

California Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast
5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 576-2220

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed General Order for Waste Discharge Requirements
for Commercial Vineyards in the North Coast Region and Environmental Impact Report

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board), will consider for adoption the proposed General Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Vineyards in the North Coast Region (Proposed Vineyard Order) and consider for certification the supporting California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The hearing is scheduled for December 4, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Regional Water Board Hearing Room, 5550 Skylane Blvd, Suite A, in Santa Rosa, California. This meeting is scheduled to occur with both a physical meeting location and an option for remote participation via video and teleconference. Live video and audio broadcasts of the public workshop will be available via the internet and can be accessed at the [CalEPA Public meeting live webcasts webpage](https://video.calepa.ca.gov) (<https://video.calepa.ca.gov>). The meeting will be recorded.

Please be aware that dates and venues may change. In accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (Gov. Code, § 11120 et seq.), an agenda will be posted to the Board's website at least 10 days in advance of the Board's meetings. The agenda will specify any updates to the meeting format. You can access the current agenda for changes in dates and locations at the [North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Meetings webpage](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/).

Overview

There are approximately 65,000 acres of land planted to vineyards in the North Coast Region. Over 95% of North Coast vineyards are located within the Navarro and Russian River watersheds which are impaired for sediment and temperature and provide habitat for threatened and endangered salmonid species. Cultivation of winegrapes has the potential to discharge wastes to surface waters and groundwater (through soil disturbance and use of agricultural chemicals) and affect other related controllable water quality factors such as the loss of riparian shade. The Regional Water Board has a statutory obligation under the Federal Clean Water Act and the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act to regulate discharges of waste to waters of the state, restore water quality in impaired waters, and maintain existing high-quality waters.

The Proposed Vineyard Order would regulate the cumulative impacts of commercial vineyards through requirements, prohibitions, and provisions applied to farmed areas and appurtenant road networks. Under the Proposed Vineyard Order, growers would be required to self-assess the conditions on their vineyard and report implementation of minimum management practices and nitrogen use. The Proposed Vineyard Order would also require surface and groundwater quality monitoring and adaptive management in response to monitoring. The Proposed Vineyard Order would allow the option for growers to enroll in grower Coalitions which assist with enrollment, fee collection, monitoring, reporting, and grower education.

Information about the Regional Water Board's Vineyard Program can be found online at:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/agricultural_lands/Vineyards/

Document Availability

The Proposed Vineyard Order and Final Environmental Impact Report is available and can be obtained at the Regional Water Board's Vineyard Program website at:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/agricultural_lands/Vineyards/.

These files can also be viewed or copied by contacting or visiting the Regional Water Board's office, 5550 Skylane Blvd, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California, weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Appointments are recommended for document reviews and can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

Public Comments

Oral comments will be accepted at the hearing. The time limit for oral comments will be 5 minutes; however, additional time may be provided, upon request, at the discretion of the Regional Water Board Chair. A timer may be used, and speakers are expected to honor time limits. Where speakers can be grouped by affiliation or interest, such groups will be expected to select a spokesperson to avoid unnecessary or repetitive presentations.

Procedural Matters

The procedures governing Regional Water Board hearings may be found in the California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 648 et seq. and are available upon request.

[Ex parte communications are allowed in this matter subject to the disclosure requirements of Water Code section 13287,](#)

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws_regulations/docs/exparte.pdf). Any communications between interested persons and board members (other than at a noticed board meeting where the Vineyard Order is on the agenda or submitted as a comment letter in compliance with this or another public notice) must be disclosed by the interested person within seven working days of the communication. A sample disclosure is available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/public_notices/.

Accessibility

Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation to participate in the public meeting should contact Deidre Wilkerson at 707-576-2220 at least five days prior to the scheduled meeting. The meeting location is accessible to people with disabilities. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 800-735-2929 or voice line at 800-735-2922.

Regional Water Board Staff Contact

Questions regarding the proposed Order should be directed to Vineyard Program, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, 5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403, by phone or email at NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov with "Vineyard Program" as part of the subject.

For future updates on the Proposed Vineyard Order and EIR, please [subscribe to the](#)

[email list](#) by visiting our subscription site and choosing “Agricultural Lands Discharge Program” after entering your email address (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRCB/subscriber/new?qsp=north_coast).