

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 12 – 13, 2024**

Prepared on November 14, 2024

**ITEM NUMBER:** 12

**SUBJECT:** Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program -  
Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program  
Update

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**KEY INFORMATION:**

Location: Region-wide

**ACTION:** Information/Discussion

**SUMMARY**

This staff report provides an update of the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program - Groundwater Assessment and Protection (CCAMP-GAP) Program. The Central Coast region is a groundwater dependent region with approximately ninety percent of the population relying on groundwater for drinking water and other uses. Some areas of the region are entirely dependent on groundwater. Regional groundwater monitoring data are essential to assess groundwater quality and associated beneficial uses, especially sources of drinking water. Groundwater quality data are important to inform actions of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board), local environmental and public health agencies, water management organizations, and communities to protect public health, groundwater quality, and its beneficial uses and to evaluate the effectiveness of those actions. In addition, groundwater quality data are important to inform the public about the safety of their drinking water

In May 2012, the Central Coast Water Board adopted [Resolution No. R3-2012-0024](#)<sup>1</sup> which established CCAMP-GAP as the groundwater monitoring component of the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/gap/docs/res\\_r3-2012-0024\\_final.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/gap/docs/res_r3-2012-0024_final.pdf)

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program<sup>2</sup> (CCAMP). The purpose of CCAMP-GAP is to develop and implement regional groundwater monitoring programs and to support the implementation of groundwater related projects with the intent of evaluating, restoring, and protecting groundwater and its beneficial uses. In addition, CCAMP-GAP prioritizes projects that advance environmental justice and benefit underrepresented communities.

CCAMP-GAP projects are managed by the [Bay Foundation of Morro Bay](#)<sup>3</sup> (Bay Foundation) and funded primarily by a private endowment. The Central Coast Water Board coordinates with the Bay Foundation to help determine funding priorities and to provide project related technical support. CCAMP-GAP supports programs and projects that align with the mission and priorities identified by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), State Water Board's [Policy on Supplemental Environmental Projects \(SEP Policy\)](#)<sup>4</sup>, and the [Central Coast Water Board's Strategic Plan](#)<sup>5</sup>.

This staff report describes CCAMP-GAP activities and milestones since April 2022, as well as program priorities for FY 24-25, including the Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program, Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program, Assistance to Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Growers Project, and CCAMP-GAP Funding.

This summary is also available in Spanish. Interested persons may request that the entire staff report be translated into Spanish, by contacting the staff named at the beginning of this staff report, dependent upon available resources.

## DISCUSSION

### Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program

In April 2022, the Central Coast Water Board adopted [Resolution R3-2022-0015](#)<sup>6</sup> which allocated \$1.2 million to the [Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment](#)<sup>7</sup> (Rose Foundation) to develop and implement the Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program (Grants Program). The goal of the Grants Program is to support projects in the Central Coast Water Board's jurisdiction, with an emphasis on projects that advance environmental justice and provide water quality benefits to underrepresented communities. Aligned with the priorities of CCAMP-GAP, the Central Coast Water Board recommended specific grant [project ranking and selection criteria](#).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> CCAMP is the regional surface water monitoring program for the central coast, providing long-term trend data for surface water quality in all the major central coast watersheds.

<sup>3</sup> <https://bayfoundationmb.org/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/seps/20180503\\_sep\\_policy\\_and.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/seps/20180503_sep_policy_and.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2024/oct/item20\\_att1.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2024/oct/item20_att1.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/2022/r3-2022-0015.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2022/r3-2022-0015.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://rosefdn.org/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2022/apr/item12\\_att2.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2022/apr/item12_att2.pdf)

In December 2023, the Bay Foundation and the Rose Foundation executed a contract to formally implement the Grants Program. On May 6, 2024, the Rose Foundation announced the Grants Program solicitation with a grant application due date of June 28, 2024. After several months of public solicitation and outreach to potential applicants to discuss the grant opportunity, the Rose Foundation received twenty-five applications requesting a total of \$2.46 million in funding. Of the twenty-five applications, fifteen “small track” applications requested funding of \$50K or less and ten “large track” applications requested funding between \$140K - \$200K. The applications included a diverse and wide range of projects and many benefited underrepresented communities in the Central Coast region. Project types included groundwater recharge, upgrades to aging infrastructure, outreach, education, technical assistance, community engagement, monitoring, and assessment. Applicants included Tribes, municipalities, water and community service districts, non-profit organizations, foundations, and community groups.

