

# DRAFT RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN FOR THE NORTH COAST REGION



Mouth of the Klamath River at the Pacific Ocean

NOVEMBER 2024

# Draft Racial Equity Action Plan for the North Coast Water Board

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# Introduction

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (North Coast Water Board's) mission is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources for all beneficial uses and for the benefit of present and future generations. The North Coast Water Board recognizes that it cannot achieve this mission if any of its regulations and procedures cause or reinforce racial inequities or environmental injustices. Racial equity is achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved<sup>1</sup>. Environmental justice means the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other Federal activities that affect human health and the environment<sup>2</sup>.

The North Coast Water Board accepts responsibility for and prioritizes confronting structural and institutional racism and advancing racial equity in the North Coast Region. Because race intersects with many, if not all, other marginalized identities, prioritizing and addressing racial inequities improves outcomes for other marginalized communities (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, immigration status, age, etc.). Accordingly, the North Coast Water Board aims to improve life outcomes for all marginalized communities in the North Coast Region by advancing racial equity.

The North Coast Water Board is working toward a future where it equitably implements the Water Board's mission for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses. The North Coast Water Board envisions a California where:

- race is not a predictor of water and sanitation access a person receives;
- race is not a predictor of professional outcomes for its staff; and
- a racial equity lens is consistently applied to North Coast Water Board decision-making processes.

This draft Racial Equity Action Plan sets priorities, goals, and actions for the North Coast Water Board to address racial inequities and advance racial equity and identifies metrics to measure progress. Applying a "racial equity lens" means the North Coast Water Board and its staff will consider racial equity throughout

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<sup>1</sup> "Racial equity" definition by the Governmental Alliance on Race and Equity.

<sup>2</sup> "Environmental justice" definition by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

its hiring, staff development, planning, permitting, enforcement, and decision-making processes. The racial equity lens examines the impact of unintended consequences by taking into consideration the lived experiences and perspectives of the racially diverse communities in the North Coast Region.

## How We Got Here

In 2020, in response to social unrest and the historic and ongoing oppression of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color (BIPOC), North Coast Water Board staff created a voluntary, staff-led “Racial Equity Self Education Series.” The Racial Equity Self Education Series was developed to engage North Coast Water Board staff (Staff) in recognizing and combatting white supremacy and racism through interacting with various forms of media, such as books, podcasts, and film documentaries, and subsequently engaging in discussions. The goals of the Racial Equity Self Education Series were to (1) provide opportunity for staff to engage in and normalize conversations about racism and white supremacy; (2) promote self-reflection, growth, and anti-racist<sup>3</sup> behavior; and (3) provide a platform for staff to exchange ideas on actions that the North Coast Water Board and its staff can take to improve racial equity in the workplace and within the communities they serve. The participants of the Racial Equity Self Education Series later formed the Racial Equity Workgroup, which is comprised of staff dedicated to the development and implementation of actions to advance racial equity in the North Coast Region.

On November 16, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted Resolution No. 2021-0050, *Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism* (State Water Board Resolution). The State Water Board Resolution in part directed its staff to develop a racial equity action plan and encouraged the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards to adopt similar resolutions. Concurrently, the North Coast Water Board identified in its Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Work Plan that its staff would develop a region-specific racial equity resolution for North Coast Water Board consideration to advance racial equity among North Coast communities and within the organization.

Following outreach and engagement with communities of interest throughout the

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<sup>3</sup> “Anti-racist” refers to a person or organization that actively identifies and opposes racism. The goal of antiracist behavior and actions are to actively change policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and actions.

North Coast Region, the North Coast Water Board adopted *Condemning Racism, Xenophobia, Bigotry, and Racial Injustice and Strengthening Commitment to Racial Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Access, and Anti-Racism in the North Coast Region*, Resolution No. R1-2023-0001 (North Coast Resolution)<sup>4</sup> in February 2023. The North Coast Resolution acknowledges and condemns racism, xenophobia, bigotry, and racial injustice while outlining a commitment to racial equity, diversity, inclusion, access, and anti-racism. It directs Staff to develop an Action Plan which “articulates a vision for racial equity and outlines specific actions to address Regional Water Board systems that perpetuate racial inequities while establishing new, equitable, and resilient systems.” In particular, the North Coast Resolution specifies that the Action Plan shall do the following:

