

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

SAN DIEGO REGION

RESOLUTION NO. R9-2026-0084

**SUPPORTING AN ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THE PRACTICAL
VISION AND OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027**

WHEREAS:

1. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) staff developed a Practical Vision to guide efforts toward addressing the highest priority projects.
2. The San Diego Water Board adopted a Resolution in Support of San Diego Water Board's first Practical Vision titled "Healthy Waters, Healthy People" on November 13, 2013 (Resolution No. R9-2013-0153).
3. The San Diego Water Board endorsed an update to the Practical Vision in September 2021 through adoption of Resolution No. R9-2021-0007.
4. The Operational Plan for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (FY 26-27) commits to advancing 27 projects, including Practical Vision and core program projects (Attachment 1 - Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operational Plan Projects).
5. Projects included in the FY 26-27 Operational Plan were selected considering the Key Beneficial Uses and Areas established in San Diego Water Board Resolution No. R9-2017-0030¹ and guidance from the Practical Vision Priority Setting Team.
6. The Operational Plan commits 17 percent of available staff resources to priority Practical Vision and core program projects in fiscal year 26-27 (Attachment 1).
7. Section 13168 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act states "[t]he state board shall allocate to the regional boards from funds appropriated to the state board such part thereof as may be necessary for the administrative expenses of such boards. The regional boards shall submit annual budgets to the state board."
8. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has final allocation authority on the distribution of most staffing resources throughout the State and Regional Water Boards. State Water Board Resolution No. 2012-0061 delegates the authority to conduct and supervise the activities of the State Water Board to the

¹ San Diego Water Board Resolution No. R9-2017-0030 can be accessed electronically at the following webpage:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/key_areas/

Executive Director of the State Water Board. Subject to the direction of the State Water Board, the Executive Director oversees and approves the State Water Board's day-to-day budgeting and staff allocation. Occasionally, statutory requirements (such as Water Code section 13260, subdivision (d)(2)(B)), the State budget and/or the Governor will directly specify the board(s) that will be assigned additional resources.

9. The San Diego Water Board is allocated 77 Personnel Years of staffing resources including 3 part-time temporary help positions in FY 26-27.
10. Regional Water Board budgets are allotted in programmatic areas, making it difficult for the San Diego Water Board to link budget dollars to the desired outcomes of the Practical Vision. The annual Operational Plan represents an effort to enrich budget and performance integration. The State Water Board initiated efforts to evaluate the fees collected, Water Board expenditures, and align Water Board resources, priorities, and workload outputs statewide through the [Resource Alignment Project](#).
11. The State and Regional Water Boards annually engage in a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) process to recommend new positions for legislative authorization. In FY26-27 the Board is receiving four positions to staff its Border Water Quality Unit and one position for enforcement and protection of wetlands in response to the *Sackett vs Environmental Protection Agency* decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in 2023.
12. The Practical Vision and Operational Plan identify goals and actions that are critical to the success of the mission of the San Diego Water Board. In doing so, they also identify critical underfunded needs to achieve those goals. Regulation of irrigated lands, restoration of wetlands, and public engagement (especially efforts involving Tribal Nations, racial equity and environmental justice, and underrepresented communities) are key efforts that are not adequately supported with staffing and contracting resources. Each of these projects require a sustained level of effort over multiple years to achieve their goals. The most essential and long-term work for achieving success of the Practical Vision includes leveraging community-based partnerships to generate engagement and collaboration.
13. The level of effort dedicated to the Practical Vision Projects of the Operational Plan is a minimum effort and tenuous. Should higher priority work demand, the level of effort on these projects would necessarily decrease, if not stop altogether. The core work of the San Diego Water Board remains a priority. Should major adjustments to the Operational Plan become necessary, they will be presented in the monthly Executive Officer's Report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The San Diego Water Board endorses the use of an Operational Plan to implement the Practical Vision to prioritize work. Attachment 1 lists the staff resources necessary to implement the Practical Vision and the board's priorities, while continuing to meet core regulatory requirements.

2. The San Diego Water Board endorses aligning staff resources with its priorities to advance both the highest priority Practical Vision projects and the core programmatic work.
3. Board Members request the Executive Officer continue to explore all available resources to move forward high-priority projects, including but not limited to advancing the regulation of irrigated lands, the restoration of wetlands, and the full engagement of interested persons. The Executive Officer should coordinate these efforts with the State Water Board's [Resource Alignment Project](#) as appropriate and continue to work within the BCP process.
4. Board Members will also seek ways to augment the efforts of the Executive Officer to implement the Practical Vision such as exploring opportunities for partnerships and ways to leverage existing resources and statewide or multi-regional efforts.

I, David W. Gibson, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, on September 9, 2026.

TENTATIVE

David W. Gibson
Executive Officer