As described in the [June 2024 Executive Officer’s Report](#)<sup>9</sup>, the Rose Foundation established a Funding Advisory Board (FAB) comprised of six individuals who have expertise in both water quality and the Central Coast region. The FAB reviewed and evaluated grant applications based upon the Central Coast Water Board’s recommended project ranking and selection criteria. The FAB ranked grant projects using a combination of numeric scoring and multiple discussions on the merits of each proposal. At the end of an extensive process, the FAB selected thirteen grant projects for funding awards totaling over \$1 million. These thirteen projects include 4 large track projects totaling \$625,000 and 9 small track projects totaling \$417,000. Grantees include governmental bodies such as community service districts, large non-profits, and small community groups, with projects focused on a wide range of water issues in the region such as sea water intrusion, nitrate contamination, and groundwater recharge. The grant projects will benefit several counties across the Central Coast region, with many taking place in disadvantaged communities in Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Luis Obispo counties. The selected grant projects are listed in Table 1 and described in the Rose Foundation’s Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program Docket, included in Attachment 1.

As a next step, the Rose Foundation will execute grant contracts in January 2025 and grantees will begin project implementation. Grant project implementation timelines range from four months to two years. The Rose Foundation will also begin accepting applications from small track grantees for capacity building mini grants and has reserved \$14,000 for this purpose. The mini grants will support small track grantees to build capacity through strategic planning, staff or volunteer management, equipment, professional development, or training. Specific grant projects will be presented at the February 2025 Central Coast Water Board Meeting, as part of the Environmental Justice Annual Update.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2024/jun/item11\\_stfrpt.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2024/jun/item11_stfrpt.pdf)

**Table 1. Rose Foundation Grant Award Recipient List  
Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Grant Project Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.	Central Coast Water Quality and Drought Resilience	\$175,000
City of Buellton	Buellton - Implementation of New Groundwater Monitoring Well	\$50,000
Cabrillo Estates Property Owners Association	Cabrillo Estates Sewer Connection to Help Reduce Nitrate in the Los Osos Basin	\$40,000
Community Water Center	Delivering on the Human Right to Water for Central Coast Environmental Justice Communities	\$100,000
Los Osos Basin Management Committee	Los Osos Basin Management Committee Lower Aquifer Water Quality Monitoring Well	\$150,000
Monterey Waterkeeper	Healthy Central Coast Watersheds	\$35,000
Northern Chumash Tribal Council	Northern Chumash Tribal Council Monitoring Program	\$200,000
Oceano Community Services District	Oceano Community Services District New Well House	\$45,000
Safe Ag Safe Schools	Reducing the Water Quality Threat from Pesticides in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties	\$50,000
San Lucas County Water District	San Lucas Water District- Small System Upgrades	\$50,000
San Miguel Community Service District	San Miguel Community Service District Drought Related Water Supply Resiliency Project - Monitoring Improvements	\$47,000
San Luis Obispo Beaver Brigade	San Luis Obispo Beaver Brigade Paso Robles Drinkable Rivers	\$50,000
Sustainable Systems Research Foundation	Applying Compost to Reduce Nitrate Pollution on Small Farms Operated by Latine Farmers	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,042,000</b>

## Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program

In October 2018, CCAMP-GAP coordinated with the Bay Foundation to establish the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program (Well Testing Program). The Well Testing Program provides free well testing to domestic well users and small water systems in the Central Coast region. The goal of the program is to assess groundwater quality and provide information to well users to ensure safe drinking water. The Well Testing Program is both voluntary and free to anyone in the region who receives their drinking water from a private domestic well or small water system with fourteen or fewer residential connections. While all qualified participants are welcome to participate, resources are prioritized to conduct outreach and testing to support underrepresented communities consistent with the CCAMP-GAP priorities.

Data generated by the Well Testing Program fills a critical data gap and provides information needed to identify areas where groundwater sources of drinking water do not meet safe drinking water standards, inform drinking water well users of water quality, measure groundwater basin health, and prioritize actions to protect and improve groundwater quality. To date, the program has tested more than 650 drinking water wells and has determined that approximately 45% of the wells tested do not meet safe drinking water standards.

The Bay Foundation utilizes contracts with qualified personnel to implement the Well Testing Program. Currently, the Bay Foundation contracts with Tetra Tech to implement the program, and Tetra Tech coordinates with Eurofins Laboratory to conduct the laboratory analyses.

