

Response to Public Comments

On

DRAFT RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN FOR THE NORTH COAST REGION

Prepared by:
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Staff
March 17, 2025

I. Procedure

Beginning in April 2024, staff of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (North Coast Water Board, or Board) conducted outreach and engagement to invite interested persons, including communities of color and California Native American Tribes (Tribes) in the North Coast Region, to provide input on the development of a draft Racial Equity Action Plan. In the fall of 2024, North Coast Water Board staff (Staff) shared a Preliminary Draft Actions document with interested persons for initial feedback and comments. On November 4, 2024, the North Coast Water Board issued a Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment and Notice of Board Workshop and Listening Sessions (Public Notice) on the *Draft Racial Equity Action Plan for the North Coast Region* (draft Racial Equity Action Plan) presented in English and Spanish. The Public Notice notified interested persons of the draft Racial Equity Action Plan's 45-day public review period, which began on November 4, 2024, and ended on December 19, 2024. The Public Notice stated that the North Coast Water Board would hold a Board workshop on December 4, 2024, two listening sessions on November 13 and 16, 2024, and virtual lunchtime office hours November 18-22, 2024, during the 45-day public comment period. The Public Notice was distributed to subscribers of the North Coast Water Board's Racial Equity email subscription list and posted on the North Coast Water Board's [Racial Equity webpage](https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/racial_equity/) (https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/racial_equity/).

II. Background

In February 2023, the North Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R1-2023-0001, *Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism in the North Coast Region* (Racial Equity Resolution). The goals of the Resolution are to:

- Acknowledge and condemn systemic racism and the role racism plays in creating inequities in access to and quality of beneficial uses in the North Coast Region;
- Commit to advancing racial equity and workforce equity within the Regional Water Board and the communities we serve; and
- Direct Staff to advance racial and workforce equity and develop and implement an Action Plan for the North Coast Region.

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The draft Racial Equity Action Plan development was informed by BIPOC community feedback, North Coast Water Board staff input, and the Racial Equity Resolution directives. The Racial Equity Action Plan is organized by Priorities, Goals, and Actions. The three overarching Priorities include: (A) Improve Internal Administrative Processes and Organizational Culture to Promote Racial Equity Within the Workplace; (B) Advance Community Engagement, Collaboration, and Access; and (C) Incorporate Equity into Permits, Enforcement Actions, Watershed Planning, Policies, and Stewardship. Each of these Priorities contains several goals with specific actions, action examples or sub-actions, and performance indicators to specify how goals will be achieved.

Advancing racial equity is a priority for the North Coast Water Board and its staff. Through the development of the Resolution and action plan, and other parallel initiatives, the North Coast Water Board is working toward a future where it equitably implements the Water Board’s mission to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California’s water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations. The North Coast Water Board envisions a California where:

- Race is not a predictor of water and sanitation access a person receives;
- Race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for Staff; and
- A racial equity lens is consistently applied to the Regional Water Board decision-making processes.

III. Comments Received

During the November 4 to December 19, 2024, comment period, the North Coast Water Board received written comment letters from two organizations on the draft Racial Equity Action Plan and one oral comment during the Board workshop. This *Response to Comments on the Draft Racial Equity Action Plan* document includes direct quotes from these comments and Staff’s response to the corresponding comment. Comments were received from the following individuals and organizations:

1. Gayle Yamamoto-Seymour, NAACP
2. Save California Salmon
3. Russian Riverkeeper

Quotes from comments, followed by Staff’s response to the comment, are organized in the tables below which references the corresponding section of the Action Plan.

1. Oral Comments from Gayle Yamamoto-Seymour, NAACP

Section	Comments from Ms. Yamamoto-Seymour	Responses from North Coast Water Board staff
B1.1	Recognition of Kason Grady and staff conducting outreach and attending a	Thank you for your comment.