- Be developed in consultation with and be informed by 1) California Native American Tribes and 2) Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color communities in the North Coast Region;
- Articulate a vision for racial equity;
- Address North Coast Water Board systems that perpetuate racial inequities and supports new, equitable, and resilient systems within all aspects of our work, including, but not limited to, plans, policies, permits, enforcement, compliance assurance, contracting, funding, procurement, site remediation, and monitoring;
- Include goals, actions, timelines, metrics, and quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to measure and evaluate progress;
- Include a framework to analyze the potential impacts of staff recommendations and Board actions on racial equity and modify, as necessary, community engagement and the decision-making processes to address inequities; and
- Complement the State Water Board’s Racial Equity Action Plan.

Following the adoption of the North Coast Resolution, Staff established a Racial Equity Workgroup that developed a process to engage internally with all North Coast Water Board staff and externally with BIPOC communities, members of the public, and Tribes. Internal staff engagement included meetings with each

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<sup>4</sup> The North Coast Resolution may be reviewed at the following webpage:  
[https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board\\_info/board\\_meetings/02\\_2023/pdf/6/2301\\_racialequity.pdf](https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/02_2023/pdf/6/2301_racialequity.pdf)

organizational unit to develop program-specific actions and officewide review of a compiled list of all draft actions in July 2024. External engagement included offering Tribal consultation, meeting with interested parties, attending community meetings and sharing a preliminary list of draft actions during September and October 2024.

Staff incorporated feedback from these engagement efforts into the draft Racial Equity Action Plan (Draft Action Plan). Some actions originate from the North Coast Resolution public engagement events in October 2022. The Draft Action Plan will be available for a 45-day public review period from November 4, 2024, through December 19, 2024. Staff will hold several public engagement events to seek input on the Draft Action Plan, including two virtual listening sessions on November 13 and 16, 2024, a North Coast Water Board workshop on December 4, 2024, and virtual “office hours” during the public review period.

## Next Steps

During the public review period, Staff will engage with BIPOC communities, North Coast Tribes, North Coast Water Board members, and other members of the public to solicit feedback on and prioritize actions in this Draft Action Plan for implementation beginning in 2025. Staff will present a revised Action Plan to the North Coast Water Board as an informational item at a subsequent meeting, currently scheduled for April 2025<sup>5</sup>. Staff will routinely update the North Coast Water Board, BIPOC communities, and the public on (1) the status of ongoing actions<sup>6</sup>, (2) any new or revised actions, and (3) pending priority actions for the following year, including lead role designations (e.g., specific programs or divisions, management, all Staff, etc.). Any updates will be made available to the public for review and input<sup>7</sup>.

In 2028, Staff will reengage with BIPOC communities, Tribes, and other community members to reflect on accomplishments, hear feedback on prioritization of actions and other processes, and any required revisions to the Action Plan. General comments about the North Coast Water Board’s ongoing

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<sup>5</sup> The North Coast Water Board will not take action to approve or deny the plan. This Action Plan does not modify any existing policy, plan, permit, or regulation duly adopted by the North Coast Water Board. Any proposed changes to North Coast Water Board policy will be subject to North Coast Water Board approval.

<sup>6</sup> Some actions in this Action Plan may be completed within a year and some will require multi-year processes depending on the level of planning and resources needed to implement an action.

<sup>7</sup> Please note that the release of routine updates will not involve a formal public engagement process, such as Staff response to comments.

racial equity work are welcomed and encouraged and may be shared anytime by emailing [RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:RB1-Equity@waterboards.ca.gov).

## How This Document Is Organized

**Priorities** – Key areas of North Coast Water Board focus to advance racial equity.

**Goals** – Results the North Coast Water Board aims to achieve.

**Actions** – Specific actions the North Coast Water Board could implement to achieve goals.

**Action Examples**– Examples of how individual actions can be implemented through specific programs, projects, or policies, etc., or actions that should occur before the stated action can be implemented.

**Performance Indicators** – 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. These performance indicators are intended to be adapted or further detailed over time as the Action Plan is implemented and revised.