### Geographic Implementation

The Well Testing Program samples domestic drinking water wells and small water systems throughout the Central Coast region. To maximize efficiency, the program focuses outreach and well testing in specific counties, in coordination with local agencies and community partners. To date, 72% (476 of 657) of the drinking water wells tested are in Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties. Most recently, outreach in Santa Cruz County began in April 2024 and outreach in Santa Barbara County began in September 2024. As the Well Testing Program continues throughout the region, the dataset will continue to grow. Additionally, staff is evaluating the possibility to conduct repeat well testing as part of regional trend-monitoring to identify long-term water quality patterns.

### Outreach and Community Engagement

Well Testing Program outreach and implementation is successful due to an effective outreach strategy and collaboration among a broad network of project partners. The objectives of the outreach strategy are to 1) Identify state and local agencies that have a role in environmental health and public health activities who can help identify local water quality issues and priority areas for well testing, 2) Identify program partners, such as

community leaders, drinking water and environmental justice organizations, health clinics, libraries, schools, churches, and others to assist with community engagement and outreach efforts, 3) Conduct a community specific, multilingual, multi-pronged outreach approach to promote awareness and engage potential program participants through community events, public workshops, radio, television, social media, Promotoras/Promotores<sup>10</sup>, door-to-door canvassing, and direct-mailers, and 4) Share program data and information by distributing easy-to-read multilingual informational materials using websites, online databases, community information repositories, social media, email, and direct mail to participants.

Households interested in free domestic well testing can sign up by filling out an online application form on the [Well Testing Program website](#)<sup>11</sup> or by calling the following phone number: 1 (844) 613-5152. After interested community members sign-up, program contractors conduct intake screening of participants and schedule well testing appointments.

### Program Partners

The State Water Board Office of Public Participation (OPP) and the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) help support the Well Testing Program by providing input to the outreach strategy, developing content and designing bilingual outreach materials, and helping to coordinate media activities. In addition, Central Coast Water Board staff also share information about program implementation with the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) to maximize coordination with the local district offices and the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program (SAFER) that can provide additional resources to support drinking water solutions.

*Community Water Center* - Through their robust and extensive outreach, education, community engagement activities in the Central Coast region, the [Community Water Center](#)<sup>12</sup> (CWC) has brought over two-hundred participants to the Well Testing Program since October 2018. Additionally, CWC supports the participants they bring to the Well Testing Program by attending well testing appointments, reviewing well test results with participants, answering questions about drinking water quality, and connecting participants to additional resources to obtain replacement water (e.g., bottled water programs and well treatment) and pursue long-term drinking water solutions.

*County of Santa Cruz County* – The [County of Santa Cruz Environmental Health Department](#)<sup>13</sup> is actively engaged in the Well Testing Program outreach and implementation. They issued press releases in [English](#)<sup>14</sup> and [Spanish](#)<sup>15</sup>, paid postage to

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<sup>10</sup> Promotoras / Promotores are described as residents and identified leaders in their community who work for community-based health promotion projects or as part of a research group.

<sup>11</sup> <https://sites.google.com/view/ccgroundwater>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.communitywatercenter.org/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.scceh.org/NewHome/Programs/WaterResources/DroughtResponse/HouseholdWellAssistance.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> [Press Release-Free Water Quality Testing in Santa Cruz County 05-02-2024.pdf](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Press Release-Pruebas Gratuitas de Calidad del Agua en el Condado de Santa Cruz 05-02-2024.pdf](#)

deliver approximately 4,500 direct mailers to rural carrying routes, distributed posters and flyers in public areas with high foot traffic (e.g., strip malls, health clinics, gas stations, grocery stores, etc.), advertised on social media, conducted door to door outreach in high priority areas, participated in community events, and attended meetings with community leaders. In addition, the County of Santa Cruz Environmental Health Department funded the analyses of additional well testing parameters<sup>16</sup> of local water quality interest. County staff also attended well testing appointments and connected participants with the County's local bottled water program. As a result of their public engagement and outreach activities, the Well Testing Program quickly surpassed initial targets for enrollment within Santa Cruz County.

