

Triennial Review

of the

Water Quality Control Plan

for the

Central Coastal Basin

November 16, 2021



Water Boards
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REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region

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Introduction

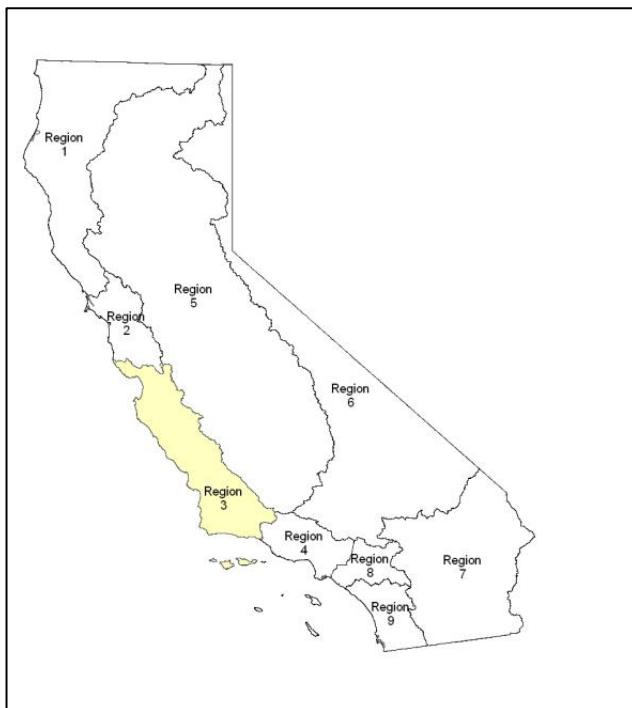
The Basin Plan

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) initially adopted the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan) in 1975 and has periodically been revised. The current Basin Plan (2019 edition) can be found on the Central Coast Water Board Basin Planning website:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/.

The Basin Plan explains how the quality of surface waters and groundwaters in the Central Coastal Basin should be managed to provide the highest water quality reasonably possible. The Basin Plan defines and designates beneficial uses of surface waters and groundwaters (i.e., waters of the state), establishes narrative or numeric water quality objectives to protect beneficial uses, and contains provisions to protect high quality waters from degradation (i.e., antidegradation). The Basin Plan also includes a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives and outlines corrective measures to be implemented when developing discharge limitations. Figure 1 shows the geographic boundary of the Central Coast Region.

Figure 1. Central Coast (Region 3) Water Board Boundary



The Basin Plan fulfill statutory requirements for water quality planning in the California Water Code (section 13240) and in the federal Clean Water Act (section 303(c)). The

Clean Water Act further stipulates that a state's water quality standards be reviewed every three years; the last Triennial Review of the Basin Plan was completed in December 2017. Consequently, the Central Coast Water Board is conducting the 2021¹ Triennial Review of the Basin Plan.

The Triennial Review

The purpose of the Triennial Review is to 1) identify potential improvements to the Basin Plan, 2) prioritize the improvements that are to be made, and 3) affirm those portions of the plan where no improvements are necessary. An improvement to the Basin Plan is here defined as any change that brings the Basin Plan more up-to-date or increases the Basin Plan's effectiveness as a regulatory instrument to protect water quality. Because these potential improvements must be implemented through Basin Plan amendments, they are referred to as "proposed amendments," or simply "proposals²."

The Triennial Review satisfies two statutory requirements. The Clean Water Act (section 303[c][1]) requires states to hold public hearings for the review of water quality standards at least once every three years. Water quality standards consist of beneficial use designations and water quality criteria (i.e., objectives) necessary to protect those uses. In addition, the California Water Code (section 13240) requires the regional water boards to periodically review and possibly revise their Basin Plan.

The Triennial Review as conducted by the Central Coast Water Board comprises five steps:

1. Compiling a preliminary list of proposals;
2. Conducting a public process to receive and respond to comments on the proposals on the preliminary list;
3. Refining the preliminary list into a secondary list³;
4. Identifying a priority list of proposals from the secondary list to develop during the next three years; and

¹ The additional year since the last Triennial Review is due to staffing changes and complications arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

² Proposed amendments were previously referred to as "issues." This nomenclature was updated during the 2021 cycle.

³ The preliminary list includes all of the proposals (proposals included on the 2017 Triennial Review and new proposals suggested by staff and interested persons since the 2017 Triennial Review). The secondary list includes a refined list of proposals for consideration for future Triennial Reviews that staff have identified as 1) improving the Basin Plan's effectiveness as a regulatory instrument to protect water quality and 2) align with one or more of the Central Coast Water Board's priorities and the priorities for the Basin Planning Program.

5. Obtaining approval from the Central Coast Water Board at a public hearing to proceed with the proposals on the priority list.

The Preliminary List

The preliminary list records and describes all the proposed amendments that will be considered during the Triennial Review process. The sources of the proposed amendments are from previous Triennial Reviews lists and from input from Water Board staff and other interested persons since the 2017 Triennial Review. To the extent possible, staff structured the list of proposals so that each proposal can be completely addressed by a single Basin Plan amendment. The preliminary list was released for public comment on August 26, 2021, as [Brief Issue Descriptions for the Triennial Review of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin](#).

Additional amendments proposed by commenters during the public comment period can be and have been added to the preliminary list.

The Public Process

Public participation is an important part of the Triennial Review process, which comprises a public workshop, a public comment period, and a public hearing. Central Coast Water Board staff solicited input on the preliminary list of proposals from external stakeholders and the public during a 45-day comment period. Central Coast Water Board staff also held a public workshop to encourage verbal comments. The schedule for the public participation components of the 2021 Triennial Review are show in Table 1.

Table 1. Schedule for the 2021 Triennial Review.

Event	Date
Public comment period begins	August 26, 2021
Public workshop (virtual)	September 28, 2021
Public comment period ends	October 11, 2021
Public Hearing & Board Meeting	December 10, 2021

The Central Coast Water Board distributed correspondence related to the 2021 Triennial Review via an email subscription list⁴ established for the Triennial Review of the Basin Plan.

⁴ To sign up for these announcements, select “Basin Planning Triennial Review” on the Central Coast Water Board Email List Subscriptions webpage:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg3_subscribe.shtml

The Secondary List

After the public comment period, staff evaluate proposals on the preliminary list for placement on the secondary and priority lists. The purpose of the secondary list is to preserve all proposals that would improve the Basin Plan. Proposals that satisfy the following criteria were placed on the secondary list:

- Does the proposed Basin Plan amendment increase the Basin Plan's effectiveness as a regulatory instrument to protect water quality?

The proposals on the secondary list were further evaluated to determine alignment with the Central Coast Water Boards priorities and the priorities for the Basin Planning Program by consideration of the following criteria:

- Does the proposal provide improvements to relevant water quality standards?
- Does the proposal improve regulatory and program efficiency and/or effectiveness?
- Does the proposal affirm the realization of the human right to water and the protection of human health?
- Does the proposal implement activities that ensures the fair treatment of Underrepresented Communities?
- Does the proposal further goals to mitigate for and adapt to the impacts of climate change?
- Does the proposal align with the Central Coast Water Board's Vision for Healthy Watersheds?

Central Coast Water Board Vision

The Vision for the Central Coast Water Board is Healthy Watersheds. The Vision represents a framework for how we conduct business and achieve measurable results in water quality improvement. The Vision structures our work towards our highest water quality priorities and more strategically aligns us with current and future challenges and opportunities in water quality protection.

Consistent with the Vision, the Central Coast Water Board has established the following measurable goals in Section 1.7 of the Basin Plan:

- Healthy Aquatic Habitat. By 2025, 80 percent of aquatic habitat is healthy, and the remaining 20 percent exhibits positive trends in key parameters.
- Proper Land Management. By 2025, 80 percent of lands within a watershed will be managed to maintain proper 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.

The Vision and measurable goals were added to the Basin Plan in 2016. For additional information about the Central Coast Water Board's Vision process, please see the following webpage:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/vision/index.shtml

The Priority List

Developing every proposal on the secondary list is not feasible given available staff resources. Therefore, a limited subset of the proposals on the secondary list were prioritized for development. Proposals on the priority list are identified for development, but not necessarily completion, in the next three years. The proposals selected for placement on the priority list is because they met the following criteria:

- 1) Central Coast Water Board program staff identified the proposal as a high priority to improve program efficiency and/or effectiveness and identified technical staff resources to work on the proposal, and
- 2) executive management identified staff resources to further develop a scope of work for developing the proposal due to need for the proposal..

Approving the Priority List

The Basin Plan Triennial Review process is complete once the Central Coast Water Board approves the priority list of proposals. While the purpose of the Triennial Review is to identify future changes to the Basin Plan, it does not itself result in any changes to the Basin Plan.

The public hearing to discuss and approve the final priority list of the 2021 Triennial Review is December 10, 2021.

Progress Since Last Triennial Review

The previous Triennial Review of the Central Coastal Basin Plan was conducted in December 2017. This effort resulted in 21 priority proposals for staff to develop into possible Basin Plan amendments. Staff estimated it would take a total of approximately 20.4 personnel years (PY) to address all 21 proposals, however, approximately 0.5 PY per year were allocated to Basin Planning activities. Consequently, staff only addressed a subset of the 2017 Triennial Review prioritized list between 2017 and 2021. For additional information about the 2017 Triennial Review and other previous Triennial Reviews, please see the following Central Coast Water Board Triennial Review webpage:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/triennial_review/index.shtml

Table 2 presents 2017 Triennial Review proposal descriptions and progress made by staff to develop the proposals between 2017 and 2021. In summary, progress was made on the following four of the priority proposals:

- **2017 Triennial Review Priority 1: Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection.** Progress via implementation of several program specific actions however, a Basin Plan amendment was not developed.
- **2017 Triennial Review Priority 2: Establish Turbidity water quality objectives for Aquatic Life Protection.** Proposal in progress. The technical justification and scientific peer review are complete. This proposal is on the priority list for the 2021 Triennial Review and staff anticipate a Basin Plan amendment will be brought to the Board for consideration before the next Triennial Review.- **2017 Triennial Review Priority 3: Establish Prohibitions on Unpermitted Discharges.** Proposal in progress. Project public comment period and proposed Basin Plan amendment documentation completed. Pending Central Coast Water Board Hearing in 2022.
- **2017 Triennial Review Priority 17: Edit the Land Disturbance Prohibition.** Proposal in progress. Project public comment period and proposed Basin Plan amendment documentation completed. Pending Central Coast Water Board Hearing in 2022.

Table 2. The 2017 Triennial Review prioritized proposals and progress made during the period 2017 to 2021.

Priority Proposal	Description	Progress
Priority 1: Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection	Amend the Basin Plan to develop authority to address the highest priority activities and factors that affect waters. Amendments will focus on achieving preservation and restoration of watershed processes through implementation of integrated water resource management planning. These amendments and follow-up actions may include prohibitions, beneficial use definitions, water quality objectives, implementation, policies, permit terms, guidelines, and incentives.	A Basin Plan amendment was not initiated. The Basin Plan amendment was put on hold pending further refinement of Water Board goals for integrated water resource management. Several programs have taken actions that are aligned with the intent of this priority proposal and staff have identified focused Basin Plan amendment proposals for other elements that are not already being implemented.
Priority 2: Establish Turbidity water quality objectives for Aquatic Life Protection	Adopt numeric water quality objectives for turbidity for the protection of aquatic life beneficial uses. This will include objectives necessary for Salmonid spawning and passage requirements.	Substantial progress. Staff completed technical work and scientific peer review in support of 1) a Basin Plan amendment to revise the water quality objectives and 2) turbidity TMDLs for the Gabilan Creek watershed.
Priority 3: Establish Prohibitions on Unpermitted Discharges	Add prohibitions on the unpermitted discharge of wastes to land or waters of the state.	Substantial progress. Staff developed draft Basin Plan amendments that clarify existing prohibition language and establishes additional prohibitions on specific unauthorized discharges. Adoption is pending a public hearing.
Priority 4: Add Aquatic Life Uses for Steelhead	Review all waterbodies in the region and add COLD, MIGR, or SPWN beneficial use designations for those waterbodies that are documented critical habitat for Steelhead trout.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.5 PY to complete).

Priority Proposal	Description	Progress
Priority 5: Add RARE Uses for Selected Waterbodies	Review all waterbodies in the region and add RARE beneficial use designations for those waterbodies that are documented critical habitat for threatened, rare, or endangered species.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.5 PY to complete).
Priority 6: Establish Additive Toxicity water quality objectives for Aquatic Life Protection	Adopt a narrative water quality objective for additive toxicity for the protection of aquatic life beneficial uses.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.5 PY to complete).
Priority 7: Develop Water Flow Objectives	Adopt narrative water quality objectives to address critical water flows necessary for the protection of beneficial uses and water quality. This project will include coordination with the Division of Water Rights to ensure that narrative flow objectives are consistent with water rights.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 2.5 PY to complete).
Priority 8: Revise Pesticides Objective	Revise the existing narrative water quality objective for pesticides to include all pesticide concentrations (i.e., not limited to chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides) that may impair beneficial uses.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.2 PY to complete).
Priority 9: Establish Temperature water quality objectives for Aquatic Life Protection	Adopt a narrative water quality objective for temperature for the protection of aquatic life.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.0 PY to complete).
Priority 10: Designate Surface Waters that Recharge Groundwater	Review all waterbodies in the region and add GWR beneficial use designations for those permeable surface waterbodies that percolate to groundwater basins. Develop groundwater recharge area maps.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.0 PY to complete).

