

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER
MARCH 8, 2023**

ITEM 4

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED MINOR CHANGES TO THE ADMINISTRATOR POLICY HANDBOOK TO AWARD FUNDS TO AN ADMINISTRATOR ON BEHALF OF A DESIGNATED WATER SYSTEM UNDER THE SAFE AND AFFORDABLE FUND FOR EQUITY AND RESILIENCE (SAFER) PROGRAM.

DISCUSSION

The proposed update to the Administrator Policy Handbook will give the State Board the flexibility to award construction, planning, and/or operation and maintenance funds to an appointed Administrator on behalf of a designated water system in the case that the designated water system has governance, financial, or other issues that prevent them from directly receiving State Water Board funding in its accounts.

California Health and Safety Code Section 116686 (a), (1) allows the State Water Board to “contract with, or provide a grant to, an administrator to provide administrative, technical, operational, legal, or managerial services, or any combination of those services, to a designated water system to assist the designated water system with the provision of an adequate supply of affordable, safe drinking water, which services may include steps necessary to enable consolidation.”

The proposed changes would allow the State Water Board to move forward with administrator appointments for designated water systems that are currently unable to be awarded funding due to a lack of tax identification information required for encumbrance of funding, or other technical, managerial, or financial issues that the administrator is designed to address. Any funding awarded to the administrator would be required to be spent in accordance with the scope of work specified for the water system, and appropriate funding conditions will be incorporated into the funding agreement.

POLICY ISSUE

The proposed minor changes to the Administrator Policy Handbook would clarify that it is the State Water Board’s intent to directly award funds to an administrator when the water system would not be able to receive funding directly, for example, in the case the water system is abandoned or no tax identification information is available. Should the State Water Board adopt the changes to the Administrator Policy Handbook?

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The State Water Board should adopt the changes to the Administrator Policy Handbook allowing authorizing staff to provide grants to administrators on behalf of designated water systems, as needed.