*Santa Barbara County* – The [Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Department](#)<sup>17</sup> is also actively engaged in the Well Testing Program outreach and implementation. Santa Barbara County generated significant interest in the Well Testing Program through issuing a press release ([English](#)<sup>18</sup> / [Spanish](#)<sup>19</sup>) that was picked up by numerous local news outlets, distributing notifications to community leaders and school districts, and posting announcements to multiple social media platforms, including an audio message in Mixteco which is available on Santa Barbara County's social media page and can be accessed by scanning the QR code below. Additionally, Santa Barbara County coordinated with CCAMP-GAP to distribute more than 6,000 direct mailers to rural carrying routes throughout the area.



### Well Testing Program Parameters and Results

Well testing is conducted by program contractors using a Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP) and laboratory analyses are conducted by an [Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program](#)<sup>20</sup> (ELAP) accredited laboratory. Drinking water well samples are

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<sup>16</sup> Santa Cruz County provides funding for the analysis of additional parameters, including bacteria (Total Coliforms and E. coli), iron, manganese, hardness, and unionized hydrogen sulfide to determine potential suitability for the installation of point of use (POU) drinking water treatment systems for income qualified households.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.countyofsb.org/2277/Water-Wells-Drinking-Water>

<sup>18</sup> <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/2ce8ca7c-aa3c-434c-9d2b-5cef69a2ef15>

<sup>19</sup> <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/ee243dd4-aec5-4f68-b263-6d3a547efacf>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/labs/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/)

analyzed for the eighteen parameters listed below that include common contaminants in drinking water wells. Five of the parameters have an established [primary Maximum Containment Level](#) (MCL<sup>21</sup>) for drinking water to address health concerns (identified by an asterisk\*). The remaining parameters included to inform general groundwater quality conditions do not have primary MCLs, but several have secondary MCLs that are based on aesthetic concerns such as taste, odor, and color.

- 1,2,3-Trichloropropane (1,2,3-TCP)\*
- Arsenic\*
- Nitrate as N\*
- Perchlorate\*
- Chromium, Hexavalent\*
- pH
- Specific Conductance
- Total Dissolved Solids
- Alkalinity
- Potassium
- Magnesium
- Calcium
- Sodium
- Chloride
- Sulfate
- Carbonate as CO<sub>3</sub>
- Hydroxide
- Bicarbonate as HCO<sub>3</sub>

Between October 2018 and July 2024, the Well Testing Program sampled 657 drinking water wells. Central Coast Water Board staff conducted an analysis of the data results and determined that 296 (45%) of the drinking water wells tested show an exceedance of at least one primary MCL. The total number of wells sampled and primary MCL exceedances by county is shown in Table 2. This pattern is consistent with previous analyses of the Well Testing Program dataset that indicate a similar percentage of primary MCL exceedances.

Table 3 summarizes the most common parameters with primary MCL exceedances. Of the drinking water wells tested by the Well Testing Program, over 27% exceeded the primary MCL for nitrate (175 of 657 wells). After nitrate, hexavalent chromium and arsenic continue to be the second and third most common contaminants, with primary MCL exceedances in 13% (85 of 657) and 8% (53 of 657) of wells tested, respectively.

While the Well Testing Program does not investigate sources of pollution, the program references the California Consumer Confidence Reference Manual for Water Suppliers<sup>22</sup> to describe common sources of pollution. Common sources of nitrate in drinking water include runoff and leaching from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewage; erosion of natural deposits. Common sources of arsenic in drinking water include erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; glass and electronics production wastes. Common sources of chromium in drinking water include discharge from steel and pulp mills and chrome plating; erosion of natural deposits.

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<sup>21</sup>[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/mclreview/mcls\\_dlrs\\_phgs.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/mclreview/mcls_dlrs_phgs.pdf)

<sup>22</sup>[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/CCR.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/CCR.html)

### Providing Data to Participants and the Public

Well Testing Program results are provided to participants electronically<sup>23</sup> along with resources related to replacement water (e.g., bottled water programs and well treatment) and proper well maintenance. Information is provided in English and Spanish. Central Coast Water Board staff also follow-up with well users who have primary MCL exceedances to confirm receipt of the information and address any questions. In addition, all Well Testing Program data is uploaded by the laboratory directly to [GeoTracker](https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/)<sup>24</sup> and available to view and download via the [GAMA GIS](https://gamagroundwater.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/gamamap/public/Default.asp)<sup>25</sup> online data portal. Program data is also shared with DDW and local agencies to inform drinking water programs. Consistent with standard practices to ensure privacy of individuals participating in voluntary programs, drinking water wells are identified by a unique identification number and participant information is kept confidential (i.e., names, addresses, and contact information are not shared).

