

**Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Strategic Plan - Fiscal Year 25-26
Attachment 1**

Summary of Accomplishments for Fiscal Year 24-25

Each year, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) prepares a strategic plan that 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 and vision. Attachment 1 provides a summary of accomplishments achieved during Fiscal Year 24-25 related to our regional and program-specific priorities.

Workforce Planning and Development, Environmental Justice, and Climate Change

- Prioritized recruitment and retention of qualified, well-trained staff in all Central Coast Water Board programs.
- Conducted leadership training and provided professional development coaching opportunities to strengthen organizational culture and affirm organizational vision, mission, and values.
- Convened a staff-led Workforce Planning and Development Committee to consider feedback from staff, help the organization prioritize actions, and develop recommendations for implementation to ensure that staff have what they need to be successful and do their best work.
- Developed a Mentorship Program that connects individual staff to provide support and share institutional, professional, and leadership knowledge.
- Implemented the Technical Workgroups Program and Cross-Program Shadowing Opportunities Tracker to encourage and allow time for information transfer, cross-program learning, and provide opportunities for growth and professional development.
- Supported the Environmental Justice (EJ) Leadership Team; Maintained staff expectations for EJ related knowledge, training, and development of effective public outreach plans: Provided EJ and tribal engagement resources; Implemented the EJ, Racial Equity and Tribal Engagement Action Plan and maintained the EJ Project Tracker to support cross-program coordination and provide transparency to the public and identify opportunities for community engagement.
- Developed the Recycled Water Program to facilitate the production of new water supplies from recycled water by streamlining the State Water Board and Central Coast Water Board permitting processes. By developing new and underutilized water resources—including recycled water—communities are better able to diversify local supplies and mitigate the effects of extended drought, climate change, and water supply uncertainty.

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Waste Discharge Requirements Program (WDR)

- Enrolled facilities in general permits; Terminated facilities in general permits.
- Conducted inspections.
- Coordinated with facilities to draft new permits and conduct permit renewals.
- Improved templates for general permits including large domestic, small domestic, recycled water use, aquifer storage and recovery, wineries, fruit and vegetable processing facilities; Improved templates for notices of violation.
- Improved facility GeoTracker reporting compliance.
- Coordinated with State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) to secure funding for wastewater treatment plant upgrades.
- Issued notices of compliance and time schedule orders to address violations.
- Participated in statewide forums to share WDR Program best practices; Led efforts to develop WDR staff training (permit development tools, GeoTracker).
- Conducted outreach to regulated community, industry groups and the public.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of WDR facility inspections = 28
 - Number of individual orders adopted = 0¹

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program (NPDES)

- Drafted new and revised permits, enrolled facilities in general permits, terminated permits.
- Conducted inspections of NPDES facilities.
- Coordinated with State Water Board Office of Enforcement and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) on NPDES enforcement cases.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Renew or terminate major facility permits = 1
 - Renew or terminate minor facility permits = 2
 - Major facility inspections = 10
 - Minor facility inspections = 4

Wastewater Consolidation Program (WWC)

- Increased outreach to and engagement with communities, sewer system entities/municipalities, nonprofit partners, and partnering local and state agencies.
- Increased coordination with the Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) and Office of Public Participation (OPP).
- Advanced specific WWC projects (e.g., Hacienda Apartments, Monterey County).

¹ WDR program focus is on enrolling existing and new facilities under regional or statewide general orders.

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Recycled Water Program

- Established regular coordination protocols and communication tools to facilitate cross-program and inter-agency coordination on recycled water permit review and approvals.
- Reviewed and provided technical assistance on recycled water permit applications and renewals.
- Continued to provide regulatory support to high priority recycled water projects in coordination with WDR Program.

Site Cleanup Program (SCP)

- Advanced site cleanup investigation and remediation at multiple high priority sites; Investigated sources of pollution and evaluated impacts to drinking water.
- Required the provision of replacement water or treatment for impacted drinking water supply wells.
- Reduced and mitigated chemical vapor intrusion risks to indoor air for residential and commercial buildings.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of sites new into active remediation = 6
 - Number of cases closed = 3

Department of Defense Program (DoD)

- Provided investigation and cleanup oversight at multiple active and former military facilities to address DoD sites with historical releases of pollutants to the environment (including soil, groundwater, surface water, soil gas, indoor air, and sediment).
- Ensured protection of public health by assessing impacts to drinking water and indoor air.
- Participated in PFAS working groups to develop and review PFAS investigation plans.
- Coordinated with the WDR Program to assess potential impacts to water quality from rocket launch activities.
- Ensured that DoD community engagement activities included outreach to non-English speakers, tribes, and Underrepresented Communities near the facility.

