
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

Friday, December 15, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

**Central Coast Water Board Office
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo**

And via Video and Teleconference

Video and teleconference recordings of the meeting are currently available on the following website: <https://cal-span.org/static/meetings-RWQCB-CC.php>

Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

Board Business

1. Roll Call
[Tammie Olson, Clerk to the Board, 805/549-3140,
Tammie.Olson@Waterboards.ca.gov]

Present: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Absent: Member Rodriguez

2. Introductions and Staff Recognition
[Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, 805/549-3140, Ryan.Lodge@waterboards.ca.gov]

Mr. Lodge made the following introductions and announcements:

- Tammie Olson, clerk to the Board; Sophie Froelich, legal counsel; Thea Tryon, assistant executive officer; section managers Harvey Packard, Angela Schroeter, and Mary Hamilton.
- State Water Resources Control Board liaison Sean Maguire.
- AGP and staff

Announcements:

Retirement:

- Thea Tryon and Angela Schroeter presented a resolution for Sheila Soderberg, Senior Engineering Geologist supervising the Department of Defense and Site Cleanup Program Unit.

Motion: Member Hunter motioned to approve the resolution for Sheila Soderberg.

Second: Member Wolff

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Abstain: None

Absent: Member Rodriguez

Motion Carried: 4 to 0

Staff Introductions and Recognitions:

- Sheila Soderberg, Senior Engineering Geologist introduced her successor and announced that Amber Sellinger was promoted to Senior Engineering Geologist supervising the Department of Defense / Site Cleanup Program Unit.
- Harvey Packard Supervising Water Resource Control Engineer announced that Leah Lemoine was promoted to Senior Water Resource Control Engineer and will supervise the new Stormwater/Recycled Water Unit
- Arwen Wyatt-Mair, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, announced sustained superior accomplishment awards for Kathy Truong, Water Resource Control Engineer, and Leah Lemoine, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, for their exemplary work on the Wastewater Consolidation Program.

Public Commenters: none

3. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes,

Motion: Member Hunter motioned to approve the minutes of October 19, 2023, with corrections.

Second: Member Harlan

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Abstain: None

Absent: Member Rodriguez

Motion Carried: 4 to 0

4. Reports by Regional Board Members

Member Hunter:

- December 8, 2023, attended board meeting briefing.
- October 22-24, 2023, attended Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC) via Zoom.

Vice Chair Wolff:

- October 23-24, 2023, attended WQCC in Sacramento.
- October 26, 2023, attended via Zoom a meeting with Whitney Brownie, SIP Certified Certification Coordinator, and Beth Vukmanic, Executive Director of the Vineyard Team, regarding the agriculture Order 4.0 and how to extract more information submitted as part of the Sustainability and Practice Certification Program.
- October 27, 2023, met with the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District, with the staff and the board of the RCD. We had discussions about the use of the 401-certification process associated with the Regional Water Board and how to address the different requirements from other agencies such as Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, and Army Corps.
- November 24, 2024, hosted the Central Coast Wetland group for training on rapid assessment. Some Central Coast Water Board staff also participated in the training.
- November 29, 2023, hosted the statewide Assistant Executive Officers and provided a demonstration tour on climate adaptations associated with climate change.

Member Harlan:

- December 8, 2023, attended board meeting briefing.
- October 23-24, 2023, attended WQCC in Sacramento.

Chair Gray:

- Attended weekly meetings with the Executive Officer.
- Attended monthly phone calls with State Water Resources Control Board member, Central Coast Liaison Sean Maguire, and the Executive Officer.
- Attended monthly State Board Chairs meetings.
- October 23-24, 2023, attended WQCC in Sacramento.
- November 5 – 7, 2023, attended the 2023 WateReuse California Annual Conference in Indian Wells. Pure Water gave a presentation on Pure Water Soquel.
- November 7, 2023, virtually attended the Voluntary Settlement Agreement and Community Advisory Group meeting regarding the San Luis Obispo County Airport PFAS issues.
- November 21, 2023, had a brief telephone call with Ms. Sarah Lopez of Preservation Inc.