**Table 2. Total number of wells sampled and total number of wells with at least one Primary MCL exceedance by county (October 2018 – July 2024)**

County	No. of Wells Sampled	No. Wells with at Least One Primary MCL Exceedance
Monterey	253	195
San Benito	81	24
San Luis Obispo	223	53
Santa Barbara	2	0
Santa Clara	2	1
Santa Cruz	96	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>296 (45%)</b>

**Table 3. Total number of wells sampled with Primary MCL Exceedances by county (October 2018 – July 2024)**

	<b>Nitrate</b> (MCL = 10 mg/L as N)	<b>Hexavalent Chromium</b> (MCL = 10 ug/L)	<b>Arsenic</b> (MCL = 10 ug/L)	<b>123-TCP</b> (MCL = 0.005 ug/L)	<b>Perchlorate</b> (MCL = 6 ug/L)
<b>County</b>					
Monterey	141	61	10	39	5
San Luis Obispo	20	3	30	1	0
Santa Cruz	3	16	4	1	0
San Benito	10	5	9	2	1
Santa Clara	1	0	0	0	0
Santa Barbara	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>6</b>

<sup>23</sup> Hard copy results are mailed to participants who don't have email.

<sup>24</sup> <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://gamagroundwater.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/gamamap/public/Default.asp>

## Ensuring Safe Drinking Water – Drinking Water Replacement Programs

With a large percentage of drinking water wells tested exceeding at least one drinking water standard, an important component of the Well Testing Program is to connect program participants with resources to obtain replacement drinking water (e.g., bottled water programs or well treatment). Currently, there are two drinking water replacement programs available in the Central Coast region - the Central Coast Regional Bottled Water Program and the Santa Cruz County Household Well Assistance Program. These programs are funded by the SAFER Program and provide an immediate source of replacement drinking water to income qualified households with wells that do not meet safe drinking water standards. Access to replacement water fills a critical need for disadvantaged communities in the Central Coast region. In addition, these replacement water programs also assist participants to pursue long-term drinking water solutions.

### *Central Coast Regional Bottled Water Program*

The Community Water Center receives funding from the SAFER Program to implement the [Central Coast Regional Bottled Water Program](#)<sup>26</sup> (Regional Bottled Water Program), which provides drinking water through a bottled water delivery service available to income qualified households. CWC identifies potential participants through the Well Testing Program, as well as through active community outreach and engagement. The Regional Bottled Water Program started in October 2019 and has delivered approximately 518,500 gallons of replacement drinking water to 369 households in the Central Coast region, primarily in Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties, as of September 30, 2024. For more information about the Regional Bottled Water Program, please contact CWC:

Shirley Robles at (831) 500-2677 or [shirley.robles@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:shirley.robles@communitywatercenter.org),  
Pedro Enriquez at (831) 809-7367 or [pedro.enriquez@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:pedro.enriquez@communitywatercenter.org),  
Mayra Hernandez at (831) 500-2125 or [mayra.hernandez@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:mayra.hernandez@communitywatercenter.org),  
Saul Reyes at (831) 348-9898 or [saul.reyes@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:saul.reyes@communitywatercenter.org), or  
Brandon Bollinger at (831) 500-2162 or [brandon.bollinger@communitywatercenter.org](mailto:brandon.bollinger@communitywatercenter.org)

### *Santa Cruz County Household Well Assistance Program*

In May 2022, the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Department received funding from the SAFER Program to implement the [Household Well Assistance Program](#)<sup>27</sup> for income-qualified households throughout Santa Cruz County. The Household Well Assistance Program provides guidance on how to conduct proper well maintenance, well water level sounding, and water quality testing. In addition, the program provides information on how to obtain bottled water, hauled water delivery, or point of use (POU) treatment systems for households whose wells have gone dry or whose wells are impacted by pollutants. As of October 21, 2024, the Household Well

<sup>26</sup> <https://sites.google.com/communitywatercenter.org/central-coast-regional-bottled/home>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.scceh.org/NewHome/Programs/WaterResources/DroughtResponse/HouseholdWellAssistance.aspx>

Assistance Program has installed a POU treatment system at one household and has delivered approximately 60 gallons of replacement drinking water to two other households while they assess the feasibility of POU treatment. Upon installation of the POU treatment systems, these households will stop receiving bottled water delivery. For more information about Santa Cruz County's Household Well Assistance, please contact the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Department: Sean Abbey at (831) 698-6166 or via email at [sean.abbey@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:sean.abbey@santacruzcountyca.gov)