## Priority A

# Improve Internal Administrative Processes and Organizational Culture to Foster Racial Equity Within the Workplace

The North Coast Water Board recognizes that the percentage of its staff who identify as BIPOC is not reflective of the demographics of the North Coast Region, which does not fully serve its mission of water quality protection for all its communities. Greater staff diversity provides many benefits, including broader perspectives, more innovation, improved collaboration, and relatability to all North Coast communities. To make decisions that equitably benefit BIPOC communities, the North Coast Water Board must include and value more BIPOC staff and leadership in decision-making. The Board must assess and improve internal administrative processes and organizational culture to build an anti-racist work environment that is safe and welcoming for BIPOC staff; conduct more meaningful and effective outreach with BIPOC communities on vacant North Coast Water Board positions; apply a racial equity lens to all North Coast Water Board work; and seek more resources to implement the actions in this plan.

### Goal A1: Foster an Anti-Racist Work Environment

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A1.1	Review the Staff Expectations Memos and amend them as necessary to outline expectations of an anti-racist work environment.	Systematically assess how workplace culture creates an unwelcoming or hostile environment for BIPOC staff and implement measures to address identified issues.  External organizational equity audit or internal survey.	Updated memos drafted and approved by Executive staff.  All staff are notified of and directed to the new memo language.
A1.2	Coordinate with the Equal Employment Opportunity Office to ensure all relevant documents associated with the Discrimination Complaint Process, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Harassment Prevention are readily available to all Staff.		Applicable documents are readily available to all staff.



#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A1.3	Maintain the internal Racial Equity Awareness Discussions <sup>8</sup> group to facilitate ongoing Staff educational and personal growth opportunities related to racial equity.		Meeting appointments and materials shared with staff and number of attendees are annually maintained or increased.
A1.4	Provide and/or promote racial equity-related trainings for staff.	<p>Coordinate with the State Water Board's Training and Technical Services Program on existing or potential future training options.</p> <p>Identify required/mandatory trainings.</p> <p>Implement diverse approaches to educating and training staff to ensure all staff have an adequate understanding of racial equity issues.</p>	Number of staff attending per year.
A1.5	Hire community and Tribal members or organizations/Tribes to lead trainings that support the North Coast Water Board's Racial Equity Resolution and Action Plan goals.		<p>Number of trainings held per year.</p> <p>Pre-training and post-training surveys aimed at identifying progress towards staff awareness of differences in social position and power when conducting outreach, drafting regulations and policies, and communicating with the public.</p>
A1.6	Provide opportunities for staff	Bring racial equity talks to	Calendar created.

<sup>8</sup> The Racial Equity Awareness Discussions group was formerly known as the Racial Equity Self-Education Series.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
	to learn about racial equity and Tribal sovereignty issues in the North Coast.	<p>the existing internal staff Speaker Series.</p> <p>Maintain and promote an internal calendar that depicts webinars or other learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Updated and promoted to reflect current opportunities.</p> <p>Number of events per year and number of staff attendees per year.</p>

### Goal A2: Increase Staff Diversity

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A2.1	Coordinate with the State Water Board's Recruitment Unit to develop content for a North Coast Water Board-specific "jobs" page on the North Coast Water Board's website to provide user-friendly information about the state's hiring process, listings of vacancies, contacts, and recruitment resources.	Publicize to Tribes, BIPOC communities, and organizations representing BIPOC communities and/or interests (e.g., National Society of Black Engineers and Society of Hispanic Engineers).	<p>New website created and appropriately updated.</p> <p>Webpage lists each available position in a fiscal year and reflects current processes.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A2.2	Develop a framework to evaluate and update existing internal procedures and expectations to foster an equitable and diverse workforce.	<p>Include desirable qualifications as appropriate for positions that promote equity (e.g., add non-English language proficiency and traditional ecological knowledge).</p> <p>Systematically assess how workplace culture creates unwelcoming or hostile environment for staff who identify as BIPOC.</p> <p>Coordinate with State Water Board staff as appropriate.</p>	Document created/leveraged and incorporated into updates to Staff Expectations Memo or other internal procedure/expectations documents.
A2.3	Coordinate with the State Water Board's Recruitment Unit to develop and implement a North Coast Water Board-specific strategy and process to recruit a diverse population of prospective candidates for Staff positions.	<p>Designate a staff member to coordinate with State Water Board Office of Public Participation to post to social media about open positions and circulate opportunities through email subscription lists.</p> <p>Circulate all job postings to the RB1-Equity, statewide Tribal Affairs, and other email subscription lists so they may reach other BIPOC communities in the Region.</p> <p>Coordinate with other Water Boards to reach communities outside the Region 1 boundary.</p> <p>Explore adding Traditional Ecological Knowledge as qualification for Environmental Scientist job</p>	<p>Internal strategy drafted.</p> <p>Executive staff reviews and approves the strategy.</p> <p>All staff are notified of and directed to implement the new strategy.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		classification series.  Participate in career fairs at schools with diverse student bodies.	