Priority Proposal	Description	Progress
Priority 11: Designate Aquatic Life Uses for Groundwater	Review all groundwater basins in the region and add aquatic life use beneficial designations for those groundwater basins that are sustaining surface aquatic or terrestrial ecosystems.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.0 PY to complete).
Priority 12: Revise water quality objectives for Site-specific Surface Waters in Table 3-5	Revise and expand existing numeric water quality objectives for site-specific surface waterbodies in Table 3-5.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.8 PY to complete).
Priority 13: Revise water quality objectives for Site-specific Groundwaters in Table 3-6	Revise and expand existing numeric water quality objectives for groundwater basins in Table 3-6.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.8 PY to complete).
Priority 14: Ocean Protection	Amend the Basin Plan to develop the authority to adequately address all relevant factors and activities that contribute to ocean water quality. Strengthen existing water quality standards in the Basin Plan for marine and estuarine waters by developing water quality objectives (for pH, nutrients, carbonate chemistry parameters, total alkalinity, or dissolved inorganic carbon) and by designating additional beneficial uses for sensitive coastal waters.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 2.0 PY to complete).
Priority 15: Define and Designate Tribal Uses	Add beneficial use definitions for tribal traditional and cultural fishing, tribal subsistence fishing, and subsistence fishing. Review and designate tribal beneficial uses to all waterbodies in the region, as warranted.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.0 PY to complete).

Priority Proposal	Description	Progress
Priority 16: Update Agricultural Supply water quality objectives in Table 3-1	Revise and expand existing numeric water quality objectives in Table 3-6 for the protection of the agricultural supply waters (AGR) beneficial use.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.5 PY to complete).
Priority 17: Edit the Land Disturbance Prohibition	Add enforceable language to the Basin Plan to prohibit the discharge of wastes to land and the discharge of pollutants or dredged or fill materials to state waters.	Substantial progress. Staff developed draft Basin Plan amendments that clarify this prohibition applies to all waters of the state. Adoption is pending a public hearing.
Priority 18: Address Discharge Prohibitions for Inland Waters	Revise Chapter 5 discharge prohibitions to inland waters to allow a short-term discharge of supply well test water.	No Progress. Staff recommend removing this proposal as it is in direct conflict with the draft Basin Plan amendment to prohibit the unauthorized discharge of well test water into waters of the state in a manner causing or threatening to cause a condition of pollution, contamination, or nuisance.
Priority 19: Modify Groundwater Recharge Use Definition	Modify the existing groundwater recharge beneficial use (GWR) definition to include maintenance of instream flows, riparian habitat, and wetland habitat.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 0.3 PY to complete).
Priority 20: Remove Beneficial Uses For Selected Waterbodies	Evaluate adequacy of existing beneficial use designations for specific surface waterbodies. Determine if uses are existing, if not prepare a Use Attainability Analysis (or equivalent) to remove the designated use. Replace removed use with the highest attainable use.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.5 PY to complete).
Priority 21: Clarify Uses for Flood Control Conveyances	Evaluate adequacy of existing beneficial use designations for flood control channels and man-made drainage systems.	Not developed due to resource constraints (2017 estimate was 1.5 PY to complete).

Public Comments Summary

Staff received public comments from seven interested persons during the Triennial Review public comment period (Table 3). Staff reviewed all public comments received. A summary of comments made by each commenter and Central Coast Water Board staff responses to each public comment are included in the applicable proposal summary below. For example, comments from the County of Santa Barbara are applicable to proposal numbers 10, 24, 33-K, and 33-AA. The public comments and staff responses applicable are included in each of those proposal numbers.

Table 3. General summary of public comment letters received during the 2021 Triennial Review.

Commenting Organization	Triennial Review Proposal No.
County of Santa Barbara	10, 24, 33-K, 33-AA
United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)	20, 21, 29-C, 33-D, 33-I
City of Santa Cruz	36, 23-G
Santa Clara Valley Water (Valley Water)	2, 10, 16, 24, 28, 34
California Coastkeeper Alliance (Coastkeeper)	45, 46, 3, 6, 13, 15, 16, 20, 23, 28, 32
Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. (Preservation, Inc.)*	5, 23, 36
Los Osos Sustainability Group	24, 47

* Preservation, Inc. provided verbal comments at the public workshop and requested that Central Coast Water Board staff include those comments herein. Central Coast Water Board staff also included paraphrased comments taken from notes during the workshop.

All comment letters are not web accessible. However, staff reproduced each comment, associated with the relevant proposal herein. In addition, staff updated the project website⁵ to inform the public that copies of the comment letters are available upon request.

⁵https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/triennial_review/

Preliminary List with Proposal Descriptions

Format of Proposal Descriptions

Proposals are ordered according to the chapter of the Basin Plan that they address. Proposals 1 through 41 were included in the Brief Issues Description document that was released for public comment. Proposals 42 through 47 were added after the public comment period and inserted into the list according to the chapter that they address. Each proposal in this document is presented using the following format:

Proposal No. and Title

A name and number for the proposal. Proposals are generally ordered by what section they refer to in the Basin Plan.

Discussion

A brief description of the proposal, including progress made toward proposal development and/or resolution, if applicable.

Public Comment Summary

A list of each commenter and a summary of the commenter's testimony and comments on the proposal. Omitted if no public comments were received.

Staff Response

Central Coast Water Board staff responses to public comments. Omitted if no public comments were received.

Recommendation

A preliminary recommendation from Central Coast Water Board staff for the action to be performed to address the proposal. Possible recommendations are:

- Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development;
- Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews when additional staff resources will potentially be available;

- Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and the State Board is developing analogous regulation; or
- Remove this proposal.

Introduction (Chapter 1) Related Proposals

Proposal 42: Align Region 2-3 Boundary with Coyote Creek Watershed

Discussion

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period.

There is gap of approximately one-half mile between the Region 2-3 regional boundary and the Coyote Creek watershed boundary where they cross Highway 101 in Santa Clara county. Projects in this gap are located in Region 3 yet drain to Region 2 resulting in jurisdictional ambiguity. In coordination with Region 2, amend the Basin Plan to align the Region 2-3 boundary with the Coyote Creek Watershed boundary.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 1: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 1)

Discussion

The following editorial amendments are proposed for Chapter 1:

- A. Amend section 1.3 to either update the table displaying central coast county populations based on latest census information or remove column summarizing data from the 1988 census.
- B. Amend section 1.4 to update list of duties and responsibilities carried out by the Central Coast Water Board.
- C. Amend section 1.7 to add the specific priorities of the Central Coast Water Board such as the following:

1. Central Coast Water Board's adopted priorities from the [October 2013 Central Coast Water Board hearing](#) (see Agenda Item 9);
 2. Central Coast Water Board's commitment to the realization of the Human Right to Water ([Resolution No. R3-2017-0004](#)); and
 3. Central Coast Water Board's commitment to climate change adaption and mitigation actions as affirmed by the Central Coast Water Board Climate Action Initiative Vision Statement: "We will face the threat and the effects of climate change for the foreseeable and distant future. To proactively prepare and respond, we will identify how our work relates to climate change and strategically pursue high impact projects to improve resilience and protect beneficial uses." Include [State Water Board Resolution No. 2017-0012](#).
- D. Amend section 1.7 to describe in greater detail what is meant by "Healthy Watersheds" and "Healthy Aquatic Habitat". Clarify other goals in this section (e.g., avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to riparian areas).

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal contains several editorial revisions that would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Beneficial Use (Chapter 2) Related Proposals

Proposal 2: Add and Designate the Limited Water Contact Recreation Beneficial Use

Discussion

On August 7, 2018, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2018-0038](#) and statewide [Bacteria Provisions as Part 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays and Estuaries of California \(ISWEBE\)](#). The Bacteria Provisions contain the following definition for a limited Water Contact Recreation (LREC-1) beneficial use:

Uses of water that support limited recreational activities involving body contact with water, where the activities are predominantly limited by physical conditions and, as a result, body contact with water and ingestion of water is infrequent or insignificant.

Amend to adopt the Limited Water Contact Recreation (LREC-1) beneficial use and designate waterbodies with this use as appropriate.

Public Comment Summary

Valley Water:

Valley Water supports the amendment to the Basin Plan to adopt the Limited Water Contact Recreation (LREC-1) beneficial use and to designate waterbodies with this use as appropriate. Many of the water bodies in Santa Clara County exhibit the conditions in the State Board's definition for the LREC-1 beneficial use. Typical local conditions that may warrant a LREC-1 designation include restricted public access, unsafe channel geometry, flow characteristics not conducive to significant body contact, and others.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 3: Add and Designate the Tribal Beneficial Uses

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

On May 2, 2017, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2017-0027](#) and the Provisions titled "[Final Part 2 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California – Tribal and Subsistence Fishing Beneficial Uses and Mercury Provisions](#)". These Provisions relate to the following beneficial use definitions:

Tribal Tradition and Culture (CUL). Uses of water that support the cultural, spiritual, ceremonial, or traditional rights or lifeways of California Native American Tribes, including, but not limited to: navigation, ceremonies, or fishing, gathering, or consumption of natural aquatic resources, including fish, shellfish, vegetation, and materials.

Tribal Subsistence Fishing (T-SUB). Uses of water involving the non-commercial catching or gathering of natural aquatic resources, including fish and shellfish, for

consumption by individuals, households, or communities of California Native American Tribes to meet needs for sustenance.

Subsistence Fishing (SUB). Uses of water involving the non-commercial catching or gathering of natural aquatic resources, including fish and shellfish, for consumption by individuals, households, or communities, to meet needs for sustenance.

Amend to adopt the tribal beneficial use definitions listed above and designate waterbodies with these uses as appropriate.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 4: Clarify and Update Agricultural Supply Beneficial Use Definition

Discussion

Amend the Agricultural Supply (AGR) beneficial use definition (section 2.2.2) to include the terms irrigated agriculture and cannabis cultivation. For example, amend as follows (amendment shown in red and underlined):

2.2.2 Agricultural Supply

Uses of water for farming (e.g., irrigated agriculture and cannabis cultivation), horticulture, or ranching including, but not limited to, irrigation, stock watering, or support of vegetation for range grazing.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 5: Designate Aquatic Life Uses for Groundwater

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Groundwater basins are traditionally designated the following beneficial uses: Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN), Agricultural Supply (AGR), and Industrial Supply (IND). However, several surface waterbodies in the Central Coast region are reliant on

groundwater to replenish and sustain baseflows. In some cases, water quality objectives established to support MUN, AGR, IND are inadequate to support aquatic habitat, wildlife, and terrestrial ecosystems.

Conduct a Use Attainability Analysis, or comparable analysis, and evaluate merit of this proposed amendment to designate selected groundwater basins with aquatic habitat/ecosystem support beneficial uses. Such designations would require substantial research such as using spatial analysis and mapping of groundwater dependent ecosystems. This is the emphasis of the following quote from "Mapping Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in California" by Howard and Merrifield (2010):

Most groundwater conservation and management efforts focus on protecting groundwater for drinking water and for other human uses with little understanding or focus on the ecosystems that depend on groundwater. However, groundwater plays an integral role in sustaining certain types of aquatic, terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, and their associated landscapes.

Public Comment Summary

Coastkeeper:

The vast majority of waterbodies in the Central Coast Region are influenced to some degree (if not primarily) by surfacing groundwater. Contaminated groundwater contributes to a highly significant number of surface water quality impairments, including those within the Southern coast streams such as Glen Annie Creek, Los Caneros Creek, Bell Creek, Franklin Creek, Rincon Creek, and the Carpinteria Salt Marsh. Water Quality Objectives designed for other beneficial uses such as drinking water supplies are not necessarily protective of aquatic beneficial uses. Surface and groundwater supplies are often connected, and it is important for the Regional Board to manage them as such. We agree that this [proposal] should be prioritized, and we recommend that the Regional Board engage in outreach to identify partners to develop data to support these efforts.

Preservation, Inc.:

This proposal may have the unintended consequence of requiring the Water Board to enforce aquatic life water quality objectives that are an order of magnitude lower than the water quality objectives currently implemented by Ag Order 4.0.

Staff Response

In response to Coastkeeper comment regarding support for this proposal, staff acknowledge this support.