### *Replacement Water Pilot Project for Santa Barbara County*

Currently, drinking water technical assistance providers and replacement water programs are limited in the southern portion of the Central Coast region. To fill this critical need, the Bay Foundation is contracting with Tetra Tech to implement a pilot project that expands services to households in the southern part of the region whose drinking water wells exceed safe drinking water standards. The Bay Foundation is allocating up to \$50,000 to provide bottled water to income qualified households in Santa Barbara County. Eligible households, identified through the Well Testing Program, will receive vouchers redeemable with a local bottled water service to receive up to 50 gallons per month of bottled water delivered to their homes, for up to three months while they pursue longer-term replacement water. After three months, if the household is unable to implement a longer-term drinking water solution, they may reapply for bottled water services. Pilot project funding is sufficient to provide replacement drinking water to approximately 30 households for one year. During this time, Central Coast Water Board staff will coordinate with the Bay Foundation, program contractors, local agencies, and community partners to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot project, identify other replacement water programs that may become available, and assess the need for additional replacement water services in the Central Coast region.

### **Assistance to Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Growers Project**

In April 2023, the Bay Foundation established a \$25,000 contract with [Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc.](https://ccwqp.org/)<sup>28</sup> (Preservation, Inc.) to provide technical compliance assistance for limited resource and socially disadvantaged growers to conduct on-farm domestic well monitoring and reporting. Specifically, this contract provides technical assistance to growers listed as the Responsible Party (RP) for ranches enrolled in the Central Coast Water Board's [Order R3-2021-0040](#)<sup>29</sup>, General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dischargers from Irrigated Lands (Agricultural Order 4.0) to comply with annual on-farm domestic well monitoring and reporting requirements.

Utilizing this contract, Preservation, Inc. assisted ten limited resource growers to sample thirteen on-farm domestic and dual-purpose wells during the 2023 monitoring year. During the 2024 monitoring year, Preservation, Inc. assisted sixteen limited resource growers to sample nineteen on-farm domestic and dual-purpose wells. Of the \$25,000

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<sup>28</sup> <https://ccwqp.org/>

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/ilp/docs/ag\\_order4/2021/ao4\\_order.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/docs/ag_order4/2021/ao4_order.pdf)

allocated for this project, 26% of the funds have been dispersed and approximately \$18,500 remain available to provide technical compliance assistance to limited resource and socially disadvantaged growers to implement on-farm domestic well monitoring and reporting requirements.

### CCAMP-GAP Funding

CCAMP-GAP projects are funded primarily by a private endowment managed by the Bay Foundation. The Central Coast Water Board coordinates with the Bay Foundation to help inform funding priorities. At the April 2022 Board Meeting, the Central Coast Water Board provided detailed information regarding CCAMP-GAP program funding and history.<sup>30</sup> Table 4 summarizes the current CCAMP-GAP endowment and operational account balances.

**Table 4. CCAMP-GAP Funds Account Balance (as of September 30, 2024)**

Category	Amount
Endowment Account	\$7,968,915
Operational Account	\$562,911
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,531,826</b>

The Bay Foundation manages the CCAMP-GAP endowment to generate an ongoing annual revenue stream to support the long-term implementation of high priority projects such as the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program. The CCAMP-GAP operational account is a non-investment cash account that covers costs associated with administrative expenses and contracts to implement CCAMP-GAP projects. The Bay Foundation manages accounts, establishes contracts and manages contract agreements (e.g., contract invoicing and reporting) and coordinates with the Central Coast Water Board to provide project related technical support. CCAMP-GAP funds are not directed to the Central Coast Water Board and are not utilized to support Central Coast Water Board personnel.

### Well Testing Program Funding

During the April 2022 Board Meeting, the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution R3-2022-0015 which allocated \$600,000 to continue implementation of the Well Testing Program for three years. To identify a potential source of future funding for the Well Testing Program, Central Coast Water Board and State Water Board Enforcement Program staff coordinated together to request the use of supplemental environmental project (SEP) funds to support the Well Testing Program.