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Section	Comments from Ms. Yamamoto-Seymour	Responses from North Coast Water Board staff
	committee for environmental justice. This is important to build trust. Marginalized communities don't have a voice or a sense of belonging so coming to a Board meeting is not easy. The North Coast Water Board is one agency that is doing outreach well by following through and making multiple contacts.	
B2.3	Suggesting enlisting and/or hiring community ambassadors; members from community organizations present about the North Coast Water Board; North Bay Organizing Project and Sonoma State University and Environmental Justice Group and others have the potential to be sources of ambassadors.	Thank you for your suggestion. Action B2.3 now includes an Action Example that reads: <u>“Develop a “community ambassador”-style program with members from community organizations to present information to their communities about the North Coast Water Board, and improve North Coast Water Board knowledge about issues in their communities.”</u>
C1.3	People are really feeling the effects of climate change. It's effective to focus on these effects with community groups. Going out into the community and during community events will work. Examples include Juneteenth, Day of Remembrance, and other public events where North Coast Water Board staff, or ambassadors, could table.	Thank you for your suggestion. Actions B1.1 and B1.2 are focused on community outreach and engagement, with action examples that speak to your suggestion.

2. Written Comments from Save California Salmon

Section	Comments from Save California Salmon	Responses from North Coast Water Board
A1.4	We support the Action example for this goal of implementing diverse approaches to educate and train staff. Interdisciplinary training is integral to understanding racial equity issues as a whole. Additionally, it is necessary in order to identify where there	Thank you for your support.

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Section	Comments from Save California Salmon	Responses from North Coast Water Board
	may be need for improvement in racial equity.	
A1.5	We support the hiring of Tribes, Tribal members, Tribal organizations, and community members to lead racial equity trainings. It is unclear if in this action the community members are specifically Tribal community members or members from the community at large.	Thank you for your support. This action seeks trainings from community members and organizations working to address racial equity issues, which includes Tribally-focused training as well as other BIPOC communities.
A1.6	We support the action of providing opportunities for staff to learn about racial equity and Tribal sovereignty issues in the North Coast. It would be beneficial if staff were actively encouraged to attend these opportunities as well. If the attendance is low then the method in which these opportunities are offered should be reevaluated so that staff exposure to these educational opportunities is increased. There is also an opportunity to bring in community members and offer these opportunities to community members or other organizations that may be interested in educating themselves or learning about how the North Coast Water Board is addressing racial equity.	<p>Thank you for your support. The North Coast Water Board will be tracking the number of events and number of staff attendees per year. These metrics will be evaluated to revise the Action Plan, and methods and offerings could change in response.</p> <p>The actions under Goal A are internally focused on the North Coast Water Board. Actions that would include outreach with community members and organizations are found in Goal B.</p>
A2.1	We support the Action Example of publicizing job opportunities to Tribes, BIPOC communities, and organizations representing BIPOC communities and/or interests. For reaching a broader Tribal audience, examples of outlets that frequently share information for Tribes or job opportunities are the News From Native California social media and the California Indian Law Association.	Thank you for your support and suggestions. The 2025 Racial Equity Action Plan has been revised to include the examples you shared.
A2.3	We support many of the Action Examples, specifically including: sharing opportunities across various platforms and the addition of Traditional Ecological Knowledge as a	Thank you for your support.

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	<p>qualification for the Environmental Scientist job classification series. Sharing positions across social media and through many different email subscription emails is helpful for spreading the word about open positions.</p>	
A3.5	<p>We support the incorporation of racial equity considerations into project planning and management documents. Integrating an “Equity” section into documents to address whether the project or action has potential for racial equity or environmental impacts is an important aspect that will ensure the North Coast Water Board will address racial equity prior to and during the development of projects and actions. It would also be important to include a specific “Tribal” portion within the “Equity” section which should include the relevant Tribes which are or could be impacted. Regardless of where a project is located, it is on the traditional lands of one or more Tribes of the North Coast.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support. The 2025 Racial Equity Action Plan Action 3.5 Action Example has been revised as shown:</p> <p>“Include "Equity" section in project workplans, board item completion plan templates, and other documents to address whether the project/action has potential racial equity or environmental justice impacts; <u>include “Tribes” section to name potentially impacted Tribes and in coordination with named Tribes address Tribal impacts;</u> if unknown whether impacts are present, identify a process for how staff will determine impacts.”</p>
A4.1	<p>We support providing stipend, payment, or honoraria for Tribes and/or BIPOC community members or organizations to help with implementation or revision of the Action Plan. To have an effective Action Plan, the involvement of Tribes and BIPOC community members is really important. Providing financial support would help encourage involvement and make it more accessible for those who may otherwise not have the means to participate.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
A4.3	<p>We support the increased time allocation for the North Coast Water Board’s Tribal Coordinator. More time to support meaningful engagement will help to build a stronger and more trusting relationship between the Board and local Tribes. In</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p> <p>An increase in pay for the Tribal Coordinator is not within the authority of the North Coast Water Board. We</p>