In response to Preservation, Inc.'s, comment regarding potential conflict with the water quality objectives implemented by Ag Order 4.0 (e.g., the nitrate targets and limits established in Ag Order 4.0), potential consequences such as the one mentioned above would be evaluated thoroughly by staff during development of the proposal and made available for public review and comment during the public process.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 6: De-designate Beneficial Uses for Selected Waterbodies

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review and was modified following the 2021 public comment period, which included a comment suggesting de-designating the MUN beneficial use from Arroyo Burro Creek.

Several commenters on previous Triennial Reviews requested removal of specific beneficial use designations from certain waterbodies as summarized in the table below. Supporting evidence to remove these beneficial uses has not yet been collected or provided.

Unit	Waterbody Name	Use Recommend for Removal
304	Loch Lomond Reservoir	SHELL
312	Santa Maria River	MUN, REC1, REC2
312	All Santa Maria flood control channels	MUN, REC1, REC2, COLD, WARM
314	Santa Ynez River (downstream of Cachuma Res.)	MUN, AGR, PROC
314	Graves Wetland (Bailey Wetland)	REC-1, REC-2, COMM, SPWN
315	Sycamore Creek	AGR
315	Glen Annie Canyon	AGR
315	Atascadero Creek (Santa Barbara Co.)	AGR

Unit	Waterbody Name	Use Recommend for Removal
315	Maria Ygnacio Creek	AGR
315	San Jose Creek (Santa Barbara Co.)	AGR
315	San Pedro Creek	AGR
315	Franklin Creek	AGR
315	Carpinteria Creek	AGR
315	Arroyo Burro Creek	MUN

40 CFR 131.10(g) specifies the conditions required to remove a beneficial use. For removal of “fishable and swimmable” uses, a detailed Use Attainability Analysis is required. For removal of other uses, a report comparable to a Use Attainability Analysis is required. Under recently promulgated regulations, removed uses must be replaced with the highest attainable use as defined in 40 CFR 131.3(m).

Develop a Use Attainability Analyses and evaluate merit of the proposed amendments to de-designate beneficial uses for specific waterbodies in accordance with 40 CFR 131.10(g) and 40 CFR 131.3(m).

Public Comment Summary

Coastkeeper:

The Central Coast Regional Board is required to protect all existing beneficial uses of State waters regardless of whether or not such uses are currently being attained. A tremendous amount of work must be performed to improve water quality conditions on impaired waterways throughout the region, and limited resources are available to accomplish this goal. We believe that the Regional Board should prioritize efforts that will lead to water quality improvements. While a small number of case-by-case instances of unjustified beneficial uses may exist, these [proposals] should be addressed by the Regional Board only as ample evidence and urgency are presented to the Regional Board. Absent overwhelming evidence that this [proposal] is a significant problem affecting the entire region, we recommend that this [proposal] be removed from the priority list.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge the concerns of the Coastkeeper regarding this proposal. The inclusion of the above-mentioned waterbody and beneficial uses does not represent a

recommendation by Central Coast Water Board staff to make the proposed change, instead it is a record of a request to consider the beneficial use change. Evaluating the accuracy of the beneficial use designations in the Basin Plan is important and each case requires a comprehensive study, i.e., a Use Attainability Analysis, to determine if de-designation is truly warranted. Absent stakeholder execution of these studies, staff cannot justify prioritizing this proposal at this time and it will remain on the secondary list.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal could potentially improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 43: Split Coastal Reaches at Saline/Freshwater Transition Zone

Discussion

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period ended (personal communication with Central Coast Water Board staff Shanta Keeling and as a result of public comments received for the 2020-2022 Integrated Report). Dr. Jill Murray, City of Santa Barbara, requested refinement of the estuarine habitat beneficial use (EST) for Mission and Sycamore Creeks. The EST beneficial use is currently designated to the entire length of both creeks, however, a large volume of salinity data from these waterbodies shows that the use is only realized in the lower reaches, near tidal influence. The EST designation results in several Clean Water Act section 303(d) List impairments for metals in the upper watershed.

Amend the Basin Plan to split reaches at saline/freshwater transition zone.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 7: Designate Selected Waterbodies with Aquatic Life Uses

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to designate Moore Creek, Wilder Creek, Green Oaks Creek, Bates Creek, Berry Creek, and Toro Creek in Table 2-1 with the RARE beneficial use. These recommendations are based on Cal Poly contract work for the Central Coast Water

Board in 1995 and the [Federal Register—Designation of Critical Habitat for Tidewater Gobi](#).

Conduct a systematic review all waterbodies in the region using National Marine Fisheries Service's Critical Habitat for Steelhead GIS Layers to determine appropriate beneficial uses (e.g., COLD, MIGR, and/or SPWN) and amend the Basin Plan to designate the resulting list of waterbodies with those uses in Table 2-1. See [Central Coast Water Board Resolution No. R3-2016-0030](#), for a case study of this approach, which designated COLD, MIGR, and SPWN to five waterbodies.

Amend to designate Santa Maria River Estuary in Basin Plan Table 2-1 with the COLD beneficial use based on the Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration's [Steelhead/Rainbow Trout \(*Oncorhynchus mykiss*\) Resources South of the Golden Gate, California report](#).

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 8: Designate Surface Waters that Recharge Groundwater

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend Chapter 2 to designate all surface waters that percolate to groundwater in Table 2-1 with the Groundwater Recharge (GWR) beneficial use. All waterbodies that overlay groundwater basins in Figure 2-2 could include the GWR beneficial use. Notable exceptions would be waterbodies that are impermeable for their entire reach, such as concrete-lined conveyances. Chapter 2 could include lists and maps of clearly defined GWR areas.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 9: Clarify Uses for Waterbodies Not Specifically Named

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to improve the clarity for specific beneficial uses designated for unnamed surface and groundwaters in Chapter 2.

Section 2.1, Present and Potential Beneficial Uses, has created some limitations on Central Coast Water Board staff's ability to interpret water quality conditions and apply protective water quality targets. Additionally, the language has led to differing interpretations, internally and with external stakeholders, regarding which beneficial uses and water quality objectives apply to which surface waterbodies. The Central Coast Water Board should specify which beneficial uses are designated to waterbodies that do not otherwise have beneficial uses designated to them in Table 2-1.

For example, amend the second paragraph of section 2.1 to read:

Surface waterbodies within the Region that do not have beneficial uses designated for them in Table 2-1 are assigned the following designations:

- Municipal and Domestic Water Supply ([MUN](#)).
- Protection of both recreation and aquatic habitat.
- Protection of recreation (REC-1 and REC-2),
- Protection of freshwater aquatic habitat (COLD, WARM, and WILD) or protection of estuarine waters (EST and WILD).

The origin of beneficial use designations for minor streams and tributaries within the Central Coastal Basin stems from USEPA's (October 10, 1975) letter on Interpretations of Water Quality Standards for Central Coastal Basin 3 (see page 2350 of [Historical amendments of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin \(Basin Plan\) from 1969 to 2015](#)), which included the following:

Until explicitly clarified otherwise, it is assumed that all waters in Basin 3 are protected by beneficial uses and objectives. It is assumed that, on the basis of a footnote to Table 2-1, all minor streams and tributaries not specifically named in the Table are presently designated to protect both recreation and aquatic life.

The propagation of fish, wildlife, and recreation in and on the water are presumptive uses of surface waters under the Clean Water Act section 101(a)(2). Accordingly, USEPA has consistently required most surface waters in the Central Coast Region to be designated with recreational and aquatic life beneficial uses. In addition, Clean Water Act regulations at 40 CFR 131.3(e) state that existing uses, whether identified or not in water quality standards, must be protected.

Similarly, [State Water Board Resolution No. 88-63](#) considers all surface and groundwaters suitable for MUN uses.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 10: Update Groundwater Basin Boundary Map and Table

Discussion

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

In response to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) modified some groundwater basin boundaries, revising the 2003 edition of California's Groundwater - Bulletin 118 with a series of updates. Amend to incorporate current groundwater basin boundaries. Amend to replace the groundwater basin map (Basin Plan Fig 2-2) and table (Basin Plan Table 2-4) to be consistent with the current edition of Bulletin 118.

Amend to update last paragraph of section 2.1 to reflect the citation for the current DWR groundwater basin map and include language stating that the Water Board relies on DWR delineations of groundwater basins and the current version of DWR's Bulletin 118 map.

Amend to update the map in Appendix A-34 to reflect the current DWR Basin Boundary Modification for the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. Current groundwater basin boundaries may be viewed in the "[Bulletin 118 Groundwater Basins](#)" layer of the SGMA Data Viewer.

Amend to delete the word "alluvial" from the caption of Figure 2-2.

Public Comment Summary

County of Santa Barbara:

It is understood that groundwater basin boundary maps are being updated to be consistent with the SGMA boundaries as shown in Bulletin 118. The boundary for the Santa Maria River Valley would be modified from the Appendix A-34 to that shown on the interactive map. How will the sub-basins shown on Appendix A-34 and named on Table 3-6 be updated?

Valley Water:

Valley Water supports the Water Board's efforts to bring the basin descriptions into alignment with Bulletin 118 revisions.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for updating groundwater basin boundaries to align with current California Department of Water Resources Bulletin No. 118 boundaries. Bulletin No. 118 does not define smaller-scale boundaries within groundwater basins that correspond to the subareas defined in the Basin Plan, which were established to account for local variations in water quality. The justification for the subarea boundaries of the Santa Maria River Valley are described in "Water Quality Objectives for the Santa Maria Ground Water Basin Revised Staff Report, May 1985" (Santa Maria Staff Report). Staff cannot predict exactly how subarea boundaries will be affected by these updates at this time but, any changes to the Basin Plan would be developed as part of a public process where there are multiple opportunities for public input and comment during that process.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 11: Modify Groundwater Recharge Use Definition

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to revise the Groundwater Recharge beneficial use (GWR) definition (section 2.2.5) to include maintenance of instream flows, riparian habitat, and wetland habitat. This beneficial use could also be revised as it relates to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and climate change adaptation water supply augmentation and resiliency projects with a groundwater recharge component.

Amend text to read:

Uses of water for natural or artificial recharge of groundwater for purposes of future extraction, maintenance of water quality, maintenance of supply, or halting of saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers. Groundwater recharge includes recharge of surface water underflow.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 12: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 2)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for Chapter 2:

- A. Amend section 2.1 to include a link to [California Basin Plan Beneficial Use Viewer](#).
- B. Amend section 2.2.1 to be consistent with the Sources of Drinking Water Policy ([State Water Board Resolution No. 88-63](#)) by editing as follows:

...all surface waters and groundwaters are considered suitable, or potentially suitable, for municipal or domestic water supply...
- C. Amend Table 2-1 to correct misspelling of “Chalome” with correct “Cholame” in Cholame Creek and Little Cholame Creek entries.
- D. Amend Table 2-1 to replace quotation marks with “(Dune Lakes)”.
- E. Amend Table 2-1 to add “Uvas Creek, downstream of Uvas Res.” header above Uvas Res., L. Arthur Cr, Bodfish Cr, and Black Hawk Canyon Cr and indent these entries one level to the right.
- F. Amend Table 2-1 entry “Glen Annie Creek” to read “Glen Annie Canyon”.
- G. Amend Table 2-1 entry “Prisoner Harbor” to read “Prisoners Harbor on Santa Cruz Island”.
- H. Amend Table 2-1 entry “Graves Wetland” replace with “Bailey Wetland”.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Water Quality Objectives (Chapter 3) Related Proposals

Proposal 13: Develop Biological Water Quality Objectives

Discussion

Amend to establish water quality objectives for biological integrity. For example, establish a narrative biological water quality objective for water bodies in the Central Coast Region such as: "Waters of the State shall be of sufficient quality to support native aquatic species without detrimental changes in the resident biological communities."

Additionally, establish numeric water quality objectives for biological integrity that apply to surface waters designated as Cold and/or Warm Freshwater Habitats (COLD and WARM) (i.e., the Southern California Index of Biotic Integrity or the California Stream Condition Index). The San Diego Region's Basin Plan provides an example of this.

Public Comment Summary

Coastkeeper:

This should be prioritized, and the Regional Board should engage in outreach to identify partners to develop data to support efforts for specific water bodies.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal and the Coastkeeper recommendation to prioritize this work and identify partners for the proposal. The State Water Board is currently leading an effort to develop statewide water quality objectives for biological objectives (e.g., algal and benthic invertebrate communities). Central Coast Water Board staff have allocated resources to participate in the State's Biological Objectives workgroup and will postpone work on a Central Coast water quality objective until a decision is made by the State Water Board.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 14: Develop Aquatic Life Water Quality Objectives

Discussion

Amend to adopt numeric water quality objectives for the protection of aquatic life beneficial uses for specific cyanotoxins and current use pesticides.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 15: Develop and Establish Surface Water Flow Objectives

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to establish narrative and/or numeric water quality objectives that are protective of the minimum flows necessary to maintain and protect fish passage and habitat connectivity.