Minutes

- November 21, 2023, attended a meeting with State Board Member Laurel Firestone and Executive Officer Ryan Lodge.
- On November 22, 2023, participated in a call with Ms. Chelsea Tu of Monterey Waterkeeper and with Sarah Lopez of Preservation Inc.
- November 29-30, 2023, attended and spoke at the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) and California Water Environment Association (CWEA) innovative tech conference.
- December 12, 2023, attended board meeting briefing.
- December 12, 2023, had a brief call with Ms. Sarah Lopez of Preservation Inc.
- December 12, 2023, virtually attended the Voluntary Settlement Agreement and Community Advisory Group meeting regarding the San Luis Obispo County Airport PFAS issues.

Public Commenters: none

Public Forum

5. Public forum

Public Commenters: none

Discussion/Informational Items

6. Proposed Designation of Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary – Presentation by Northern Chumash Tribal Council
[Angela Schroeter, Supervising Engineering Geologist, 805/542-4644, Angela.Schroeter@waterboards.ca.gov]

Executive Officer Ryan Lodge introduced guest speakers representing the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Tribal Advisor Margaret Webb and Gianna Pachen. Tribal Advisor Webb and Gianna Pachen delivered a presentation on the Proposed Designation of Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS). Paul Michel of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Sanctuaries West Coast Regional Office also participated in the meeting to address questions related to the sanctuary designation process.

Invited Guest Speakers:

Tribal Advisor Margaret Webb (PJ), Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Gianna Pachen, Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Paul Michel, NOAA Sanctuaries West Coast Regional Office

Public Commenter:

Sarah Lopez, Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc., and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

7. Annual Agricultural Order Implementation Update

[Elaine Sahl, 805/542-4645, Elaine.Sahl@waterboards.ca.gov,
Paula Richter, 805/549-3865, Paula.Richter@waterboards.ca.gov,
Claire Bjork, 805/549-3702, Claire.Bjork@waterboards.ca.gov,
Sarah Treadwell, 805/549-3695, Sarah.Treadwell@waterboards.ca.gov,
Caroline Webster, 805/549-3691, Caroline.Webster@waterboards.ca.gov]

Central Coast Water Board Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) staff provided an informational update to the Board regarding implementation of General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, Order No. R3-2021-00401 (Ag Order) that have occurred since the last annual update to the Board in October 2022. The update included Central Coast Water Board staff presentations as well as presentations from the approved third-party program, Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. (Preservation, Inc.). Elaine Sahl, a Senior Environmental Scientist and program manager for the ILP, introduced the item and each of the following speakers and presentations:

- Paula Richter, a Senior Environmental Scientist, summarized coordination efforts from the past year with the approved third-party program, Preservation, Inc. The presentation included third-party workplan development, Ag Order requirements implementation, and outreach efforts.
- Sarah Lopez, the Executive Director of Preservation, Inc., and Pavan Dhaliwal with Luhdorff & Scalmanini Consulting Engineers gave a presentation regarding third party member assistance and efforts to help their members comply with Ag Order 4.0. The presentation covered several topics including the following: compliance assistance and general member support and outreach; surface water quality monitoring (implementation and data analysis), and planning for follow-up monitoring in High Priority areas; groundwater quality (well sampling) monitoring and reporting and planning for groundwater quality trend monitoring; and outreach and support for Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) and Irrigation and Nutrient Management Plan (INMP) record keeping and reporting. Board Members engaged in discussion regarding compliance assistance and tools and services available for underrepresented growers and how those tools have streamlined some reporting processes and increased the success of follow-up outreach. Board Members also engaged with the third-party to discuss challenges with limited database programmer time available for GeoTracker, necessary to make updates to GeoTracker forms that would make required reporting more user friendly and accurate. Finally, the Board Members also discussed the use of biochar to remove pesticides from surface waters, as well as groundwater well monitoring logistics and water quality data.
- Claire Bjork, a staff Environmental Scientist, provided a summary of Ag Order requirements implemented in 2023 and upcoming for 2024.
- Sarah Treadwell, a staff Engineering Geologist, provided a summary of ILP outreach and coordination this past year including additional YouTube video tutorials, workshops, one-on-one sessions with growers and stakeholders,

reminders of upcoming and past due requirements, TNA summary reports, the tools available on the ILP website, and outreach to County Health Department Officers in coordination with Division of Financial Assistance and Division of Drinking Water staff. Board Members engaged in discussion regarding efficiencies we have achieved in our outreach efforts and made recommendations for staff to work with County Ag Commissioners and to make public meetings more inclusive by looking for resources and opportunities to provide food, drink, and activities for children.