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	<p>addition to an increase in hours, the Water Board should also consider an increase in pay for the Tribal Coordinator - similar to how bilingual pay is offered at some institutions, in order to compensate for the employee’s specialized skill set and additional workload.</p>	<p>will forward your recommendation to the State Water Board.</p>
<p>Priority B</p>	<p>We commend the North Coast Water Board for its effort to make a “more comprehensive and meaningful engagement strategy” in order to ensure that decisions that have the potential to impact Tribal land or Tribal water resources do not have negative effects. We are hopeful that the Board believes in (and seems to be committed to) furthering existing relationships with Tribes as well as developing new relationships.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>B1.1</p>	<p>We are in support of the Board conducting outreach to BIPOC community members to learn about their lived experiences and how it relates to the Board’s work.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>B1.2</p>	<p>We greatly support and encourage the North Coast Water Board in creating more effective outreach strategies to Tribal and BIPOC communities and to actively seek out information regarding community needs, impacts, and concerns. Extending where notices are made available will be crucial to increasing community involvement. Emails and website posts can be overlooked. Providing notice on a more active platform (such as tribal or community partner social media pages, tribal list serves, local newspapers) or in a more engaging way would be helpful for impacted communities. Additionally, the creation of documents, notices, and outreach materials that are in plain-language that is easily accessible to community members is really important</p>	<p>Thank you for your support. The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Goal B1.2 Action Example now reads, in part:</p> <p>“Provide notices to affected communities using <u>engaging, focused</u> methods in addition to email, such as social media, <u>community mailing lists</u>, newspapers, and radio.”</p> <p>A new Action Example for Action B2.6 was added:</p> <p><u>“As feasible, offer meetings/ workshops virtually.”</u></p>

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	<p>and something that is often overlooked by agencies. This creates exclusionary processes. Meeting people within their own communities will help them to feel more comfortable attending. This is especially important for rural communities that may feel isolated. The ability for Tribal and BIPOC communities to review their comments and clarify or update their comments would be extremely beneficial, especially when communications with the Board or staff occur after the submission of comments. Having the ability to discuss comments after providing them to the Board can lead to community members either having further comments or require edits and being able to make those changes instead of being excluded from a process until the next step would help eliminate later for both for the commenters and the Board staff.</p> <p>Further, any and all meetings regarding projects and proposals that will affect rural communities should at the very least be offered virtually, allowing members of the public to attend safely. The North Coast region can be dangerous to travel long distances to attend meetings. The roads are often winding, and subject to rain, heavy fog, and landslides. Virtual meetings would also eliminate potential costs associated with traveling.</p>	
B1.3	<p>We support the North Coast Water Boards desire to advocate for remedying issues that are found through data collection. Advocating for increased funding for cleanup of contaminated properties would aid Tribal and BIPOC communities, as they often do not have the financial ability to pay for or the resources to conduct cleanup of contaminated properties.</p>	Thank you for your support.

