

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION**

MEETING DATE: December 11, 2024

ITEM: 4

Executive Officer's Report

Executive Officer’s Report December 6, 2024

Table of Contents

All Staff Training – Lake Merritt (Michelle Thompson and Katie Kulha).....	2
California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) Annual Conference (Maggie Monahan)	5
Staff Updates (Eileen M. White).....	6
Enforcement Actions (Brian Thompson)	7
401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received (Elizabeth Morrison).....	8

All Staff Training – Lake Merritt (Michelle Thompson and Katie Kulha)

On October 17 the Toxics Cleanup and Groundwater Protection Divisions led an all-staff training in the form of a field trip to Lake Merritt, a tidal lagoon located in downtown Oakland. The field trip began with presentations by Kevin Brown, Engineering Geologist, and Alan Friedman, Water Resource Control Engineer, who provided an overview of Lake Merritt's history, geologic setting, and significance in maintaining ecosystem health and supporting urban resilience.



Figure 1: This 1857 U.S. Coast Survey map shows a historic perspective of Lake Merritt and Oakland.

Following the presentations, staff walked to Lake Merritt. James Robinson, the Executive Director of the Lake Merritt Institute, educated staff about the Clean Lake Program. Since December 1996, the program has removed 1,000 to 6,000 pounds of trash from the lake each month, with much of the work done by volunteers. James also shared details of the Lake Merritt Institute's educational initiative to reduce urban runoff, which is a major source of pollution in the lake.



Figure 2: James Robinson, Executive Director, of the Lake Merritt Institute talks to Water Board staff about the Clean Lake Program.

Tong Yin, Water Resource Control Engineer, gave a presentation on the harmful algal bloom of 2022 that resulted in massive fish kills in Lake Merritt. These blooms, fueled by excess nutrients, deplete oxygen levels and harm aquatic life. Tong discussed her efforts working on the Lake Merritt Total Maximum Daily Load Alternative Project which aims to monitor nutrient levels and tackle low dissolved oxygen in Lake Merritt. Ongoing efforts include monitoring water quality, evaluating runoff, and conducting sediment analysis, all overseen by a Technical Advisory Committee to guide future restoration.

In addition to the educational sessions, staff had the opportunity to engage in bird-watching co-led by Christina Toms, Water Resource Control Engineer, and Julian Wood, an ornithologist and San Francisco Bay Program Leader at Point Blue Conservation Science (formerly known as Point Reyes Bird Observatory). Julian works to promote conservation efforts that address climate change and land-use changes in ways that benefit both human and wetland bird communities across the Bay Area. This session provided a chance to observe and learn about the diverse bird species thriving in the Lake Merritt ecosystem.



Figure 3: (left) Julian Wood and Christina Toms lead a bird watching session. (right) Michelle Thompson peers through binoculars to view a night heron.

Lake Merritt Institute staff encouraged the Water Board staff to participate in their ongoing trash cleanup efforts around the lake, contributing to ongoing conservation and helping to maintain the beauty and health of this vital ecosystem. All members of the public are invited to share in this responsibility and it has been a great success with community engagement.



Figure 4: Staff of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board.

California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) Annual Conference (Maggie Monahan)

In October, the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) held its annual conference in Sacramento, drawing more than 1,200 participants, including municipal stormwater staff, consultants, industrial and utility representatives, federal and state government staff, and practitioners. The conference serves as a venue for communicating the latest technical information, regulatory updates, and lessons learned.

Watershed Management Division Section Leader Maggie Monahan joined a panel of Water Board staff discussing Industrial Stormwater General Permit enforcement priorities. Topics included sampling and reporting, no exposure certifications, compliance groups, and lessons learned from inspections. The panel highlighted opportunities to improve compliance such as preparing for stormwater sampling, maintaining best management practices, and developing and implementing site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans.

In addition, our former Assistant Executive Officer Tom Mumley was presented with an Outstanding Partnership Award: Lifetime Collaboration and Engagement, recognizing his significant contributions in advancing CASQA's Vision for Sustainable Stormwater Management over his career.

Staff Updates (Eileen M. White)



Please welcome Emilisa Chea to the Water Board. Emilisa joins the Planning and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Division and the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) as a Watershed Stewards Program corpsmember for AmeriCorps, where she will be assessing the quality of California's surface waters. She is a recent graduate from the University of California, Davis, with a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Science and Management. During their academic career, they gained hands-on experience as a Lab Assistant at the UC Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant and conducted vital water quality testing/data analysis for the Davis campus and Putah Creek. Additionally, they led operations at the UC Davis Student Farm Market Garden, overseeing organic crop production, mentoring peers, and managing community-supported agriculture sales. Emilisa has also contributed to several community-focused initiatives, including volunteering at the Berkeley Animal Shelter, Friends of the Urban Forest, and Oakland Fire Department, showcasing their commitment to environmental stewardship and public service.



Please welcome Sasha Mariniuk to his new role at the Water Board. Sasha joins the Planning and TMDL Division through a placement with the Watershed Stewards Program, a project of the California Conservation Corps in partnership with AmeriCorps. He graduated from UC Santa Cruz in 2023 with degree in Environmental Studies and Biology. For the last 9 months, Sasha was a Scientific Aide in the NPDES division where he assisted in permit writing and handling staff case loads. In his transition to SWAMP, he hopes to gain fieldwork experience, learn to use ArcGIS (a system to integrate data with geography to help users understand patterns and relationships) and R (a domain specific language designed for statistical computing and analysis), and spend lots of time outside. While he's not working, Sasha spends a lot of time playing sports outdoors. He recently picked up pickleball and hopes to one day beat the retirees at his local park.

