

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND A PUBLIC WORKSHOP CONCERNING PROPOSED ORDER R3-2021-0040-A1 (AG ORDER 4.0 AMENDMENT) AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY PROGRAM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board) will accept input and comments on proposed *Order R3-2021-0040-A1, as amended by State Water Board Order WQ 2023-0081¹* (Order R3-2021-0040-A1). Proposed Order R3-2021-0040-A1 amends Order R3-2021-0040 (Ag Order 4.0) and incorporates changes responsive to the State Water Quality Control Board's remand directions in Order WQ 2023-0081 and also includes proposed Drinking Water Solutions Program regulatory requirements related to the development of an Alternative Water Supply Program.

Public comment on the following documents will be accepted from **May 26, 2026 – July 10, 2026**, available on the Central Coast Water Board's websites^{2,3} or by request (see contact information below):

[Proposed Order R3-2021-0040-A1 and attachments:](#)

- A - Findings,
- B - Monitoring and Reporting Program,
- C - Acronyms and Definitions,
- D - Assessment of Interim Drinking Water Needs and Costs in Central Coast Areas Affected by Agricultural Nitrate Groundwater Contamination (incorporates comments received as part of the first comment period from July-Aug 2025 [referred to as the Final Assessment of Interim Drinking Water Needs and Costs herein]).

Each of these documents show the tracked proposed revisions using underline and strikethrough formatting. **Written comments are being accepted only on the tracked proposed revisions to Ag Order 4.0, including (but not limited to) the**

¹ Order WQ 2023-0081:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality/docs/2023/wqo2023-0081.pdf

² Central Coast Water Board's Tentative Orders website:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/tentative_orders/

³ Central Coast Water Board's Alternative Water Supply Program website:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/alternative-water.html

development of the alternative water supply program.

The proposed tracked changes can be categorized as follows:

- Address remands in State Water Board Order WQ 2023-0081;
- Correct minor typos, grammatical errors, or other editorial changes;
- Improve clarity of existing language; or
- Incorporate other State Water Board direction in Order WQ 2023-0081 to:
 - develop an alternative water supply program and
 - consider developing time schedule orders for Dischargers subject to total maximum daily load (TMDL) compliance dates that are past due.

Additional documents available for public review include the following:

- An Executive Summary of the *Final Assessment of Interim Drinking Water Needs and Costs* (available in English and Spanish).
- Documents summarizing the changes, including the following:
 - Summary table of the revisions to address remand directions in Order WQ 2023-0081 (in English and Spanish); and
 - Drinking Water Solutions Program Regulatory Requirements Summary (in English and Spanish).

Written comments must be received by **5:00 PM on Wednesday, July 10, 2026**. Late comments will not be accepted unless approved by the Central Coast Water Board Chair.

ADDITIONALLY, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Central Coast Water Board will hold a workshop for proposed Order R3-2021-0040-A1 at the regular meeting of the Central Coast Water Board on Thursday, June 18, 2026. This workshop is an opportunity for the public to provide input to Central Coast Water Board staff on the proposed Order R3-2021-0040-A1 and any other related issue of interest. Although a quorum of Central Coast Water Board members may be present, no Board action will be taken.

The workshop will begin no earlier than:

Thursday, June 18, 2026 - 9:00 AM
City of Goleta City Hall
130 Cremona Drive, Goleta, CA 93117
and via Video and Teleconference

Instructions for remote participation in the workshop will be included in the Board meeting agenda, which can be found on the webpage linked below:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2026/2026_agendas.html

LANGUAGE SERVICES

As set forth above, several summary documents are available in both English and Spanish and this meeting will be offered in English and Spanish. To request translation of a written document, interpretation services for the meeting, or sign language services please use one of the following options at least ten (10) business days before the meeting, if possible:

- Submit an online request: bit.ly/LanguageAccessForm
- Call (916) 341-5254
- Email languageservices@waterboards.ca.gov

Contact us to request information in your language.

Contáctenos para solicitar información en su idioma.

Liên hệ chúng tôi để yêu cầu thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của quý vị.

귀하의 언어로 작성된 정보를 요청하려면 저희에게 문의하십시오.

ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Makipag-ugnayan sa amin para humiling ng impormasyon sa iyong wika.

请联系我们，以您的语言获取相关信息。

ACCESSIBILITY & REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Users of a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 or the teletype (TTY) voice line at (800) 735-2922.

Any person who requires a reasonable accommodation to participate in the meeting should email contact@waterboards.ca.gov or call (916) 341-5254, at least ten (10) business days prior to the meeting. Learn more about accessibility within Zoom at www.zoom.com/en/accessibility.

BACKGROUND

On September 20, 2023, the State Water Board adopted Order WQ 2023-0081, *In the Matter of Review of General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands Order R3-2021-0040*. Order WQ 2023-0081 remands portions of Order R3-2021-0040 (Ag Order 4.0) and directs the Central Coast Water Board to develop an alternative water supply program for residents in the Central Coast region relying on groundwater in areas where the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for nitrate is exceeded as a result of agricultural operations.

Subsequently, the Central Coast Water Board drafted revisions to Ag Order 4.0 to address the remanded portions of the Order and to incorporate alternative compliance pathways that allow growers to choose to participate in a third-party administered drinking water replacement program (alternative water supply program). The Central Coast Water Board is seeking public input on the development of the proposed changes

to Order R3-2021-0040, as reflected in Order R3-2021-0040-A1, and encourages the public to submit written comments and/or to participate in the public workshop.

STAY INFORMED

Any person interested in receiving additional information about proposed Order R3-2021-0040-A1, including any change to the date, time, or meeting location in this public notice, should subscribe to the email distribution list at the following link:

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRCB/subscriber/new?qsp=central_coast

Instructions:

- 1) Submit the subscriber's email address.
- 2) Once directed to the list of email subscription lists, select the checkbox for:
 - "Alternative Water Supply Program" and/or
 - "Irrigated Lands Program"
- 3) Select "Submit."

For more information, please contact the staff person listed below.

STAFF CONTACT AND COMMENTS SUBMITTAL

Please email written comments to RB3-Ag-Order@Waterboards.ca.gov and include "**Comment Letter – Amended Ag Order**" in the subject line. Written comments may also be mailed or delivered to:

Central Coast Water Board
Irrigated Lands Program – Ag Order Amendment
Attention: James Bishop
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Contact James Bishop at james.bishop@waterboards.ca.gov or 805-542-4628 with any questions regarding this notice or opportunity for public participation.