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B1.5	<p>We encourage the Board to move forward with the action to expand in-house language capacity to reflect languages spoken in the region. Since there are many tribes in the area, it would be encouraging to see some documents and resources that contain some of the Native languages. Adding some vocabulary of the local Tribes would make the documents and resources more accessible to local Tribal communities. Having simple translations for words like water, river, ocean, salmon, etc, as well as place names, may encourage more engagement from Tribal communities.</p>	<p>The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Goal B1.5 has a new Action Example: <u>“Work with Tribes to identify place names and key terms in Native languages to acknowledge Tribes’ relationships with the land and water and to encourage engagement from Tribal communities.”</u></p> <p>And B3.3 has a new Action Example: <u>“In coordination with Tribes, use Native place names and key terms as appropriate to acknowledge Tribes’ relationships with the land and water and to improve engagement.”</u></p>
B1.6	<p>For the Action Examples for this goal, it would be helpful if there were both a “Get Involved” tab/link in addition to a Community Resources tab. Having those clear markers would make the website more accessible and would help encourage community members that want to learn more or participate in North Coast Water Board processes or actions.</p>	<p>In the <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Goal B1.6 now reads: <u>“Create ‘Get Involved’ or and ‘Community Resources’ tabs on North Coast Water Board website.”</u></p>
B2.1 & B2.3	<p>These goals could work together in a beneficial way. Demographic information that is collected can inform which other agencies or organizations would be best to partner with in order to encourage engagement with Tribal and BIPOC communities.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
B2.6	<p>We support the goal of conducting meetings at times and locations that are easily accessible for BIPOC communities to encourage engagement. Ensuring a</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

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	<p>safe environment for those that want to participate in person and providing childcare are really important steps to create a welcoming place for BIPOC community members. Scheduling meetings at varying times and providing predetermined start times for topics is extremely important for planning especially for those who work during the day or have limited time to participate.</p>	
B2.7	<p>We support the North Coast Water Board seeking opportunities to contract with BIPOC businesses. This is important for supporting local BIPOC communities and will help foster a safer environment for BIPOC community members and staff.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
B3.1	<p>We appreciate the action being taken to conduct meetings at times and locations that optimize attendance by Tribal government representatives. We encourage the Board to also consider optimizing attendance to the greater Tribal community members. The Action Examples are steps towards creating a trusting relationship with Tribes. Seeking out opinions on optimal meeting times and the permission from Tribal communities to hold meetings would display a greater level of respect than was historically provided to Tribes and sometimes is still provided to Tribes today. Again, providing security and childcare are important steps for creating a safe and welcoming space for Tribal community members to participate and engage with the Board and staff.</p>	<p>The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Goal B3.1 Action now reads: “Conduct meetings at times and locations that optimize attendance by Tribal government representatives <u>and Tribal community members.</u>”</p>
B3.2	<p>We support the North Coast Water Board making an effort to seek opportunities to contract with Tribal governments and organizations. This is important in supporting local Tribal communities and</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

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	will help foster a safer environment for Tribal community members and staff.	
B3.3	We strongly support ensuring meaningful and effective Tribal Consultation and engagement. The development of the Tribal Consultation guidance documents will be helpful in protecting Tribal communities and encourage meaningful dialogue and participation. Additionally, the Action Example that states “Tribal input is deliberated at a level equivalent to other government agencies” is an extremely important point. Often Tribal input and concerns are shared with agencies and in turn the agency does nothing to address those concerns. Ensuring that the North Coast Water Board fully understands the importance of Tribal input is an important part of this goal.	Thank you for your support.
Priority C	We are hopeful that the North Coast Water Board will follow through with the following statement: “Tribes and BIPOC communities will be sought to provide experience, expertise, and/or apply traditional ecological knowledge in developing and/or completing regulatory actions, projects, and enforcement actions that benefit their communities and the beneficial uses they rely on.” Tribal and BIPOC community members carry expertise and knowledge that is important to them personally and cannot be learned from anyone outside of the community. The incorporation of that knowledge and expertise is vital to the continued work of the Board.	Thank you for your comment.
C1.1	We fully support the goal of identifying opportunities to incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge and stewardship practices into plans, policies, permits, and enforceable actions. It should be noted	Thank you for your support. The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> now has ‘Traditional Ecological

