

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Richard Looker)
MEETING DATE: September 12, 2018

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: **2018 Triennial Review of the San Francisco Bay Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) –**
Adoption of Resolution and List of Prioritized Basin Planning Projects

CHRONOLOGY: December 2015 – Most recent Triennial Review Resolution adopted

DISCUSSION: This item is for the Board to consider adoption of a Resolution and Prioritized List of Basin Planning projects that may result in amendments to the Basin Plan. This package includes the Tentative Resolution and list of prioritized basin plan projects (Appendix A), the supporting Triennial Review Staff Report (Appendix B), written comment letters received (Appendix C), and our responses to those comments (Appendix D).

The Basin Plan is the master policy document for the Water Board, establishing water quality standards, which consist of beneficial uses for all waters in the Region, the water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses, and the implementation plans, policies, and programs designed to meet the standards. The Triennial Review is conducted to meet State Water Code (section 13240) and federal Clean Water Act section 303(c)(1) requirements. The Triennial Review provides the opportunity to review the water quality standards and identify portions of the Basin Plan that need to be updated or modified to improve the efficiency and environmental protection associated with permitting and other programs. Since we only have two funded staff positions for Basin Plan activities, the Triennial Review also serves as a process to set priorities for using staff resources.

We began the Triennial Review process in early 2018, reviewing the status of the list of Basin Plan issues identified during the previous Triennial Review completed in 2015, and identifying new issues for consideration. In April 2018, we produced a “Brief Issue Descriptions” paper, describing a wide range of candidate projects, held a stakeholder workshop in May, and asked stakeholders for input. We also included our priorities for Basin Plan amendments to establish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for pollutants causing impairment of waters in the Region. In addition to comments received during the stakeholder workshop, we received thirteen comment letters. Stakeholders provided input towards developing and refining a list of 26 candidate Basin Planning projects and the associated ranking criteria scores for prioritizing the projects. The Triennial Review Staff Report includes a

summary of the public participation process, description of the ranking criteria, and the list, descriptions, and rankings of the projects.

The high priority Basin Plan projects, excluding TMDL projects, include the following:

- Climate Change and Wetland Policy Update
- Review and Update Policy 94-086 -Using Wastewater to Create, Restore, and Enhance Wetlands
- Review and Refine Dissolved Oxygen Objectives for San Francisco Bay
- Review and Implement Biological Assessment Tools
- Develop Numeric Nutrient Endpoints (NNEs) in Freshwater Streams and Estuaries
- Incorporate Revised Recreational Contact Bacteria Objectives
- Designate Tribal and Subsistence Fishing Beneficial Uses

The draft Staff Report and list of proposed priority projects were circulated to interested parties on July 20, 2018. We received 23 comment letters during the public comment period (July 20 – August 20, 2018). The comment letters included submissions from the Alameda County Water District, a coalition of environmental and community advocacy groups, the Marin Audubon Society, and 20 private citizens writing in support of the candidate project to designate tribal and subsistence fishing beneficial uses.

Staff has responded to all issues raised by the public (see Appendix D). In response to a request from a coalition of environmental and community advocacy groups, we increased the score of the project to designate tribal and subsistence uses. This project is now included in the high priority list of projects, but we lack the full staff resources required to complete this project in the next three years. We appreciate all the interest and input from stakeholders.

**RECOMMEN-
DATION:**

Adopt the Tentative Resolution and List of Prioritized Basin Planning Projects

APPENDICES:

- A. Tentative Resolution and List of Prioritized Basin Planning Projects
- B. Triennial Review Staff Report
- C. Comment Letters
- D. Responses to Comments