Basin Plan amendments, enforcement actions and cleanup and abatement orders focused on the most significant water quality and drinking water impairments, facilitating grants for watershed restoration and protection projects.

[21] See Central Coast Water Board TMDL Report Cards for nitrate in San Simeon Creek, Chorro Creek, and Santa Ynez River and cyanobacteria blooms in Pinto Lake:

conditions on a larger scale are not improving and may be worsening. This is particularly true in areas of intensive irrigated agricultural where water quality data demonstrates significant nitrate impacts to drinking water supply wells in addition to a significant increase in the number of pesticide and pesticide toxicity impaired surface waterbodies.[22] Some of this may be an artifact of the collection and analysis of more data, which is a very essential component of measuring our performance. Nonetheless these are significant issues that we are mandated to address and these data indicate unhealthy watershed conditions. Moving forward, we will continue to utilize and build on existing and develop new quantitative water quality evaluation tools like the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay's CCAMP data navigator,[23] the State Water Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment Program Groundwater Information System (GAMA-GIS),[24] Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired water bodies and associated Integrated Report,[25] and our TMDL report cards,[26] and Irrigated Lands Program dashboard tools[27] to more effectively and transparently measure our performance with respect to achieving improved water quality outcomes.

Summation

We are committed to implementing our mission and vision in accordance with our stated priorities and in coordination with our many partners. This document is intended, in part, to clearly document this commitment and the framework by which we will evaluate and prioritize our work. Our staff are our biggest asset with respect to implementing our mission and we need to continue to focus resources on rebuilding our organization in response to significant staff turnover due to an ongoing wave of retirements. As a regulatory agency charged with a mandate to protect and restore water quality, the environment, and public health for the benefit of existing and future generations, the Central Coast Water Board is first and foremost an agency that serves and answers to the public. We take this public service responsibility very seriously and public engagement and transparency continue to be foundational priorities of the Central Coast Water Board.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/performance_report_2122/plan_assess/11112_tmdl_outcomes.html

[22] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2020_2022_integrated_report.html

[23] www.ccamp.org

[24] https://gamagroundwater.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/gamamap/public/

[25] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2020_2022_integrated_report.html

[26] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdl/report-cards.html

[27] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/dashboard.html

Appendix - Background

Authority and Mandate

The Regional Water Quality Control Boards' primary mandate is the protection and restoration of water quality and the beneficial uses of water for existing and future generations. This includes protection of the environment and public health. California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (1969),[28] which became Division Seven ("Water Quality") of the California Water Code (Water Code), establishes the responsibilities and authorities of the nine Regional Water Boards and the State Water Board. The Porter-Cologne Act names these Boards "... the principal State agencies with primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality" (Section 13001). Each Regional Board is directed to "...formulate and adopt water quality control plans for all areas within the region." A water quality control plan for the waters of an area is defined as having three components: beneficial uses which are to be protected, water quality objectives which protect those uses, and an implementation plan which accomplishes those objectives (Section 13050).

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan)[29] is the Board's master water quality control planning document. It designates beneficial uses and associated water quality objectives for waters of the State, including surface waters and groundwater. It also includes programs of implementation to achieve water quality objectives.

The federal Clean Water Act (Public Law 92- 500, as amended) provides for the delegation of certain responsibilities in water quality control and water quality planning to the states. Where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State Water Board have agreed to such delegation, the Regional Boards implement portions of the Clean Water Act, such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), 401 Certification, and toxic substance control programs (e.g., Underground Storage Tank Program, Land Disposal Program, Superfund site cleanup oversight).

The Central Coast Water Board protects and restores water quality through the issuance of waste discharge requirements and other orders for various land use activities (i.e., municipal, agricultural, industrial), the implementation of enforcement actions, the implementation of water quality monitoring, and through facilitation and coordination with various other partnering agencies and entities.

