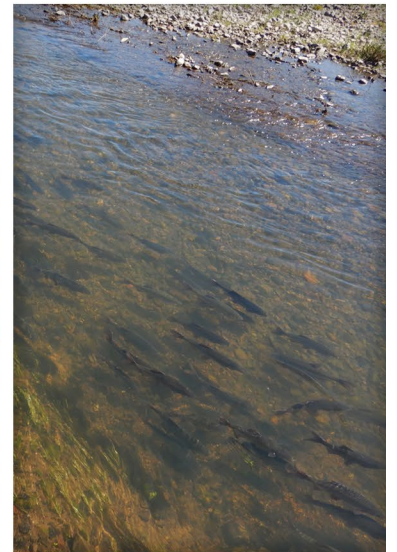
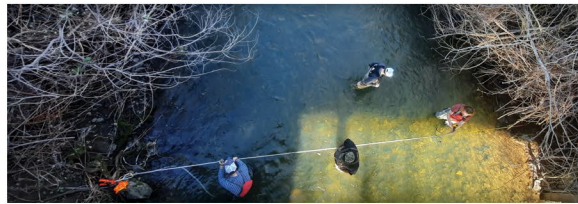


**CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**



**2023–2025**

# **RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN**

**2024 ANNUAL UPDATE**



## **Acknowledgements**

The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board or Board) Racial Equity Action Plan was developed in partnership with employees and the communities they serve. Many people dedicated their time and resources to contribute to the visioning and strategizing sessions, participate in government-to-government tribal consultations, attend public workshops, submit public comments, and engage with the State Water Board in many other ways to ensure this plan reflects the needs and priorities of communities most impacted by our work. The Water Boards acknowledges and thanks our community partners, community members, California Native American tribes, and Water Boards staff for their continued support and engagement throughout the implementation of the Racial Equity Action Plan.

This report was prepared by Adriana Renteria and Jenalyn Guzman from the State Water Resources Control Board Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs, and Anthony Austin from the Office of Chief Counsel. Graphic design by Michael Tanamachi from the State Water Resources Control Board Communications Office.

Thank you to the staff throughout the Water Boards' regions, divisions, and offices that contributed to this report:

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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN | 2024 ANNUAL UPDATE

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (regional water boards), collectively the Water Boards, have a shared mission to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water. This mission is strengthened by a commitment to racial equity and environmental justice. *Racial equity* is achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved. *Environmental justice* means the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The Water Boards envision a future where California's water resources and drinking water are equitably preserved, enhanced, and restored for all Californians, regardless of race; where race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for Water Boards employees; and a racial equity lens is consistently applied to Water Boards' decision-making processes.

Between 2020 and 2023 the State Water Board engaged with its employees, the public, and with California Native American tribes to develop a [Racial Equity Resolution](#) and associated [Racial Equity Action Plan](#). The Racial Equity Action Plan has been implemented for two years, and this annual report describes progress made in 2024. The Racial Equity Action Plan establishes three strategic directions the State Water Board will take to approach the work of advancing racial equity:

1. Integrating racial equity and measuring impact by infusing considerations throughout policies, programs, and practices; and monitoring progress.
2. Creating and maintaining inclusive spaces by addressing representation within the Water Boards and elevating understanding of racial equity.
3. Activating community wisdom and sharing power by removing barriers for participation and incorporating input.

The Racial Equity Action Plan establishes goals for each strategic direction that the Water Boards aim to achieve and establishes actions to overcome existing barriers and achieve goals. Every action has a division or office responsible for leading the action's implementation. On a quarterly basis, representatives from all Water Boards' regions, divisions, and offices meet to coordinate on environmental justice and racial equity through the Environmental Justice Roundtable. The Environmental Justice Roundtable serves as the main internal convening place for the implementation of the Racial Equity Action Plan and other related racial equity and environmental justice efforts across the Water Boards. Through this roundtable, quarterly written updates are developed and shared internally to support ongoing coordination and accountability.

## Reflections on Year 2 Implementation

The Water Boards have been working hard implementing the State Water Board's 2023–2025 Racial Equity Action Plan for the second year to bring about significant and permanent organizational changes. The first year of implementation was dedicated to improving coordination and alignment, building internal capacity, expanding engagement, and using racial equity tools to embed a racial equity lens throughout all programs and projects. The second year of implementation continues to build on these efforts and maximize new opportunities to advance racial equity through the Water Boards' work.

In January 2024, the state announced that California is in a \$68 billion budget deficit and on January 10, 2025, Governor Newsom announced the state's budget proposal to ensure a balanced budget over the next two years. Part of this plan includes a reduction to state operations and a targeted elimination of 6,500 unfilled state positions. Direct impacts on the Water Boards' racial equity and environmental justice efforts have not been quantified. As teams adjust to the new workload capacity constraints caused by budget cuts, the Water Boards anticipate delays in completing all work, including the actions identified within this Racial Equity Action Plan. The Water Boards will continue its commitment to prioritizing racial equity and environmental justice and furthering progress towards its goals.

### Key accomplishments for 2024 include:

#### Elevating Equity and Tribal Affairs:

As of December 2024, the Water Boards' Office of Public Participation (OPP) was restructured into a new office, named the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs (OPEETA). This change reflects the expanded scope of the office due to recent developments, such as new Executive Orders, legislative changes, and the Water Boards' racial equity and tribal efforts. Additionally, it elevates the importance of the office within the Water Boards:

- **Public engagement** reflects a broader, more inclusive approach than participation, focusing on meaningful, ongoing dialogue and collaboration with communities. It emphasizes the Board's commitment to building lasting relationships and engaging the public in shaping decisions and outcomes.
- **Equity** highlights the Board's focus on addressing systemic inequities and ensuring all voices, especially historically marginalized ones, are heard. It also reflects our commitment to workforce equity and creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all employees.
- **Tribal affairs** acknowledges the distinct political and sovereign status of California Native American tribes. Separating tribal affairs from public engagement recognizes that tribes are not stakeholders but sovereign governments, requiring dedicated efforts to honor their sovereignty and to build government-to-government partnerships.

With this restructuring, the State Water Board aims to address feedback from employees, communities, and California Native American tribes; clarify roles; reinforce the Board's priorities; and strengthen the Board's commitment to environmental justice, public engagement, workforce equity, and strengthening tribal relations.

### Improving coordination and alignment:

The Water Boards use existing structures like roundtables to coordinate on racial equity and are establishing additional working groups that will provide additional support to ensure consistent approaches to advancing equity within Water Boards' work:

- Multiple regions, divisions, and offices established employee workgroups to inform and guide their region, division, or office's direction towards advancing racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental justice [\[Action 8\]](#).
- All Water Boards' roundtables include a standing agenda item to discuss racial equity and incorporate racial equity into their workplans or charters [\[Action 29\]](#).
- A racial equity data subcommittee of the Environmental Justice Roundtable was created to help ensure coordination with colleagues working on equity data projects is taking place to improve consistency and reduce duplicative efforts [\[Action 2\]](#).

### Fostering workplace equity and inclusion:

The State Water Board is building individual and organizational capacity for internal workforce equity. Workforce equity refers to the intentional actions and policies organizations implement to support belonging, accessibility, dignity, diversity, inclusion and equity within their workforce. This includes fostering a culture where employees are valued and supported, and addressing systemic barriers to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within organizational structures and practices.

- Racial equity support lunches are held monthly to provide a supportive space for Water Boards staff and help normalize conversations about racial equity [\[Action 8\]](#).
- A Welcoming Equity in the Workplace discussion series was delivered to Water Boards' management as staff returned to in person office attendance twice a week. The purpose of this series is to assist managers and supervisors with understanding what equity at the workplace looks like and how they may support it. [\[Action 12\]](#).
- Many Water Board staff lead or participate in the California Environmental Protection Agency's Affinity Groups: Concerned Black Employees Affinity Group, Hispanic and Latinx Unidos, LGBTQIA2S+, and Women in the Workplace.

### Building internal capacity for advancing equity in Water Boards' work:

The State Water Board is building individual and organizational capacity for advancing racial equity in its decisions, programs, and projects. External equity efforts focus on addressing disparities through incorporating racial equity considerations in organization decisions, programs, and projects. Improving capacity for internal workforce equity benefits the organization's ability to advance racial equity in its work that impacts residents of California. The State Water Board offers training in advancing racial equity, equity at the workplace, communication, and engagement. These learning opportunities are available through the Water Boards' Training Academy.

- Two cohorts completed the Openscapes Champions process for integrating open science, equity, and kindness into individual and team collaborations and data-intensive workflows.

- Racial equity training competencies were developed and an internal training advisory committee was formed and provides input on the direction of racial equity training plan [[Action 12](#)].

### **Expanding engagement:**

The Water Boards developed resources to support meaningful engagement with communities and tribes last year. Staff continue to use the developed resources and explore ways to engage with affected communities and tribes. Many regions, divisions, and offices focused on building relationships with communities and tribes that may have been underrepresented in decision-making processes. This proactive engagement allows staff to understand community interests, provides opportunities to inform people of the Water Boards and its work, and hopefully leads to increased engagement in specific projects.

- Equitable engagement plans were implemented within the Tule, Kern County, and Kaweah subbasins for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act to ensure affected communities and tribes are engaged in decision-making processes [[Action 15](#)].
- 32 media representatives of media outlets that report on issues affecting disadvantaged and/or communities of color were added to the press distribution lists [[Action 50](#)].

### **Using racial equity tools:**

The Water Boards continue to explore how to analyze data collected by programs, demographic data, and other relevant environmental data to understand impacts on communities of color and incorporate a racial equity lens to project decisions. In 2024, the focus was establishing methods for analyzing collected data and identifying what questions to ask through use cases and professional coaching.

- An Equity Data Specialist was hired to lead the Water Boards' efforts to implement an analytical method to understand equity impacts of Water Boards' programs and decisions.
- A beneficial uses mapping tool was developed to help identify waterbody segments for possible tribal beneficial use designations [[Action 3](#)].
- Several mapping tools are being developed by multiple water quality programs to connect data on water quality, demographics, and other environmental burdens [[Action 4](#)].

### **Advancing equitable outcomes in existing programs:**

The Water Boards has increasingly incorporated equity considerations into programmatic work as internal capacity for understanding and applying equity concepts increases. Additionally, new legislation was passed that increases the Water Boards' ability to advance equity in its work.

- The Site Cleanup Subaccount Program used a new ranking methodology to prioritize funding to clean up contaminated sites in economically disadvantaged and environmental justice communities [[Action 7](#)].
- The Prioritization Framework for Plans to Restore Impaired Waterbodies includes criteria to prioritize environmental justice and racial equity in actions that restore water quality of impaired waterbodies listed on the 2024 Integrated Report [[Action 4](#)].

- The draft Bay-Delta Plan includes definitions for Tribal Beneficial Uses and a specific section for tribal engagement and incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge into implementation measures [[Action 21](#)].
- Notable legislation that passed in 2024: [AB 805](#) authorizes the State Water Board to appoint administrators to sewer systems where disadvantaged communities lack adequate sanitary sewer services, and [AB 2454](#) requires testing of domestic wells that serve rental properties where free testing is available [[Action 52](#)].

## Beyond the Racial Equity Action Plan

The State Water Board continues to find opportunities to embed equity where it can in addition to the 53 actions identified within this Racial Equity Action Plan.

- **Openscapes cohorts:** The Office of Information Management and Analysis has been leading [Openscapes](#) Champions Cohorts for Water Boards staff since 2022, with the completion of the third and fourth cohorts in 2024. Openscapes is a mindset, approach, and community that provides a framework for integrating open science, equity, and kindness into individual and team collaborations and data-intensive workflows.
- **Bioaccumulation Monitoring Training:** The Office of Information Management and Analysis' Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program, in partnership with California Indian Environmental Alliance, completed the tribally centered Bioaccumulation Monitoring Training Series in December 2024. The purpose of this training is to support California Native American Tribes in developing programs in the areas of bioaccumulation monitoring, data analysis, and data use processes; enable Tribes and other bioaccumulation monitoring groups to adopt those processes into their workflows; and, more easily partner with the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program and the [Safe to Eat Workgroup](#). Six courses were offered throughout the year. Over 75 tribal representatives, representing over 50 tribes throughout the state, registered for or attended one or more trainings. The program is continuously accepting feedback on the training series. If you attended a training or reviewed resources after a training was offered and are interested in providing feedback, please complete the [Post-Series Survey](#) at your convenience. For more information and to access slides and recordings of all past trainings, visit the [Training Series Webpage](#).
- **Mapping tool to explore beneficial use attainment:** The Division of Water Quality developed a [beneficial uses mapping tool](#) to help identify waterbody segments for possible future Tribal Beneficial Use designations. The mapping tool overlays existing designated beneficial uses with waterbody segments where data show beneficial uses are supported, impaired, or lack sufficient data.

