

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

**STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: William Burrell
MEETING DATE: February 12, 2025**

ITEM: 6C

**City of Palo Alto, Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant and Wastewater
Collection System, Palo Alto, Santa Clara County – Reissuance of NPDES Permit**

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DISCUSSION:

This Revised Tentative Order (Appendix A) would reissue the NPDES permit for the City of Palo Alto's Regional Water Quality Control Plant and sanitary sewer system. The plant serves about 234,000 people in the cities of Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills, and Stanford University.

The plant provides advanced secondary treatment for up to 39 million gallons per day (MGD) and full secondary treatment for up to 80 MGD. While most plant effluent is discharged to an unnamed channel that drains to South San Francisco Bay, the City routes about 1 MGD to Matadero Creek via Renzel Marsh Pond, an environmental enhancement project. As part of its planned upgrades, the City is building a horizontal levee pilot project that will discharge about 0.1 MGD to the adjacent Harbor Marsh.

The Revised Tentative Order contains updated requirements, including new effluent limitations based on the Statewide Toxicity Provisions. The most significant changes to the facility anticipated over the coming permit term are that the City plans to (1) start discharging a small portion of treated wastewater through the horizontal levee, (2) expand its use of recycled water by about 0.5 MGD by adding an advanced water purification system, and (3) install membrane aerated biofilm reactors in its aeration basins to reduce total inorganic nitrogen concentrations below 20 mg/L.

We circulated the Tentative Order for public review and did not receive any comments. We made minor editorial and formatting changes, including adding a brief rationale for requirements related to the new horizontal levee discharge. We expect this item to remain uncontested.

APPENDIX:

A. Revised Tentative Order

Appendix A
Revised Tentative Order