Administrative Structure

The State Water Board and the Regional Water Boards (collectively the Water Boards) are housed within State government and are part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA).

The nine Regional Boards[30] are semi-autonomous and are each comprised of seven part-time, volunteer Board members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the

[28] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws_regulations/docs/portercologne.pdf
[29] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/
[30] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterboards_map.html

Senate. Each Regional Board makes critical water quality decisions for its region, including setting standards, issuing waste discharge requirements, determining compliance with those requirements, and taking appropriate enforcement actions.

With limited exceptions (Water Code section 13223), the Central Coast Water Board can delegate its powers to its sole employee, the Executive Officer, to administer its duties pursuant to the Water Code in coordination with Central Coast Water Board staff. The Central Coast Water Board can't delegate to the Executive Officer certain duties, therefore, the Board must convene pursuant to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act for public meetings, workshops, or formal hearings to conduct its business (e.g., approve waste discharge requirements, enforcement orders, adopt water quality control plans, receive updates from staff and various stakeholders, engage with the public and regulated parties, etc.). The Regional Water Boards are required to have at least six public meetings per year. Under the guidance of the Executive Officer and in coordination with the Board, the Central Coast Water Board staff (currently consisting of 81 staff, including management, line/technical, and administrative staff positions, and 8 student positions) implement various programs and associated actions. The bulk of the management team and technical staff consist of scientists, engineers, and geologists with expertise in various areas of water quality associated with data analysis, wastewater treatment, contaminant fate and transport and remediation, geology, hydrogeology, hydrology, and natural watershed functions and ecosystems. In addition to the administrative team, the management team and staff are distributed across various regulatory and nonregulatory programs (see Program Priorities and Actions section above).

State Water Resources Control Board

The Central Coast Water Board works closely with the State Water Resources Control Board to implement its various programs. The State Water Board consists of five full time board members and numerous divisions and associated programs implemented by technical, administrative, and legal staff. The State Water Board develops statewide permits, policies, and regulations governing many of our programs, develops and manages information technology resources, databases, and tools we use to manage and track our programmatic work and associated documents and data, provides legal, human resources, administrative, public participation and engagement, and general support to the Regional Boards. Separate from Regional Water Board functions and authority, the State Water Board also implements the state drinking water program, administers California's water rights program, emergency management program, and provides or administers financial assistance in the form of grants and loans for projects that clean up and protect water quality and drinking water supplies and that otherwise protect water resources. The Executive Office of the State Water Board houses the Administrative Hearing Office, Communications Office, Office of Chief Counsel, Office of Delta Watermaster, Office of Enforcement, Office of Information Management & Analysis, Office of Legislative Affairs, Office of Research, Planning, and Performance.

Regional Setting

The Central Coast Water Board regional boundaries are based on watersheds making up the Central Coast Hydrologic Unit[31] and water quality requirements are based on the unique differences in climate, topography, geology, and hydrology for each watershed. The central coast region is an 11,274 square mile area covering the entirety of the coastal, valley and upland areas of Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara Counties, and southern Santa Clara County (south of Morgan Hill) as well as very small portions of San Mateo, Kern, and Ventura Counties that collectively make up the Central Coast Hydrologic Unit. It includes 378 miles of coastline between San Mateo and Ventura Counties, 2,360 miles of streams, 99 lakes, 50 wetlands and estuaries covering 8,387 acres, and 53 groundwater basins covering 3,559 square miles.

In the central coast region climate is primarily governed by proximity to the Pacific Ocean with moderate rainfall and temperatures (Coastal Mediterranean) along the coast, coastal ranges and coastal valleys with more temperature and rainfall extremes (both highs and lows) in inland valleys and mountain ranges. Approximately 90 percent of agricultural, municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply comes from groundwater with the remaining portion derived from local reservoirs and imported water from the state and federal water projects in Central California, a significant portion of which is used for groundwater recharge.