- **Water Rights Data Transparency:** The Division of Water Rights is actively working on the Updating Water Rights Data for California (UPWARD) project, which will significantly enhance access to information and materials. UPWARD includes a new water rights data system (Cal-WATRS) and involves digitizing over seven million records currently only accessible in person at the California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters. UPWARD established a user advisory group, and an initial version of Cal-WATRS is anticipated for public review in 2025. The division is also revising Senate Bill 88 Water Measurement and Reporting Regulations to clarify requirements and ensure reported data align with Cal-WATRS. Public engagement began in late 2024 and the division plans to bring proposed revisions to the Board in 2025. Additional efforts are underway to promote more equitable access to water diversion data. For example, staff launched pilot projects to test how telemetry data can be reported and used to model instream flows and promote local watershed management.
- **Water Rights Enforcement:** The Division of Water Rights enforces water rights permits to ensure water rights holders are adhering to the conditions within their permits and applicable regulations. This is vital for preventing unauthorized diversions and maintaining streamflows necessary to support ecosystems and endangered fish species. Staff continue to evaluate and update enforcement communications and procedures to ensure materials are accessible and understandable for people who may face language barriers or lack legal representation. Simplifying enforcement messaging can improve compliance with permits and regulations, while reducing frustration and building trust.
- **Delta Cyanobacteria Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring Strategy:** The Division of Water Rights is coordinating with the Delta Stewardship Council on a harmful algal bloom monitoring strategy in the Delta. The collaboration involves several Native American tribes, community groups, academics, and state and federal agencies. The strategy coordinates data collection, promotes data-sharing, and identifies ways to mitigate the effects of harmful algal blooms in the Delta. Because the amount of water available in a water body can influence the presence of harmful algal blooms, coordination with the Division of Water Rights and major water users is critical to ensure management approaches can be adapted to varying hydrologic conditions.
- **Including racial equity into duty statements:** Multiple divisions and offices continue to add racial equity language to duty statements. For example, “Conduct community and Tribal outreach and engagement, establish and maintain partnerships, and foster open communication with voices from historically underserved and disadvantaged communities, including conducting outreach and analyses and developing findings consistent with Water Code section 13149.2. Conduct programmatic assessments and identify actions to implement the Water Board’s Racial Equity Resolution, Racial Equity Action Plan, Human Right to Water Resolution, and Climate Change Resolution in integrated water resource management.”



- **Establishing additional positions for racial equity:** An Equity Data Specialist was hired to lead the Water Boards' efforts to implement an analytical method to understand equity impacts in Water Boards' programs and decisions. A Tribal Affairs Program Manager was hired to lead the Water Boards' tribal affairs program. These positions signify the Water Boards' commitment to advancing equity and tribal collaboration in the Water Boards' programs and decisions.
- **Establishing division and office specific racial equity teams:** Multiple divisions and offices established internal teams to advance racial equity projects and initiatives. For example, the Division of Water Quality established an Advancing Racial Equity team of staff and supervisors to lead projects to advance the Racial Equity Action Plan.
- **Website performance and accessibility:** The Division of Information Technology expanded its access to, and utilization of, multiple site auditing and monitoring tools like Google 4 Analytics Suite, Siteimprove auditing platform, and Google Lighthouse. These tools allow the Water Boards to more efficiently evaluate and report on performance, usability, security, accessibility, and search engine optimization issues and opportunities. As a result, the Water Boards can better address site-wide issues such as broken or stale links and pages, which greatly enhances performance for users with limited internet connectivity. The auditing and monitoring tools also help the Water Boards pinpoint specific performance issues that could be addressed when a webpage is being redesigned.

# SUMMARY OF ACTION PROGRESS MADE IN 2024

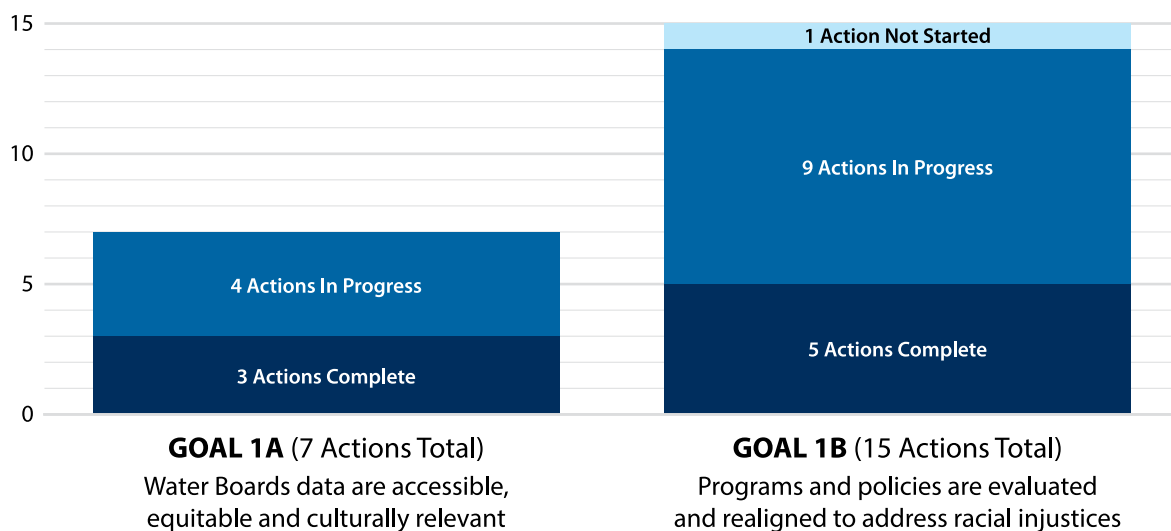
Stages		# Actions within stage (2023)	# Actions within stage (2024)
Stage 1	Preparation or scoping not yet started	1	1
Stage 2	Preparation, scoping, data collection, securing funding and resources	4	1
Stage 3	Work in progress	35	21
Stage 4	Action complete and/or at least one cycle of continual action complete; monitoring and evaluation of action is complete or ongoing	13	30

**Table 1:** Defines the stages of completion and how many actions are within each stage at the end of 2024

## Strategic Direction #1:

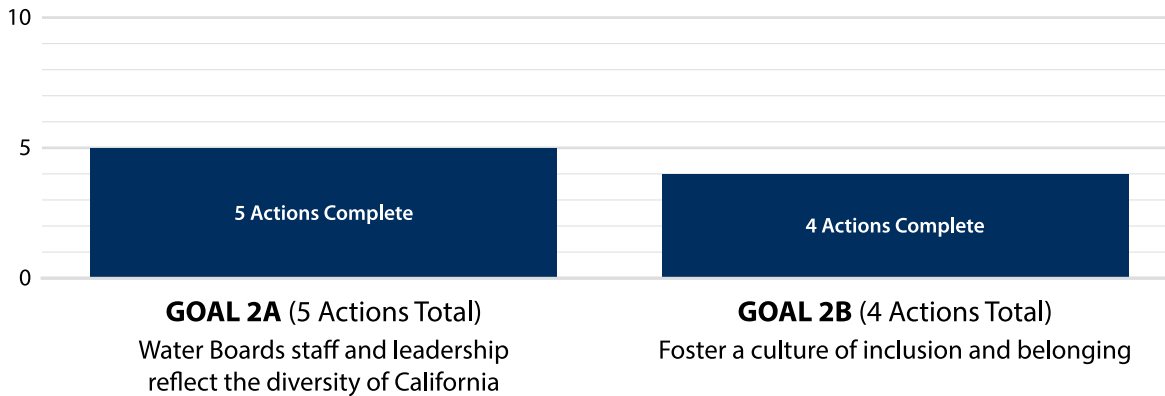
### INTEGRATING RACIAL EQUITY, MEASURING IMPACT

Infusing racial equity throughout the Water Boards’ policies, programs, and practices; measuring progress toward goals and adapting when necessary.



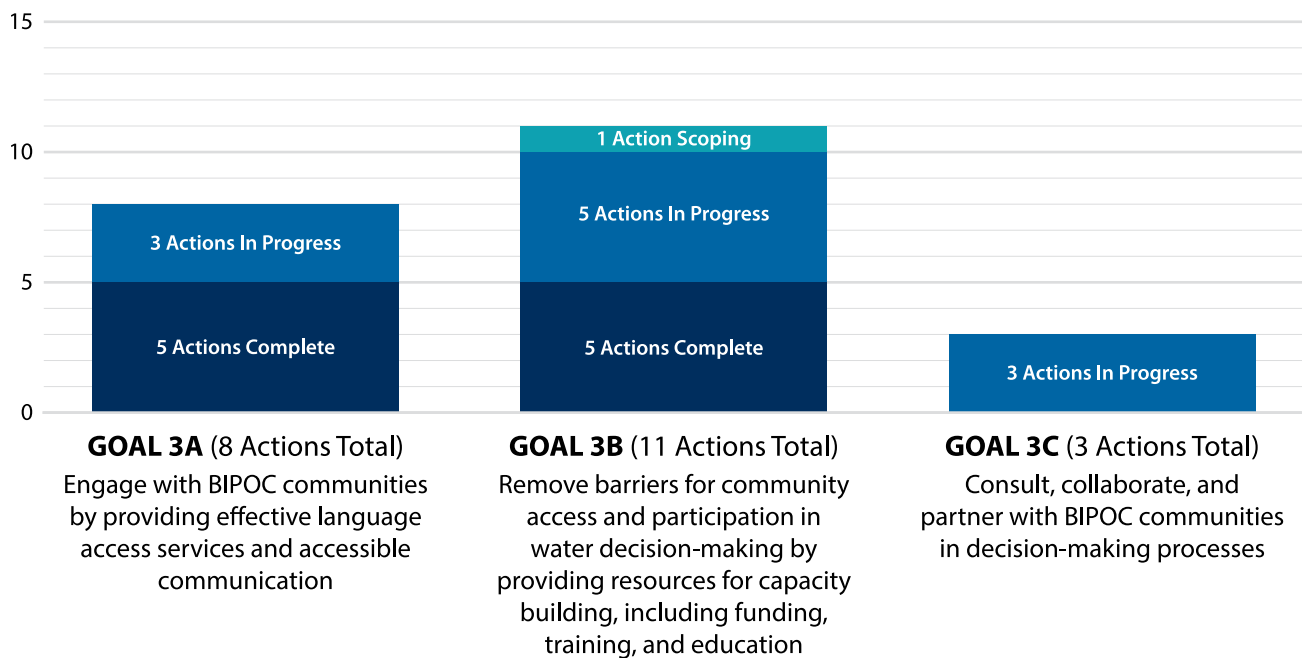
**Strategic Direction #2:  
CREATING, MAINTAINING SPACES FOR INCLUSION & BELONGING**

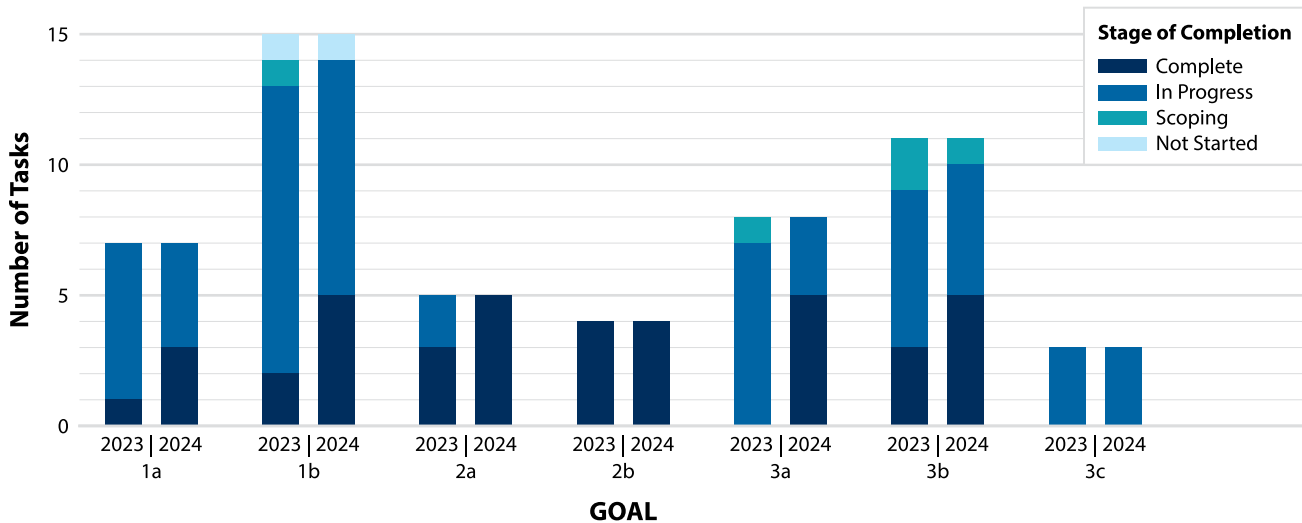
Addressing internal and external representation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color at all Water Boards’ levels; elevating overall understanding of racial equity.



**Strategic Direction #3:  
ACTIVATING BIPOC COMMUNITY WISDOM AND SHARING POWER**

Fostering open communications for voices of Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities; building power in BIPOC communities by cultivating authentic relationships and engaging communities as partners for racial equity; offering ongoing training, education, and dedicated resources to raise awareness of the Water Boards’ role in managing the state’s water resources; and incorporating wisdom from Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities in Water Boards’ decision-making processes.





Graph of the number of tasks at each stage of completion for 2023 and 2024

Strategic Direction #1:

# INTEGRATING RACIAL EQUITY, MEASURING IMPACT

Infusing racial equity throughout the Water Boards’ policies, programs, and practices; measuring progress toward goals and adapting when necessary.