Public Comment Summary

Coastkeeper:

Inadequate flows are an increasingly detrimental problem for Central Coast Region waterbodies. This problem will most likely be exacerbated by increasing impacts of climate change and drought. Lack of adequate surface flows due to depletion of interconnected groundwater is occurring in waterbodies region-wide. Depletion of surface flows directly impacts nearly all beneficial uses of coastal streams and rivers as physical habitat is limited, water quality is degraded, and recreational uses are eliminated.

We believe that this proposal should be one of the Central Coast Regional Board's highest priorities. The Regional Board should coordinate with other State resource agencies and use existing models to identify specific water bodies where beneficial uses are impaired by depleted flows. The Regional Board should be urgently pursuing development and implementation of flow objectives as one of its highest priorities.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal and the Coastkeeper recommendation to prioritize this work in coordination with other State resource agencies. At this time, the proposal does not have staff resources identified to develop an amendment.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 16: Establish Additive Toxicity Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Toxicity to aquatic life can be caused by synergistic effects of pesticides that have the same mode of action. This is not addressed specifically by any water quality objective but several TMDL projects establish numeric targets for additive toxicity.

Amend to establish numeric water quality objectives for the additive toxicity of specific classes of pesticides to protect aquatic life beneficial uses or to adopt a narrative objective to protect aquatic life from additive toxicity, similar to the narrative objective in the [Central Valley Basin Plan](#) (see section 4.5.5).

Public Comment Summary

Valley Water:

Valley Water supports this water quality objective amendment. Valley Water acts as a steward of local waterways within its jurisdiction and supports various public outreach and education programs to reduce the urban use of toxic pesticides. Addressing pesticide-related toxicity is a challenge because new pesticides arrive on the market as soon as old ones are phased out. Amending the Basin Plan to address additive toxicity will be a positive step in the effort to reduce over-application of all types of toxic pesticides that affect water quality.

Coastkeeper:

Development of numeric water quality objective for additive toxicity should be prioritized.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal and the Coastkeeper recommendation to prioritize this work. At this time, the proposal does not have staff resources identified to develop an amendment.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 17: Develop and Establish Temperature Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to adopt numeric water quality objectives for temperature instead of, or in addition to, the Basin Plan narrative water quality objective to protect aquatic life beneficial uses.

Design these temperature objectives to account for ambient conditions, including daily and seasonal fluctuations, for the protection of COLD and WARM beneficial uses.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 18: Develop and Establish or Clarify Turbidity Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Develop numeric water quality objectives for turbidity or define specific “natural” turbidity levels for streams in the region so that the existing turbidity water quality objective can be used to protect aquatic life beneficial uses. For example, establish turbidity levels needed to protect from excessive sedimentation (e.g., 100 NTU), to ensure that fish can search for food (25 to 40 NTU), or to define maximum turbidity levels for specific life stages of anadromous fish. The [2013 South-Central California Coast Steelhead](#)

[Recovery Plan](#), written by the National Marine Fisheries Service, provides information on these parameters, including some water quality requirements and identification of critical habitat areas.

Amend to establish numeric turbidity objectives and/or to revise existing objectives by defining numeric definitions of “natural” turbidity levels for aquatic life beneficial uses including Cold Freshwater Habitats (COLD), Warm Freshwater Habitats (WARM) Spawning, Reproduction, and/or Early Development (SPWN), and Migration of Aquatic Organisms (MIGR).

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 19: Update Basin Plan to Include all Statewide Objectives

Discussion

Amend to include the following statewide objectives:

- A. Mercury. On May 2, 2017, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2017-0027](#), which includes statewide mercury water quality objectives in [Part 2 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California—Tribal and Subsistence Fishing Beneficial Uses and Mercury Provisions](#). This action specifically superseded the Basin Plan mercury water quality objective, defined in footnote c of Table 3-3. Amend this footnote to read:

Total mercury values should not exceed 0.05 µg/L as an average value; maximum acceptable concentration of total mercury in any aquatic organism is a total body burden of 0.5 µg/g wet weight.

The mercury body burden objective in the footnote to Table 3-4 pertaining to marine habitats should remain.

- B. Bacteria. On August 7, 2018, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2018-0038](#), which includes statewide bacteria water quality objectives for Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) beneficial use. The Resolution adopts the Bacteria Provisions, which are specifically titled “[Part 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California—Bacteria Provisions and a Water Quality Standards Variance Policy](#).”

Amend Basin Plan section 3.2.2.2, bacteria water quality objectives under the Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) beneficial use accordingly. Specifically,

remove the REC-1 objective for fecal coliform, which has been superseded by a REC-1 objective for e. coli.

- C. Dredge and Fill. On April 2, 2019, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2019-0015](#), which defines wetlands and delineation procedures for wetlands that are Waters of the State but not Waters of the U.S. so that Water Boards' regulation of dredge or fill activities will "ensure no overall net loss and long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands." The Resolution adopts the Procedures, which are specifically titled, "[State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State](#)."
- D. Trash. On April 7, 2015, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2015-0019](#), which provides provisions limiting the amount of trash that may be present in waterbodies. The Resolution adopts the Trash Provisions, specifically titled "[Part I Trash Provisions of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California](#)."
- E. Toxicity. On December 1, 2020, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2020-0044](#), which supersedes portions of the general toxicity objectives in the Basin Plan, section 3.3.2.1. The Resolution adopts the [Toxicity Provisions as a component of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California](#). Amend Basin Plan section 3.3.2.1 accordingly.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 20: Revise Dissolved Oxygen Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Develop and adopt dissolved oxygen water quality objectives to account for daily and seasonal fluctuations. Consider adding the [Worcester et al. \(2010\)](#) upper limit of 13 mg/L dissolved oxygen and the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) diurnal range.

Amend to revise or remove dissolved oxygen saturation water quality objective from General Objectives for all inland surface waters regardless of their beneficial use designations, enclosed bays, and estuaries (section 3.3.2.1). If revised, align with appropriate specific beneficial use(s) only.

Public Comment Summary

United States Environmental Protection Agency:

If the Regional Board plans to remove dissolved oxygen water quality objectives for WARM beneficial uses from the General Objectives section of Chapter 3, please clarify whether the Regional Board is considering developing new dissolved oxygen saturation objectives to replace them.

Coastkeeper:

We support this amendment.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal and have edited the description to clarify that it refers only to the general objective for dissolved oxygen saturation (85%) and would not affect the water quality objective for dissolved oxygen for the WARM beneficial use (5.0 mg/L). The State Water Board is currently leading an effort to develop statewide water quality objectives for biostimulatory substances (e.g., nutrients) and responses (e.g., dissolved oxygen). Central Coast Water Board staff have allocated resources to participate in the State's biostimulatory substances workgroup and will postpone work on a Central Coast water quality objective until a decision is made by the State Water Board.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 21: Revise Water Quality Objectives to be as Protective as Federal Criteria

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review and modified following the 2021 public comment period to explain why the Central Coast Water Board did not adopt new or revised criteria for parameters for which EPA has published new or revised Clean Water Act (CWA) section 304(a) criteria recommendations.

Staff did not develop this proposal during the 2017-2021 Triennial Review cycle due to resource constraints and the need to address other priorities (i.e., the development of turbidity water quality objectives and establishing prohibitions on unpermitted discharges). It should be noted that Central Coast Water Board staff do participate in

the State's Biostimulatory Substances Objectives workgroup efforts to develop water quality objectives for all waters of the state that will address the USEPA recommended aquatic life nutrient criteria.

Amend to incorporate Clean Water Act section 304(a) criteria. Federal regulations 40 CFR 131.20(a) require states to review their water quality standards in comparison to Clean Water Act section 304(a) criteria as new information becomes available. Water quality objectives in Basin Plan Chapter 3 or in effect under the California Toxics Rule that are not as protective as the USEPA nationally recommended criteria and need to be updated.

For example, USEPA promulgated new and revised human health water quality criteria in 2015 (Federal Register 80(124):36986-36989). This ruling established new water quality criteria for seven pollutants that are not in the California Toxics Rule (arsenic, chloroform, 3-methyl-4-chlorophenol, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, 1,2,4-trichlorobenzene, selenium, and zinc). The 2015 ruling contains revised water quality criteria that are more stringent than the California Toxics Rule for 64 pollutants. In addition, the 2015 ruling contains revised water quality criteria that are less stringent than the California Toxics Rule for 19 pollutants.

The Los Angeles Water Board provides an example of this amendment process in the staff memo titled "[Evaluation of New or Revised Recommended Section 304\(a\) Criteria for Incorporation into the Basin Plan as Water Quality Objectives.](#)"

Public Comment Summary

United States Environmental Protection Agency:

Proposal 21 acknowledges the recent revisions to the federal Water Quality Standards regulations at 40 CFR Section 131.20 by including an item to evaluate new or revised 304(a) recommended criteria for incorporation into the Basin Plan as water quality objectives. EPA supports such an evaluation as a priority item. However, to fully comply with 40 C.F.R. § 131.20, the Triennial Review must also include an explanation if the State does not adopt new or revised criteria for parameters for which EPA has published new or revised Clean Water Act (CWA) section 304(a) criteria recommendations.

In addition, the discussion of EPA's process in publishing new and revised CWA 304(a) criteria is not fully accurate. EPA's CWA 304(a) criteria that are cited in the discussion were not promulgated as a rulemaking but were published in a notice of availability as recommendations for States and Tribes.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge USEPA support for this proposal, understand the requirement to explain any decision not to adopt new or revised Clean Water Act section 304(a) criteria

recommendations, and appreciate the correction regarding the distinction between rulemaking and recommendations. An explanation has been added to the description of this proposal. Although the proposal has not been developed, staff have participated in the development of several statewide water quality objectives that do/will address pollutants for which USEPA has developed recommended criteria.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 22: Update Agricultural Supply Water Quality Objectives in Table 3-1

Discussion

This issue was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to update water quality objectives to protect the Agricultural Supply beneficial use (AGR) in Table 3.1 - Guidelines for Interpretation of Quality of Water for Irrigation using either or both of the following:

- A. The [1985 FAO document by Ayers and Westcot](#)
- B. The [2006 UC publication by Stephan Grattan “Agricultural Salinity and Drainage”](#)

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 23: Revisions for Table 3-5 - Water Quality Objectives for Site-specific Surface Waters

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review and modified following the 2021 public comment period to add the request to define the term “reach” (see item 23-F below) and to add item 23-G.

The following amendments are needed for Table 3-5 and associated sections:

- A. Site-specific surface water quality objectives for salts (namely, chloride, sulfate, boron, sodium, nitrate, and total dissolved solids) are found in Table 3-5 - Mean

Surface Water Objectives. The implementation of these objectives is discussed in section 3.3.3. - Objectives for Specific Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays and Estuaries of the Basin Plan. Amend as follows:

Associate objectives with the specific beneficial uses appropriate for the thresholds. Revise Table 3-5 to clearly state that objectives apply to specific beneficial uses, such as Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) or aquatic life (e.g., COLD and WARM).

Revise waterbody segment names in Table 3-5 to align with Table 2-1 names where possible or else clearly differentiate them.

Revise Table 3-5 to clarify that the site-specific objectives should be evaluated as annual medians instead of annual mean values. This is consistent with the groundwater site-specific objectives and use of a median is a better indicator of the most typical value, especially if the data set contains an outlier. Specifically, revise as follows:

1. Table heading: “Table 3-5. MeanMedian Annual Surface Water Quality Objectives, mg/L^a.”
 2. Table footnote a: “Objectives shown are annual meanmedian values. Objectives are based on preservation of existing quality or water quality enhancement believed attainable following control of point sources.”
- B. Develop and amend to add site-specific numeric water quality objectives for other constituents such as pH, phosphorous, nickel, chromium, and other specific salts. Some watersheds in the Central Coast Region contain naturally high levels of pH, phosphorous, nickel, chromium, sodium, and chloride.
- C. Amend to revise to improve specificity of some Hydrologic Units (HUs) listed in Table 3-5. Revise Santa Ynez, “Solvang” to “Santa Ynez River near Solvang”, revise “Lompoc” to “Santa Ynez River near Lompoc”, and revise to add “Santa Ynez River above Cachuma Reservoir.”
- D. Develop site-specific water quality objectives for the following waterbodies and amend to add these waterbodies and water quality objectives to Table 3-5:
1. Under Santa Maria HU, add “Santa Maria River.”
 2. Under Salinas River HU add “above Nacimiento River.”
 3. Under Santa Lucia HU add “Big Creek” and “Willow Creek.”
 4. Under Pajaro River HU add “Uvas Creek” and “Tres Pinos.”
 5. Add South Coast HU and subareas using the Jalama Creek Sodium and Chloride TMDL as a reference.

E. Develop site-specific water quality objectives for tidally influenced areas (lagoons and estuaries) and amend to add these waterbodies and water quality objectives to Table 3-5. These reaches are currently on the 303(d) List for salts and/or pH exceedances but the impairment is limited to the tidally influenced segment:

1. Old Salinas River,
2. Moro Cojo Slough,
3. Scott Creek Lagoon,
4. Waddell Creek Lagoon, and
5. Pajaro River below Highway 1.

