
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

Notice Date: February 21, 2025

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A SUBSEQUENT NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT

CONDITIONAL WAIVER OF WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRAZING OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION (NAPA RIVER, SONOMA CREEK, PETALUMA RIVER, AND TOMALES BAY WATERSHEDS, AND ALL GRAZING OPERATIONS IN POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) will hold a public hearing on **May 14, 2025**, to consider adoption of a Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Grazing Operations (Grazing Waiver) in accordance with this notice.

The Water Board currently regulates about 88,000 acres of grazing lands in the Tomales Bay, Sonoma Creek, and Napa River watersheds with two separate Grazing Waivers. A revised multi-watershed Grazing Waiver is proposed to renew the existing waivers and to expand the scope of coverage to include the Petaluma River watershed and grazing operations in Point Reyes National Seashore that do not drain to Tomales Bay. Requirements for Grazing Waiver compliance will largely remain the same.

Project documents for public review and comment include a proposed Initial Study/Subsequent Negative Declaration prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.). The draft Initial Study summarizes the Grazing Waiver requirements and identifies no significant environmental impacts from the proposed Grazing Waiver. The Water Board, acting as the Lead Agency under CEQA, must adopt the Subsequent Negative Declaration before adopting the Grazing Waiver.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The proposed Grazing Waiver, including the draft environmental document, is available online at the Water Board's "Public Notices and Documents for Review" page (under the Agriculture heading): https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/public_notices/. Alternatively, a copy of the Grazing Waiver and supporting documents can be received by email or postal mail by contacting the staff contact identified below.

The hearing will be held in-person with a remote participation option as follows:

DATE: **May 14, 2025**

TIME: 9:00 a.m. (approximate)

LOCATION:

In-Person: Elihu M. Harris Building
First Floor Auditorium
1515 Clay Street, Oakland, CA 94612

Remotely: Please check
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_info/remote_meeting/index.html to find out how to participate in the hearing remotely.

STAFF CONTACT:

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SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS: Written comments on the Grazing Waiver and environmental document must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 24, 2025, to be considered. Please send all written comments to the staff contact identified above. Additionally, all evidence, testimony, and exhibits to be offered at the hearing must be submitted in writing by this date to the above staff contact. Non-evidentiary policy statements to be made at the hearing need not be submitted in advance. Submission of written comments via email is preferred, but not required. One week before the Board hearing date, any proposed changes to the proposed Grazing Waiver, along with written responses to all comments received during the public comment period, will be posted at the Board Meeting agenda page: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_info/agenda.html.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS: The Water Board will receive oral public testimony on the proposed Grazing Waiver at the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board will consider adoption of the proposed Grazing Waiver, including changes that are consistent with the general purpose of the proposed Grazing Waiver and are a logical outgrowth of the comments received.

The public hearing will be conducted in accordance with the California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 649.3. To ensure a productive, efficient and fair hearing in which all participants have an opportunity to be heard, oral comments will generally be limited to five minutes. Participants with similar comments are strongly encouraged to

make joint presentations and groups are encouraged to designate a spokesperson. Individuals who require special accommodation are requested to contact Executive Assistant Julie Haas, (510) 622-2399, Julie.Haas@Waterboards.ca.gov, at least five (5) working days before a meeting. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

FUTURE NOTICES: Any changes in the date of the hearing, the availability of responses to comments or any other updates will be noticed by the GovDelivery e-mail list. Any person desiring to receive future notices concerning the proposed Grazing Waiver should sign up for the GovDelivery e-mail list at https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRRCB/subscriber/new?qsp=san_francisco_bay, and select any box under “Current Basin Planning / TMDL Projects” that refers to either the Tomales Bay, Petaluma River, Sonoma Creek, or Napa River watersheds.