### Goal A3: Apply a Racial Equity Lens to All North Coast Water Board Work

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A3.1	When available, inform and train Staff on racial equity resources developed by the State Water Board as part of its Racial Equity Action Plan.	Resources stored in accessible location.	Staff are aware of and using racial equity resources, when available, in their routine work.
A3.2	Include a "Racial Equity Action Plan Update" agenda item in routine all-staff, division, and unit check-ins.		All-staff meetings, unit, and division check-in meetings have standing agenda items.
A3.3	Annual Unit/Program review, adaptation, and documentation of the implementation of relevant actions in this Racial Equity Action Plan.	Ensure future regulatory mechanisms may be remediated if they are found to perpetuate racial inequities.  Units/programs complete survey on Racial Equity Action Plan implementation.	Units/programs are evaluating, revising, and documenting Racial Equity Action Plan implementation.
A3.4	Include Racial Equity Action Plan implementation and inclusion related work duties in Duty Statements and annual Workplans.	Revise existing, and include language in new, Duty Statements to identify position-specific expectations for Racial Equity Action Plan implementation.	Racial Equity Action Plan implementation duties are incorporated into Duty Statements and Workplans.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A3.5	Incorporate racial equity considerations into project planning and management documents.	<p>Include "Equity" section in project workplans, board item completion plan templates, and other documents to address whether the project/action has potential racial equity or environmental justice impacts; if unknown whether impacts are present, identify a process for how staff will determine impacts.</p> <p>Review and incorporate the processes outlined in the "Advancing Equity in Water Boards Decision Making - Practical Guidance for Outreach and Engagement" into project planning.</p>	Equity section incorporated into project planning and management templates/documents.
A3.6	Revise Workplans to include program reviews and identification of actions to implement the Racial Equity Action Plan.		Annual Workplans include program audits and response actions to ensure Racial Equity Action Plan implementation.

**Goal A4: Increase Resources and Support for Racial Equity Action Plan Implementation**

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
A4.1	Seek funding for additional personnel and contract resources to fully implement the Racial Equity Action Plan.	<p>Funding for internal trainings.</p> <p>Funding for newspaper and radio advertisement notices.</p> <p>Providing a stipend or similar payment/honoraria for Tribes</p>	Annual identification of personnel and contract resources dedicated to implementation of Racial Equity Action Plan.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		<p>and/or BIPOC individuals or organizations assisting with implementation or revision to this Action Plan.</p> <p>Ensure outreach to BIPOC communities are supported as mission critical activities.</p> <p>Hire a public outreach and inclusion specialist(s) to help coordinate North Coast Water Board outreach strategies, processes, and opportunities with BIPOC and Tribal communities.</p>	
A4.2	Secure more resources to assist with translations in the field (iPhones, iPads with translation capabilities).		Translation equipment secured and regularly accessed by staff.
A4.3	Increase the time allocated for the North Coast Water Board's Tribal Coordinator to support meaningful engagement with Tribes.		Increase in total staff hours expressly devoted to Tribal coordination.

## **Priority B**

### **Advance Community Engagement, Collaboration, and Access**

Historically, State and Regional Water Board programs were established over a structural framework that perpetuated inequities based on race. These inequities persist, and prior to its Racial Equity Resolution, the North Coast Water Board had not explicitly acknowledged the role racism plays in creating inequities in affordability and access to clean and safe water and protection of water resources. The positionality<sup>9</sup> of staff, which has typically not represented BIPOC perspectives or concerns, has created a decision-making process that does not adequately engage these communities nor give them an accessible platform to provide feedback on water quality issues that often directly affect them.