**GOAL 1A:**

**Water Boards data are accessible, equitable and culturally relevant**

**ACTION 1**

Update the State Water Board’s racial equity webpage to include a page for tracking and measuring progress on the Racial Equity Action Plan.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED

SCOPING

IN PROGRESS

COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs updates the racial equity webpage to include the annual report and an interactive report dashboard before each annual update to the State Water Board.

**ACTION 2**

Develop and implement a Racial Equity Data Action Plan. At a minimum, the Racial Equity Data Action Plan must do the following: (1) Develop training and best practices guidance for Water Boards staff on incorporating racial equity concepts into the planning and design of data collection methods and visualizations (e.g., maps, factsheets, etc.) projects. (2) Identify and expand existing opportunities for public participation in science and community data gathering programs to develop new data collection methods, support existing programs, and incorporate community datasets into the database. (3) Create a publicly accessible data catalog tool / interface that includes existing demographic data, Water Boards program data, and other available data (such as heat maps or flood hazard maps) to inform the implementation of the Racial Equity Action Plan.

**LEAD:** Office of Information Management and Analysis

NOT STARTED

SCOPING

**IN PROGRESS**

COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Racial Equity Data Action Plan is being developed by a team led by the Office of Information Management and Analysis and the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs and includes representation from many divisions and offices. The Racial Equity Data Action Plan will include three components: 1) Guidance on best practices, 2) Compilation of data tools, and 3) Plan for Water Boards-wide implementation of best practices and data tools. Key accomplishments include:

- **Online catalog:** An online catalog of available equity-related tools is in development and is being tested and used internally. There were technical issues that prevented staff’s ability to actively work on this project. For example, the Water Boards’ ArcGIS publishing system was down for several months.
- **Guidance document and Resource Catalog:** A Racial Equity Data Handbook is in development and includes guidance on key practices that should be considered when undertaking a racial equity focused data analysis.
- **Increased coordination:** A racial equity data subcommittee of the Environmental Justice Roundtable was created to help ensure coordination between colleagues working on equity data projects is taking place to improve consistency and reduce duplicative efforts.
- **External coaching:** The Office of Information Management and Analysis is working with a data consultant that coaches Water Board staff on the use of racial equity data and supports program specific use cases through training webinars and one-on-one coaching to racial equity data analysis practitioners.

**ACTION 3**

Incorporate racial equity analysis into the 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report to identify impacted waters in Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), and disadvantaged communities, starting by identifying data gaps. The Integrated Report is a document with a comprehensive review of surface water quality and includes a list of currently impaired water bodies by pollutant type.

**LEAD:** Division of Water Quality

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The California Integrated Report is a requirement of the Federal Clean Water Act. The Division of Water Quality coordinates with regional water boards to assess surface waters and determine if they contain pollutants at levels that exceed protective water quality standards. The Integrated Report includes a list of impaired water bodies, which are streams, rivers, lakes, and coastal waters that have elevated pollutant levels. This list is organized by water body and pollutant type, as each water body may have multiple pollutant impairments. The Division of Water Quality analyzes spatial data to develop a preliminary estimate of the impaired waterbody size in miles and acres, and the percentage of streams, lakes, and coastal/bay shorelines that are impaired in California. Key accomplishments include:

- **2024 California Integrated Report:** The State Water Board adopted the 2024 California Integrated Report in February 2024. This report assessed data from waterbodies within the boundaries of the San Francisco Bay, Santa Ana, and Los Angeles Regional Water Boards, the Sacramento River sub-area of the Central Valley Regional Water Board, and a limited number of waterbodies within the boundaries of the Central Coast and San Diego Regional Water Boards. Based on assessments of these data, the State Water Board added approximately 641 new waterbody-pollutant impairments and removed 101 previous impairments from the 2024 list of impaired waterbodies in California.
- **Tribal data guidance:** The Division of Water Quality developed procedures for when to consider tribal data in the integrated report and how to engage with tribes on their data and the program. The Division of Water Quality is implementing these procedures while developing the 2026 Integrated Report. The tribal data guidance may be included in the overarching Racial Equity Data Handbook being developed as part of [Action 2](#).
- **Mapping tool to explore beneficial use attainment:** The Division of Water Quality developed a [beneficial uses mapping tool](#) to help identify waterbody segments for possible tribal beneficial use designations. The mapping tool overlays designated beneficial uses with waterbody segments where data show beneficial uses are supported, impaired, or lack sufficient data.

**ACTION 4**

Identify and assess available data to identify racial equity data gaps related to water quality.

**LEAD:** Division of Water Quality

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The Division of Water Quality is leading several efforts related to assessing water quality impacts:

- **Developing mapping tools:** The Division of Water Quality is developing mapping tools for multiple programs to aid racial equity data gaps related to water quality. For example:
  - The Strategy to Optimize Resource Management of Stormwater (STORMS) program is creating a dynamic, electronic map that identifies copper and zinc impaired waterbodies; Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color; and CalEnviroscreen scores.
  - The Pretreatment and Constituents of Emerging Concern (CEC) program has utilized mapping tools and GIS layers to help evaluate areas of interest for a constituent of emerging concern referred to as 6ppd-quinone. 6ppd-quinone is known to be highly toxic to salmon and of concern to tribes in the Pacific Northwest, including northern California. Staff submitted a proposal to participate in a United States Environmental Protection Agency’s Regional-Office of Research and Development Community of Science Networking Program (ROCS-Net) that provides an opportunity to work with tribal representatives to develop a monitoring approach for 6ppd-quinone.
  - The Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program developed a workgroup to review a screening tool for environmental justice concerns. The goal is to have a mapping or ranking tool for future grant funding.
- **Identifying potential water quality trends:** The Division of Water Quality is exploring approaches to evaluating water quality and demographic data to identify potential trends in water quality in disadvantaged communities.
- **Evaluating business practices:** The Division of Water Quality is evaluating business practices in its water quality certification and enforcement programs to consider how and where to integrate racial equity and environmental justice into processes. For example, adding a metric when developing inspection protocols for the year to determine whether the project site is within an economically disadvantaged community.
- **Addressing disparities in the Site Cleanup Program:** In 2023, the Division of Water Quality worked with the regional water boards to evaluate site cleanup cases to understand the baseline of systemic inequalities in site cleanup program progress and set internal targets to work toward minimizing existing disparities. The 2024 target is to review and assess 200 out of 428 active cleanup cases in communities assigned a CalEnviroscreen score over 75%. The Division of Water Quality exceeded this target and assessed 222 active sites.

**ACTION 5**

Include a Racial Equity Action Plan progress update at a State Water Board meeting. The update should include any barriers, such as funding or legislation, encountered as the plan is implemented.

**LEAD:** Executive Office

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

State Water Board divisions and offices will present an update to the State Water Board as an information item at a March 2025 Board meeting.

**ACTION 6**

Incorporate racial equity analysis into the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment, including a measurement of the number of BIPOC communities impacted by primary and secondary contaminants in drinking water and water unaffordability. Work with U.S. EPA to implement a similar analysis to federally regulated tribal water systems.

**LEAD:** Division of Drinking Water

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment is a core component that guides and informs the implementation of the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) drinking water program. The Needs Assessment is comprised of four core components: the Failing Water System List (Failing list), the Risk Assessment, the Cost Assessment, and the Affordability Assessment. The Needs assessment measures the number of Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color that are impacted by primary and secondary drinking water contaminants and unaffordable water bills. The Needs Assessment includes a chapter specifically addressing tribal drinking water systems, where the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency applies the failing water system criteria from the State Water Board’s Needs Assessment to evaluate tribal water systems. The 2024 Needs Assessment was completed and is publicly available on the [Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience webpage](#).



**ACTION 7**

Assess race/ethnicity data and other relevant demographic data, associated with the communities that benefit from funding administered by DFA. Existing annual funding reports and plans will be the primary mechanism to report these data on a project specific basis, where appropriate. In addition, summaries for the funding program will be provided.

**LEAD:** Division of Financial Assistance

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The Division of Financial Assistance applied this action to several funding programs:

- **Annual Fund Expenditure Plan:** The Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) drinking water program’s annual Fund Expenditure Plan summarizes demographic information for projects funded in the previous fiscal year and provides a geographic distribution of projects funded since 2019. The Division of Financial Assistance is collaborating with the Office of Information Management and Analysis to improve how this information is analyzed and presented.
- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund** and **Drinking Water State Revolving Fund:** The annual reports for these funds include summaries of demographic information for both programs based on communities benefitting from the executed funding agreements. The Division of Financial Assistance uses data on identity characteristics, median household income, and poverty level. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund program offers low-cost financing for a wide variety of water quality projects. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program assists public water systems in financing the cost of drinking water infrastructure projects needed to achieve or maintain compliance with Safe Drinking Water Act requirements.
- **Orphan Site Cleanup Fund:** The Division of Water Quality and Division of Financial Assistance are identifying and prioritizing funding for orphan cleanup sites located in disadvantaged and environmental justice areas. The Orphan Site Cleanup Fund provides financial assistance to eligible applicants to clean up sites contaminated by leaking petroleum underground storage tanks where there is no financially responsible party, and the applicant is not eligible for the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund.
- **Site Cleanup Subaccount Program (SCAP):** In August 2024, the State Water Board adopted Resolution 2024-0023 that establishes a new ranking methodology for the Site Cleanup Subaccount Program. This program primarily funds the cleanup of contaminated sites when the responsible party has no or limited ability to pay for the cleanup. The methodology used to establish funding priorities provides greater weight to projects in economically disadvantaged and environmental justice communities. In October 2024, the Deputy Director of the Division of Financial Assistance approved lists of projects that may be funded through this program.

For the period ending December 2024, 72% of the 36 total projects funded for fiscal year 2023 through 2024 are in economically disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities.



Board Member Nichole Morgan presents South Mesa Water Company with a ceremonial \$10.2 million check. The State Water Board awarded funding to South Mesa Water Company through the Safe and Affordable Fund for Equity and Resilience program to strengthen and expand the region's drinking water system.

**GOAL 1B:**  
**Programs and policies are evaluated and realigned to address racial injustices**

**ACTION 8**

Deputy directors and directors should regularly discuss their division's or office's progress with their staff on actions identified in the Racial Equity Action Plan and gauge where more support is needed.

**LEAD:** ALL

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

Discussions about opportunities to consider and address racial injustices in program and policies continue to take place at various levels and coordination spaces within the Water Boards:

- **Internal coordination:** Divisions and offices regularly discuss and implement new approaches with their programs. All program roundtables should now have racial equity as a standing agenda item. State Water Board briefings now include considerations of racial equity impacts. Coordination meetings like the Deputy Management Committee and the Management Coordinating Committee regularly discuss racial equity and environmental justice. The Environmental Justice Roundtable serves as a quarterly internal coordination meeting to discuss progress made towards advancing equity and justice. A racial equity training advisory team has been established. The State Water Board’s draft 2025 Strategic Work Plan also includes considerations for equity.
- **Division, region, and office-specific workgroups:** Multiple regions, divisions, and offices have established employee workgroups to inform and guide their division, office, or region’s directions towards advancing racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental justice.

<b>ACTION 9</b>			
Develop a racial equity toolkit for all Water Boards staff to consider racial equity in their day-to-day work. <b>LEAD:</b> Office of Information Management and Analysis			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The racial equity toolkit will be a collection of training, resources, and tools developed as a result of several actions within this Action Plan including the Racial Equity Data Handbook and Data Hub [Action 2], Advancing Equity in Water Boards Decisions Guidance [Action 45], Equity Centered Engagement Curriculum [Action 44], and Racial Equity Training Curriculum [Action 12]. All the actions that are components of the toolkit are in development.

<b>ACTION 10</b>			
Develop training and guidance for how to implement the racial equity toolkit to examine potential disproportionate impacts of policies and programs on BIPOC communities. <b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
<b>NOT STARTED</b>	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

Pending completion of the Racial Equity Data Handbook and Data Hub which is still under development [Action 9].

<b>ACTION 11</b>			
<p>Select, train, and support a second cohort of Water Boards staff to deliver “Advancing Racial Equity at the Water Boards” trainings.</p> <p><b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs</p>			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed a Racial Equity Train-the-Trainer program to equip Water Boards staff with the skills to deliver a three-part racial equity course to their colleagues. The program aims to build internal capacity to deliver racial equity trainings to as many Water Boards staff as possible. This course, titled “Advancing Racial Equity at the Water Boards,” was adapted from a similar course developed by the California Environmental Protection Agency and adds content specific to the Water Boards. It is an opportunity to engage with peers who are exploring and developing a shared understanding of fundamental racial equity concepts, a model of change to become an antiracist organization, and an overview of racial equity tools. The second cohort of 10 staff completed the train-the-trainer program and are certified trainers. The Water Boards has a total of 20 certified trainers that delivered the training to approximately 800 staff over the past 2 years. The Advancing Racial Equity curriculum and the Train-the-Trainer curriculum will be revised and relaunched in 2025.