F. Amend section 3.3.3 - Objectives for Specific Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bay and Estuaries to align with changes made to Table 3-5 outlined above. For example, revise as follows:

Certain water quality objectives have been established for selected surface waters; these objectives are intended to serve as a water quality baseline for evaluating water quality management in the basin. ~~Mean Median~~ values, shown in Table 3-5 for surface waters, are based on available data.

It must be recognized that the ~~mean-median~~ values indicated in Table 3-5 are values representing gross areas of a waterbody. ~~Specific water quality objectives for a particular area may not be directly related to the objectives indicated.~~ Therefore, application of these objectives must be based upon consideration of the surface water and groundwater quality naturally present in any specific reach; i.e., waste discharge requirements must adhere to the previously stated objectives and issuance of requirements must be tempered by consideration of beneficial uses within the immediate influence of the discharge, the existing quality of receiving waters, and water quality objectives.

In addition, include a definition for “reach” or describe the process by which reaches are define.

G. Create site-specific water quality objectives for turbidity and pathogen indicators extending 5-miles upstream of the City's San Lorenzo River surface water diversion at Crossing Street to protect the primary drinking water sources for the City of Santa Cruz.

Public Comment Summary

City of Santa Cruz:

[We request that the Central Coast Water Board] [c]reate site-specific turbidity and pathogen objectives extending 5-miles upstream of the City's San Lorenzo River surface water diversion at Crossing Street... [in order to] further protect MUN beneficial uses.

As the San Lorenzo River is the primary water source for the City of Santa Cruz, we would like increased focus on protecting the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) beneficial uses than are currently incorporated into the basin plan. To better protect the MUN beneficial uses we suggest lowering acceptable turbidity and pathogen levels for reaches upstream of the main diversion near Crossing Street in the City of Santa Cruz (<https://goo.gl/maps/baP8bJytZrM7HaiE7>) with site specific objectives. For instance, using a value of 15 NTU, which is in between the secondary MCL for turbidity of 5 NTU and the 25 NTU regional value, for 5 miles upstream of the diversion would be useful to regulate discharges in addition to helping meet annual load targets of the sediment TMDL.

Winter water from the San Lorenzo is rapidly becoming more important to municipal use in terms of groundwater recharge projects. Having the pathogen and turbidity standards applied for this reach on a year-round basis will further protect MUN beneficial uses. It is our position that lowering the objective on pathogens upstream of the diversion would be warranted, especially given the challenges of enforcing the 5.4.2.2 prohibition on fecal matter discharge and the increased homeless population in the area.

Coastkeeper:

Similar to our concerns expressed above regarding [Proposal] 6, we caution the Regional Board from focusing on this [proposal] as a pressing regional priority. A significant number of waterbodies within the region are detrimentally impaired by pollution and not on track to achieve water quality objectives in the foreseeable future. We believe that the Regional Board's limited resources should be acutely focused on [proposals] related to the improvement of water quality. We recognize that there may be limited locations where natural conditions impact water quality as it relates to existing WQO's. The southern coastal portion of the region may be one area where this should be considered. However, salinity impaired streams of the southern coastal region are not resulting in significant investment of private or public resources to ameliorate. In other words, we don't see this as a large problem given the real water quality concerns that exist in the region. If site-specific objectives may be useful in maximizing protections for existing high-quality water bodies from emanating new threats (such as forthcoming urban or agricultural development), then expenditure of the Regional Board's resources on this [proposal] may be justified. Given, however, the other highly pressing impairments that do require investment of resources, we believe this [proposal] should not be a regional priority and recommend that it be removed from the list.

Preservation, Inc.:

We recommend that you include in the Basin Plan a definition for the word “reach.”

Staff Response

In response City of Santa Cruz's comment regarding as site-specific objective for the San Lorenzo River, staff updated the proposal to include site-specific objectives for a 5-mile reach of the San Lorenzo River upstream of Crossing St. in Santa Cruz for turbidity and pathogen indicators (see item G above).

In response to Coastkeeper's comment and as described in staff's response to comments for proposal 6, staff use the triennial review as a tracking mechanism for proposed updates to the Basin Plan, in this case for site-specific objectives that account for local variation in water quality. As such, it is important that this proposal remain on the secondary list even if, as noted by the commenter, resource constraints do not allow for its prioritization.

In response to Preservation, Inc.'s, comment regarding defining the word “reach” in the context of site-specific objectives, staff have added this suggestion to item F.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 24: Revisions for Table 3-6 - Site-specific Groundwaters

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review and modified following the 2021 public comment period to add item 24-G below.

Basin Plan groundwater boundaries and/or names do not correspond with the boundaries defined by the current State Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118. Some Basin Plan groundwater basin boundaries are in Appendices A-32 through A-35 and the maps need to be replaced with current maps.

Amend Table 3-6 so that Basin Plan groundwater boundaries and/or names correspond with the boundaries defined by the current DWR Bulletin 118:

- A. Footnote f - update the maps in Appendix A-32 - A-35 to reflect the 2018 (or current) DWR Basin Boundary Modifications for each Groundwater Basin.

- B. Footnote f – add statement clarifying that the State’s DWR is responsible for establishing and updating groundwater basin boundaries.
- C. Reevaluate objectives in Table 3-6 based on current available data in GeoTracker and GAMA programs. Focus on those constituents and/or subbasins that had limited data at the time when the water quality objective was created (e.g., boron).
- D. Include editorial revisions as described in Proposal 30: Editorial corrections or minor clarifications (Chapter 3).
- E. Add footnote to each parameter found in Table 3-6 (namely, for chloride, sulfate, boron, sodium, nitrate, and total dissolved solids) that clarifies which beneficial use(s) the objective protects (e.g., Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) or Cold and Warm Freshwater Habitats (COLD and WARM)).
- F. Consider expanding Table 3-6 to include all groundwater basins in the Central Coast Region and develop and adopt minimum and maximum water quality objectives for each one.
- G. Create an entry in Table 3-6 for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin and develop site-specific objectives for TDS, CL, and N.

Public Comment Summary

County of Santa Barbara:

It is understood that evaluation of the groundwater objectives for constituents by basin and sub-basin is proposed based on current data. Has the data been evaluated and are updated numerical objectives proposed?

Valley Water:

As with [Proposal] 10, Valley Water supports Basin Plan updates to ensure alignment with DWR Bulletin 118. Valley Water also supports the review of numeric objectives in Table 3-6 and recommends this be done in coordination with local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, who may have substantial groundwater quality data available.

Los Osos Sustainability Group:

To ensure the long-term sustainability and highest beneficial uses of the [Los Osos Groundwater] Basin, we request the following:

1. Develop water quality objectives for chlorides and TDS and a water quality control plan for the Basin to stop the degradation and restore parts of the Basin being degraded by seawater to historic levels and incorporate the

- objectives and control plan into the Regional Basin Plan as part of the Triennial Review process.
2. Develop a water quality control plan to stop the degradation and restore parts of the Basin degraded by nitrates to historic levels and incorporate the control plan into the Regional Basin Plan as part of the Triennial Review process.

Staff Response

In response to the County of Santa Barbara's comment regarding the evaluation of current data and development of updated numerical objectives, staff have not begun this work.

In response to Valley Water's comment in support of this proposal, staff acknowledge the support for this proposal.

In response to Los Osos Sustainability Group's comment regarding water quality objectives for the Los Osos groundwater basin, staff have added an additional item (see 24-G) to this proposal for the development of site specific objectives for the Los Osos groundwater basin.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development. This proposal is a priority for multiple programs; however, development of this Basin Plan amendment will be complex and very resource intensive. Basin planning staff will need to first develop a scope of work, project schedule, and identify resources prior to moving forward with a formal Basin Plan amendment.

Proposal 25: Revise Sediment Water Quality Objective

Discussion

Amend the current sediment water quality objective in section 3.3.2.1 so that phrasing is consistent with other objective in this section. Amend as follows:

Sediment

~~The suspended sediment load and suspended sediment discharge rate of surface waters shall not be altered in such a manner as to cause nuisance or adversely~~

affect beneficial uses. Waters shall be free of changes in suspended sediment concentrations that cause a nuisance, harm or potentially harm to beneficial uses, or affect the quality of the waters of the state.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 26: Revise Pesticides Water Quality Objective

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend the narrative pesticide water quality objective in section 3.3.2.1 to include all legacy and currently applied pesticides by striking the phrase “chlorinated hydrocarbon”. Amend the text in the second “Pesticides” paragraph of section 3.3.2.1 to read:

For waters where existing concentrations are presently nondetectable or where beneficial uses would be impaired by concentrations in excess of nondetectable levels, total identifiable ~~chlorinated hydrocarbon~~ pesticides shall not be present at concentrations detectable within the accuracy of analytical methods prescribed in Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, latest edition, or other equivalent methods approved by the Executive Officer.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 44: Establish Narrative Toxicity Water Quality Objective for Groundwater

Discussion

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period.

Develop and establish a narrative objective for toxicity specific to groundwater. Use the Sacramento River Basin and San Joaquin River Basin - Basin Plan as an example:

Ground waters shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations that produce detrimental physiological responses in human, plant, animal, or

aquatic life associated with designated beneficial use(s). This objective applies regardless of whether the toxicity is caused by a single substance or the interactive effect of multiple substances.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 27: Establish Nutrient Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend the Basin Plan to adopt numeric water quality objectives instead of, or in addition to, the Basin Plan narrative water quality objective for biostimulatory substances. Establish numeric water quality objectives for nutrients that are protective of aquatic life, such as seasonal objectives for total nitrogen, nitrate, and total phosphorus. These water quality objectives would complement the narrative water quality objective for biostimulatory substances.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 28: Update Reference to MCLs

Discussion

Amend the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) section 3.3.4.2 to include [Maximum Contaminant Levels \(MCLs\) in 22 CCR section 64533](#) such as haloacetic acids, trihalomethanes (THMs), all disinfection byproducts, and 1,2,3,-trichloropropene (1,2,3-TCP) and other appropriate drinking water levels for contaminants of emerging concern, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances.

Public Comment Summary

Valley Water:

[This proposal would change] the Basin Plan regarding Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC) such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Valley Water supports the Water Board's effort to better understand CECs and their impacts, including setting appropriate water quality objectives. Given the lack of drinking water standards for many CECs, including PFAS, Valley Water recommends that any related water quality objectives be determined in coordination with the Division of Drinking Water, groundwater sustainability agencies, and water resource agencies. Valley Water also recommends that the Central Board consider (among other criteria) the technical feasibility of measurement/analysis, enforcement feasibility, and historical data, including data from State Board PFAS Investigative Orders. The use of a science advisory panel and/or consideration of recommendations from science panels convened by other entities (such as the State Board) could also provide guidance regarding water quality objectives for CECs in the Central Coast region.

Coastkeeper:

We support this amendment.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal, as well as the suggestion that resulting water quality objectives be developed in coordination with other water resource agencies and technical experts.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 29: Editorial Corrections or Minor Clarifications (Chapter 3)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for Chapter 3:

- A. Amend Chapter 3 to discuss and reference the California Toxics Rule. Add discussion to the chapter introduction (e.g., sections 3.1, 3.3, or in a new section).
- B. Amend to add a discussion about emerging contaminants in section 3.3 or in a new section. Detection of these pollutants may influence how the Central Coast Water Board regulates waste discharges. For example, the Central Coast Water

Board may limit biosolids use (section 4.6.1.7) if elevated concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are detected in biosolids.

- C. Amend 3.1 to clarify that nonpoint sources of pollution are “loads” and not “wasteloads.” Remove “urban drainage” and “road construction activities” as an example of a nonpoint source. USEPA considered point sources to include all sources subject to regulation under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. The recommended edits are as follows:

Nonpoint sources are ~~wasteloads loads~~ resulting from land use practices where wastes are not collected and disposed of in any readily identifiable manner. Examples include ~~urban drainage~~, agricultural runoff, ~~road construction activities~~, mining, grassland management, logging and other harvest activities, and natural sources such as effects of fire, flood, and landslide.

- D. Amend section 3.3.1 to add a footnote that defines jurisdictional authority in Monterey Bay. Amend as follows:

The Ocean and Thermal Plans shall also apply in their entirety to Monterey Bay¹ and Carmel Bay.

¹The bay of Monterey between its headlands and the ocean adjacent to a line drawn between these headlands for a distance of three nautical miles is within the boundaries of the state of California and of the counties respectively of Santa Cruz and Monterey.

- E. Amend section 3.3.2.1 to clarify the specific type of wastewater effluent. Amend as follows:

Chemical Constituents

Where municipal, domestic, and industrial wastewater effluents are returned to land for irrigation uses, regulatory controls shall be consistent with Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and other relevant local controls.