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	<p>that “Traditional Ecological Knowledge” is generally written with capitalization when referring to the knowledge that comes from Tribes. We encourage the Board to build relationships and trust with Tribes so that such knowledge can be shared without fear that it will be taken from Tribes and used by the Board. There is a strong need for Indigenous Data Sovereignty regarding Traditional Ecological Knowledge and staff should be trained and advised on this topic prior to working with Tribes.</p>	<p>Knowledge’ capitalized correctly in Action C1.1. There is also a new Action Example:</p> <p><u>“Train staff on Indigenous Data Sovereignty, especially regarding Traditional Ecological Knowledge.”</u></p>
C1.4	<p>We support the investigation of the connection between land use restrictions and water quality and exploration of facilitation of access for Tribes and their Cultural Beneficial Uses. Lack of access to cultural resources continues to be an issue throughout the state and if the Board is able to assist in removing some of those access barriers, it would create more equity for Tribes. We also support funding opportunities for projects for Tribal access to water, co-management of cultural and natural resources, and the return of ancestral lands to Tribal ownership. These ideas would create more equity and opportunities for Tribes and Tribal communities to participate.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>
C1.5	<p>We encourage the North Coast Water Board to not only consider Tribal issues when prioritizing projects in triennial reviews, but to prioritize Tribal issues. Merely considering the issues can often lead to an outcome that does not fully address or resolve the issue. The historical lack of support from Water Boards should warrant a course correction where Tribal issues and concerns are given proper acknowledgement, mitigation, and reconciliation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Goal C1.5 Action Examples now reads, in part:</p> <p><u>“Continue to consider <u>prioritize</u> Tribal issues-interests <u>as a factor</u> when prioritizing-considering projects in triennial review.”</u></p>

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C2.1	We support the Action Example of working with Tribes and other partners to develop Supplement Environmental Projects that include provisions for Tribal and BIPOC community access to and stewardship of water resources. We also support efforts for co-management, land and water rights acquisition, and return of ancestral lands to Tribal ownership.	Thank you for your support.
C2.2	We support seeking input from and consideration of impacts to Tribes and BIPOC communities when developing enforcement priorities of Supplemental Environmental Projects.	Thank you for your support.
C2.3	We support increased education and outreach to Tribes and BIPOC communities about the CalEPA Complaints System. In furtherance of supporting advocacy for language access beyond Spanish and English, we encourage the use of Tribal languages where possible. The inclusion of some relevant words, such as “water”, “river”, “ocean”, “salmon”, etc. in the respective Tribe’s language, would not only encourage Tribal participation but would educate the Board, staff, and the greater community of the traditional languages of the North Coast.	Thank you for your support. Please refer to section B1.5 and B3.3 to see new Action Examples aimed at improving engagement with Tribal communities.
C3.1	We encourage the Board to prioritize identifying potential impacts to Tribal and BIPOC communities, Tribal Beneficial Uses, and cultural resources. It is highly likely that permits will impact traditional Tribal lands and communities and ensuring that is identified, along with the level of impact and possible mitigation measures, is crucial for permit development.	Thank you for your comment. A performance indicator for this action is that the North Coast Water Board will establish a process to assess and mitigate impacts of regulatory actions on Tribes and BIPOC communities.

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C3.3	Updating water quality protection requirements in permits is deeply important to Tribal and BIPOC communities who often suffer most because of poor water quality. Prioritizing permits in Tribal and BIPOC communities is necessary to ensure the health and safety of those communities.	Thank you for your support.
C4.2	We support the North Coast Water Board’s efforts to support Tribal and BIPOC efforts to secure grants for infrastructure and land acquisition projects. We encourage the Board to advocate for these communities in the grant processes. We also encourage the Board and staff to share possible opportunities with Tribal and BIPOC communities and organizations when they become aware of them.	Thank you for your support. The <i>2025 Racial Equity Action Plan</i> Action C4.2 Action Examples now includes: <u>“Share grant opportunities with BIPOC and Tribal communities.”</u>

3. Written Comments from Russian Riverkeeper

Section	Comments from Russian Riverkeeper	Responses from North Coast Water Board
all	I am writing to express Russian Riverkeeper’s support for the North Coast Water Quality Control Board’s (RWB’s) Racial Equity Action Plan, which represents an important step toward a more inclusive and equitable approach to water quality management in the region. This plan’s focus on addressing historical inequities and promoting environmental justice is commendable, but we believe that a few additional considerations could further strengthen its impact and accessibility.	Thank you for your support. We consider all suggestions that may improve inclusivity and equity in and through North Coast Water Board policy and practices.
B2, B3	To ensure meaningful implementation of any adopted RWB Racial Equity Plan, it is crucial that outreach efforts are more intensive, varied across communication	Thank you for your comment. We agree it is essential to ensure that Tribes and communities of color are