<b>ACTION 12</b>			
<p>Develop a racial equity training plan for staff that will guide efforts to develop and coordinate a racial equity curriculum through the Training Academy. Elements may include analysis of what trainings are effective; what trainings should be required; how often people should get training; which current courses could be modified to incorporate more content related to racial equity; how racial equity goals should inform the selection, onboarding, and evaluation of instructors and vendors providing materials or courses; and what educational content could be developed or made available.</p> <p><b>LEAD:</b> Office of Research, Planning, and Performance</p>			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Research, Planning, and Performance houses Training Services, which leads a robust employee training and development program that works to anticipate organizational needs. The office evaluated current courses, instructors, and processes for opportunities to incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging best practices and content. They also incorporated feedback from surveys, course evaluations, and committees into courses and discussions with vendors, and updated instructor expectations. The office piloted new courses and worked closely with vendors to ensure courses reflect the Water Boards’ racial equity goals and racial equity training competencies. A Training Advisory Committee was formed and meets quarterly to review, modify, and provide feedback on courses and racial equity training efforts.

The Office of Research, Planning, and Performance and Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed and executed a Water Board workplace equity course for Water Boards’ management. Moving forward, these offices will work with sponsors of new courses to ensure equity components are present.

<b>ACTION 13</b>			
As appropriate, ensure that priorities and actions within the State Water Board’s annual Strategic Work Plan reflect this action plan.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Research, Planning, and Performance			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

This is an ongoing project. The Office of Research, Planning, and Performance develops the State Water Board Strategic Work Plan every year for the Executive Director and coordinates with programs to effectively include equity considerations. Strategic Work Plans can be found on the [State Water Board Priorities webpage](#).

<b>ACTION 14</b>			
Develop a plan to identify climate change impacts (related to State Water Board authorities) and how they may potentially disproportionately impact BIPOC communities or interests.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Research, Planning, and Performance			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Research, Planning, and Performance provides consultation to Water Boards’ units and programs to help them advance climate resilience and equity; connects staff with academics, community organizations, and advocates; and coordinates Water Boards’ work that intersects with climate change and racial equity. In

June 2024, the office presented its plan to propose a new climate change resolution for the Board to consider adopting in 2025. The climate change resolution will further advance Action 14 and may be a resource for Water Boards staff by informing procedures and policy recommendations. Staff are researching methods for assessing potential climate impacts of Water Boards’ decisions and how they may disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. The new resolution may incorporate concepts and lessons learned from the previously conceived Climate and Racial Equity Strategy. More information can be found on the [Climate Change webpage](#).

<b>ACTION 15</b>			
In basins where State Water Board intervention into groundwater management (through SGMA authorities) is likely, engage with BIPOC communities that may be affected.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Sustainable Groundwater Management			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The State Water Board created the Office of Sustainable Groundwater Management to fulfill the State Water Board’s role under the landmark Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act established a statewide framework to protect groundwater resources and address groundwater issues, including drinking water wells going dry or water quality issues caused by over pumping groundwater. Such issues may disproportionately affect predominantly Hispanic or Latiné communities in the Central Valley.

The Office of Sustainable Groundwater Management and the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs implemented equity-centered engagement plans within the Tule, Kern County, and Kaweah subbasins. Staff applied a racial equity lens to engagement by providing multilingual materials and interpretation in Spanish and Punjabi; partnering with community-based organizations; using multimedia outreach channels like printed flyers, public service radio announcements in Spanish, and emails; hosting seven public workshops with hybrid meeting options; and hosting government-to-government consultations with two tribal governments.

After robust engagement, the State Water Board designated the Tulare Lake Subbasin and Tule Subbasin as probationary. A probationary designation identifies the deficiencies in a subbasin’s Groundwater Sustainability Plan that led to state intervention and potential actions to remedy the deficiencies. It also requires certain well owners within the probationary basin to submit information annually to the State Water Board on how much groundwater they extract and pay fees.



*State Water Board staff coordinated a meeting and panel discussion with the Punjabi American Growers Group in Visalia, California.*

## **ACTION 16**

Assess potential equity impacts of the proposed urban water use efficiency regulation.

**LEAD:** Office of Research, Planning, and Performance

NOT STARTED

SCOPING

IN PROGRESS

**COMPLETE**

### **Progress Summary:**

The State Water Board approved a regulation to make conservation a California way of life on July 3, 2024, to boost California’s water resilience amid climate change. The “Making Conservation a California Way of Life” regulation established a framework for individualized efficiency goals for each urban retail water supplier. Urban retail water suppliers supply water to most California residents. The regulation is structured to support equity in various ways. For example, an “alternative compliance pathway” is incorporated for suppliers meeting specific criteria. Suppliers serving disadvantaged communities may qualify by demonstrating sustained water savings. Staff are working to support suppliers’ compliance and to support collaboration at multiple levels. Staff are providing compliance support to suppliers, with a focus on those serving disadvantaged communities. This work will be adaptive, based on evolving conditions, and will seek to implement recommendations and feedback provided directly by those suppliers. Staff are also working to track the impacts of the regulation over time, including if impacts are disproportionate.



*State Water Board members and staff after the Board adopted the “Making Conservation a California Way of Life” regulation on July 3, 2024.*

## **ACTION 17**

Pilot the racial equity toolkit to identify program-specific actions, priorities, and metrics, and realign programs and practices to advance racial equity, and assess the effectiveness of programs.

**LEAD:** Division of Water Quality

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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### **Progress Summary:**

The racial equity toolkit is being developed as part of the Racial Equity Data Action Plan under [Action 9]. Additionally, the Division of Water Quality aligns its nonpoint source grant funding program with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Justice40 initiative, which aims to allocate 40% of federal grant funds to disadvantaged communities. The nonpoint source grant funding program funds projects that reduce nonpoint source pollution. The Division of Water Quality is piloting a method for prioritizing watersheds with overburdened communities that have not received funding from this program by using the Recovery Potential Screening tool developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



As a part of this effort, the nonpoint source grant program is partially funding a project in the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in the Angeles National Forest. The State Water Board approved up to \$3.5 million of federal Clean Water Act funds to support a multi-phase project that will enhance river access, protect fragile forest and riparian habitat, and install infrastructure and facilities that address a trash impairment on the East Fork San Gabriel River. This stretch of the San Gabriel River is a popular recreation area for surrounding underserved communities and is a key Southern California water source for Los Angeles County. The first phase of this project is in grant agreement development and is scheduled to begin in 2025.

More information on the online tools can be found on these websites: [Recovery Potential Screening tool](#), [CalEnviroScreen](#), and [EJScreen](#).

<b>ACTION 18</b>			
Provide guidance to Regional Water Boards on the consideration of impacts to BIPOC communities and environmental justice when addressing impaired waters through development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) or other actions to restore clean water. Use prioritization to inform allocation of funding for environmental cleanup projects.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Division of Water Quality			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Division of Water Quality completed a [prioritization framework](#) that includes criteria to prioritize environmental justice and racial equity in actions that restore waters identified as impaired in the 2024 Integrated Report. For example, developing total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) or other regulatory actions that are expected to restore water quality within a specified time frame. The prioritization framework will be included in the Racial Equity Data Handbook being developed as part of [\[Action 2\]](#) within the Use Case section.

<b>ACTION 19</b>			
Participate as partners in implementing the Environmental Justice Enforcement Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Enforcement			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>

**Progress Summary:**

The Environmental Justice Enforcement Memorandum of Understanding establishes a collaborative framework for joint environmental justice activities, encompassing enforcement, inspections, and community outreach. The primary goal is to strengthen enforcement and ensure compliance in environmental justice communities. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines an agreement between federal and state agencies to devise environmental justice strategies, specifically aimed at safeguarding the health of residents in communities disproportionately burdened by pollution. Annual progress reports on these initiatives are made available to the public. As a direct result of participating in the Memorandum of Understanding, the Office of Enforcement participated in approximately 70 community and agency meetings and completed 7 inspections in economically disadvantaged communities in 2024.

The Office of Enforcement actively participates in standing meetings of various community organizations including meetings of Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods (IVAN) networks. Spanning seven locations across the state, these networks serve as resources, connecting communities with individuals who can address local environmental concerns. In addition to attending regular community focused meetings, the Office of Enforcement is committed to following up on community concerns and participates in the Rapid Response Team. This team is mobilized in response to urgent environmental threats or community concerns requiring immediate attention from both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA).

The Rapid Response Team was mobilized in 2024 to address a fire at Radius Recycling in West Oakland. The initial emergency response evolved into a cooperative agreement between U.S. EPA, CalEPA, Water Boards, Department of Toxic Substance Control, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Radius Recycling, and the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project. In the agreement, these parties commit to continue seeking creative solutions to address impacts on the community associated with the metal shredding operations. A signing ceremony for that agreement is scheduled for January of 2025.

<b>ACTION 20</b>			
Consider impacts to BIPOC communities, tribal beneficial uses and cultural resources, and related ecosystems when developing, implementing, and enforcing instream flow requirements, consistent with all applicable laws and requirements, including those related to water rights, basin planning, public trust resources, and endangered species.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Division of Water Rights			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

- **Prioritizing instream flows:** The Division of Water Rights is prioritizing instream flow work in watersheds with a strong tribal and equity focus. In January 2025, the Board extended for another year the emergency instream flow requirements for the Scott and Shasta River watersheds in an ongoing effort to protect imperiled fish and ensure adequate water supplies

for human health and livestock needs threatened by multiple years of dry conditions. In October 2024, the State Water Board adopted a [resolution](#) directing staff to develop the scientific basis for minimum baseline flow needs in the Scott and Shasta Rivers.

- Clear Lake Hitch:** The Division of Water Rights continued coordinating with and supporting tribal efforts to protect the Clear Lake hitch (or chi) throughout 2024. The Division began collecting groundwater pumping data from more than 1,800 properties surrounding key chi habitat pursuant to the Board’s emergency information order regulations for the Clear Lake watershed. The Division also expanded stream gaging and groundwater level monitoring in the watershed. Information order and monitoring data will be shared publicly and used in the Division’s groundwater-surface water study, which is evaluating how groundwater pumping impacts surface water flows necessary for chi spawning and rearing. Additionally, the Division prioritized water rights enforcement in the Clear Lake watershed. The Division will continue these efforts in 2025.



*State Water Board staff taking stream gage measurements in Clear Lake, California.*

**ACTION 21**

Establish a single point of contact in the Division of Water Rights to serve as a coordinator on Bay-Delta tribal and BIPOC engagement to improve communication and outreach and conduct tribal outreach under AB 52 and B-10-11 for the Bay-Delta Plan implementation regulation for Lower San Joaquin River flows and Southern Delta Salinity.

**LEAD:** Division of Water Rights

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The State Water Board continues to prioritize the update and implementation of the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (Bay-Delta Plan). In 2023, the State Water Board assigned a staff tribal coordinator to lead tribal engagement, held listening sessions to hear input and feedback from California Native American Tribes, and held additional sessions to hear feedback from environmental justice communities. In 2024, the State Water Board also held several meetings, tribal focused workshops, and briefings with California Native American Tribes, environmental justice communities, and others to discuss the Bay-Delta Plan update. These meetings focused on the Sacramento River and Delta and associated proposed voluntary agreements. Board staff also participated in other tribal and environmental justice focused conferences and meetings to learn about the concerns and issues these communities face and to continue outreach and engagement.

Based on feedback from these processes, the draft Bay-Delta Plan update for the Sacramento River and Delta includes several provisions. Specifically, the draft includes definitions for Tribal and Subsistence Fishing Beneficial Uses and identifies that the Board is considering formal designation of Tribal Tradition and Culture (CUL) Beneficial Use in the Bay-Delta watershed as part of the current update to the Bay-Delta Plan or through a subsequent appropriate process and invites public input on how the Board should proceed. The draft Bay-Delta Plan also includes provisions for ongoing tribal engagement, incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge, and for addressing harmful algal blooms (HABs). Specifically, the draft plan proposes: 1) the formation of a tribal advisory group to advise the Board on its Bay-Delta planning and implementation processes; 2) development of a tribal engagement plan in coordination with California Native American Tribes to incorporate their knowledge and perspectives into the Bay-Delta Plan update; 3) incorporation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and other tribal feedback within the update and implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan, as appropriate; and 4) additional monitoring and evaluation of harmful algal blooms in the Delta to inform management actions.

<b>ACTION 22</b>			
Incorporate racial equity analysis when developing maximum contaminant levels using available data and as data and methods allow.  <b>LEAD:</b> Division of Drinking Water			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The State Water Board adopted a maximum contaminant level for hexavalent chromium in drinking water to meet public health goals. This new regulation requires drinking water systems to monitor for hexavalent chromium and remove the contaminant from the water if concentrations exceed the maximum contaminant level. An equity analysis was attempted for this rulemaking process. However, limited data made it impossible to confidently pinpoint areas receiving contaminated water. To address this data gap, a pilot project was initiated to explore frameworks for tracking chemicals through distribution systems. The objective is to trace manganese within drinking water systems, establish a framework for assessing exposure risks, and develop

strategies to mitigate these risks. This pilot project will enhance the analysis of equity impacts for contaminants, aiding future rulemakings to establish maximum contaminant levels. The Division of Drinking Water hired a Senior Water Resource Control Engineer Specialist to lead the manganese pilot project. The Division will also purchase equipment to support this work and will conduct distribution system water quality studies within disadvantaged communities such as San Lucas, Sativa, and Maywood.