Underground Storage Tank Program (UST)

- Coordinated with State Water Board to address stalled UST cases.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Target Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of cases closed = 5

Land Disposal Program

- Adopted Order R3-2024-0036, General Waste Discharge Requirements for Closed Landfill Facilities.

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- Enrolled facilities into new Closed Landfill General Order (including drafting new site-specific monitoring and reporting programs).
- Issued 13267 Order for continued PFAS monitoring for Active Landfills.
- Completed review and approval of new Joint Technical Documents (JTDs).
- Addressed compliance issues at landfills and composting facilities, in coordination with Stormwater and NPDES Programs.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Target Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of inspections = 47

Active Oilfields Program

- Coordinated with the State Water Board and California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) to develop sampling guidance for operators related to Health Protection Zones for oil and gas operations.
- Conducted conduit analyses.
- Assisted with proper abandonment of orphaned oil and gas wells.
- Investigated potential releases from well casing failures and potential impacts to groundwater.
- Provided oversight to pipeline-related Site Cleanup Program (SCP); Provided support to the Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program.

401 Water Quality Certification Program

- Issued individual 401 certifications and general order enrollments; Conducted inspections; Reviewed annual reports and provided comments; Reduced proposed impacts; Increased proposed mitigation for impacts; Issued notices of violation for unauthorized work in waters of the state.

Stormwater Program

- Inspected industrial and construction facilities; Performed program assessments of Phase II MS4 enrollees, including evaluation of TMDL implementation plans to determine compliance with pollutant discharge reduction requirements.
- Initiated multi-agency Wasteload Allocation Attainment Plan revision with Santa Cruz County MS4 dischargers.
- Issued notices of violation for Industrial General Permit (IGP), Construction General Permit (CGP) and Phase II permit violations; Conducted enforcement of CGP enrollees.
- Developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for Stormwater Program tasks and implemented tablet-based inspection format and report writing.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of municipal stormwater program audits = 3
 - Number of construction stormwater inspections = 35
 - Number of industrial stormwater inspections = 39

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Wildfire Resiliency Program

- Reviewed vegetation management plans and conducted inspections of post-fire areas and vegetation management projects; Responded to comments and issued revised vegetation treatment order for public comment.

Irrigated Lands Program (ILP)

- Targeted outreach to nonfliers to increase enrollment and prioritized enrollment in areas with disadvantaged communities and/or surface water and groundwater impairments; Issued directive to enroll letters to landowners for failure to submit a report of waste discharge.
- Conducted outreach and education efforts and compliance assistance to landowners, operators, and technical assistance providers; Conducted multilingual outreach and developed resource materials (e.g., YouTube tutorials and workshops in Spanish, Chinese). Expanded the ILP Dashboard for grower reporting and improved GeoTracker functionality; Issued Semi-Annual Ranch Summary Reports to improve compliance awareness; Issued TNA and INMP Summary Reports to inform growers how their nitrogen application and/or nitrogen discharge compares to other ranches in the groundwater basin.
- Coordinated with the approved third-party program to implement Ag Order requirements; Supported limited-resource growers with compliance assistance and grant access.
- Prepared a technical report on TNA and INMP Summary Report Data for the Second Agricultural Expert Panel.
- Assessed compliance with requirements and tracked violations; Issued notices of violation for failure to submit TNA-INMP reporting; Conducted follow-up to discharge complaints in five watersheds involving many ranches to develop watershed approach to resolving sediment-laden stormwater discharges.
- Coordinated with State Water Board, environmental justice representatives, agricultural representatives and the public to initiate development of an Alternative Water Supply (AWS) program, including development of a needs and cost assessment for interim/short-term replacement drinking water.
- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Percent of total acres enrolled = 404,079 acres enrolled (85%)
 - Percent of total operations enrolled = 1,445 operations enrolled (72%)

Cannabis Regulatory Program

- Conducted enrollment checks; Conducted inspections at enrolled sites and unenrolled sites; Reviewed technical reports; Provided compliance assistance; Required enrollment and/or remediation; Issued notices of violation.
- Coordinated with State Water Board Office of Enforcement and local law enforcement to address noncompliance; Participated in a joint operation with Department of Cannabis Control; Developed program procedures and tracking tools (e.g. inspection reports).

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- Conducted outreach and education to cultivators, consultants, agencies, and the public; Conducted specialized staff technical training.