Toward reconciliation, the North Coast Water Board aims to improve its public engagement and communication strategies so that decisions made by the Board are informed by all, especially those who have not traditionally been engaged in, and those who are most affected by, Water Boards' decisions. In addition, enhancing the ways that members of the public can interact with the North Coast Water Board's public facing actions will create a more transparent agency where feedback can be freely given and incorporated directly into plans, policies, and permits.

The North Coast Water Board also contends that a more comprehensive and meaningful engagement strategy is necessary to ensure that North Coast Water Board decisions that have the potential to impact Tribal land or Tribal water resources do not have negative effects. The North Coast Water Board believes that furthering existing relationships with Tribes as well as developing new relationships is paramount to advancing equity and environmental justice in the North Coast Region.

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<sup>9</sup> Positionality refers to how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society. Positionality focuses not only on how our individual identities are constructed, but on how these identities shape the way we see the world in relation to those we interact with and influence the way we make decisions and interpret others' actions. (Via the University of British Columbia, <https://orice.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2022/06/2022-Gender-Guide-1.pdf>.)

Goal B1: Advance Transparency, Accessibility, and Accountability

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B1.1	<p>Conduct outreach to learn from and understand BIPOC community members' lived experience as it relates to water quality and to inform BIPOC community members about the Water Boards' mission, vision, and programs and the relevance to their lives.</p>	<p>Attend outreach events at middle and high schools and colleges with diverse student bodies to share information about the North Coast Water Board and how to pursue a career with our agency.</p> <p>Attend symposiums and other community events.</p>	<p>Community events are attended no less than four times each year.</p> <p>Information about the North Coast Water Board is distributed at each community event attended.</p> <p>Issues shared by BIPOC communities during outreach are collected and brought back to share with other Staff.</p> <p>Number of in-person meetings between staff and community members (i.e. cups of coffee/tea had with community).</p>
B1.2	<p>Develop and implement an outreach strategy to transmit and publicize specific North Coast Water Board work to BIPOC and Tribal communities and actively seek community needs, impacts, and concerns.</p>	<p>Establish a convention on how staff create meaningful outreach and engagement. Train staff on intercultural communication prior to conducting outreach.</p> <p>Provide notices to affected communities using methods in addition to email, such as social media, newspapers and radio.</p> <p>Disseminate newsletters at regular intervals to Tribes and BIPOC communities on board meeting topics, items in public review, and other events.</p> <p>Provide concise, plain-language briefing documents tailored and distributed to affected communities.</p> <p>Meet people in their</p>	<p>Outreach strategy completed.</p>



#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		<p>communities and spaces to seek out their perspectives.</p> <p>Identify and implement a process to identify affected communities that staff is not reaching and then reach out.</p> <p>Provide BIPOC community members an opportunity to review our transcription of their comments from engagement/ outreach so they can provide updates and clarifications to ensure that they maintain control of the written record of their own comments.</p> <p>Create a flyer summarizing the CalEPA complaints process in English and Spanish.</p>	
B1.3	<p>Collect information on issues with statewide Water Boards processes and/or systems that impede the advancement of the North Coast Water Board's racial equity efforts; report on the information collected; and advocate to remedy those issues.</p>	<p>Notify executive management of federal or statewide policies that further racial inequities so that they may bring those issues to the attention of staff and management at statewide leadership meetings or other appropriate venues</p> <p>Ensure GeoTracker<sup>10</sup> is accurate and updated with environmental and public health data, including vapor intrusion information.</p> <p>Advocate for increased funding for cleanup of contaminated properties.</p>	<p>Staff are identifying and regularly collecting and reporting racial equity issues to Water Boards staff at program roundtables.</p>