The Division is also performing statewide per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing at all wells serving economically disadvantaged communities. The Division will use U.S. Environmental Protection Agency targeted analytical methods and the California state-developed broad spectrum analytical method to better understand the total mass and class of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances compounds. This large volume of data will be analyzed to look for correlations, including aspects of underserved, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and other demographic criteria in communities.

### Strategic Direction #2

# CREATING, MAINTAINING SPACES FOR INCLUSION & BELONGING

Addressing internal and external representation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color at all Water Boards’ levels; elevating overall understanding of racial equity.

## GOAL 2A: Water Boards staff and leadership reflect the diversity of California

### ACTION 23

Review existing data, and new data to be collected and produced by CalHR, on demographics of Water Boards staff. Disaggregate data by Region, Division, Office, position classification, etc. and publish findings to the Racial Equity Webpage.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED

SCOPING

IN PROGRESS

**COMPLETE**

### Progress Summary:

The Division of Administrative Services collected 2023–2024 demographic data from the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) and from the State Controller’s Office. These data were included in the 2024 Workforce Development and Succession Management Plan and was shared internally and with CalHR. More information can be found on [CalHR’s workforce analysis webpage](#).

**ACTION 24**

Review and revise the “Immediate Action Plan for Advancing Workforce Diversity” to improve long-term effectiveness of strategies to recruit, promote, and retain BIPOC staff.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The Immediate Action Plan for Advancing Workforce Diversity establishes a set of hiring practices that can be put in place immediately to promote workforce diversity. This plan focuses on the following key goals: 1) requiring hiring panelists receive training on implicit bias or racial equity, 2) including a diversity statement in job advertisement packages, 3) establishing model diversity interview questions, and 4) focusing recruitment efforts.

In 2024, the Division of Administrative Services identified a list of recruitment fairs to attend in fiscal year 2024–2025 to advance workforce diversity. The identified recruitment fairs include San Jose State’s Diversity Fair, South San Francisco’s 24th Annual Diversity Employment Day Career Fair, Sacramento LGBT Community Center’s “You Betta’ Work” LGBTQIA+ Career Fair, and Asian Resources Incorporated’s State Career Fair.

**ACTION 25**

Increase recruitment for job openings and internship opportunities at high schools, community colleges, colleges, universities, workforce development networks, and community-based groups that serve BIPOC communities in California. Collaborate with Regional Water Boards on future recruitment efforts.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

Improving and expanding recruitment efforts is an ongoing goal that will not have a completion date. The Division of Administrative Services established a recruitment unit in 2019 to support recruitment efforts for the Water Boards. The recruitment team aligned its recruitment practices to support diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. They identified and implemented the following four goals:

**Goals 1 and 2:** Goal 1—Partner with Water Boards’ divisions, offices, and regions to improve the Water Boards’ brand and provide positive candidate experiences. Goal 2—Establish and sustain partnerships with educational institutions and community organizations.

- In 2024, the Division of Administrative Services continues to work with regional water boards to partner with educational institutions, such as California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt, for recruitment and career opportunities.

**Goal 3:** Employment assistance public webpages are revised and updated to provide additional resources for prospective applicants.

- In 2024, the Division of Administrative Services updated the State Water Board’s employment webpage to include additional resources for prospective applicants. The resources include the following: written instructions and videos for applying for a state job, an application checklist, guidance for writing a Statement of Qualification, a list of current State Water Board opportunities, and a list of career fairs/events.

**Goal 4:** Support Water Boards staff in low-paying classifications by providing resources for career development and upward mobility.

- In 2024, the Division of Administrative Services launched a 2024 Upward Mobility Program in November 2024. Three participants were approved to participate in this program and will receive resources for career development and upward mobility.

**ACTION 26**

Update the Water Boards’ website to include additional guidance for prospective applicants on how to navigate the state’s hiring process, with a focus on successfully applying for Water Board positions.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The Division of Administrative Services updated the State Water Board’s employment webpage to include additional resources for prospective applicants. The resources include the following: written instructions and videos for applying for a state job, an application checklist, guidance for writing a Statement of Qualification, a list of current State Water Board opportunities, and a list of career fairs/events. The division also added information on paid and unpaid internships. Contact information for the recruitment team was added to the webpage so prospective applicants can email or call them with any questions related to the application process. The division sends monthly email updates on the webpage and career fairs to those subscribed to its email notification list. More information can be found on the [State Water Board employment website](#).

**ACTION 27**

Require implicit bias and racial equity training for all hiring panelists, supervisors, and State and Regional Board Members.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

Immediate Action Plan for Advancing Workforce Diversity contains the requirements for all hiring panelists and supervisors to take implicit bias and/or equity training [[Action 24](#)]. These courses are regularly offered through the Water Boards’ Training Academy.

**GOAL 2B: Foster a culture of inclusion and belonging**

**ACTION 28**

Develop a mentorship program that allows employees, including BIPOC staff, to connect with others who may have similar experiences and to provide coaching on career growth and advancement.

**LEAD:** Division of Administrative Services

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The Division of Administrative Services launched its first cohort of the mentorship program in April 2024. The program aims to provide all Water Boards employees opportunities to gain institutional knowledge and experience that would aid professional development. The mentorship program is open to all Water Boards employees, and everyone is encouraged to apply. The program is currently being revised for the 2025 calendar year to have two cohorts, sample mentor/mentee questions, mentee exercises, and a dedicated recruitment analyst. These revisions are being completed in collaboration with the Water Boards’ Workplace Equity Advisor.



**ACTION 29**

Update roundtable charters or workplans to include racial equity and include racial equity discussions as a standing agenda item on roundtables.

**LEAD:** Division of Water Quality

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

Water Boards roundtables serve as coordinating bodies for specific programs within the organization’s structure. These forums are designed to ensure the efficient, consistent, and effective implementation of program requirements. Roundtables facilitate the incubation of ideas, exchange of information, discussion of program challenges and associated lessons learned, consideration of improvements, and the development of collective feedback and recommendations for upper management regarding program implementation and enhancement.

Environmental justice and racial equity are being added as standing agenda items to all program roundtables. Of the 17 program roundtables with established workplans or charters, 17 made updates in 2024 to include racial equity and environmental justice. Deputy Management Committee (DMC) roundtable liaisons are verifying that the program roundtable charters and/or workplans continue to include racial equity and environmental justice, and the standing agenda items are prioritized in roundtable discussions. The Division of Water Quality established its own advancing racial equity team that is preparing resources and materials that support this action.

**ACTION 30**

Distribute the second, biannual racial equity survey to the Water Boards to measure staff understanding of racial equity.

**LEAD:** Office of Information Management and Analysis

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

This action was completed in 2023. In 2023, the Water Boards collaborated with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to survey Water Boards staff. The purpose of the optional survey was to assess racial equity knowledge, skills, and experiences among staff to inform future actions toward advancing racial equity. Overall, respondents indicated a willingness and capacity to engage in racial equity work. Survey results revealed increased agreement on divisional and agency-wide actions compared to 2020, validating the internal efforts that have been underway. While awareness of activities being undertaken improved, there

is now an increased desire to understand how the work fits within the various work of Water Boards’ divisions and offices, as well as monitoring the effectiveness of the activities put in motion. Disaggregated results across race and ethnicity, supervisory status, and division or work unit suggest the experiences and perspectives differ across the organization. Survey results suggest that progress has been made over time and that continued support, and resources will maximize the impacts of equity-centered activities. The survey results will be useful for shaping the Water Boards’ long-term organizational racial equity strategy.

**ACTION 31**

Develop educational materials for staff to improve understanding of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) processes for submitting racial discrimination/harassment complaints and following up after a complaint has been submitted.

**LEAD:** Equal Employment Opportunity

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

In 2024, the Equal Employment Opportunity Office trained several regional water boards on the complaints process. The Equal Employment Opportunity Office will train the State Water Board’s divisions and offices, the remaining regional water boards, and all Division of Drinking Water district offices through 2025. Additionally, the office internally published a Frequently Asked Questions document to assist with questions about the complaint process. The office also developed a new process to file complaints anonymously online and will launch this process around January 2025.

### Strategic Direction #3

# ACTIVATING BIPOC COMMUNITY WISDOM AND SHARING POWER

Fostering open communications for voices of Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities; building power in BIPOC communities by cultivating authentic relationships and engaging communities as partners for racial equity; offering ongoing training, education, and dedicated resources to raise awareness of the Water Boards’ role in managing the state’s water resources; and incorporating wisdom from Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities in Water Boards’ decision-making processes.

## GOAL 3A:

**Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communication**

### ACTION 32

Cultivate relationships with ethnic and multi-language media in BIPOC communities and provide opportunities for them to understand and contextualize water policy information.

**LEAD:** Communications Office

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
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### Progress Summary:

In 2024, the Communications Office continued its outreach to media outlets throughout the state to expand its media relationships and encourage local reporting on water quality issues impacting Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. The Communications Office engaged with 27 new outlets in 2023 and 32 new outlets in 2024. Several members of the Communications Office attended a major conference organized by Ethnic Media Services in August 2024 and leveraged contacts from the conference and ongoing outreach to expand press lists and facilitate coverage of Water Boards’ efforts. In April 2024, the office hired a communications specialist to work with the State Water Board’s Office of Sustainable Groundwater Management to increase media contacts and coverage of groundwater issues, especially by Spanish-speaking media, in basins currently before the Board in the state intervention process. Through its contacts, the office helped reporters understand the structure of the Water Boards, how to navigate the Water Boards’ websites and the types of stories that may be relevant to their geographical and thematic areas of interest.

**ACTION 33**

Review and evaluate existing photo library inventory and identify gaps to diversify photos so that our communications material better reflect California’s people. Create guidance for staff on use of culturally sensitive imagery, such as for Native American ceremonies, and avoiding images that reinforce racial stereotypes.

**LEAD:** Communications Office

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

In 2023, the Communications Office reviewed photographs and graphics on the Water Boards’ most mature social media channels, Twitter (now X), and Instagram, to evaluate its diversity and inclusion. That review found that much of the imagery on the Water Boards’ social media channels depicts the natural environment and does not feature people. On Twitter, about half of the photographs used contain people, while on Instagram only one-third did. Of those images on Twitter that do have people, about 67% contained at least one person of color in 2023 versus about 75% in 2022; on Instagram, about 79% contained at least one person of color in 2022 versus about 63% in 2021. The conclusion from this review was that the best way to increase diversity in our communications materials is to increase the overall amount of imagery that includes people.

The Communications Office hired a position dedicated to social media management in mid-2024. The social media management position includes the strategic management of the Water Boards’ social media presence to increase content that supports communications objectives and the Water Boards’ reach to new platforms and promote diversity and the Water Boards’ racial equity goals. The incumbent is working with graphic designers to develop guidance on the sourcing and inclusion of more people-centered imagery on social media and all external communications materials. This guidance will be among the overarching guidelines currently being developed on overall procedure around social media management and content, and graphic design requests.

**ACTION 34**

Add racial equity, diversity, and inclusion guidance to the Water Boards’ existing editorial style guide, including plain language writing, using acronyms, a racial equity glossary of terms, and culturally sensitive and gender-inclusive language, etc.

**LEAD:** Communications Office

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The Communications Office hired a Writer/Editor in 2024, who is developing a comprehensive style guide for the Water Boards. The draft comprehensive style guide includes a chapter on considering diversity, equity and inclusion in all communications, and a glossary of terms. The draft style guide also includes chapters on plain language and writing style that were adjusted from the Associated Press Style for Water Boards’ needs. It also includes chapters on communications planning and brand identity.

<b>ACTION 35</b>			
Revise the Water Boards’ public comment webpages and instructions to better describe the process and improve access to participation.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs updated the Water Boards’ public participation webpage to improve access to information. The webpage provides information about the Water Boards, accessing language services, participating in public processes, and general contact information in English and Spanish.

<b>ACTION 36</b>			
Create a new public notice template to be used by Water Boards staff. The template will use plain language, have an intuitive layout, communicate potential racial equity impacts, and explain how participant input will be considered.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs, the State Water Board Clerk, and Office of Chief Counsel are actively working on this project and anticipate releasing a draft public notice template for staff to use in 2025.

**ACTION 37**

Finalize language access guidance document and deliver training to Water Boards staff on language access laws and best practices.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs and the Office of Chief Counsel are actively working on this project and anticipate releasing a draft language access policy in 2025.

**ACTION 38**

Implement a form that the public can use to request language services. Distribute the form via public notices, the Water Boards website, and social media.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed an online form that the public can use to request language services for translation or interpretation needs and to submit language service complaints. The form is available in six languages: Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Punjabi. The [online public request form for language services](#) can be found on Water Boards’ websites.

**ACTION 39**

Expand the Spanish language glossary to include more terminology related to water. Use glossary to ensure consistent and accessible use of terminology.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs completed its Spanish language water glossary and is regularly adding new terms. The glossary is used to provide guidance to Spanish language interpreters and translators to ensure consistency with Water Boards’ Spanish language terminology. The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs will vet the terminology with Spanish speaking communities to ensure alignment in understanding of terms and will publish the glossary online to be used as a resource. The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs will develop similar water glossaries for the top languages spoken in California to ensure consistency in terminology.