The central coast region is primarily a rural agricultural region that also includes urban and industrial land uses. Major industries include agriculture, and associated food processing, oil production, power production, military installations, technology-based and industrial services and manufacturing, and tourism. Urban areas include, but are not limited to, the Monterey Peninsula and city of Salinas, the city San Luis Obispo and Five Cities Area (i.e., Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Oceano), Santa Barbara area coastal plain (i.e., Goleta, Santa Barbara, Summerland, Montecito and Carpinteria), city of Santa Cruz and adjacent communities of Soquel, Capitola and Aptos, and the cities of Watsonville, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, Hollister, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, King City, Paso Robles, Atascadero, Santa Maria, and Lompoc. Prime agricultural lands are dispersed throughout the region with significant areas concentrated in the Salinas, Pajaro, Santa Maria, Edna, and Santa Ynez River Valleys. The central coast region contains some of the most productive wine grape, berry (strawberry, raspberry, and blueberry), and vegetable agricultural areas in the state, nation, and world due to its Coastal Mediterranean climate conducive to a year-round growing season along portions of the coast for berries and various cool season vegetables such as lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach and celery.

[31] California Water Code section 13200. [Regional Board boundaries]. The central coast region, which comprises all basins, including Carrizo Plain in San Luis Obispo and Kern Counties, draining into the Pacific Ocean from the southerly boundary of the watershed of Pescadero Creek in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties to the southeasterly boundary, located in the westerly part of Ventura County, of the watershed of Rincon Creek.

The central coast region also includes significant areas of open space and relatively pristine watersheds with abundant native plants and wildlife along the coast (e.g., Santa Cruz Mountains, Big Sur, Point Conception) and within State Park and National Forest lands (e.g., Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Moss Landing State Wildlife Area, Montana de Oro State Park, Pinnacles National Park, Pfieffer Big Sur State Park, Los Padres National Forest, Carrizo Plain National Monument) as well as within privately owned land or preserves.

Ten watersheds within the central coast region drain into Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary,[32] one of the largest marine sanctuaries in the world. Elkhorn Slough is one of the largest remaining tidal wetlands in the United States and one of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) designated National Estuarine Research Reserves. The region also includes the Morro Bay National Estuary[33] and its extensive wetland and salt marsh habitats.

Water Quality Issues

Waste discharges and associated water quality impacts are directly linked to anthropogenic land uses or activities such as agricultural production, waste management and disposal, mineral mining/extraction, oil production, industrial manufacturing, urbanized areas, energy production, construction (houses, buildings, roads), etc. The largest land use in the central coast region, second only to open space, is irrigated agriculture. Consequently, some of the most significant and widespread issues of water quality impairments are associated with fertilizer nitrogen loading to groundwater and associated drinking water nitrate pollution as well as nutrient runoff causing degradation including eutrophication, toxic algal blooms, pesticide and pesticide toxicity pollution, and erosion and associated sediment discharges adversely impacting surface water and near shore aquatic habitats. Drinking water nitrate pollution is a significant problem that disproportionately impacts underrepresented and disadvantaged communities in rural areas.

Stormwater runoff to surface water and the Pacific Ocean from urbanized areas, industrial facilities, roads, and construction sites has the potential to contain various contaminants such as pathogens from pet waste, nutrients, pesticides, sediment, heavy metals, minerals, oil and grease, and numerous organic chemicals. Construction and even restoration activities within stream channels, wetlands and estuaries also have the potential to result in discharges of waste. Former and existing commercial, industrial and Department of Defense facilities have the potential to discharge various contaminants to surface water and groundwater, the most prevalent of which in the region are associated with the historical improper use and disposal of chlorinated solvents and other chemicals, as well as leaking above ground and underground fuel and oil storage tanks. Older landfills used to dispose of municipal and industrial waste prior to the advent of protective liner and cap design regulatory standards are also a source of waste discharges to surface water and groundwater as are the construction

[32] https://montereybay.noaa.gov/welcome.html
[33] https://www.mbnep.org/

and operation of newer landfills but to a lesser extent with sufficient oversight. Municipal and industrial wastewater treatment and disposal and various drinking water treatment system technologies also result in waste discharges to surface water and groundwater that need to be appropriately designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to ensure waste discharges are minimized to the extent practicable and meet water quality standards.