- Caroline Webster, a staff Environmental Scientist, provided an overview of the ILP Dashboard pages available on the ILP websites. The Dashboard pages provide summary data on ILP enrollment, TNA, potential nitrogen discharge to groundwater, and surface water quality data. Board members expressed appreciation for the creative and informative tools that increase data transparency and utility.
- Paula Richter, a Senior Environmental Scientist, summarized compliance data and the enforcement program process and actions over the past year. Board Members made recommendations to coordinate with and utilize data from the County Ag Commissioners and Tax Assessors to help identify commercial irrigated agricultural lands that may need to enroll in the Ag Order.
- Elaine Sahl, a Senior Environmental Scientist and the program manager for the ILP, provided closing remarks.

Public Comments:

- Chelsea Tu, Executive Director of the Monterey Waterkeeper, thanked the Board, ILP staff, and Preservation, Inc. staff for their work on Ag Order implementation and this informational update to the Board. Chelsea Tu also thanked Preservation, Inc. for including the Monterey Waterkeeper in the Third-party Alternative Compliance Pathway Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and stated that Monterey Waterkeeper hoped to be invited back to the SAC if and when the committee is reconvened.
- Kija Rivers, a Policy Advocate for the Community Water Center (CWC), submitted a comment card but could not stay to deliver her comments. Chelsea Tu of the Monterey Waterkeeper delivered the following comments on behalf of Kija Rivers and CWC. Many underrepresented communities are impacted by drinking water sources that are contaminated from agricultural activities. CWC is disappointed by the State Water Board remands for the Ag Order, but CWC does look forward to working with the Central Coast Water Board to develop the State Water Board directed program to provide short-term and long-term alternative water supplies for residents relying on groundwater in areas where the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for nitrate is exceeded as a result of agricultural operations. CWC requests that the Central Coast Water Board does not follow the Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) process wherein outreach to communities and interested parties like CWC was lacking and ineffective and recommended that the Board establish external (non-agricultural party) management of the Central Coast's drinking water program.

10. Report by State Water Resources Control Board Liaison

[Sean Maguire, 916/341-5877, Sean.Maguire@waterboards.ca.gov]

State Water Board Member Sean Maguire provided updates via Zoom on Drinking Water Needs Assessment, Wastewater Needs Assessment, and State Water Board vote to consider direct potable reuse regulations.

Mr. Maguire explained that the Drinking Water Needs Assessment is an estimate of systems that are currently failing or struggling to comply with water quality standards, and an estimate of the costs necessary to help bring those systems up to standards.

State Water Board staff are evaluating affordability indicators and updating the cost assessment model. The Drinking Water Needs Assessment will now include systems with supply capacity issues. Mr. Maguire announced two webinars on December 20, 2023, the first "Overview Updates" and the second "Cost Assessment Model".

Later, Mr. Maguire mentioned a celebration at Coachella Valley for the 100th water system consolidation in the state of California. Mr. Maguire discussed opportunities to help address affordability challenges associated with operations and maintenance issues and possible funding where it makes sense to help accelerates consolidation efforts.

Wastewater Needs Assessment is kicking off a four-year process to evaluate risk of failure for wastewater and septic systems, evaluate costs, and look at affordability challenges for the community to bring the system up to standards. The first phase is determining criteria to determine if a system is failing, looking at a solution set list, and different cost criteria.

The State Water Board will be considering Direct Potable Reuse Regulations at the December 19, 2023 Board meeting. Mr. Maguire indicated that it is essential to look at water resiliency challenges associated with climate change, and the regulations are consistent with the governor's water supply strategy.

This item was moved to Thursday.

Public Commenters: none

The meeting was adjourned at: 5:12 pm

Friday, December 15, 2023, 9:03 a.m.

