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

MEETING DATE: February 11, 2026

ITEM: 5

Executive Officer's Report

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Update on PCBs Source Property Referrals (Helen Hild and Katie Kulha)

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board staff members from the Toxics Cleanup Division, Katie Kulha and Helen Hild, presented an update on polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) source property referrals at the January 2026 Bay Area Municipal Stormwater Coalition meeting. The Bay Area Municipal Stormwater Coalition is an informal collaboration of the municipal stormwater programs in the San Francisco Bay Area representing 88 cities and towns, 8 counties, and 7 special districts. The presentation included the general organization of the Regional Water Board, an overview of the investigation and cleanup process, and an update on PCBs source property referrals from the municipalities.

Staff members explained how the Regional Water Board receives new cases, how the investigation process works, and covered the timeline once a PCBs source property referral is received.

Staff also presented an update on PCBs Team activities conducted in 2025, including:

- The PCBs Source Property Referral Fact Sheet, which can be found on the Region 2 PCBs TMDL website. Staff are using the fact sheet to help inform agencies and dischargers about the source property referral program.
- Notification that all PCBs source property referrals are being uploaded to GeoTracker (the State Water Resources Control Board's publicly available database for cleanup and other sites) and are categorized as non-case information as investigations are being conducted. Staff also gave a brief tutorial on how to use GeoTracker to find information about specific sites.

Finally, staff discussed the ongoing status of the PCBs source property referrals. Since fiscal year 2015-2016, the Regional Water Board has received a total of 25 source property referrals. Six are completed, three are in remediation, eight are in investigation/design, four are in review, and four are managed by other regulatory agencies. The presentation was well received, and the Regional Water Board PCBs Team will continue to look for opportunities to collaborate and coordinate across our groundwater and surface water programs.

Groundwater Resources Association Annual Regulatory Update (Ross Steenson, Carina Cornejo, Brian Thompson, Katie Kulha, and Jessica Watkins)

On January 14, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board staff presented its annual regulatory update to the Bay Area branch of the Groundwater Resources Association of California. The Groundwater Resources Association is a non-profit organization that promotes the protection and improvement of groundwater supply and quality in California. Our staff has been presenting to this Groundwater Resources Association branch for over 20 years. This meeting continues to be one of the best attended meetings for this Groundwater Resources Association branch and provides a useful forum for staff to inform and interact with the regulated community.

During this meeting, staff discussed several news items, program updates, and technical topics. This included an overview of our Strategic Plan and our priorities for the Site Cleanup and Underground Storage Tank programs. Staff discussed some of the performance metrics for the programs, controlling human health exposure and contaminant migration at cleanup sites, closing cleanup cases, and moving cleanup sites into active remediation. Staff also discussed three open positions in the Toxics Cleanup and Groundwater Protection divisions.

Our staff presented the Case Intake Team's process of reviewing new cleanup case applications through the 2005 Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, and the California Environmental Protection Agency for the Oversight of Investigation and Cleanup Activities at Brownfield Sites. (Brownfield sites are properties where the use is complicated by the presence of environmental contamination.) Staff outlined the criteria to determine whether the Regional Water Board or the Department of Toxic Substances Control will lead the review. Our staff described the evaluation process that considers the location of the contamination source, exposure pathways potentially impacting human health and the environment, and the need for remediation or mitigation. If additional investigation and/or cleanup are necessary, staff open a cleanup case and assign a case manager. Otherwise, staff may prepare a non-case determination letter that documents our findings and potential future actions.

Staff provided an overview of our enforcement approach. When there is a violation, staff consider water quality and public health harm, economic benefit, discharger conduct, and our resources when pursuing enforcement. Staff explained that enforcement provides an opportunity for dischargers and the Regional Water Board to begin good faith negotiation, which will ideally result in improved relationships. Our staff concluded this topic by providing three examples of enforcement in the cleanup programs in 2025.

Staff also discussed our approach to evaluating the potential impacts of sea level rise and groundwater rise at nearshore cleanup sites by requesting vulnerability assessments. Staff provided a general framework on the components of a vulnerability assessment, including an evaluation of site location, site contamination, remedy selection, and potential adverse effects. Staff may request a vulnerability assessment at

different stages of a cleanup case, such as remedial investigation, remedy selection, performance monitoring, five-year reviews, and prior to case closure.