In addition to providing technical and regulatory oversight of activities like those listed above, the Central Coast Water Board also focuses on ensuring protection of the relatively pristine areas along with supporting the establishment of additional protected areas and restoration projects.

Vision, Measurable Goals, and Priorities

In 2005 and 2006, the management team implemented a ground-up, all-staff collaborative process to identify and prioritize water quality issues, to develop issue statements and associated measurable goals, and to develop a vision for healthy watersheds. The resulting vision and measurable goals are as follows:

Vision: Healthy Watersheds[34]

Measurable Goals:

> Healthy Aquatic Habitat – By 2025, 80 percent of aquatic habitat is healthy, and the remaining 20 percent exhibits positive trends in key parameters.
>
> Sustainable Land Management – By 2025, 80 percent of lands within a watershed will be managed to maintain healthy watershed functions, and the remaining 20 percent will exhibit positive trends in key watershed parameters.
>
> Clean Groundwater – By 2025, 80 percent of groundwater will be clean, and the remaining 20 percent will exhibit positive trends in key parameters.

In 2007, four staff-led and cross-programmatic vision teams (Clean Groundwater, Healthy Aquatic Habitat, Sustainable Land Management, Vision Assessment) were assembled to create project charters to develop specific objectives and associated actions to achieve the vision and measurable goals, and to implement various actions. The project charters were completed in 2008. At key stages of the vision, measurable goals, and project charter development process, staff provided status updates to the Board during public meetings to engage them in the process.[35]

In 2011, the Central Coast Water Board also established the following as our highest priorities:[36]

- Preventing and Correcting Threats to Human Health
- Preventing and Correcting Degradation of Aquatic Habitat

[34] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/vision/
[35] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/vision/approach.html
[36] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2011/July/Item_18/18_att1.pdf

- Preventing Degradation of Hydrologic Processes
- Preventing/Reversing Seawater Intrusion
- Preventing Further Degradation of Groundwater Basins from Salts

Many of the Vision Team actions were incorporated into our work as follows and in alignment with our highest priorities:

- Developed a Geographical Information System (GIS) system to better evaluate land uses, water quality, and watershed characteristics,
- Creation of the Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program (GAP),
- Creation of the Low Impact Development Initiative (LIDI),
- Developed Post Construction Development Standards in the Stormwater Program,
- Expansion of our Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program and development of improved data viewer and user tools,[37]
- Applied additional staff resources to our Irrigated Lands Program to draft agricultural orders (starting with Ag Order 2.0) that better defined and documented agricultural pollution, and required pollution load reductions and associated milestones and schedules, nitrogen applied monitoring and reporting, and groundwater monitoring and reporting,
- Restructured our grants program to focus on accountability, tangible results, and achieving tangible water quality goals,
- Aligned enforcement actions with our stated priorities,
- Leveraged our work with other regions and the State Water Board,
- Developed a regional drinking water well testing program, and
- Issued cleanup and abatement orders requiring replacement water for drinking water wells polluted with nitrate from irrigated agricultural operations.

Many of the above actions are still being implemented and the vision, measurable goals, and priorities listed above are still being used to prioritize our work to achieve the most tangible outcomes possible.

A future action to consider is a comprehensive, office-wide effort to revisit our mission, vision, and measurable goals, and to make changes as appropriate based on new information to improve our effectiveness. This is particularly true with respect to the 2025 measurables goals and the development of tools and metrics to evaluate our progress.

[37] http://rdc-omega.mlml.calstate.edu/ca/view_data.php?org_id=rb3