Basin Planning Program

- Completed the 2024 Basin Plan Triennial Review with a priority list adopted by the Central Coast Water Board; Completed a Basin Plan amendment incorporating applicable provisions of statewide plans and policies approved by the State Water Board.
- Secured 205J grant funding for a 2026 California Sea Grant Fellow to work on a nomination for a new Area of Special Biological Significance.

Total Maximum Daily Load Program (TMDL)

- Completed Santa Ynez Nitrogen Compound TMDL, including USEPA approval.

Integrated Report Program

- Completed data solicitation and data organization for 2028 Integrated Report.
- Reviewed analyte tables for water, tissue, and sediment.
- Reviewed quality assurance project plans.

Grants Program and Nonpoint Source Programs

- Managed four 319h Nonpoint Source (NPS) implementation grant projects and one NPS planning project.
- Secured funding for two new NPS grant projects.
- Led a public field tour in the Salinas watershed to demonstrate results of grant funded bioreactor and wetland treatment projects.
- Coordinated with CCAMP-GAP on outreach to residents at-risk of exposure to groundwater pollutants.
- Informed TMDL Report Cards regarding project pollutant loads reductions.
- Facilitated collaboration between state and regional programs for future funding for stormwater, water recycling, and wastewater projects.
- Coordinated on an Irrigated Lands Program newsletter.

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP)

- Coordinated with Bay Foundation of Morro Bay to hire a full-time Monitoring Coordinator and multiple part-time field technicians; Completed Watershed Rotation Monitoring in the Santa Lucia Rotation; Completed monthly monitoring at long term trend sites for Coastal Confluence Monitoring; Completed Pre-Holiday Assessment for harmful algal blooms (HABs) and shared results agencies, local water body lake/reservoir managers, and the public.
- Issued appropriate advisories to protect public health.
- Completed data submittal of CCAMP field data and confirmed successful data upload to CEDEN; Maintained and improved Data Navigator to share water quality data analysis and viewing tools.

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- Participated in the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council.
- Provided cross-program opportunities to support involvement of regulatory program staff in monitoring activities.

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program (CCAMP-GAP)

- Coordinated with the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment to execute contract agreements for all thirteen grant projects that were selected for funding through the Central Coast Community- Based Water Quality Grants Program, including \$14K in capacity building mini grants to nine of the thirteen grant projects.
- Coordinated with the Bay Foundation to test 104 drinking water wells through the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program; Initiated outreach in Santa Barbara County with outreach efforts prioritizing disadvantaged communities (DAC). Presented a CCAMP-GAP programmatic update at the December 2024 Board meeting, including an analysis and presentation of data collected through the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program; Made data available through GAMA GIS and developed instructions for accessing the data.
- Supervised intern to complete report titled, "A Groundwater Quality Long-Term Trend Monitoring Pilot Project for the Salinas Valley – Paso Robles Area Subbasin (3-004.06)", which describes a recommendation for a long-term groundwater quality trend monitoring program.
- Continued collaboration with the Community Water Center (CWC) and the County of Santa Cruz to provide replacement drinking water or point of use treatment to DAC households with polluted wells.
- Initiated a replacement drinking water pilot project for DAC households in Santa Barbara County.
- Provided funding for limited resources growers through "Technical Assistance for Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Growers to Conduct On-Farm Domestic Well Monitoring and Reporting."

Enforcement Program

- Updated Enforcement Priorities and developed Settlement Project Priorities and Considerations; Coordinated with regulatory programs to prioritize enforcement actions aligning with the Central Coast Water Board's region-specific enforcement priorities, including enforcement actions to address violations that impact water quality in Underrepresented Communities and violations that pose a significant threat to human health, including impacts to drinking water supplies, and to the environment; Issued notices of violation; Issued Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) complaints and orders; Issued Expedited Payment Program Letters (EPL; Settlement Proposals for Mandatory Minimum Penalties);

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Prioritized enforcement of Irrigated Lands Program violations and other program violations that met two or more general Enforcement Program priorities.

- *State Water Board Program Performance Targets Achieved in FY 24-25:*
 - Number of MMP violations addressed by formal enforcement action issued within FY 24-25 and within 18 months of violation discovery = 89
 - Number of Class A violations addressed with formal enforcement or an investigative order within FY 24-25 and within 18 months of discovery = 2

Administrative Program

- Managed all business operations and services for the organization (e.g., travel, training, budgets, contracts, coordination of information technology equipment and services).
- Managed position recruitment and human resources.
- Coordinated facility maintenance and management.
- Distributed correspondence.
- Received public records act requests and spill reports.
- Provided database management and website support; Implemented health and safety activities.