Enforcement Actions (Brian Thompson)

Recent enforcement activity includes issuing a complaint, posting a proposed settlement for public comment, and imposing a monetary penalty after a hearing before the Executive Officer. The complaint and proposed settlement are pending and could come before the Regional Water Board; therefore, *ex parte* communications are not allowed. Please refer to the [Pending Enforcement Liabilities and Penalties](#) webpage for more information on the complaint and proposed settlement.

Complaint

A complaint was issued and noticed for public comment. The matter is scheduled for a hearing before the Executive Office on December 11, 2024:

Discharger	Violation	Proposed Penalty	Comment Deadline
LP Acquisitions LLC	Failure to submit annual report	\$2,910	August 23, 2024

Proposed Settlement

The following has been noticed for public comment. If no significant comment is received by the deadline, the Executive Officer may sign an order implementing it.

Discharger	Violations	Proposed Penalty	Comment Deadline
Martinez Refining Company LLC	Effluent limit violations, unauthorized discharges, and failure to submit report	\$4,482,000 ¹	December 2, 2024

¹ Includes \$2,241,000 for Supplemental Environmental Projects, including \$1,046,000 to fund a water quality improvement and management project for Peyton Slough marshes, \$153,600 for the Martinez Watershed Rangers Program, and \$1,041,400 for four Regional Monitoring Program studies.

Administrative Civil Liability Order

On behalf of the Board, the Executive Officer held a hearing on October 9, 2024, and issued an order imposing the following penalty:

Discharger	Violation	Imposed Penalty	Supplemental Environmental Project
SODA LLC	Failure to submit annual report	\$2,910	none

401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received (Elizabeth Morrison)

The table below lists those applications received for Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification from October 16 through November 14, 2024. A check mark in the right-hand column indicates a project with work that may be in the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) jurisdiction.

Project Name	City/Location	County	May have BCDC Jurisdiction
Piledriving - Replacement of 20 Pilings	Alameda	Alameda	✓
F02C96 San Lorenzo Creek Concrete Side Slope and Wall Joint Repairs	San Lorenzo	Alameda	
Porewater Assessment Project	Oakland	Alameda	✓
Laguna Creek Restoration and Flood Protection Project	Moraga	Contra Costa	
Franklin Canyon RV Resort Project - Culvert Cleanout	Hercules	Contra Costa	
Rodeo Creek Bank Erosion Repair Project	Rodeo	Contra Costa	
Pinole Creek Bank Erosion Repair	Pinole	Contra Costa	
Hetfield Estates	Moraga	Contra Costa	
2133 Alameda Diablo	Unincorporated	Contra Costa	
Emergency Bank Repair - 4661 San Pablo Dam Road	El Sobrante	Contra Costa	
US Coast Guard Station Golden Gate dredging Project	Sausalito	Marin	✓
Marin City Flood Improvements Gateway Pump Station Project	Sausalito	Marin	
McDevitt Enterprise Seawall Repair Project	San Rafael	Marin	✓
Novato Boulevard Improvements Project	Novato	Marin	
97 Westshore Residential Overwater Home Emergency Repair	Belvedere	Marin	✓
Firehouse 20 Remodel	San Anselmo	Marin	

Project Name	City/Location	County	May have BCDC Jurisdiction
Silveira Novato Ranch Emergency Culvert and Flood Gate Replacement	Unincorporated	Marin	
Greenwood Beach Restoration Project	Tiburon	Marin	✓
Renovations to the Demmel Boathouse	Inverness	Marin	✓
18 Fleetwood Court Retaining Wall Project	Novato	Marin	✓
Oak Hills Apartments Project	Unincorporated	Marin	
Bulkhead Repair on Belvedere Lagoon	Belvedere	Marin	✓
Napa County Stream Maintenance Program	Napa	Napa	
EA 04-4J830 Hopper Slough Bridge Replacement	Unincorporated	Napa	
Yountville Recycled Water Transmission Main Repair Project	Yountville	Napa	
Sector San Francisco Boat Basin and Pier	San Francisco / Yerba Buena Island	San Francisco	✓
Red and White Fleet Waterside Improvement Project	San Francisco	San Francisco	✓
Mission and Islais Creek Channel Sediment Investigation Project	San Francisco	San Francisco	✓
BART Transbay Tube Cathodic Protection Maintenance Work	San Francisco Bay	San Francisco	✓
Twin Pines Park Storm water Detention Project	Belmont	San Mateo	
Belmont Slough Emergency Levee Repair	Redwood City	San Mateo	✓
413 Fulton Creek and Deck Repairs Project	San Mateo	San Mateo	
Port of Redwood City Living Shoreline Pilot Project	Redwood City	San Mateo	✓

Project Name	City/Location	County	May have BCDC Jurisdiction
Bank Erosion Repair 18150 Bancroft Ave Project, Monte Sereno	Monte Sereno	Santa Clara	
The Gates	Morgan Hill	Santa Clara	
Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project	San Jose	Santa Clara	
Two Electric Distribution Pole Replacements, Sonoma 1107, 35583126 & 35580437	Unincorporated	Sonoma	✓
Helen Putnam Park Extension Project	Petaluma	Sonoma	
1860 Thornsberry Road	Sonoma	Sonoma	