Finally, staff highlighted the new general NPDES permit for discharges of groundwater to surface waters that was adopted at our December 2025 Board meeting. Specifically, discussed was the establishment of technology-based effluent limits for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) for certain types of more complex discharges (i.e., "Class 4 discharges"); the majority of enrollees fall into this category. Staff explained that the United States Environmental Protection Agency maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) were selected as the effluent limits based on the extensive technological assessment performed when deriving the maximum contaminant levels.

This year's Annual Regulatory Update was attended by over 60 people. During the question-and-answer period, this year's presentation team addressed many questions related to our cleanup programs. Feedback from participants was very positive.

Hyde Street Harbor Excavation (Demir Worthington and Ron Goloubow)

The Port of San Francisco and Pilot Thomas Logistics, LLC, have completed excavation of R-99 fuel (renewable diesel) impacted soil adjacent to San Francisco Bay at the Hyde Street Harbor in San Francisco. The source of the contamination was from the marine fueling facility at the Hyde Street Harbor pier that was discovered in April 2020. In October 2024, the Regional Water Board issued Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R2-2024-0026 requiring cleanup of R-99 impacted soil and groundwater. The Order also requires post-excavation groundwater monitoring and a risk management plan to address the residual contamination.

Figure 1: Hyde Street Pier, north of the excavation

The 2,000 cubic yard excavation involved removal of impacted soil, the underground fuel pipelines, and associated infrastructure. Soil was excavated from approximately 10-foot-wide by 12-foot-deep sections. The sections were backfilled with cement slurry and soil before excavating the adjacent section, to reduce the potential for sidewall collapse and bay water infiltration. Due to access limitations, some contaminated soil remains under the pier, road, and rip rap located adjacent to the area of excavation. This residual contamination is not accessible to people and does not pose a threat to human health. Best management practices such as dust suppression and air quality monitoring were implemented during the excavation to ensure protection of water quality and public health.

The next phase of the project includes the installation of groundwater monitoring wells and post-excavation groundwater monitoring. During this monitoring period, sheens associated with the R-99 fuel leak may appear intermittently in the bay, so absorbent booms and pads will stay in place in San Francisco Bay adjacent to the excavation area and be periodically replaced until no longer needed.

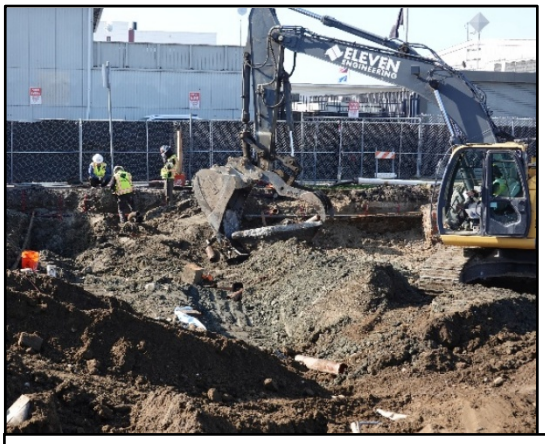
Figure 2: Removal of pipeline infrastructure


Figure 3: Excavation backfilled with cement slurry

Staff Updates (Eileen M. White)

Mel Johnson was hired as a Water Resource Control Engineer in the Watershed Management Division's Municipal Stormwater Section, where he will support the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP). He recently graduated from the University of California, Davis, where he earned both a Master of Science and a PhD in civil and environmental engineering. His graduate research focused on developing rapid-detection microbial water quality monitoring techniques for natural and engineered systems. Outside of water and engineering, Mel enjoys participating in sports and outdoor activities such as hiking, distance running, and ultimate frisbee.

Tim Chen has been hired as an Environmental Scientist Specialist in the Watershed Management Division's Creek and Wetland Protection Section, where he will work as the Liaison for Santa Clara Valley Water District. Tim's position is funded through an agreement with Valley Water. He comes to us from Caltrans District 4, where he worked to obtain 401 permits from both the San Francisco Bay and Central Valley regions. Before Caltrans, Tim worked for the County of San Luis Obispo as a lab technician analyzing and collecting samples from drinking water and wastewater facilities. Tim studied at California Polytechnic State University where he earned both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Environmental Science. Outside of creek and wetland permitting, Tim enjoys mountain biking, running, and traveling.