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	<p>formats, and are repetitive (B3.3). Representation throughout the entire process is critical to achieve an action item that further challenges historical inequities and promotes environmental justice, from start to finish. As such, it is important that the RWB have established policies and procedures in place to ensure that a good faith effort is made to engage and involve tribes and other stakeholders throughout the process.</p>	<p>informed and have opportunities to provide input at every stage of all North Coast Water Board processes. As part of the Action Plan implementation, policies and procedures would be documented and implemented that increase opportunities for input from tribes and communities of color, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase resources and support for Racial Equity Action Plan implementation (Goal A4) - Develop and implement an outreach strategy to transmit and publicize specific North Coast Water Board work to BIPOC and Tribal communities and actively seek community needs, impacts, and concerns. (Action B1.2) - Expand written translation and oral interpretation services (Action B1.4) - Establish and Strengthen Relationships and Trust with BIPOC Communities (Goal B2) - Establish and Strengthen Relationships and Trust with Tribes (Goal B3)
<p>B1.4, B1.6</p>	<p>We commend the Board's commitment to expand language services (B1.4) to make information accessible to non-English-speaking communities. As part of these services, we strongly urge the RWB to implement comprehensive multilingual navigation for interactive options on the RWB's website. This would allow community members to more easily navigate the site and access critical resources in their preferred language,</p>	<p>Thank you for this suggestion. Resources available to the Water Boards for website modifications such as the ones you recommend are limited. However, we have added an action example to Racial Equity Action Plan section B1.6 to identify the need for website modification to serve the needs of non-English speakers and</p>

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	while also creating a more inclusive digital environment, provide a welcoming space for people to learn about the RWB’s work, and help increase engagement activities.	readers and pursue changes as appropriate.
B1.2, B1.6	Moreover, simplifying legal or technical language within the Action Plan and other public documents could make them more understandable to a broader audience. Including plain language summaries, with understandable language describing community impacts, would be particularly beneficial for community members unfamiliar with regulatory language, empowering them to engage more fully in water management decisions.	We agree that simplifying language and highlighting potential impacts of Water Board actions to affected communities within Water Board documents and communications is crucial for increasing access to and involvement from a broader range of people. Action Plan action B1.2 addresses these needs.
B1.1, B1.2, B2.6, B3.1, B3.3	Part of improving the understanding of the RWB’s role must also include education around the right to publicly participate in meetings and that retribution and/or intimidation is not tolerated.	We also agree that the Water Board has a responsibility to educate the public on how to get involved in Water Board actions and provide safe spaces to do so. Action Plan actions B1.1, B1.2, B2.6, B3.1, and B3.3 are intended to accomplish this.
Goal B1	On the topics of transparency and accountability, we see the inclusion of performance indicators as beneficial to measuring and ensuring long-term progress of this plan. Making these indicators easy to track in a public manner will help build trust and encourage more community engagement. Public access to these metrics would allow stakeholders to track the plan’s effectiveness and foster a collaborative approach to meeting racial equity goals	Thank you for the comment. We agree that performance metrics are essential to confirm that Action Plan implementation and effective change is occurring. Also, we recognize the need for regular evaluation of performance metrics and that the evaluation results are publicly accessible. We have added an action into Action Plan action B1 that commits to making performance metric reviews publicly accessible (see new action B1.8).
B1.1 and B1.2	Lastly, we strongly support the idea of community education programs. Providing workshops focused on environmental justice, water quality, and the role of the RWB—both online and in-person; after	Thank you for this comment. We have added language to Racial Equity Action Plan Goals B1.1 and B1.2 that evaluates the need for North Coast Water Board-led community education

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	<p>work hours and on weekends—would equip communities with the knowledge needed to actively engage in Board decisions. Community education and collaboration are especially important since most individuals are unfamiliar with the work of the RWB and educating the public could help them make more informed contributions. In terms of community collaboration, people need to feel their voices are heard on interests that matter to them (B1.2). To encourage participation, different communities’ interests and concerns that impact them must be addressed through action on part of the RWB so they can make a difference in their communities by being actively involved and listened to.</p>	<p>events while providing an opportunity for two-way engagement. We will evaluate the need for broad and targeted education events.</p>