- F. Amend to clarify that the term “restrictions” in paragraph 2 of section 3.3.5 refers to those restrictions discussed in paragraph two of section 3.3.3 as follows:

The restrictions specified for Table 3-5 in the second paragraph of section 3.3.3 are applicable to the values indicated in Table 3-6; i.e., the values are at best representative of gross areas only.

- G. Amend Table 3-1 to change EC units from mmho/cm to $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ to be consistent with State Water Board Resolution No. 88-63 and section 2.2.1.

- H. Amend Table 3-3 header to replace “<” with “≤” in the SOFT column. Currently, and since 1975, only a less-than symbol is in place. This correction is based on cadmium criteria guidelines in the 1972 USEPA Blue Book cadmium criterion for fish spawning where “Hard water is defined as water exceeding 100 mg/L.”
- I. Amend Table 3-5 column names to spell out all constituents.
- J. Amend first sentence of footnote a of Table 3-6 to clarify that objective are annual median values. Amend as follows:

Objectives shown are annual median values.
- K. Amend Table 3-6 column names to spell out all constituents (e.g., replace “N” with “Total Nitrogen as N”) and remove footnote b which defines “N” as “Nitrogen”.
- L. Amend footnote f of Table 3-6 to add basis documents for Santa Ynez groundwater basins and for the Lompoc Terrace.
- M. Amend Table 3-6 to remove reference to footnote e from N (nitrogen) column of Santa Maria River Valley rows. This footnote was changed during a previous revision but not removed from the table at that time, by mistake. The footnote no longer applies.
- N. Amend Table 3-6 to add a column that refers to a current map and basis for the water quality objectives for each basin.

Public Comment Summary

United States Environmental Protection Agency:

[Regarding item C,] EPA agrees that removing the term urban drainage as an example of a nonpoint source is appropriate. It may be useful to clarify the reason for removing urban drainage as a nonpoint source. For example, it could be noted that urban drainage can be categorized as a point source and a wasteload from an identifiable municipal discharge as described earlier in section 3.1 of the Basin Plan.

The Regional Board should also clarify whether some of the other categories that are currently classified as nonpoint sources in the Basin Plan, such as road construction activity, may also be defined as point sources in some instances.

Staff Response

Staff updated proposal 29-C to remove ambiguous examples of nonpoint sources and clarify that this proposal is consistent with USEPA definition of how wasteloads are implemented.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Implementation (Chapter 4) Related Proposals

Proposal 45: Establish State Water Quality Protection Areas

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period.

Establish a State Water Quality Protection Area for the Point Sur Marine Protected Area and other Marine Protected Areas.

Public Comment Summary

Coast Keeper Alliance:

Developing water quality protections for all Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) on the Central Coast should be a top priority for the Regional Board in 2022 and 2023. To protect our coast from the threat of land-based pollution, the State Water Board created State Water Quality Protection Areas (SWQPAs). These areas, like MPAs, serve as a tool to protect and preserve marine ecosystems from human interference, but as of yet, have not been adopted into the Basin Plan. While MPAs manage what activities can take place within the protected area (such as commercial or recreational fishing), SWQPAs regulate the water quality of coastal discharges into these areas. In 2020, the state adopted its Ocean Strategic Plan through the Ocean Protection Council. Within the Strategic Plan, the State commits to “Strengthen water quality protection in MPAs equivalent to at least that of Areas of Special Biological Significance or State Water Quality Protection Areas by 2023.”

California Coastkeeper Alliance staff have discussed developing SWQPAs for all MPAs on the Central Coast with Regional Board staff, State Water Board staff, and other stakeholders, and we believe there is strong support for this project. The State Water Board’s Ocean Plan includes “procedures for the nomination and designation” of SWQPAs. Initially, California Coastkeeper Alliance proposed submitting a nomination to develop SWQPAs to the Regional Board in 2021, but

we agreed to postpone the nomination until 2022 at the request of staff. The strategy we have developed is to first adopt a SWQPA for the Point Sur MPA in 2022, and using that process as a model, in 2023 adopt protections for the remaining MPAs on the Central Coast. This should be a top priority project for 2022 and 2023.

Staff Response

Staff have added a proposal to establish a State Water Quality Protection Area for the Point Sur Marine Protected Area and other Marine Protected Areas to the 2021 priority list.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 46: Develop protections for riparian corridors

Discussion

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period. This proposal was removed from the Triennial Review list in 2014 because it was included in the Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection proposal. This proposal is being added back in the 2021 Triennial Review. There remains a need to build upon statewide and regional riparian and wetland policies.

Develop protections for riparian corridors.

Public Comment Summary

Coast Keeper Alliance:

Development of protections for riparian corridors was on the Regional Board's list of goals previously but does not appear on the priority list. To the extent that such protections are understood or expected to be a part of [Proposal] 40 (Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection), we request that this specific [proposal] be identified as a stand-alone priority because of the urgent and specific attention it deserves. Restoring and protecting riparian zones is scientifically accepted and often promoted by Regional Board staff, sister agencies, and stakeholders, as one of the most effective strategies for improving water quality and protecting beneficial uses. The Central Coast Regional Board already invested significant time, during development of the Ag 4.0 Order, compiling a record that justifies and demonstrates the need for riparian

protections. Protecting and restoring riparian corridors must be a top priority for the Central Coast over the next few years.

Staff Response

Staff have added a proposal to develop protections for riparian corridors to the 2021 priority list.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 47: Develop a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin

Discussion

This proposal was added after the 2021 public comment period.

Develop and implement Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin that prevents further degradation.

Public Comment Summary

Los Osos Sustainability Group:

To ensure the long-term sustainability and highest beneficial uses of the [Los Osos Groundwater] Basin, we request the following:

3. In the water quality control plans developed for continuing seawater and nitrate contamination, include measures that address the proposals in all plans and projects the Regional Board initiates and approves for the Los Osos area, e.g., the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) for the Basin.
4. Include a seawater intrusion and nitrate impact analysis and statement in all plans, programs, and requirements affecting the Los Osos Basin.

Staff Response

Staff have added a proposal to develop a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan to the secondary list (Proposal 47).

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 30: Provide 401 Exemptions for Some Restoration Activities

Discussion

Amend to establish a provision in the Basin Plan that would waive 401 requirements for some restoration projects that meet specific criteria. Currently, restoration projects are hindered by the need to avoid temporary exceedances of objectives for constituents such as turbidity even if the project would result in overall improvements in water quality.

Note, this proposal may become unnecessary or be modified to only address those projects that do not require authorization from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Clean Water Act section 404. The State Water Board has already adopted a General Certification for small habitat restoration projects that do require USACE authorization (under 5 ac or 500 linear feet that qualify for a CEQA Class 33 Categorical Exemption). The State Water Board is in the process of developing a large restoration project general order as a companion to the small project Certification.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 31: Revise to Reflect Regulation under the Current Agricultural Order

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to remove or revise outdated implementation language contrary to the regulatory requirements established in the 2021 General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges From Irrigated Lands ([Order No. R3-2021-0040](#)) or [current Order regulating the discharge of waste from irrigated agriculture](#). Revise the following Basin Plan sections:

- Sec. 4.6.1.4.1 Wastewater Disposal (nitrate removal & percolation basins)
- Sec. 4.8.3 Agricultural Water and Wastewater Management
- Sec. 4.8.3.3 Irrigation Operations - Need for Salt Management

- Sec. 4.8.3.4 Improved Salt Management Techniques
- Sec. 4.9 Total Maximum Daily Loads (several)

Mushroom farm operations (section 4.8.3.5) are regulated by individual waste discharge requirements, not by the Agricultural Order. Therefore, this section should remain unchanged in the Basin Plan.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 32: Revise TMDL Attainment Dates for Agriculture

Discussion

Amend to revise TMDL attainment dates for load allocations assigned to agricultural dischargers to align the Basin Plan with the 2021 General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges From Irrigated Lands ([Order No. R3-2021-0040](#)).

Public Comment Summary

Coastkeeper:

Extending TMDL attainment dates should be taken off the priority list for the Regional Board. The extensions listed in the 2021 Agricultural Order (Order No. R3-2021-0040) were improper for numerous reasons, and as a result, were challenged in our petition to the State Water Resources (Board Petition SWRCB/OCC Files A-2751[a-b]).

Staff Response

The inclusion of the proposal does not represent a recommendation by Central Coast Water Board staff to make the proposed change, instead it is a record of a potential need should the Agricultural Order requirements regarding TMDL attainment dates stand as written in Order No. R3-2021-0040. Staff acknowledge that the California Coastkeeper Alliance has petitioned this specific element of the Agricultural Order.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 33: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 4)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for Chapter 4:

- A. Amend to create a section for cannabis cultivation related discharges and clearly differentiate the implementation strategy for the Cannabis Regulatory Program (e.g., the State's [Cannabis Cultivation Policy](#) and the [Cannabis General Order No. 2019-0001-DWQ](#)) from the implementation of the Agricultural Order.
- B. Amend to incorporate the prohibitions and requirements in Cannabis General Order Attachment A to help clarify expectations related to all cultivation sites in the region— both enrolled and unenrolled. Incorporate the requirements by reference in the event that the Cannabis Policy and/or Cannabis General Order are updated in the future.
- C. Amend to update description of the 401 Program in section 4.5.1.1. The current description is outdated and too brief.
- D. Amend to update discussion of NPDES program in section 4.5.1.2.
- E. Amend section 4.5.1.6 to read “Cleanup and Abatement” throughout the section. Text currently reads “Cleanup or Abatement.” Note that this amendment is incorporated into the proposed amendments associated with clarifying and improving waste discharge prohibitions language. These proposed amendments will be presented to the Central Coast Water Board in early 2022.

Further, amend the “Cleanup and Abatement Order” paragraph of section 4.5.1.6 to incorporate language from CWC section 13304(a) and 13304(f) authorizing the Water Boards to require replacement water services that meet water quality standards. Amend section 4.5.1.6 as follows:

A Cleanup ~~or and~~ Abatement Order (California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Section 13304) is an order requiring a discharger to clean up a waste or abate its effects or, in the case of a threatened pollution or nuisance, take other necessary remedial action. A Cleanup ~~or and~~ Abatement Order can be issued by the Regional Board or by the Regional Board Executive Officer. Cleanup ~~or and~~ Abatement Orders are issued for situations when action is needed to correct a problem caused by regulated or unregulated discharges which are creating or threatening to create a condition of pollution or nuisance. A Cleanup ~~or and~~ Abatement Order is also used by the Regional Board to establish the acceptable level of cleanup.

- F. Amend to replace all occurrences of the word “ephemeral” with the phrase “ephemeral or intermittent” in section 4.6.1.1.

- G. Amend to replace outdated discussion of waivers of secondary treatment requirements with reference to the Ocean Plan in section 4.6.1.3.
- AA. Amend reference to State Health Department in section 4.6.1.4.1 to refer to State Water Resources Control Board Department of Drinking Water.
- H. Amend to delete list of municipalities with pretreatment programs in section 4.6.1.6. The list is unnecessary and is subject to changes more frequent than can adequately be addressed by Basin Plan amendments.
- I. Amend to delete the sixth paragraph in section 4.6.11.2 that begins “Beneficial reuse of sludge/septage is increasing in popularity.” This paragraph advocates for the use of biosolids as a soil amendment. As the Central Coast Water Board becomes more aware of the threat of contamination posed by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other emerging contaminants of concern it may begin to curtail such use.
- J. Amend section 4.6.1.7 to reflect requirements for “a 75% reduction in the level of statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2025” (Senate Bill 1383 (2016)).
- K. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to reduce the level of detail in section 4.6.2 since is subject to changes more frequent than can adequately be addressed by Basin Plan amendments. Amend to incorporate revisions submitted by the City of Lompoc for sections 4.6.2, 4.6.5, and 4.8.2 pertaining to Municipal Wastewater Management, Stormwater Management, and Urban Runoff Management, respectively. These sections are out of date and should be updated to recognized current conditions, verify the accuracy of beneficial uses, and provide scientifically defensible water quality objectives for surface and groundwater.
- L. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to update outdated references to Title 22 in sections 4.6.4 and 4.6.11.4. The Basin Plan currently cites an outdated section of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Sections 66300 - 67100 of Title 22 were repealed, effective July 1, 1991. Make the following revisions to the Basin Plan to bring it up to date:
 1. Replace reference to “CCR Title 22, Section 66300” with “22 CCR 66261.3 - Definition of Hazardous Waste” in section 4.6.4
 2. Clarify reference to “Title 22” with “22 CCR 66261.120 – List of Special Wastes” in section 4.6.11.4.
- M. Amend to clarify that the floodplain referred to in section 4.6.4.1 is based on a 100-year recurrence interval.
- N. Amend to include Central Coast Water Board’s commitment to viewing stormwater as a resource rather than a waste in section 4.6.5. Cite the STORMS

Vision Statement: “Stormwater is sustainably managed and utilized in the Central Coast Region to support water quality and water availability for human uses as well as the environment.”