<sup>10</sup> GeoTracker is the Water Boards' data management system for sites that impact, or have the potential to impact, water quality in California, with emphasis on groundwater.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B1.4	Expand written translation and oral interpretation services, to the extent feasible.	<p>Identify the need for written translation and oral interpretation based on effected communities by each project.</p> <p>Create language services resources like business cards with QR codes that staff can hand out to community members when engaging with the public that speak other languages.</p>	Translation and interpretation needs to be provided whenever necessary to ensure language justice and equitable access to Water Boards information and decisions.
B1.5	Expand in-house language capacity in the North Coast Region to reflect languages spoken in the region.	<p>Create a list of staff who speak a language other than English and indicate proficiency (e.g., basic to fluent)</p> <p>Coordinate with State Water Board training staff to advocate for relevant language courses or classes.</p>	Create a document detailing each staff person's non-English language communication proficiencies.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B1.6	Update website to incorporate racial equity improvements.	<p>In coordination with the Governor’s appointments office, update the North Coast Water Board website to clearly outline the process to apply for vacant Board positions. Identify and implement actions to make process known to Tribes and organizations representing communities of color when Board vacancies exist.</p> <p>Create "Get Involved" or Community Resources tab to North Coast North Coast Water Board website.</p> <p>Improve the North Coast Water Board website and applications to be more user friendly, understandable, and accessible, including providing information in other languages.</p>	Website updated to incorporate actions.
B1.7	Inventory and publicly document present and past North Coast Water Board actions and policies that furthered and/or perpetuated racial inequities.	<p>Maintain an officewide, shared inventory of instances that are annually reviewed for actionable corrective opportunities.</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of, and empowered to contribute to, the inventory.</p>	An inventory is created with broad officewide participation.

## Goal B2: Establish and Strengthen Relationships and Trust with BIPOC Communities

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B2.1	Use demographic information to inform public engagement efforts and facilitate the assessment of racial disparities in access to beneficial uses of waterways, lived experiences with water quality, and community needs.	Conduct surveys to collect demographic information as needed (e.g., use CalEnviroScreen and census data to choose where we hold a workshop).	Demographic information is available to adequately inform targeted outreach.
B2.2	Identify existing in-office relationships with communities of color to ensure those relationships are sustained and strengthened.	Conduct staff survey.	Number of relationships identified/kept in regular communication.  Number of community events attended.
B2.3	Partner with other organizations to advance racial equity goals.	Build community capacity to engage in Water Boards processes and decisions.  Leverage relationships with other agencies (partnerships) for collective improvements/impacts that are greater than our authority alone (e.g., cultural burning activities, increased instream flows).	Active organization partnerships are ongoing.
B2.4	Engage with Office of Public Participation at the beginning of projects to identify availability of translation/interpreter services, where necessary.	Submit Office of Public Participation assistance requests as needed.	Document the number of connections made with language services.

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B2.5	Establish internal, watershed-specific workgroups comprised of staff who routinely work in specific watersheds and can serve as stewards to the communities of color in that watershed.	<p>Identify watersheds and staff for workgroups.</p> <p>Make staff contacts available for each watershed workgroup.</p> <p>Update Duty Statements as appropriate.</p>	Workgroups established and meeting routinely to discuss watershed-specific coordination and topics to support trust and relationship-building with BIPOC communities in the watershed.
B2.6	Conduct meetings at times and locations that optimize attendance by BIPOC communities.	<p>Schedule Board agenda items for evening sessions as needed.</p> <p>Conduct survey to solicit feedback from BIPOC communities on optimal meeting times for their communities.</p> <p>As appropriate, provide security at Board meetings that is culturally competent and reflective of community needs. This should be informed by community engagement to be assured that the security offered enhances a sense of safety.</p> <p>Establish a process that enables the provision of childcare during public meetings.</p> <p>As feasible, hold meetings in communities affected by North Coast Water Board actions at the times of day when community members may attend.</p> <p>Develop a more accessible Board comment process (e.g., pre-recorded or written comments in advance of board meeting).</p>	<p>Board meetings held in the evening and/or where affected community members may more easily attend.</p> <p>Survey completed.</p> <p>Security and/or childcare provided at board meetings as informed by community needs.</p> <p>Improved and more accessible Board comment process identified and implemented.</p> <p>Number of meetings conducted in response to community feedback.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		Schedule Board Meeting agenda items with predetermined start times when appropriate to promote equitable access to Board decisions.	
B2.7	When contracts are necessary, seek opportunities to contract with BIPOC businesses.	California Environmental Quality Act compliance.	Increasing percentage of discretionary funds to BIPOC led contracts.