**GOAL 3B:**

**Remove barriers for community access and participation in water decision-making by providing resources for capacity building, including funding, training, and education**

<b>ACTION 40</b>			
Improve Water Board participation in community-based environmental violations monitoring meetings (IVAN meetings).  <b>LEAD:</b> Office of Enforcement			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Enforcement collaborates with various California Environmental Protection Agency boards, departments, and offices in attending regular community Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods (IVAN) meetings and other meetings of community organizations with environmental concerns. The intent is to gather and address environmental complaints. When necessary or appropriate, the Office of Enforcement assumes a leadership role in addressing community concerns related to water pollution arising from these meetings. The Office of Enforcement attended approximately 70 meetings of Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods Networks or other community organizations with environmental concerns in 2024.

<b>ACTION 41</b>			
Develop guidance document for improving/streamlining enforcement complaint process to improve responsiveness to community complaints.  <b>LEAD:</b> Office of Enforcement			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Enforcement continues to refine complaint reporting and processing procedures and provide direct access to the California Environmental Protection Agency’s complaint tracking system from its public website. Progress on this action was limited due to staff turnover and onboarding.

<b>ACTION 42</b>			
Develop a form for members of the public to submit questions or requests. Distribute the form via public notices, the Water Boards website, and social media.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs currently manages ombudsperson phone calls and emails from the public. As questions and concerns come in, the office routes the member of the public to the appropriate region, division, or office. An online form is being developed to streamline this process and develop template responses for commonly asked questions and requests. The online form will be able to better route and track public inquiries and is being reviewed internally.

<b>ACTION 43</b>			
Continue to update the external contact list on a quarterly basis and expand curated lists for groups and leaders working on racial and environmental justice.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>

**Progress Summary:**

In 2022, the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs compiled an external contact list for Water Boards staff to utilize for enhancing their project outreach efforts. This external contact list can be used by staff to create tailored project contact lists. The contact list includes organizations representing various interests, expertise, and geographic areas. Categories include community organizations, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, schools/academia, advocacy groups, and tribal interest groups. Over 100 new contacts were added this year for a total of 2,927 contacts. The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs continues to expand and update the list. The external contact list will be transitioned to a constituent relationship management software once the software is operational [[Action 49](#)].



**ACTION 44**

Coordinate the second cohort of the Facilitation and Training Pool to train Water Boards staff on how to engage with communities effectively, how to design and manage engagement processes, and how to navigate challenging conversations.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

One priority of the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs is building the capacity of all Water Boards staff to engage effectively with communities, tribes, and other interested parties. In 2023, a cohort within the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs pursued and obtained a Professional Certificate in Public Engagement for Government through the Davenport Institute in Pepperdine University’s School of Public Policy. The office is leveraging the expertise obtained through this certificate program to develop a public engagement training curriculum that will be available for all Water Boards staff. Supplementary templates and resources to support effective public engagement practices will also be developed and made available to Water Boards staff.

**ACTION 45**

Develop guidance and templates for developing outreach and engagement plans that support equitable public participation, engagement, and community and tribal partnerships.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

In 2022, Assembly Bill 2108 added section 189.7 and 13149.2 to the Water Code, compelling the Water Boards to undertake meaningful outreach when considering discharges of waste that may disproportionately impact water quality in disadvantaged or tribal communities. The Water Boards are now required to develop a concise summary of anticipated water quality impacts on these communities and identify measures to address such impacts within their authority. To ensure effective engagement, the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed guidance for best practices in community and tribal outreach. The guidance document is not a prescriptive checklist, but rather a flexible tool to be used in developing an engagement plan. The guidance document was accompanied by a project plan template that models a format staff can use to track and manage their projects from start to completion. The template can be downloaded as an excel document and used as a tool to collect community profile and water quality data, as well as organize and plan outreach and engagement activities.

Many programs continue to utilize these tools to implement enhanced engagement strategies. In 2025 and 2026, the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs will collect internal and external feedback on how to improve this guidance for better outcomes and revise the guidance accordingly.

<b>ACTION 46</b>			
<p>Develop a template and guidance for creating and using community profiles to inform engagement strategies, for planning equitable and accessible meetings, and for using plain language in document development.</p> <p><b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs</p>			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed this action as part of the outreach and engagement guidance action. Please see the response to [Action 45](#).

<b>ACTION 47</b>			
<p>Create a local workforce development pilot through the SAFER drinking water program to address barriers to maintaining sustainable drinking water solutions in small, disadvantaged communities.</p> <p><b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs</p>			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs and Division of Drinking Water are exploring opportunities to collaborate and leverage resources developed by the California Workforce Development Board and other organizations addressing workforce development needs in California. Many of the efforts proposed under this action are currently being undertaken by the California Workforce Development Board’s California Water, Wastewater, and Energy Workforce Program, which is focused on developing trained workers who will secure jobs in the publicly-owned utility, water and wastewater industry throughout California. The State Water Board is actively monitoring local pilot programs and continues to look for opportunities to support workforce efforts locally. More information can be found on the [California Workforce Development Board’s California Water, Wastewater, and Energy Workforce Program webpage](#).

**ACTION 48**

Develop a community capacity building pilot fund to: 1) compensate tribal and BIPOC community partners for their time and expertise; and 2) support tribal- and community-led projects that address environmental clean-up projects.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	<b>SCOPING</b>	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs developed a proposal for piloting a funding program to support cleanup efforts in environmental justice communities disproportionately affected by pollution. The project has not moved forward because a viable funding source has not been identified.

**ACTION 49**

Purchase constituent relationship management (CRM) software to improve, focus, and monitor engagement with BIPOC communities and tribes.

**LEAD:** Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE
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**Progress Summary:**

The State Water Board obtained funding for a constituent relationship management software to better manage engagement and strengthen relationships. The Division of Information Technology, in collaboration with the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs, is working to find the appropriate software that will meet the Water Boards’ needs.

**ACTION 50**

In consultation with BIPOC communities, non-governmental organizations, and tribes, expand press distribution lists with a racial equity lens and add media contacts who represent and are connected with BIPOC communities.

**LEAD:** Communications Office

NOT STARTED	SCOPING	IN PROGRESS	<b>COMPLETE</b>
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**Progress Summary:**

In 2024, the Communications Office added 32 media representatives from media outlets reporting on issues affecting disadvantaged and/or Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color to its press distribution lists.

**GOAL 3C:  
Consult, collaborate, and partner with BIPOC communities  
in decision-making processes**

<b>ACTION 51</b>			
Implement Assembly Bill 2108 (2022) by developing guidance on using racial equity data to identify potential environmental justice water quality impacts, engage with communities potentially impacted, and develop findings based on data and outreach.  <b>LEAD:</b> Division of Water Quality			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

This project is being completed as part of the Racial Equity Data Action Plan under [Action 2](#). Additionally, the Division of Water Quality established its own advancing racial equity team to support the implementation of Assembly Bill 2108 throughout the division. For example, the racial equity team will coordinate with the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs as they develop a list of contacts that can be used for outreach to ensure that tribes and communities are aware and can provide input on statewide water quality projects.

<b>ACTION 52</b>			
Provide briefings for legislators who represent geographic areas with a high percentage of BIPOC communities to help inform them of Water Boards’ resources and community participation processes, and to better understand barriers to implementation and hear suggestions for how to overcome them.  <b>LEAD:</b> Office of Legislative Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Legislative Affairs is in the process of briefing and providing helpful information to state legislators. This includes providing information on projects funded in legislative districts and assisting State Water Board staff who testify in committee hearings. 2025 will see the start of a new legislative session, along with new members of the Legislature.

Notable legislation that passed in 2024 was AB 805, which authorizes the State Water Board to appoint administrators to sewer systems where disadvantaged communities lack adequate sanitary sewer services, and AB 2454, which requires testing of domestic wells that serve rental properties where free testing is available.

<b>ACTION 53</b>			
Update Tribal Affairs webpage to include a table of current tribal consultation opportunities for all Water Boards projects subject to AB 52.			
<b>LEAD:</b> Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs			
NOT STARTED	SCOPING	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	COMPLETE

**Progress Summary:**

The Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs is developing an interactive tribal consultation dashboard that includes a list of current tribal consultation opportunities. The goal of the interactive dashboard is to create a centralized location to communicate opportunities for tribal consultation to bring greater transparency, consistency, coordination, and foster better collaboration with tribes.

Appendix A

# REGIONAL WATER BOARD SUMMARY



While this annual report is focused on the State Water Board’s Racial Equity Action Plan, various efforts to advance racial equity and environmental justice are taking place across the nine regional water boards. Multiple regional water boards are currently developing or have completed their own racial equity resolutions and action plans. Several regional water boards also developed internal working groups, embedded equity considerations in existing programs, and have incorporated discussions about racial equity and environmental justice considerations into internal standing meetings. Table 2 includes information on formal actions regional water boards have made to advance racial equity.

Appendix A includes general updates on efforts within regional water boards to advance racial equity and environmental justice and is not an exhaustive list.

Regional Water Board	Working Group	Resolution	Action Plan
1   North Coast	Complete	Complete	In Progress
2   San Francisco	Complete	Not Applicable*	Complete
3   Central Coast	Complete	Complete	Complete
4   Los Angeles	Complete	In Progress	Not Started
5   Central Valley	Complete	Complete	Complete
6   Lahontan	Complete	Complete	In Progress
7   Colorado River	In Progress	Not Started	Scoping
8   Santa Ana	Complete	Complete	Complete
9   San Diego	Complete	Scoping	In Progress

**Table 2:** Status of formal actions made by regional water boards.

\* The San Francisco Bay Water Board received feedback from community organizations and members to prioritize developing and implementing a racial equity action plan over a resolution.

## REGION 1: North Coast Water Board

The North Coast Water Board established a racial equity working group that leads the development of formal actions to advance racial equity and environmental justice within the region. For example, the North Coast Water Board adopted a [Racial Equity Resolution](#) on February 2, 2023. They also established designated leads for racial equity and environmental justice. In 2024, the North Coast Water Board held internal and external engagement opportunities as it developed its racial equity action plan. The racial equity working group aimed to build relationships with environmental justice organizations, tribal representatives, and tribal governments through one-on-one meetings with staff and government-to-government consultations with tribal governments. The draft action plan was released for public comment from November 2024 to December 2024. A final action plan will be presented to the North Coast Water Board in 2025.

The North Coast Water Board’s 2023 Triennial Review of its Basin Plan was adopted on June 2024. The Triennial Review prioritized a project to evaluate whether to update its existing Native American Culture (CUL) beneficial use to comport with the statewide definition of tribal cultural beneficial uses, or whether the existing cultural beneficial use definition provides equivalent or better protection. Focused outreach and consultation on this project will begin in 2025.

More information can be found on the [North Coast Water Board’s website](#).

## REGION 2: San Francisco Bay

In 2023, the San Francisco Bay Water Board identified racial equity and environmental justice as an organizational priority in its Strategic Workplan and identified actions to advance environmental justice and racial equity in its Racial Equity and Environmental Justice Action Plan. The San Francisco Bay Water Board is tracking progress for each action identified in its Racial Equity Action Plan. San Francisco Water Board members received an update on the implementation of these actions, at the September 2024 Board Meeting. The San Francisco Bay Water Board has been engaging with communities by showing up, listening, responding to community concerns and briefing them on topics of interest to them.

Program activities were prioritized to protect water quality and beneficial uses in environmental justice communities that experienced historical environmental racism, including the following:

- Developed a prioritization process for establishing total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) that led to a statewide total maximum daily load prioritization process. The San Francisco Bay Water Board continues to partner with several community and environmental justice groups as part of several ongoing projects.
- Participated in coordinated multi-agency efforts with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, and others to engage in racial equity and environmental justice work such as the ongoing clean-up of contamination at the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco.
- Participate in the North Richmond Cumulative Impact Assessment to engage with the North Richmond community to assess cumulative environmental impacts from military and industrial facilities.
- Developed and finalized a subsistence fishing survey with the San Francisco Estuary Institute that was developed in partnership with community-based organizations, interested parties, and tribal interest groups. Partnered with wastewater agencies to fund a project to work with a community-based organization to pilot the survey and assess its effectiveness. Lessons learned from the pilot project will be incorporated into the survey. The San Francisco Bay Water Board will seek additional partners, including community-based organizations, to secure funding for full scale implementation to understand subsistence fishing and tribal subsistence fishing within the San Francisco Bay region.
- Collaborate with the North Coast Water Board and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to explore designating waterbodies within the aboriginal territory of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria with the Tribal Cultural beneficial use.
- Work with underserved communities to assess water quality of creeks in their neighborhoods and developed an [interactive map of pathogen results](#). The map provides easy access for community members to view water quality results for creeks in their neighborhood.
- Identified that 113 of 802 Site Cleanup program cases in the region are in environmental justice communities. Engaged with environmental justice advocates in several disadvantaged communities to listen to their concerns and discuss site cleanup progress. Continued to prioritize these projects and track cleanup progress with the goal of ensuring that cases are moving forward so possible health and environmental exposures are identified and addressed



as quickly as possible. In the past 24 months, staff evaluated 65 percent of the cases, closed 9 cases, and required remediation at 9 other cases. In the cases staff evaluated, all cases included mitigation for vapor intrusion exposure or migrating groundwater plumes.

- Formed a recruitment team that implements strategies to recruit a diverse pool of candidates for job openings.