- O. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to revise section 4.6.6 - Bay Protection and Toxic Cleanup Program and Appendix A-31.

Amend to reflect the following events:

1. The Bay Protection and Toxic Cleanup Program (BPTCP) no longer exists at the State Water Board’s Division of Water Quality.
2. California Water Code section 13394 required the State Water Board and the Regional Water Boards to develop Regional and Consolidated Toxic Hot Spot Cleanup Plans by June 30, 1999.
3. In 2001, the State Water Board began a process to develop sediment quality objectives (SQOs) pursuant to the California Water Code section 13393, which requires the State Water Board to adopt SQOs for toxic pollutants that have been identified in toxic hot spots in the State’s bays and estuaries as part of the BPTCP or that have been identified as pollutants of concern.
4. [State Water Board Resolution No. 2008-0057](#) allocated funding to begin development of SQOs for bays and estuaries.
5. The State Water Board adopted Water Quality Control Plan for Enclosed Bays and Estuaries: Part 1 Sediment Quality Objectives (Resolution No. 2008-0070) in 2009 and amended the objectives with [Resolution No. 2011-0017](#) and [Resolution No. 2018-0028](#).

- P. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to revise the list and map of active military installations in section 4.6.7. Revise as follows:

1. Remove mention of Fort Ord, Estero Bay Defense Fuel Supply Point, Monterey NPGS, Presidio of Monterey, and any other inactive military installations.
2. Amend to correct the misspelling of “Vandenburg” to “Vandenberg” and amend to change “Air Force Base” to “Space Force Base.”

- Q. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend section 4.6.8 to add reference to the Statewide Containment Zone Policy. Currently, this section cites State Water Board Resolution No. 92-49 - Policies and Procedures for Investigation and Cleanup and Abatement of Discharges Under Water Code section 13304. Expand this section to also cite State Water Board Resolution No. 96-079 - Containment Zone Policy amendment of State Board Resolution No. 92-49.

- R. Amend to edit text of third bullet of last bulleted list of section 4.6.8 as follows:
Set up water and sediment monitoring program.
- S. Amend to change title of section 4.6.8 from “Spills, Leaks, Investigations and Cleanup Program” to “Site Cleanup Program” and revise text in this section accordingly.
- T. Amend to revise sections 4.6.8 and 4.6.9 with current language and remove obsolete section 4.6.10.
- U. Amend section 4.8 to incorporate updates from the current Nonpoint Source Program’s 5-year plan.
- V. Amend section 4.8.3 to reflect changes introduced by the adoption of the 2021 General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges From Irrigated Lands ([Order No. R3-2021-0040](#)). Include language regarding the need for nutrient management.
- W. Amend text in section 4.8.3.3 for gender neutral language. Currently, text refers to “businessman”, etc.
- X. Amend to add the word “riparian” to the discussion of buffers in section 4.8.3.6.1 to clarify that riparian vegetation is necessary for protection of beneficial uses.
- Y. Amend to add a summary table of TMDL Projects to section 4.9, including watershed names and pollutants. Currently the TMDLs are organized by adoption date which makes it difficult to identify the TMDLs waterbody or watershed.
- Z. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend Table 4.10-1 - TMDLs, in section 4.10, as follows:
 - 1. Revise date in caption to June 29, 2016.
 - 2. Add rows to table and a footnote as follows:

Approval Date	Resolution No.	USEPA Approval Date	Name of TMDL
12/03/2004	R3-2004-0166	Pending	TMDL and Implementation Plan for Dissolved Oxygen in Dairy Creek
12/02/2005	R3-2005-0131	10/13/2006	TMDL and Implementation Plan for Nitrate in Pajaro River and Llagas Creek ^a

11/19/2015	R3-2015-0032	Pending	TMDL for Nitrate in Streams of the San Antonio Creek Watershed, Santa Barbara County
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^a This TMDL is superseded by R3-2015-0004, Total Maximum Daily Loads for Nitrogen Compounds and Orthophosphate in Streams of the Pajaro River Basin (section 4.9.18).

Public Comment Summary

United States Environmental Protection Agency:

[Regarding item D.] [f]urther clarification of how the Regional Board plans to update the NPDES discussion would be useful.

[Regarding item I.] [w]e recommend that the Regional Board clarify where this statement appears within Section 4.6.11 of the Basin Plan. In addition, the relationship between the Regional Board's current awareness of contamination of biosolids from emerging contaminants and the public awareness of sludge and biosolids utility was not clear to us. Additional discussion of the [proposal] may be helpful.

County of Santa Barbara:

Item K recognizes that Municipal Wastewater Management discussions by discharger region-wide is outdated. It is suggested that descriptions included in each NPDES permit or WDR be used. [Recommended changes related to County of Santa Barbara and Laguna County Sanitation District as well as certain updated information for agencies within Santa Barbara County is provided in the comment letter.]

[Additionally,] the reference to State Health Department on page 49 of the Basin Plan should be updated to SWRCB DDW.

Staff Response

In response to USEPA's comment regarding item D, we acknowledge the lack of detail. Staff determined that developing the item further at this point would be premature given the uncertainty of its priority. Proposed language for a Basin Plan amendment updating the discussion of NPDES implementation in section 4.5.1.2 would be developed as part of a public process.

In response to USEPA's comment regarding item I, we have updated the description to indicate the location of the recommended edits and clarified the link between the use of biosolids as a soil amendment and the Water Board's concern about such use due to potential PFAS contamination.

In response to the County of Santa Barbara's comment regarding item K, staff included the full text of your comments in the administrative record. We will refer to this text to when making updates to the discussion on Municipal Wastewater Management if and when this proposal is developed. Additionally, item AA has been added to propose updating the reference to the State Health Department to State Water Resources Control Board Department of Drinking Water.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Plans and Policies (Chapter 5) Related Proposals

Proposal 34: Develop Authority to Require Water Recycling

Discussion

Amend the Basin Plan to develop the authority to require that treated wastewaters (that can viably be treated to a level safe for reuse and have a viable beneficial reuse option) be put to the highest practicable beneficial reuse. Following are specific edits to support this concept, but these do not comprehensively address this amendment:

- A. Amend section 5.1.2 - Anti-Degradation Policy to specify the Central Coast Water Board's intent for this Policy related to recycling and "best practicable treatment or control." For example, amend to add a statement such as "recycling treated municipal and industrial wastewater and municipal stormwater, where viable, is the best practicable treatment or control."
- B. Amend section 5.3.2 - Wastewater Reclamation to read: "Water quality management systems throughout the basin shall provide for eventual wastewater reclamation to support beneficial uses."

Public Comment Summary

Valley Water:

[Regarding item D, t]his [proposal] recommends that the Basin Plan be amended "to develop the authority to require that treated wastewaters (that can be viably treated to a level safe for reuse and have a viable beneficial reuse option) be put to the highest practicable use." Valley Water strongly supports the use of recycled water and has demonstrated this through partnerships with the four wastewater treatment plant operators in Santa Clara County to expand the use of

recycled water. To ensure local conditions and needs are adequately considered, Valley Water recommends that any related Basin Plan amendments provide for flexibility and local agency determination of what constitutes a safe level of treatment and viable reuse. For example, Valley Water's recently completed Countywide Water Reuse Master Plan identifies full advanced treatment for planned indirect potable reuse, even though state regulations allow tertiary treated recycled water in spreading basins. This decision to protect groundwater basins from salt loading and CECs such as PFAS reflects local goals to expand recycled water use while protecting water quality. The Basin Plan should strongly encourage both potable and non-potable reuse but provide for this type of local consideration in implementing specific projects.

Staff Response

Staff acknowledge stakeholder support for this proposal and the request to allow for flexibility and local agency determination of what constitutes viable reuse and safe treatment levels. Proposed language for a Basin Plan amendment would be developed as part of a public process.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 35: Broaden Applicability - Erosion and Sedimentation Control Action

Discussion

Amend section 5.5.6.4 to 1) clarify that it is applicable to more than construction activities, 2) clarify its applicability to all waters of the state, and 3) specify native and non-native non-invasive riparian vegetation. Consider and develop justification to increase the minimum filter strip width and define the specific circumstances where this is appropriate.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the 2021 priority list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and resources have potentially been identified for its development.

Proposal 36: Revise Storm Season Start Date to October 1

Discussion

This proposal was modified following the 2021 public comment period to remove mention of a specific date range.

Amend section 5.5.6 item 2 from November 15th to an earlier date to include first flush storm events that typically occur before November 15.

Amend section 5.5.6 item 7 to clarify that “construction season” refers to the dry season. Develop a scientifically justifiable definition of the dry season.

Public Comment Summary

City of Santa Cruz:

Regarding the revision of the storm season start date to October 1, while the City supports a policy that compels project sites to be prepared for early season rains, an October 1st start date is inconsistent with several TMDLs and with other state agencies’ standards. An October 15th or November 1st start date would allow for flexibility and would be better aligned with our changing climate, where significant rains prior to November are an increasingly rare occurrence. A later date would also spare many organizations from having to use extra resources on preparation and revision of winter operation plans which are generally unnecessary since projects are often completed in mid-October.

Preservation, Inc.:

While intended to address construction activity, shortening the definition of the dry season may have unintended consequences for growers who, for example, may struggle to establish a cover crops before October.

Staff Response

Staff have revised the description to refrain from proposing a specific date range. Instead, a scientifically defensible period for dry season will be defined when the proposal is developed and will be made available for comment as part of the Basin Plan amendment process.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposal 37: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 5)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for Chapter 5:

- A. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend to incorporate the following Statewide Policies, found on the State Water Board [Plans and Policies webpage](#), into Chapter 5 of the Basin Plan:

1. The Dredge and Fill Procedures in section 5.1, as well as all other ISWBE Plan components (trash, bacteria, toxicity, etc.). See details described in Proposal 20 - Revise Basin Plan to Include all Statewide Objectives.
2. The current Policy for Implementation and Enforcement of the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program (May 20, 2004), which superseded the 1988 Nonpoint Source Management Plan in section 5.1.10 and Appendix A-10.
3. The current 5-year Nonpoint Source Implementation Plan (see [Nonpoint Source Pollution \(NPS\) Control Program | California State Water Resources Control Board](#)).
4. The Policy for Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (State Implementation Policy or SIP) via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2000-015](#) and amended in February 2005 via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2005-0019](#) in section 5.1.14.
5. The Water Quality Enforcement Policy via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2002-0040](#) in section 5.1.15.
6. The Water Quality Control Policy for Developing California's Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2004-0063](#) in section 5.1.16.
7. The Water Quality Control Policy for Addressing Impaired Waters: Regulatory Structure and Options via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2005-0050](#) in section 5.1.17.
8. The Policy for Compliance Schedules in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2008-0025](#) in section 5.1.18.

9. The Policy for Water Quality Control for Recycled Water via [State Water Board Resolution No. 2005-0019](#) 2009-0011 in section 5.1.19.
- B. Amend bullet 6 of section 5.4.2 to clarify the geographic extent of the saltwater barrier, for example amend as follows:
- The Santa Ynez River downstream from the saltwater barrier (i.e., at 13th Street, approximately 1 mile upstream from the Pacific Ocean).
- C. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to consolidate livestock waste prohibitions. Currently, there are two areas in the Basin Plan that contain site-specific prohibitions on livestock waste discharges: 1) Section 4.8.5.6 Watsonville Slough Watershed Livestock Waste Discharge Prohibition, and 2) Section 5.4.2.1 Domestic Animal Waste Discharge Prohibition. These sections could be consolidated by deleting section 4.8.5.6 entirely and amending section 5.4.2.1 as shown as necessary. Note this is incorporated into the proposed amendments associated with clarifying and improving waste discharge prohibitions language. These proposed amendments will be presented to the Board in early 2022.
- D. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to add map of Monterey Bay Prohibition Zone. Refer to this map from sections 5.4.3 and 6.5.2. Note this is incorporated into the proposed amendments associated with clarifying and improving waste discharge prohibitions language. These proposed amendments will be presented to the Board in early 2022.
- E. Amend section 5.4.4 – Groundwaters, to clarify the water quality objective for nitrate. Replace “nitrate concentration above 45 mg/L” with “nitrate concentration above 10 mg/L as N.”
- F. Amend section 5.5 - Control Actions, to clarify the purpose of this section. Incorporate the following edits:
1. Provide narratives introducing sections 5.5 and its subsections with examples of how they can be enforced.
 2. Eliminate provisions adequately addressed by existing orders (e.g., Animal Confinement Operations) or ensure consistency between an existing Order and the Control Action.
- G. Amend to improve the description of the Grants Program in section 5.5.2. Replace “State Clean Water Grants or Loans” with “State Clean Water Grants, Propositions, State Revolving Loans, and Financial Assistance Opportunities.” Incorporate text and information developed by the Grants Program.
- H. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend section 5.6.3 to remove reference to San Lorenzo Valley Certification of 1986 which is now obsolete.