Board Business

8. Roll Call

[Tammie Olson, Clerk to the Board, 805/549-3140,
Tammie.Olson@Waterboards.ca.gov]

Present: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Absent: Member Rodriguez

9. Introductions

[Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, 805/549-3140, Ryan.Lodge@waterboards.ca.gov]
introductions and announcements:

Mr. Lodge made the following introductions:

- Tammie Olson, clerk to the Board; Sophie Froelich, legal counsel; Thea Tryon, assistant executive officer; section managers Harvey Packard, Angela Schroeter, and Mary Hamilton.
- AGP and staff

Permits

11. Consideration of Waste Discharge and Water Reclamation Requirements for the Pure Water Soquel Groundwater Replenishment Reuse Project, Soquel Creek Water District, Proposed Order R3-2023-0033, Santa Cruz County

[James Bishop, Engineering Geologist, 805/542-4628,
james.bishop@waterboards.ca.gov
Rachel Hohn, Engineering Geologist, 805/542-4789,
rachel.hohn@waterboards.ca.gov]

James Bishop, Engineering Geologist with the Waste Discharge Requirements Program, provided the Central Coast Water Board an overview of the proposed permit. Staff highlighted that the permit was written to be protective of human health and the environment. Chair Gray asked about salt and nutrient management planning associated with recycled water projects. Vice Chair Wolf asked questions about redundancy and contingency planning for the injection wells. Member Hunter asked questions regarding the constituents of emerging concern monitoring and where seawater intrusion is occurring. Member Harlan provided comments related to indirect potable reuse projects and water supply. Becky Steinbruner provided public comments related to water supply alternatives and requested that approval of the permit adoption be delayed. The questions were answered by James Bishop; Harvey Packard, Supervising Water Resource Control Engineer; Sophie Froelich, Staff Attorney; Melanie Mow Schumacher, Soquel Creek Water District; and Ron Duncan, Soquel Creek Water District.

Public Commenters:

Minutes

Becky Steinbruner

Ron Duncan, General manager Soquel Creek Water District

Melanie Mow Schumaker, Soquel Creek Water District

Motion: Member Hunter moved to adopt with staff's recommended modifications as proposed order number R3-2023-0033.

Second: Member Harlan

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Abstain: None

Absent: Member Rodriguez

Motion Carried: 4 to 0

12. Consideration of Waste Discharge Requirements for the City of Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility, Proposed Order R3-2023-0001, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit CA0048194, Santa Cruz County [Peter von Langen, Engineering Geologist, 805/549-3688, peter.vonlangen@waterboards.ca.gov]

Peter von Langen, Engineering Geologist with the NPDES Unit provided the Board an overview of the proposed Order No. R3-2023-0001, a renewal of an NPDES permit for the City of Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility (Facility). Staff highlighted the renewal will allow the ocean discharge of reverse osmosis concentrate from the Pure Water Soquel project combined with secondary treated effluent from the Facility. Vice Chair Wolf asked questions about the Climate Response Plan and upgrades to the Facility. Member Hunter asked questions regarding environmental justice and the CCLEAN monitoring program. Becky Steinbruner spoke about the offshore leak and other matters related to Pure Water Soquel and the wastewater facility. The questions were answered by Peter von Langen; Angela Schroeter, Supervising Engineering Geologist; Anne Hogan, City of Santa Cruz; and Akin Babatola, City of Santa Cruz.

Public Commenters: Becky Steinbruner

Motion: Vice Chair Wolf moved to motion to adopt proposed order number R3- 2023-0001, with typo corrections noted in the presentation.

Second: Member Harlan

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hunter, and Member Harlan

Abstain: None

Absent: Member Rodriguez

Motion Carried: 4 to 0

Administrative Items

13. Executive Officer's Report

[Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, 805/549-3140, Ryan.Lodge@waterboards.ca.gov]

Ryan Lodge introduced the Executive Officer's Report highlighting attachment 1 that included an update on the implementation of the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport Voluntary Cleanup and Abatement Agreement to Address PFAS Contamination. Member Hunter asked about the plume size, monitoring, and mitigation. Vice Chair Wolff asked about the human health risk assessment and if PFAS is still used at the airport. Chair Gray asked if County Health submitted a letter regarding the human health survey. Member Harlan asked if we sent a Board meeting notice to the neighbors impacted by the PFAS. The questions were answered by Mr. Lodge, and Greg Bishop, Senior Engineering Geologist.

Public Commenters: none

Chair Gray adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

Jane Gray, Chair