More information can be found on the [San Francisco Bay Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 3: Central Coast

The Central Coast Water Board empowers an environmental justice leadership team to support continuity and positive momentum to integrate environmental justice, racial equity, and tribal engagement into organizational culture and water quality programs. In February 2023, the Central Coast Water Board adopted a [Racial Equity Resolution](#). The resolution prioritizes racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental justice, and directs staff to take action to ensure safe drinking water for all people in the central coast. In February 2024, the Central Coast Water Board presented its [Environmental Justice, Racial Equity, and Tribal Engagement Action Plan](#). This plan follows the three strategic directions prioritized in the State Water Board's Racial Equity Action Plan and identifies specific actions the regional water board will implement towards these goals.

The Central Coast Water Board implements several projects to advance racial equity and environmental justice and improve tribal engagement:

- **Internal Education and Training:** The Central Coast Water Board maintains the expectation that every staff person review and implement environmental justice and racial equity policies, complete specific environmental justice and tribal engagement training, and develop and implement project specific outreach plans to engage underrepresented communities and Tribes.
- **Strategic Plan:** As part of the Central Coast Water Board Strategic Plan, staff prioritize regulatory actions, permitted facilities, and cleanup sites to prevent and address discharges of waste that could threaten human health by causing or contributing to pollution or contamination of drinking water sources or waters of the state (e.g. Irrigated Lands Program, Waste Discharge Requirement Program, and Wastewater Consolidation Program).
- **Environmental Justice Project Tracker:** The Central Coast Water Board maintains an Environmental Justice [Project Tracker](#) tool that is used internally and is publicly accessible on their environmental justice webpage. The Project Tracker tool identifies specific projects and communicates opportunities for community and tribal engagement, as well as project status. The tool also helps staff to identify opportunities to coordinate priorities and reduce engagement burdens that agencies may place on interested parties.
- **Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program:** The Central Coast Water Board coordinates with the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay (Bay Foundation) to implement the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program. This program provides free well testing to domestic well users and small water systems to ensure safe drinking water. Program outreach is focused on underrepresented communities in the region. The program tested more than 650 drinking

water wells and determined that 40% of the wells tested do not meet safe drinking water standards. The most common contaminants found are nitrate, 1,2,3- Trichloropropane, hexavalent chromium, and arsenic. The program provides test results and resources to well users so they are informed of their drinking water quality and can take action to gain access to safe drinking water, including the availability of replacement water programs. Program data is publicly accessible on the State Water Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment program webpage. The Central Coast Water Board also coordinates with the State Water Board, local agencies, and community partners to utilize grant funds to provide interim replacement drinking water to disadvantaged communities whose groundwater source of drinking water does not meet safe drinking water standards. Staff presented an update on the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program at the [December 12–13, 2024 Board Meeting](#).

- **Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program:** In 2024, the Central Coast Water Board coordinated with the Bay Foundation and Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment to award more than \$1 million in grant projects that focus on a wide range of water issues in the region such as drinking water protection, sea water intrusion, nitrate contamination, and groundwater recharge, many projects benefiting underrepresented communities. Staff presented an update on the grants program at the [December 12–13, 2024 Board Meeting](#).
- **Tribal Beneficial Uses:** The Central Coast Water Board adopted a Basin Plan amendment in June 2024 that added Tribal Beneficial Uses definitions to its Basin Plan. Additionally, in October 2024, the Central Coast Water Board prioritized the 2024 Triennial Review Proposal to designate the Tribal Beneficial Uses for further development.

The Central Coast Water Board will also present the Annual Environmental Justice Update at the February 20–21, 2025, Board Meeting. More information can be found on the [Central Coast Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 4: Los Angeles

The Los Angeles Water Board established an internal racial equity and environmental justice working group that is developing a racial equity resolution and subsequent action plan. In February 2024, the Los Angeles Water Board adopted a resolution that prioritizes continued tribal outreach efforts for potential waterbody-specific designations of Tribal Beneficial Uses. The Los Angeles Water Board granted funds to several community-based organizations through its Los Angeles Community Water Justice Grants program. This funding program allocates supplemental environmental project (SEP) monies to projects within disadvantaged communities. Through the State Water Board's Wastewater Consolidation program, 16 projects were identified as available for funding in the Los Angeles region to consolidate inadequate onsite sewage treatment systems with local wastewater treatment plants in disadvantaged communities. The Los Angeles Water Board continues to coordinate with interested parties within disadvantaged communities that are on the fundable list for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to facilitate funding agreements for wastewater consolidation. Additionally, the Los Angeles Water Board regularly meets with community-based environmental justice groups and participates in the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network. More information can be found on the [Los Angeles Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 5: Central Valley

The Central Valley Water Board adopted a [Racial Equity Resolution](#) on December 14, 2022. Following the adoption of the Resolution, each of the Central Valley Water Board's 19 water quality programs are incorporating racial equity priority projects in their annual workplans, including the workplans developed for fiscal year 2024 through 2025. The Central Valley Water Board also convened a racial equity workgroup composed of non-management and management level staff. The workgroup works with program managers to develop and keep track of racial equity goals, integrate inclusion in office culture, and assess equity related training needs. The workgroup presented progress on program goals to the Central Valley Water Board during the August 2024 Board Meeting.

In 2024, the Central Valley Water Board prioritized developing outreach techniques to engage with communities disproportionately impacted by environmental burdens—including tribes; Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color; and disadvantaged communities. Programs are also developing tools and techniques to identify priority sites and to integrate tools such as CalEnviroScreen into programmatic decision making. Basin Plans overseen by the Central Valley Water Board (i.e, Tulare Lake Basin Plan and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Rivers Basin Plan) will be updated to include a reference to CalEnviroScreen and Tribal Beneficial Uses during the next triannual review. Central Valley Water Board staff continue to conduct tribal outreach regarding Tribal Beneficial Uses, and are currently accepting Tribal Beneficial Use designation requests. More information can be found on the [Central Valley Water Board's website](#) and the Central Valley Water Board's [Tribal Beneficial Use Designation page](#).

## REGION 6: Lahontan

The Lahontan Water Board adopted a Racial Equity Resolution on August 20, 2024. The Lahontan Water Board's racial equity working group is developing a Racial Equity and Environmental Justice Action Plan. The action plan will contain proposed actions, supporting ideas and measurements of success including metrics, milestones, data, and other indicators that can be used to indicate successful completion of actions or to track progress toward actions over time. The Lahontan Water Board committed to meaningfully engaging tribes and environmental justice communities to improve water quality in their communities. The Lahontan Water Board worked with the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe and other Tribes in the region to designate Tribal Beneficial Uses for waterbodies in the Mono Lake Basin, including Mono Lake. The Lahontan Water Board will consider adoption of a Basin Plan amendment that designates Tribal Beneficial Uses in the Mono Lake Basin at a future Board Meeting. The Lahontan Water Board is collaborating with the Bishop Paiute Tribe on the Bishop Creek Vision Plan. This plan includes actions needed to improve E.coli bacteria levels present in Bishop Creek, which includes over 875 acres of reservation land in the project area. Additionally, the Lahontan Water Board attends community events to build relationships with community organizations, residents, and tribes; share information about projects; and hear feedback and community concerns. Some events included the Annual Hinkley Community Barbeque, Washoe Earth Day, and the 28th Annual Lake Tahoe Summit. More information can be found on the [Lahontan Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 7: Colorado River

The Colorado River Water Board's Strategic Plan includes objectives to strategically engage with underserved and underrepresented communities. The Colorado River Water Board is building relationships with local environmental justice groups to facilitate environmental justice outreach goals and is developing an environmental justice and tribal outreach strategy. As part of this expanded outreach, the Colorado River Water Board distributes fact sheets to tribes and community organizations to improve project communication and transparency. Colorado River Water Board staff attended two environmental justice conferences in September and October 2024. The Colorado River Water Board aims to support community capacity building by developing a Regional Water Board 101 informative presentation to increase visibility and understanding of the Colorado River Water Board.

The Salton Sea is a priority project for the region. The Colorado River Water Board has consulted with multiple tribes on projects in development including the Salton Sea Beneficial Uses Review Basin Plan Amendment. Additionally, the Colorado River Water Board and other state agencies continue to discuss Salton Sea monitoring, Total Maximum Daily Load development, and other regional projects with interested parties, including Eastern Coachella Valley advocacy groups. More information can be found on the [Colorado River Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 8: Santa Ana

The Santa Ana Water Board adopted a [Racial Equity Resolution](#) at its March 15, 2024, Board meeting. The resolution affirms the Santa Ana Water Board's commitment to accept responsibility for confronting structural institutional racism and advancing racial equity within the Santa Ana Water Board's authority. This commitment aligns with the State Water Board's ongoing efforts. The vision is that race should not predict a person's access to or quality of water resources.

The Racial Equity Resolution reaffirms the Santa Ana Water Board's commitment to uphold the human right to water, protect public health, beneficial uses, and particularly address communities that carry a disproportionate burden from environmental pollution within the Santa Ana River watershed. This commitment begins with understanding these environmental issues as told by the impacted communities themselves, which requires improved communication with disproportionately burdened communities in the region.

The Racial Equity Resolution directs Santa Ana Water Board staff to foster a workforce that competently integrates racial equity into the region's water quality program, and to develop strategies for the following:

- Effectively reaching and meaningfully engaging with Black, Indigenous and other communities of color
- Involving and partnering with tribes and other interested parties in decision-making processes
- Providing accessible, open and transparent opportunities for people to participate in public meetings, hearings, and workshops
- Meeting people in their communities and spaces to seek out their perspectives
- Supporting communities with building capacity to advance racial equity and environmental justice

- Improving our communications by providing more plain-language materials
- Addressing barriers to public participation, including language, digital, and time-of-day access

The Santa Ana Water Board launched their [Racial Equity Action Plan](#). Staff prepared the Racial Equity Action Plan as the implementation pathway to address racial inequities and environmental injustices through the water quality programs administered by the region. The Santa Ana Water Board's Racial Equity Action Plan is a compilation of goals, actions, and metrics intended to advance efforts to create a future where the Board equitably preserves, enhances, and restores Santa Ana River's water resources. It will be used to guide Santa Ana Water Board staff with the execution of their programs over the next five years, so that progress is made toward fairly applied regulatory oversight and requirements. In addition, the Santa Ana Water Board is working towards enhancing public outreach activities to hear from potentially impacted communities. By carrying out the tasks identified in the Santa Ana Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan, staff are working to create a more inclusive public outreach program. More information can be found on the [Santa Ana Water Board's website](#).

## REGION 9: San Diego

In September 2023, the San Diego Water Board approved its 2023–24 Operation Plan which included a Racial Equity Action Plan Implementation project. The San Diego Water Board established a racial equity action plan implementation project team that is developing a Racial Equity Action Plan (Plan). The Plan will include goals for implementing racial equity and environmental justice actions in the region. In March 2024, the San Diego Water Board provided the Advancing Racial Equity at the Water Boards training to its staff to ensure all staff have the same foundational knowledge regarding racial equity and start the internal conversation about how to consider racial equity when completing the Board's work. Additionally, the San Diego Water Board is exploring the development of Tribal Beneficial Use designations for waterbodies within the region. The San Diego Water Board is consulting with approximately twelve tribes on this effort.

More information regarding the region's racial equity and environment justice measures and tribal nation engagement goals can be found in *Chapter 4: Implement Racial Equity and Environmental Justice Measures* and *Chapter 5: Partner and Consult with Tribal Nations* of the [San Diego Water Board's Practical Vision](#).

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN | 2024 ANNUAL UPDATE

### Appendix B

# PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Racial Equity Action Plan published in January 2023, included performance indicators for each action. Performance indicators are quantitative performance measures and qualitative targets to assess progress and evaluate each action’s success. Due to the diversity of actions included in this plan, measurements of success include metrics, milestones, data, and other indicators that can be used to indicate successful completion of actions or to track progress toward actions over time.

During the first year of Action Plan implementation, Water Board staff discovered that the performance indicators identified when the actions were first developed were not the most meaningful for measuring progress. Many actions will require the collection of data over time to inform future development of meaningful performance targets. For those actions, quantifiable measurements (e.g., number of permits, percent of staff) have been included in the narrative progress summary section of the report to establish a baseline measure from which to evaluate the action’s success in future years. To ensure their utility, metrics may be added or changed over time. Knowledge gained from tracking these performance indicators may result in the development of additional indicators and inform future iterations of the action plan.

