

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND NOTICE OF BOARD WORKSHOP AND LISTENING SESSIONS FOR THE NORTH COAST REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD'S DRAFT RACIAL EQUITY RESOLUTION

Regional Water Board staff will hold four public engagement events, including a Board workshop and three listening sessions described in Section III below, to seek input on the Draft 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* (Draft Resolution). A 45-day public comment period will be held from September 22 – November 7, 2022. The Regional Water Board is seeking input from Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color communities, tribes, other members of the public, and the Regional Water Board prior to proposing the Draft Resolution to the Regional Water Board for adoption in February 2023. The Draft Resolution will be available for review on the Regional Water Board's Racial Equity webpage.

I. QUICK INFORMATION

1. You can find the Draft Resolution on the Regional Water Board's [Racial Equity webpage](#).
2. Send written comments to RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov by 5:00 pm on November 7, 2022. More information in Section III.
3. Provide verbal comments at the Board Workshop on October 7, 2022. More information in Section IV.
4. Register to attend a racial equity listening session by completing the following form: <https://forms.office.com/g/TghBvqw6Ua>. Registration is highly encouraged but not required to attend.

II. BACKGROUND

On November 16, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted Resolution No. 2021-0050, *Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism* (State Water Board Resolution). The State Water Board Resolution, in part, acknowledged the role racism has played in creating inequities in affordability and access to clean and safe water; committed to advancing racial equity within the Water Boards and the communities they serve; directed its staff to develop a

racial equity action plan; and encouraged the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards to adopt the State Water Board Resolution or similar resolutions.

The North Coast Regional Water Board identified in its Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Work Plan that its staff would develop a region-specific racial equity resolution for Regional Water Board adoption to address North Coast-specific racial inequities. Leveraging the State Water Board Resolution, Regional Water Board staff began developing the Draft Resolution and parallel initiatives to advance racial equity in early 2022.

Advancing racial equity is a priority for the Regional Water Board and its staff. Through the development of the Draft Resolution, a subsequent Racial Equity Action Plan, and other parallel initiatives, the Regional Water Board is working toward a future where it equitably implements its mission to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for all. The Regional Water Board envisions a North Coast of California where:

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

III. PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

Notice is hereby given that the Regional Water Board will receive public comments on the Draft Resolution for a 45-day period from **September 22 – November 7, 2022**.

Document Availability

The Draft Resolution will be available on the Regional Water Board's [Racial Equity webpage](#) for a 45-day public review and comment period. The public comment period will close at 5:00 p.m. on November 7, 2022.

Please send comments by selecting from the following methods:

1. Email up to 15 megabytes to RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov and use the subject heading "Draft Resolution Comments"
 - a. Follow [electronic submittal guidelines](#) for comments greater than 15 megabytes
2. Fax to 707-576-2069
3. Mail or Hand Deliver to: North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Attention: Draft Racial Equity Resolution, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California 95403-1072

IV. BOARD WORKSHOP AND LISTENING SESSIONS

Notice is additionally hereby given that the Regional Water Board will hold a Board workshop and three listening sessions during the 45-day public comment period. The purpose of the Board workshop and listening sessions is to:

1. Inform and invite comments and conversations from Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color communities, other members of the public, and the Regional Water Board about 1) the Regional Water Board's Racial Equity Initiative, 2) the Draft Resolution and its public review period and engagement events, and 3) the future Racial Equity Action Plan; and
2. Create a space for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color and tribes to share their experiences, perspectives, and knowledge related to racial equity and environmental justices in the North Coast Region.

Board Workshop

The Board workshop will be held during the following Regional Water Board meeting:

<u>Board Meeting Date:</u>	October 7, 2022
<u>Board Meeting Start Time:</u>	1:30 p.m.
<u>Physical Location:</u>	David C. Joseph Board Room 5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Video and teleconference options: The meeting may be viewed live at: <https://cal-span.org/>. If you wish to comment on the item from a remote location, please complete the virtual speaker card available here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wlPwp0tTTFuELfxqg5EWIA.

The Board workshop will entail 1) opportunity for public input; 2) a Regional Water Board staff presentation on the Regional Water Board's Racial Equity Initiative, Draft Resolution, and associated public engagement opportunities; and 3) discussion between the Regional Water Board, staff, and the public.

A quorum of Regional Water Board members will be present at the Board workshop; however, no board action will be taken. Although no formal decisions will be made, the board may provide direction to staff. The Regional Water Board will consider adopting the Draft Resolution at a subsequent meeting currently scheduled for February 2 or 3, 2023.

Additional information about the Board workshop, including meeting procedures and information on making presentations, can be found at the Regional Water Board's website.

Listening Sessions

The three listening sessions will be held on the following dates and times:

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| <u>Listening Session Date:</u> | October 18, 2022 |
| <u>Listening Session Start Time:</u> | 5:30 p.m. |
| <u>Physical Location:</u> | Blue Lake Casino and Hotel, Sapphire
Palace Room
777 Casino Way
Blue Lake, CA 95525 |
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| <u>Listening Session Date:</u> | October 19, 2022 |
| <u>Listening Session Start Time:</u> | 5:30 p.m. |
| <u>Physical Location:</u> | Happy Camp High School, Gymnasium
234 Indian Creek Road
Blue Lake, CA 95525 |
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| <u>Listening Session Date:</u> | October 25, 2022 |
| <u>Listening Session Start Time:</u> | 5:30 p.m. |
| <u>Virtual Location:</u> | Zoom |

Please complete the following registration form if you plan to attend one or more listening sessions: <https://forms.office.com/g/TghBvqw6Ua>. Registration is highly encouraged but not required to attend.

The listening sessions will entail 1) opportunity for public input; 2) a Regional Water Board staff presentation on the Regional Water Board's Racial Equity Initiative, Draft Resolution, and associated public engagement opportunities; and 3) small group discussions with the public on the Draft Resolution and topics about water and equity. A quorum of Regional Water Board members will not be present at the listening sessions.

Please register in advance of the listening sessions by completing the appropriate registration form(s) on the following webpage:
https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/racial_equity/index.html.

V. ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

If you would like to request special accommodations, including language interpretation services, please call (916) 322-4265 at least five to ten days prior to the engagement event you plan to attend. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf users may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

VI. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's website:
[North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Homepage](#)

Racial Equity Webpage:
[Racial Equity Webpage](#)

Electronic Submittal Required for Correspondence and Reports to the Regional Board:
[Electronic Submittal Required for Correspondence and Reports to the Regional Board](#)

Email List Subscriptions:
[Email List Subscription Form](#)

VI. POTENTIAL FUTURE CHANGES TO THE NOTICED ITEMS

Any changes regarding the noticed items will be posted on the Regional Water Board's website and noticed through the email distribution list. Any person desiring to receive future notices must sign up for the email distribution list by assessing the [Email List Subscription Form webpage](#) and subscribing to the "Racial Equity" email list.

VII. NORTH COAST WATER BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct questions about this public notice, the Racial Equity Initiative, or the Draft Resolution to RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov. Please contact RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov or Devon Jorgenson at (707) 576-2701 at least three days before the scheduled engagement event for disability accommodations.