

Strategic Priority Actions (through 2011)

CONTROLLING NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION

Statewide Solutions to TMDLs (Trash Policy)

The State Water Board will review existing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) already adopted by the Regional Water Boards to identify opportunities for statewide action that would streamline TMDL adoptions. To start, the State Water Board will develop a statewide policy for trash, based on Trash TMDLs adopted by various Regional Water Boards, that will eliminate the need for further individual adoptions of Trash TMDLs.

Activities on National Forest System Lands

The State Water Board is developing a statewide approach to address various activities on National Forest System (NFS) lands that have the potential to impact water quality, including timber harvesting, grazing, off-road vehicle recreation, and fire suppression. The approach involves: 1) collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service to update its existing statewide Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), which is a USFS handbook setting forth best management practices to be used by USFS for controlling various nonpoint sources of pollution, and 2) based on the WQMP, promulgating statewide Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) or a statewide WDR waiver for the activities covered by the WQMP.

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS

Aligning Federal and State Dollars With Water Board Funding Needs, Focusing on Small Community Treatment Plants

In its role as provider of financial assistance for various water protection projects, the State Water Board will provide federal and State grant and loan dollars to the highest priority Board projects, within funding limitations. One of the highest stated priorities is small community wastewater projects. The State Water Board will continue to implement its Small Community Wastewater Strategy, including identifying various fund sources, to help ensure that small and/or disadvantaged communities have resources needed to protect water quality and public health related to wastewater.

Onsite Waste Water Treatment Regulations/Waiver

The State Water Board is developing a new approach for statewide regulations and a statewide conditional waiver of waste discharge requirements for discharges from septic systems. The regulations will deal specifically with any system that is subject to major repair, that pools or discharges to the surface, and that discharges waste that threatens to impair surface or ground water quality.

Southern Delta Salinity and San Joaquin River Flow Objectives

The State Water Board is reviewing its southern Delta salinity and San Joaquin River flow objectives, and the implementation program for those objectives, as part of its update of the 2006 Bay-Delta Plan. Any new or revised objectives will be implemented through water rights and other measures to protect southern Delta agricultural beneficial uses and San Joaquin River at Vernalis fish and wildlife beneficial uses.

Delta Planning Legislation: Minimum Stream Flow Criteria Workplan and Delta Water Rights Enforcement

As part of the 2009-10 Delta legislation (under SB 1), the State Water Board is developing a schedule to conduct instream flow studies and establish a process to develop new flow criteria for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem to protect public trust resources. In addition, to enhance water rights enforcement for the Delta, the State Water Board will delegate authority to require monitoring and reporting, approve water transfers, and take enforcement action to a newly-appointed Delta Watermaster.

Barriers to the Use of Recycled Water: Regulatory Barriers Under California Department of Public Health Authority

The Water Boards will work with the California Department of Public Health on the issues of time of use and blending of recycled water allowed in barrier wells and other direct use projects to increase locally available, sustainable water supplies.

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Frost Protection Regulation

The State Water Board is holding public meetings, and will consider adopting regulations through the formal rulemaking process, to address adverse effects on salmonids of water diversions for frost protection of crops in the Russian River watershed. Draft regulations currently propose to prohibit water diversions for purposes of frost protection unless water is diverted in accordance with a Board approved demand management plan, which includes monitoring and reporting.

PROMOTING STATEWIDE EFFICIENCY AND CONSISTENCY

Statewide Toxicity Control Provisions

The State Water Board will develop revised toxicity control provisions for the Policy for Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (State Implementation Policy, or SIP), with a consideration of the draft statistical methods for toxicity tests released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Ocean Plan Amendment: Monitoring and Desalination Provisions

The State Water Board is developing monitoring and desalination provisions for amending the California Ocean Plan, which establishes water quality standards and implementation provisions for regulating discharges to the ocean. The monitoring section of the Ocean Plan will be amended to provide question driven model monitoring requirements. The desalination provisions will regulate the intakes (impingement and entrainment) and discharges of desalination facilities, which convert salt water to fresh water that is suitable for human use. The State Water Board plans to fund a study on the effects of increased salinity and toxicity on marine species due to brine discharges.

Storm Water MS4 Phase II Permit

The State Water Board is developing a new NPDES storm water general permit for storm water discharges from small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). Small MS4s were permitted under Phase II, while medium and large MS4s were permitted under Phase I. The existing Phase II permit will be replaced upon adoption of the new Phase II permit.

Storm Water CalTrans Permit

The State Water Board is developing a new NPDES stormwater statewide permit for the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), which regulates all storm water discharges from the CalTrans' MS4s, maintenance facilities and, construction activities. The existing CalTrans permit will be replaced upon the adoption of the new CalTrans permit.

Storm Water Industrial Permit

The State Water Board is developing a new NPDES storm water general permit that regulates discharges from industrial facility activities, such as various mining operations, hazardous waste operations, landfills, and fabricated metals. The existing industrial permit will be replaced upon the adoption of the new industrial permit.

Aquatic Pesticide General Permit – Vector Control, Aerial Application (Adulticide) and Aquatic Application (Larvacide)

The State Water Board is developing a draft general NPDES permit for discharges of aquatic pesticides to control mosquito larvae and adults. A draft permit for adulticides, which is addressing the discharge of residual pesticides to water from adult mosquito spray applications, is being combined with the existing permit for larvacides, to result in one mosquito vector control permit.

Anti-Degradation Policy - Implementation Triennial Review

The State Water Board is conducting a review of the Anti-degradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) as a part of the triennial review of water quality standards. The review will consider the application of the Policy to both surface water and groundwater.

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IMPROVING PERFORMANCE THROUGH EVALUATION

Access to Data (SB 1070)

The Water Boards continue to provide facilitation, support, and funding to execute Senate Bill 1070 (Statutes of 2006), including the Water Boards' responsibility to implement a public information program on matters involving water quality and to administer the California Water Quality Monitoring Council. Under Monitoring Council oversight and direction, work groups comprised of numerous public and private agencies and organizations are developing portals for the "My Water Quality" website to bring monitoring and assessment information to the public. Portals on drinking water safety and the health of stream and rocky intertidal ecosystems are currently being developed.

Program Reviews to Identify Areas for Improvement (WDR and UST)

To improve upon Water Board systems, programs, functions, and core business processes, the State Water Board has launched reviews of several of its key programs. To identify problems and implement improvements to the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (USTCF) and Site Cleanup Programs, the Water Boards completed performance audits and will consider implementation of the recommendations made in the audits, and evaluate actions that should be considered in the immediate term. To improve performance of the Non-15 Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) Program, the Water Boards have initiated an internal evaluation to respond to the noticeable drop in compliance and enforcement, identify opportunities to reverse this decline and ensure that groundwater is protected, notably in communities that rely on it as their primary source of drinking water. The Water Boards will report on the findings of this evaluation and propose a plan to reinvent the Non-15 WDR Program.

Enforcement Pilot Projects: Implement Fraud Enforcement Project; and Pretreatment Enforcement

The State Water Board is initiating enforcement pilot projects to help promote compliance with laws to protect water quality. A fraud enforcement project will address strategies for detecting fraud, waste, and abuse related to the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (USTCF), and taking enforcement actions. A pretreatment enforcement project is an initiative to take direct enforcement action against industrial dischargers, currently regulated under pretreatment requirements established by municipalities.