**Goal B3: Establish and Strengthen Relationships and Trust with Tribes**

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
B3.1	Conduct meetings at times and locations that optimize attendance by Tribal government representatives.	<p>Seek interest and permission from Tribal communities to hold meetings on Tribal lands.</p> <p>Conduct survey to solicit feedback from Tribal government representatives on optimal meeting times for their communities.</p> <p>As appropriate, provide security at Board meetings that is culturally competent and reflective of community needs. This should be informed by community engagement to be assured that the security offered enhances a sense of safety.</p> <p>Establish a process that enables the provision of childcare during public meetings.</p> <p>Develop more accessible board comment process (e.g., pre-recorded or written</p>	<p>Number of meetings conducted in response to community feedback.</p> <p>More accessible board comment process.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		comments in advance of board meeting).	
B3.2	When contracts are necessary, seek opportunities to contract with Tribal governments and organizations.	California Environmental Quality Act compliance. Advocate for an easier process to contract with Tribes (like the process available to other government entities); advocate for Tribal civil service designation.	Equitable allocation of discretionary funds to Tribal contracts. Number of Tribal contracts.
B3.3	Ensure meaningful and effective Tribal Consultation and engagement.	Develop Tribal Consultation guidance documents in coordination with the North Coast Tribal Coordinator and the Office of Public Participation to ensure Consultations are effective and meaningful, and that Tribal input is deliberated at a level equivalent to other government agencies.  Evaluate Tribal engagement processes for all programs to ensure they are effective and meaningful, and that Tribal input is deliberated at a level equivalent to other government agencies.	Guidance developed.

## Priority C

### Incorporate Equity into Permits, Enforcement Actions, Watershed Planning, Policies, and Stewardship

The North Coast Water Board aims to implement the workplans of our divisions (Nonpoint Source and Surface Water Protection, Planning and Watershed Stewardship, Agriculture and Enforcement, and Point Source Control and Groundwater Protection) to more equitably protect and improve conditions in the region’s water resources using the goals and actions of Priority C as a guide. As the region faces environmental changes, including those resulting from climate change, the North Coast Water Board will examine how these factors affect Tribes and BIPOC communities disproportionately. Tribes and BIPOC communities will be sought to provide experience, expertise, and/or apply traditional ecological knowledge in developing and/or completing regulatory actions, projects, and enforcement actions that benefit their communities and the beneficial uses they rely on. The North Coast Water Board will also provide support for BIPOC and Tribal communities in accessing funds for projects that serve their communities.

#### Goal C1: Adapt to Changing Environmental Conditions and Issues Equitably

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
C1.1	Identify opportunities to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge and stewardship practices into North Coast Water Board plans, policies, permits and enforcement actions, where applicable.	<p>Develop Supplemental Environmental Projects in coordination with Tribes.</p> <p>Develop process for working Traditional Ecological Knowledge into regulatory actions.</p>	Tracking of instances of Traditional Ecological Knowledge practices done with North Coast Water Board partnership.
C1.2	Implement those components of the State Water Board’s Resolution No. 2017-0012, Comprehensive Response to Climate Change, and future updates to the Resolution, that involve the North Coast Water Board.		Resolution components implemented.



#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
C1.3	<p>Prioritize implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Strategic Initiatives for the North Coast Region which address climate impacts that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities.</p>	<p>Development of a Shoreline Adaptation Atlas for Humboldt Bay to Inform Equitable Sea Level Rise Adaptation Measures.</p>	<p>Initiatives developed.</p>
C1.4	<p>Investigate the connection between land use restrictions and water quality and explore ways to facilitate access to Native American Culture beneficial uses of waterways.</p>	<p>Work with Tribes in the Native American Culture Beneficial uses project to identify where lack of access is an issue.</p> <p>Identify if and how the North Coast Water Board may facilitate access to Native American Culture beneficial uses of waterways.</p> <p>Explore funding opportunities for projects that include provisions for Tribal access to water, co-management of cultural and natural resources, and return of ancestral lands to Tribal ownership.</p>	<p>Tribal identification of places where access is an issue for Native American Culture (CUL) beneficial uses.</p> <p>Provide updates on if and how North Coast Water Board can facilitate access for CUL beneficial uses, through either CUL Beneficial Uses project or Racial Equity Action Plan updates.</p>
C1.5	<p>Ensure that future updates to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan) are consistent with and reflect the Racial Equity Resolution and Action Plan for the North Coast Region.</p>	<p>Introduce new language into the Basin Plan where appropriate.</p> <p>Continue to consider Tribal issues when prioritizing projects in triennial review</p>	<p>Updated North Coast Region's Basin Plan will include language supporting this Action Plan.</p>