**Table 2:** Performance Indicators for Actions in the 2023–2025 Racial Equity Action Plan.

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
1	Update the State Water Board’s racial equity webpage to include a page for tracking and measuring progress on the Racial Equity Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webpage updated.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
2	<p>Develop and implement a Racial Equity Data Action Plan (REDAP). At a minimum, the REDAP must do the following: (1) Develop training and best practices guidance for Water Boards staff on incorporating racial equity concepts into the planning and design of data collection methods and visualizations (e.g., maps, factsheets, etc.) projects. (2) Identify and expand existing opportunities for public participation in science and community data gathering programs to develop new data collection methods, support existing programs, and incorporate community datasets into the database. (3) Create a publicly accessible data catalog tool / interface that includes existing demographic data, Water Boards program data, and other available data (such as heat maps or flood hazard maps) to inform the implementation of the Racial Equity Action Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate draft REDAP to Water Board organizations by January 2023.</li> <li>• Develop REDAP best practices draft guidance by February 2023.</li> <li>• Deliver beta version REDAP best practices training online by March 2023.</li> <li>• Build online platform for public access to REDAP priority data catalog and visualization tools by February 2023.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Incorporate racial equity analysis into the 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report to identify impacted waters in BIPOC and disadvantaged communities, starting by identifying data gaps. The Integrated Report is a document with a comprehensive review of surface water quality and includes a list of currently impaired water bodies by pollutant type.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly identified or prioritized waters in BIPOC and disadvantaged communities in the Integrated Report.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Identify and assess available data to identify racial equity data gaps related to water quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DWQ units/programs that have completed data needs assessments.</li> <li>• Types and # of datasets assessed.</li> <li>• Process for ground truthing data sets developed.</li> </ul>
5	<p>Include a Racial Equity Action Plan progress update at a State Water Board meeting. The update should include any barriers, such as funding or legislation, encountered as the plan is implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial Equity Action Plan update held at a State Water Board meeting in 2024.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
6	Incorporate racial equity analysis into the annual Drinking Water Needs Assessment, including a measurement of the number of BIPOC communities impacted by primary and secondary contaminants in drinking water and water unaffordability. Work with U.S. EPA to implement a similar analysis to federally regulated tribal water systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each future Needs Assessment will include the evaluation.</li> <li>• Types of data incorporated into the Needs Assessment.</li> </ul>
7	Assess race/ethnicity data and other relevant demographic data, associated with the communities that benefit from funding administered by DFA. Existing annual funding reports and plans will be the primary mechanism to report these data on a project specific basis, where appropriate. In addition, summaries for the funding program will be provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % Funding program reports/plans that include racial, ethnic, and other demographic information.</li> </ul>
8	Deputy directors and directors should regularly discuss their division’s or office’s progress with their staff on actions identified in the Racial Equity Action Plan and gauge where more support is needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division and office senior leaders meet regularly with program leaders to discuss racial equity progress and resource needs to complete actions.</li> </ul>
9	Develop a racial equity toolkit for all Water Boards staff to consider racial equity in their day-to-day work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toolkit developed.</li> </ul>
10	Develop training and guidance for how to implement the racial equity toolkit to examine potential disproportionate impacts of policies and programs on BIPOC communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training developed.</li> <li>• # Staff trained.</li> <li>• # Programs that have piloted the toolkit.</li> </ul>
11	Select, train, and support a second cohort of Water Boards staff to deliver “Advancing Racial Equity at the Water Boards” trainings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # Water Boards staff trained.</li> </ul>



Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
12	Develop a racial equity training plan for staff that will guide efforts to develop and coordinate a racial equity curriculum through the Training Academy. Elements may include analysis of what trainings are effective; what trainings should be required; how often people should get training; which current courses could be modified to incorporate more content related to racial equity; how racial equity goals should inform the selection, onboarding, and evaluation of instructors and vendors providing materials or courses; and what educational content could be developed or made available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan developed.</li> </ul>
13	As appropriate, ensure that priorities and actions within the State Water Board’s annual Strategic Work Plan reflect this action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # Strategic Work Plan actions that reflect use of a racial equity lens.</li> </ul>
14	Develop a plan to identify climate change impacts (related to State Water Board authorities) and how they may potentially disproportionately impact BIPOC communities or interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan developed.</li> </ul>
15	In basins where State Water Board intervention into groundwater management (through SGMA authorities) is likely, engage with BIPOC communities that may be affected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type and # of engagement efforts made to engage with BIPOC communities and groups.</li> <li>• # Meetings or workshops in communities where residents are predominantly BIPOC.</li> </ul>
16	Assess potential equity impacts of the proposed urban water use efficiency regulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the degree data allows, consider equity in analyses done related to the rulemaking.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
17	Pilot the racial equity toolkit to identify program-specific actions, priorities, and metrics, and realign programs and practices to advance racial equity, and assess the effectiveness of programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desired outcomes and accountability metrics are developed using results-based accountability approach for each DWQ program.</li> <li>• Type and # of metrics developed by engaging with U.S. EPA to implement the Justice 40 initiative for federally funded programs (e.g., nonpoint source grants, ocean beach monitoring grants, water quality management planning). The Justice 40 initiative includes distributing 40% of federal funds to disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>• Process established for ground truthing data sets.</li> </ul>
18	Provide guidance to Regional Water Boards on the consideration of impacts to BIPOC communities and environmental justice when addressing impaired waters through development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) or other actions to restore clean water. Use prioritization to inform allocation of funding for environmental cleanup projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised guidance to Regional Water Boards on setting priorities to address impaired waters through the development of TMDLs or other restoration actions. Prioritization factors should include impacts to BIPOC communities and consider environmental justice.</li> <li>• Revised TMDL program guidance for the development of TMDL implementation plans to include consideration of BIPOC communities and environmental justice. Consider revising the implementation plan guidance in A Process for Addressing Impaired Waters in California (adopted by SWB Resolution 2005-0050).</li> </ul>
19	Participate as partners in implementing the Environmental Justice Enforcement Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff participation in EJ community listening sessions.</li> <li>• Staff participation in EJ Enforcement Rapid Response Team.</li> <li>• Participation in community outreach training for enforcement staff.</li> <li>• # Multimedia inspections in overburdened communities.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
20	Consider impacts to BIPOC communities, tribal beneficial uses and cultural resources, and related ecosystems when developing, implementing, and enforcing instream flow requirements, consistent with all applicable laws and requirements, including those related to water rights, basin planning, public trust resources, and endangered species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and update a webpage that identifies streams with ongoing instream flow development activities.</li> </ul>
21	Establish a single point of contact in the Division of Water Rights to serve as a coordinator on Bay-Delta tribal and BIPOC engagement to improve communication and outreach and conduct tribal outreach under AB 52 and B-10-11 for the Bay-Delta Plan implementation regulation for Lower San Joaquin River flows and Southern Delta Salinity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Division coordinator.</li> <li>• Number of consultation requests and engagements related to development of the Sacramento River watershed and interior Delta (Sac/Delta) Bay-Delta Plan Staff Report.</li> <li>• Include a chapter in the Sacramento/Delta Staff report focused on BIPOC and disadvantaged community issues.</li> </ul>
22	Incorporate racial equity analysis when developing maximum contaminant levels using available data and as data and methods allow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each future maximum contaminant level will include a racial equity analysis when data and methods allow.</li> </ul>
23	Review existing data, and new data to be collected and produced by CalHR, on demographics of Water Boards staff. Disaggregate data by Region, Division, Office, position classification, etc. and publish findings to the Racial Equity Webpage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate Action Plan is revised and distributed to all Water Boards hiring managers.</li> </ul>
24	Review and revise the “Immediate Action Plan for Advancing Workforce Diversity” to improve long-term effectiveness of strategies to recruit, promote, and retain BIPOC staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track the number and type of recruitments, such as in-person job fairs and visits.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
25	Increase recruitment for job openings and internship opportunities at high schools, community colleges, colleges, universities, workforce development networks, and community-based groups that serve BIPOC communities in California. Collaborate with Regional Water Boards on future recruitment efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track the number and type of recruitments, such as in-person job fairs and visits.</li> </ul>
26	Update the Water Boards’ website to include additional guidance for prospective applicants on how to navigate the state’s hiring process, with a focus on successfully applying for Water Board positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan to provide and require implicit bias and racial equity training for staff by January 2024.</li> </ul>
27	Require implicit bias and racial equity training for all hiring panelists, supervisors, and State and Regional Board Members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan to provide and require implicit bias and racial equity training for staff by January 2024.</li> </ul>
28	Develop a mentorship program that allows employees, including BIPOC staff, to connect with others who may have similar experiences and to provide coaching on career growth and advancement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance on the Water Board’s internal mentoring program is finalized.</li> </ul>
29	Update roundtable charters or workplans to include racial equity and include racial equity discussions as a standing agenda item on roundtables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of roundtables with updated charters and/or workplans to include racial equity.</li> </ul>
30	Distribute the second, biannual racial equity survey to the Water Boards to measure staff understanding of racial equity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey response rate above 60%.</li> </ul>
31	Develop educational materials for staff to improve understanding of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) processes for submitting racial discrimination/harassment complaints and following up after a complaint has been submitted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials developed.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
32	Cultivate relationships with ethnic and multi-language media in BIPOC communities and provide opportunities for them to understand and contextualize water policy information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # Direct conversations with ethnic and multi-language media professionals in BIPOC communities.</li> <li>• # Articles published in new multi-language media outlets.</li> </ul>
33	Review and evaluate existing photo library inventory and identify gaps to diversify photos so that our communications material better reflect California’s people. Create guidance for staff on use of culturally sensitive imagery, such as for Native American ceremonies, and avoiding images that reinforce racial stereotypes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a baseline by counting the number of photos featuring people of color posted on social media in 2022. In 2023, compare progress to the baseline.</li> <li>• Diversify photos used on social media to better reflect the demographics of California (25% increase in people of color photos used).</li> </ul>
34	Add racial equity, diversity, and inclusion guidance to the Water Boards’ existing editorial style guide, including plain language writing, using acronyms, a racial equity glossary of terms, and culturally sensitive and gender-inclusive language, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions to the editorial style guide completed.</li> <li>• In 2023, create a rollout plan for distributing and explaining the style guide to all Water Boards staff by January 2024.</li> </ul>
35	Revise the Water Boards’ public comment webpages and instructions to better describe the process and improve access to participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webpage revisions completed.</li> </ul>
36	Create a new public notice template to be used by Water Boards staff. The template will use plain language, have an intuitive layout, communicate potential racial equity impacts, and explain how participant input will be considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public notice template completed.</li> </ul>
37	Finalize language access guidance document and deliver training to Water Boards staff on language access laws and best practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance completed.</li> </ul>
38	Implement a form that the public can use to request language services. Distribute the form via public notices, the Water Boards website, and social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online form published.</li> </ul>

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39	Expand the Spanish language glossary to include more terminology related to water. Use glossary to ensure consistent and accessible use of terminology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # New terms added every quarter.</li> </ul>
40	Improve Water Board participation in community-based environmental violations monitoring meetings (IVAN meetings).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and track participation in IVAN meetings and training by Water Boards staff.</li> </ul>
41	Develop guidance document for improving/streamlining enforcement complaint process to improve responsiveness to community complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duplicate complaint pathways eliminated, outdated complaint links removed, and email addresses from Water Board web pages are updated.</li> <li>• Guidance document disseminated and implemented.</li> </ul>
42	Develop a form for members of the public to submit questions or requests. Distribute the form via public notices, the Water Boards website, and social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online form published.</li> </ul>
43	Continue to update the external contact list on a quarterly basis and expand curated lists for groups and leaders working on racial and environmental justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # New contacts added to list per quarter.</li> </ul>
44	Coordinate the second cohort of the Facilitation and Training Pool to train Water Boards staff on how to engage with communities effectively, how to design and manage engagement processes, and how to navigate challenging conversations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # Staff members trained and certified as Water Boards facilitators.</li> <li>• # Meetings, workshops, and trainings facilitated by Facilitation and Training pool members.</li> </ul>
45	Develop guidance and templates for developing outreach and engagement plans that support equitable public participation, engagement, and community and tribal partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed best practices guidance document.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
46	Develop a template and guidance for creating and using community profiles to inform engagement strategies, for planning equitable and accessible meetings, and for using plain language in document development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed pilot strategy document.</li> </ul>
47	Create a local workforce development pilot through the SAFER drinking water program to address barriers to maintaining sustainable drinking water solutions in small, disadvantaged communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed pilot strategy document.</li> </ul>
48	Develop a community capacity building pilot fund to: 1) compensate tribal and BIPOC community partners for their time and expertise; and 2) support tribal- and community-led projects that address environmental clean-up projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed funding pilot charter presented to the Board.</li> </ul>
49	Purchase constituent relationship management (CRM) software to improve, focus, and monitor engagement with BIPOC communities and tribes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed procedures for inputting data and using tool.</li> </ul>
50	In consultation with BIPOC communities, non-governmental organizations, and tribes, expand press distribution lists with a racial equity lens with BIPOC communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># New media contacts that represent and are connected with BIPOC communities.</li> </ul>
51	Implement Assembly Bill 2108 (2022) by developing guidance on using racial equity data to identify potential environmental justice water quality impacts, engage with communities potentially impacted, and develop findings based on data and outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># New resources developed providing guidance on implementation of Assembly Bill 2108.</li> <li>Type and # of DWQ templates updated (e.g., project charters, outreach plans) to include racial equity and environmental justice data considerations.</li> </ul>

Action #	Action	Performance Indicator
52	Provide briefings for legislators who represent geographic areas with a high percentage of BIPOC communities to help inform them of Water Boards' resources and community participation processes, and to better understand barriers to implementation and hear suggestions for how to overcome them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # Briefings held.</li> <li>• Geographic diversity of participants' elective office included in briefings.</li> <li>• Diversity of type of elective offices contacted.</li> </ul>
53	Update Tribal Affairs webpage to include a table of current tribal consultation opportunities for all Water Boards projects subject to AB 52.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webpage completed.</li> </ul>