Haweya Farah joins the NPDES Wastewater Division as a Water Resource Control Engineer. She comes to us with Water Boards experience as a transfer from the State Water Board, where she worked on the enforcement of water rights. Haweya received her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Sacramento State. She is a Bay Area native and also claims a love of neighboring Sacramento area. Haweya is excited to work on the implementation of the industrial and construction stormwater general permits and continue carrying out the mission statement of the Water Boards. In her free time, she loves to read, travel internationally, attend live music shows, take (amateur) photographs, and do volunteer work.

Keith Lichten has been selected from a highly competitive pool of internal and external candidates to fill our vacant Assistant Executive Officer position, effective January 27, 2026. Keith's focus will be on our surface water divisions and programs.

Keith came to the Bay Area for graduate study in environmental planning at UC Berkeley following an undergraduate degree in environmental engineering at MIT. He started at the Water Board in 1996 as an intern working for both the Water Board and the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association. Over the subsequent 30 years, he has worked in the Watershed, Planning, NPDES, and Groundwater Protection divisions, across a range of programs including grants, basin planning, TMDLs, enforcement, 401 certs, navigational dredging, non-point source, stormwater, discharges of waste to land, water recycling, and cleanup cases. Since 2014 he has served as the Watershed Management Division Manager. Keith brings an incredible depth and breadth of experience that will serve our region well in delivering on our mission.

Enforcement Actions (Brian Thompson and James Parrish)

The following tables show the proposed and settled enforcement actions since last month's report. As the proposed settlements are pending and could come before the Board, ex-parte communications are not allowed. Please refer to the Pending Enforcement Liabilities and Penalties webpage for more information on the details of the alleged violation and proposed settlement.

Proposed Settlement

The following are noticed for a 30-day public comment period. If no significant comments are received by the deadline, the Executive Officer will sign the order implementing this settlement.

Discharger	Violation(s)	Proposed Penalty	Comment Deadline
City of Millbrae	Discharge limit violations	$6,000	February 8, 2026
Six Flags Entertainment Corporation and Fireworks & Stage FX America, LLC	Unauthorized discharge	$10,000	February 11, 2026
SUMCO Phoenix Corporation	Discharge limit violations	$3,000	March 2, 2026

On behalf of the Board, the Executive Officer approved the following settlement:

Discharger	Violation(s)	Imposed Penalty	Supplemental Environmental Project
City of St. Helena	Discharge limit violations	$378,000	$196,500[1]

1 This amount of the penalty funds the *City of St. Helena Sewer Pipeline Rehabilitation Project*, which will replace the oldest portions of sewer pipe near Sulphur Creek. The project will reduce the risk of inflow and infiltration into the City's sewer system and sewage leaching into groundwater or discharging into Sulphur Creek.

401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received (Joseph Martinez)

The table below lists those applications received for Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification from December 10, 2025, through January 14, 2026. 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
Canyon Road Emergency Work	Moraga	Contra Costa	
A-825 L-191A MP 2.47-2.49 Exposed Pipe Project	Unincorporated	Contra Costa	
55 Bellevue Avenue Waterfront Improvements Project	Belvedere	Marin	X
46 Cliff Road Waterfront Improvements Project	Belvedere	Marin	X
103 Wharf Road Emergency Home Stabilization Project	Bolinas	Marin	
Emergency Creek Bank Erosion Repair-Protection	Nicasio	Marin	
Porto Bello Condominium Dock Repair Project	San Rafael	Marin	X
Easkoot Creek Sediment Removal 5-EAS-2	Stinson Beach	Marin	
Abuelitos Foundation Conn Creek Land Lab Pilot Project	St. Helena	Napa	
Napa Logistics Park Outfall Maintenance	Unincorporated	Napa	
San Francisco Marina Improvement and Remediation Project	San Francisco	San Francisco	X
Pier 68 Dry Dock 2 Emergency Repairs	San Francisco	San Francisco	X

Project Name	City/Location	County	May have BCDC Jurisdiction
Aquinas Trail emergency repair	Unincorporated	Santa Clara	
Goat Island Tidal Marsh Restoration and Public Access Improvement Project	Suisun City	Solano	
201 Rollingwood Drive Project	Vallejo	Solano	
Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. maintenance dredging	Vallejo	Solano	X
Pierce Bank Stabilization Project	Glen Ellen	Sonoma	