## Goal C2: Address Environmental Justice Problems through Enforcement Actions

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
C2.1	Ensure that the Supplemental Environmental Project identification and evaluation criteria represents Tribes and BIPOC communities.	Work with Tribes and other partners to develop Supplemental Environmental Projects that include provisions for Tribal and BIPOC community access to and stewardship of water resources; co-management of cultural and natural resources; land and water rights acquisition, especially the return of ancestral lands to Tribal ownership; and restoration of properties to achieve water quality improvements.	<p>Number of Supplemental Environmental Projects and enforcement settlements that include the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are developed by Tribal or BIPOC communities or with their engagement.</li> <li>Provisions for Tribal or public access to water resources.</li> <li>Provisions for co-management of cultural and natural resources.</li> <li>Acquisition of land and water rights by Tribes and BIPOC communities, especially the return of ancestral lands to Tribal ownership.</li> </ul>
C2.2	Seek input from and consider impacts to BIPOC communities and Tribes when developing enforcement priorities and Supplemental Environmental Projects.	<p>Community engagement surveys.</p> <p>Ensure language services are available, as needed.</p>	<p>Findings made addressing pollution impacts.</p> <p>Number of Supplemental Environmental Projects developed in collaboration with Tribes and BIPOC communities.</p>
C2.3	Increase education and outreach to BIPOC communities and Tribes about the California Environmental Protection Agency Complaints System.	<p>Publicize the Complaint System</p> <p>Advocate for language access beyond Spanish and English.</p> <p>Develop a flyer and business cards with QR codes for easy distribution of</p>	<p>Outreach material developed (flier/brochure) and number distributed.</p> <p>Increased language services requests for complaints.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		information	

**Goal C3: Address Potentially Disproportionate Impacts to BIPOC Communities and Tribes through Permits**

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
C3.1	Advance racial equity through permit development.	<p>Incorporate findings into regulations (plans, policies, permits) and enforcement actions acknowledging the Tribal beneficial uses.</p> <p>Incorporate provisions in permits and enforcement actions, as necessary, to avoid disproportionate impacts to BIPOC communities.</p> <p>Develop permit writer's guidance and/or procedures to advance racial equity including when impacts associated with a proposed project conflict with Tribal beneficial uses and/or Racial Equity Plan implementation.</p> <p>Identify a process to assess and mitigate disproportionate impacts of proposed regulatory actions on BIPOC communities.</p> <p>Where possible and applicable, include requirements in permits regarding cultural resource investigation and/or beneficial</p>	<p>Number of permits that incorporate relevant findings and/or provisions.</p> <p>A completed permit writer's guidance document on advancing racial equity.</p> <p>An established process to assess and mitigate impacts of regulatory actions on Tribes and BIPOC communities.</p>

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
		use utilization.	
C3.2	Work with the State Water Board Fee Unit to assess opportunities for fee structures that incentivize projects that benefit BIPOC communities.		Discussions with State Water Board staff occurring.
C3.3	Prioritize updates to water quality protection requirements in permits affecting BIPOC and Tribal communities.	Prioritize updating older permits in BIPOC and Tribal communities to improve water quality protections.	Updated Waste Discharge Requirements and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System prioritization spreadsheet.

#### Goal C4: Prioritize Project Development for Facilities that Serve Tribes and BIPOC Communities

#	Actions	Action Examples	Performance Indicators
C4.1	Promote regional funding priorities to the Division of Financial Assistance that advance environmental justice.		Regional priorities match State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance priorities.  Existing North Coast Water Board projects scored according to new priority.
C4.2	Support BIPOC and Tribal efforts to secure grants for infrastructure and land acquisition projects.		Number of projects supported.
C4.3	Develop and implement a technical assistance program to support Tribal projects.	Execute North Coast Resource Partnership Technical Assistance contract.	Number of Technical Assistance projects funded  Contract Renewed.