- I. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend “Categorical Discharge Waiver” language in section 5.6.5. The waivers described in this section and enumerated in Appendix A-23 and Appendix A-17 are now expired. California Senate Bill 390 (1999) required all waivers to expire on January 1, 2002. All new waivers must have a five-year lifetime.

To comply with SB 390, the Regional Water Boards adopted new waivers to regulate most of the categorical discharges. In the Central Coast Region, the first general waiver was adopted by Resolution No. [R3-2002-0115](#) (Waiver Policy, Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Specific Types of Discharges). The staff report accompanying this resolution stated that “Regional Board staff proposes to delete outdated sections of the Basin Plan (Chapter Five and Appendices) in 2003.” This has not yet occurred.

- J. This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review. Amend to delete section 5.6.6 and Appendix A-25. Basin Plan section 5.6.6 cites Appendix A-25, which is Central Coast Water Board Resolution No. R3-93-04 (Appreciation for Discharger Compliance). This resolution “addresses the manner in which the Regional Board will protect water quality protection and improvement at the most cost-effective manner to society.”

Although, Central Coast Water Board staff continue to appreciate discharger compliance, the items in the resolution are superseded by California Water Code section 13267 procedures, the State Water Board Enforcement Policy, and the State Water Board Compliance Schedules Policy.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Monitoring and Assessment (Chapter 6) Related Proposals

Proposal 38: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 6)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for Chapter 6:

- A. Amend outdated language throughout this chapter. Most language in Chapter 6 was current in 2002, the date of the last major amendment to this chapter. All language in Chapter 6 could be updated except section 6.5.1.4 - Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment, GAMA, which was updated in 2016. Some

state monitoring programs mentioned in the chapter no longer exist (e.g., State Mussel Watch).

- B. Amend to delete link in paragraph 1 of section 6.1.
- C. Amend paragraph in section 6.3 regarding laboratory accreditation to cite State Water Board Division of Drinking Water Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) instead of DHS.
- D. Amend last paragraph of section 6.4.1 for gender neutral language (e.g., replace “his” with “their”).
- E. Amend to add reference to other SWAMP statewide programs (e.g., SPoT, FHABs, BA/PSA, etc.) in section 6.5.1.1. Update link in last paragraph to:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/

Update outdated links throughout chapter. Revise “1997” to “1998” in the last paragraph for accuracy.

- F. Amend to delete section 6.5.1.2 or revise to provide program’s end date.
- G. Amend to delete section 6.5.1.3 or revise to provide program’s end date and amend text as follows:

Monitoring water quality in the State Board's designated Water Quality Protection Areas (~~formerly~~ known as Areas of Special Biological Significance), to establish baseline conditions relating to the range of typical conditions in water, sediment and biota, was given prime importance in the early years of the program.

- H. Amend to add reference to CCAMP-GAP in section 6.5.1.4. Revise text as follows:

The GAMA program has four primary components: the Priority Basin Project, the Domestic Well Project, ~~GeoTracker GAMA Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment Groundwater Information System (GAMA GIS)~~, and the Special Studies Project.

Similarly replace other mentions of GeoTracker GAMA in section.

- I. Amend statistics in section 6.5.1.4.2 and 6.5.1.4.3 or remove so they will not become obsolete when the number of wells being sampled changes.
- J. Amend the last paragraph of section 6.5.2.1 as follows:

More information on the CCAMP program can be found at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/> <http://www.ccamp.org/>. The CCAMP program is conducted in coordination with the TSM and SMW monitoring programs, and

satisfies Regional Board requirements for participation in the statewide Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) program.

- K. Amend to add new section for CCAMP-GAP (create section 6.5.2.2) and provide a detailed description of CCAMP-GAP program.
- L. Amend section 6.5.3.1 to delete references to the State's Geospatial Waterbody System (GeoWBS) and to add information regarding the Integrated Report (which replaces GeoWBS).
- M. Amend section 6.5.3.4 to add a reference to CCAMP-GAP.
- N. Amend section 6.5.3.4.2 to include reference to CCAMP-GAP and update link to CCAMP website.
- O. Amend section 6.5.4 as follows:

Monitoring water quality in the State Board's designated Water Quality Protection Areas (~~formerly~~ known as Areas of Special Biological Significance), to establish baseline conditions relating to the range of typical conditions in water, sediment and biota, was given prime importance in the early years of the program.
- P. Amend section 6.5.4 to update language and reflect current funding sources.

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Proposals Related to All Basin Plan Chapters

Proposal 39: Ocean Protection

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend the Basin Plan to develop the authority to adequately address all relevant factors and activities that contribute to ocean water quality. Strengthen existing water quality standards in the Basin Plan for marine and estuarine waters by developing water quality objectives (for pH, nutrients, carbonate chemistry parameters, total alkalinity, or dissolved inorganic carbon) and by designating additional beneficial uses for sensitive coastal waters.

Recommendation

Do not place on the secondary list and replace this proposal with a suite of proposed amendments that will accomplish the intended goal in manageable increments. For example, see proposal 45 – Establish State Water Quality Protection Areas.

Proposal 40: Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection

Discussion

This proposal was included in a previous Triennial Review.

Amend the Basin Plan to develop authority to address the highest priority activities and factors that affect waters. Amendments will focus on achieving preservation and restoration of watershed processes through implementation of integrated water resource management planning. These amendments and follow-up actions may include prohibitions, beneficial use definitions, water quality objectives, implementation, policies, permit terms, guidelines, and incentives.

Recommendation

The Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection proposal is an all-encompassing concept that is difficult to develop and implement without breaking it down and completing manageable smaller tasks to fulfill the overall intent of the proposal. Therefore, Central Coast Water Board staff recommends replacing this proposal with multiple smaller manageable proposals to accomplish the intended goal of this proposal. Central Coast Water Board staff have already initiated this approach by identifying several specific proposals in this 2021 Triennial Review document to achieve watershed and integrated water resource protection (see proposals 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 24, 27, 34, 35, 44, 45, 46, 47) and four of those proposals are also in the priority proposal list (see proposals 18, 35, 45, and 46). Additionally, Central Coast Water Board staff resources have been diverted to collaborate with State Water Board programs that address biological and biostimulatory water quality objectives, climate change, drought, and water resiliency to address portions of the watershed and integrated water resource protection. The Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection proposal documentation will continue to be guide in assisting Central Coast Water Board staff in the development of additional specific proposals, as needed. In addition, several Central Coast Water Board Program actions have already been implemented, or are planned, to address elements of this proposal (e.g., grant funding and requirements in permits related to climate change, riparian protection, habitat restoration, runoff capture and infiltration, and recycled water).

Proposal 41: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (All Chapters)

Discussion

The following amendments are proposed for all chapters:

- A. Amend to make the following revisions throughout the Basin Plan:
 1. spell “water bodies” as one word, i.e., “waterbodies”;
 2. spell “storm water” as one word, i.e., “stormwater”;
 3. spell “ground water” as one word, i.e., “groundwater”;
 4. lowercase “Federal” in the context of regulatory scope, e.g., federal Clean Water Act; and
 5. format resolution citations as “Resolution No. (R3-)(20)YY-(##)##.”
- B. Amend to add [State Water Board Resolution No. 92-49](#) to the Basin Plan as an appendix.
- C. Amend to add Nipomo prohibition area map to Appendix A-27 per R3-1978-0002

Recommendation

Place this proposal on the secondary list. This proposal would improve the Basin Plan and should be considered during future Triennial Reviews.

Secondary List of Proposals for Future Consideration

Proposals that have been retained from the preliminary list because staff determined that the proposal would increase the Basin Plan’s effectiveness as a regulatory instrument to protect water quality, are shown in Table 4. Proposals not prioritized for development during the current cycle will be considered during future Triennial Reviews. Proposals on the secondary list were further evaluated according to these criteria:

- Criteria 1: Does the proposal provide improvements to relevant water quality standards?
- Criteria 2: Does the proposal improve regulatory and program efficiency and/or effectiveness?
- Criteria 3: Does the proposal affirm the realization of the human right to water and the protection of human health?

- Criteria 4: Does the proposal implement activities that ensures the fair treatment of Underrepresented Communities?
- Criteria 5: Does the proposal further goals to mitigate for and adapt to the impacts of climate change?
- Criteria 6: Does the proposal align with the Central Coast Water Board's Vision for Healthy Watersheds?

Table 4. The secondary list of proposed Basin Plan amendments.

Proposal Number	Proposal Name
42	Align Region 2-3 Boundary with Coyote Creek Watershed
1	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 1)
2	Add and Designate the Limited Water Contact Recreation Beneficial Use
3	Add and Designate the Tribal Beneficial Uses
4	Clarify and Update Agricultural Supply Beneficial Use Definition
5	Designate Aquatic Life Uses for Groundwater
6	De-designate Beneficial Uses for Selected Waterbodies
43	Split Coastal Reaches at Saline/Freshwater Transition Zone
7	Designate Selected Waterbodies with Aquatic Life Uses
8	Designate Surface Waters that Recharge Groundwater
9*	Clarify Uses for Waterbodies not Specifically Named
10	Update Groundwater Basin Boundary Map and Table
11	Modify Groundwater Recharge Use Definition
12	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 2)
13	Develop Biological Water Quality Objectives
14	Develop Aquatic Life Water Quality Objectives
15	Develop and Establish Surface Water Flow Objectives
16	Establish Additive Toxicity Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life
17	Develop and Establish Temperature Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life
18*	Develop and Establish or Clarify Turbidity Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life
19*	Update Basin Plan to Include all Statewide Objectives
20	Revise Dissolved Oxygen Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life
21	Revise Water Quality Objectives to be as Protective as Federal Criteria
22	Update Agricultural Supply Water Quality Objectives in Table 3-1
23	Revisions for Table 3-5 - Water Quality Objectives for Site-specific Surface Waters
24*	Revisions for Table 3-6 - Site-specific Groundwaters
25	Revise Sediment Water Quality Objective
26	Revise Pesticides Water Quality Objective
44	Establish Narrative Toxicity Water Quality Objective for Groundwater
27	Establish Nutrient Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life

Proposal Number	Proposal Name
28*	Update Reference to MCLs
29	Editorial Corrections or Minor Clarifications (Chapter 3)
45*	Establish State Water Quality Protection Areas
46*	Develop Protections for Riparian Corridors
47	Develop a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Los Osos Groundwater Basin
30	Provide 401 Exemptions for Some Restoration Activities
31	Revise to Reflect Regulation under the Current Agricultural Order
32	Revise TMDL Attainment Dates for Agriculture
33	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 4)
34	Develop Authority to Require water recycling
35*	Broaden applicability Erosion and Sedimentation Control Action
36	Revise Storm Season Start Date to October 1
37	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 5)
38	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 6)
39**	Ocean Protection
40**	Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection
41	Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (All Chapters)

* Proposal on the priority list.

** Proposal replaced with specific proposal(s) that will accomplish the intended goal of this proposal.

Priority List of Proposed Basin Plan Amendments

The priority list (Table 5) includes proposals for which staff or external resources have potentially been identified to develop the proposal during the current Triennial Review cycle (2022-2025).

Table 5. The 2021 Triennial Review Priority List of Proposals.

Proposal Number	Proposal Name	Technical Partner/ Program staff****
9	Clarify Uses for Waterbodies Not Specifically Named	Stormwater
18*	Develop and Establish or Clarify Turbidity Water Quality Objectives for Aquatic Life	Cannabis
19	Update Basin Plan to Include all Statewide Objectives	NA – no technical elements
24	Revisions for Table 3-6 - Site-specific Groundwaters	TBD**
28	Update Reference to MCLs	Enforcement

Proposal Number	Proposal Name	Technical Partner/Program staff****
35*	Broaden Applicability - Erosion and Sedimentation Control Action	Irrigated Lands and Stormwater
45*	Establish State Water Quality Protection Areas	California Coastkeeper Alliance ***
46*	Develop Protections for Riparian Corridors	Irrigated Lands & Stormwater

* Proposal partially achieves intended goal of 2017 Priority 1 for Watershed and Integrated Water Resource Protection.

** This proposal is a priority for multiple programs; however, development of this Basin Plan amendment will be complex and very resource intensive. Basin planning staff will need to first develop a scope of work, project schedule, and management will identify resources prior to moving forward with a formal Basin Plan amendment.

*** External stakeholder.

**** For each proposal, Basin Planning Program staff will coordinate with the “Technical Partner/Program staff” to develop the technical justification for each Basin Plan amendment. Basin Planning Program staff will also administer the Basin Plan amendment process.

Conclusion

The 2021 Triennial Review is concluded when the Central Coast Water Board adopts a resolution that approves a priority list of proposals to be pursued as future Basin Plan amendments in the next three years, and affirms the general adequacy of those portions of the Basin Plan not considered for revision. Development and implementation of the proposals is intended to improve program efficiencies and further protect and restore water quality.

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