On July 16, 2024, the State Water Board approved [State Water Board Resolution 2024-0022](#)<sup>31</sup>, authorizing dischargers settling certain administrative civil liabilities with the

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2022/apr/item11\\_stfrpt.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2022/apr/item11_stfrpt.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/2024/rs2024-0022.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/2024/rs2024-0022.pdf)

Central Coast Water Board to select the Well Testing Program as a recipient of SEP funds. This funding will support the Well Testing Program in the future, allowing up to \$400K per year in SEP funds to be directed towards drinking water well testing throughout the Central Coast region. The Bay Foundation will serve as the third-party administrator of these additional SEP funds. In October 2024, the Bay Foundation and Central Coast Water Board executed a memorandum of understanding that defines the process for administering SEP funds directed toward the Well Testing Program, in alignment with the SEP Policy.

### **Human Right to Water**

California Water Code section 106.3, subdivision (a) states that it is the policy of the State of California “that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitation purposes.” On January 26, 2017, the Central Coast Water Board adopted [Resolution R3-2017-0004](#)<sup>32</sup>, which affirms the realization of the human right to water and the protection of human health as the Central Coast Water Board's top priorities. CCAMP-GAP supports projects that are consistent with the human right to water and Resolution R3-2017-0004, by coordinating with partners to implement the Well Testing Program and supporting replacement water solutions for communities with drinking water wells impacted by pollution.

### **Environmental Justice**

CCAMP-GAP supports environmental justice, racial equity, and tribal engagement by prioritizing projects that advance environmental justice issues and benefit underrepresented communities. In addition, CCAMP-GAP prioritizes outreach and engagement to underrepresented communities, and maximizes the availability and accessibility of data and information to the public.

Environmental Justice principles call for the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income in the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of all environmental laws, regulations, and policies that affect every community's natural resources and the places people live, work, play, and learn. The Central Coast Water Board implements regulatory activities and water quality projects in a manner that ensures the fair treatment of all people, including underrepresented communities. Underrepresented communities<sup>33</sup> include but

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<sup>32</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/2017/2017-0004\\_hrtw\\_fnl.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2017/2017-0004_hrtw_fnl.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Disadvantaged Community: a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income (Public Resources Code section 80002(e)); Severely Disadvantaged Community: a community with a median household income of less than 60% of the statewide average. (Public Resources Code section 80002(n)); Economically Distressed Area: a municipality with a population of 20,000 persons or less, a rural county, or a reasonably isolated and divisible segment of a larger municipality where the segment of the population is 20,000 persons or less with an annual median household income that is less than 85% of the statewide median household income and with one or more of the following conditions as determined by the department: (1) financial

are not limited to Disadvantaged Communities (DACs), Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDACs), Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs), Tribes, Environmentally Disadvantaged Communities (EnvDACs), and members of fringe communities. Furthermore, the Central Coast Water Board is committed to providing all stakeholders with access to data and information, and the opportunity to participate in the public process and provide meaningful input to decisions that affect their communities. More information is available on the Central Coast Water Board's [Environmental Justice, Racial Equity, and Tribal Affairs](#) webpage.<sup>34</sup>

## Climate Change

CCAMP-GAP implements the Central Coast Water Board's Climate Action Initiative by prioritizing projects that implement climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, such as regional groundwater monitoring, drought resiliency projects, and projects that address climate change hazards and vulnerabilities.

The Central Coast region faces the threat and the effects of climate change for the foreseeable and distant future. To proactively prepare and respond, the Central Coast Water Board implements a Climate Action Initiative, which identifies how the Central Coast Water Board's work relates to climate change and prioritizes actions that improve water supply resiliency through water conservation and wastewater reuse and recycling; mitigate for and adapt to sea level rise and increased flooding; improve energy efficiency; and reduce greenhouse gas production. The Climate Action Initiative is consistent with the Governor's Executive Order B-30-15 and the State Water Board's Climate Change [Resolution 2017-0012](#).<sup>35</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Since 2012, CCAMP-GAP has implemented regional groundwater monitoring programs and supported groundwater-related projects to evaluate, restore, and protect groundwater and its beneficial uses, especially drinking water. In addition, CCAMP-GAP prioritizes projects that benefit underrepresented communities. Moving forward, CCAMP-GAP will continue to support the following program priorities identified in the FY 24-25 Strategic Plan:

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hardship, (2) unemployment rate at least 2% higher than the statewide average, or (3) low population density. (Water Code section 79702(k)); Tribes: federally recognized Indian Tribes and California State Indian Tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List; EnvDACs: CalEPA designates the top 25 percent scoring census tracts as DACs. Census tracts that score the highest five percent of pollution burden scores but do not have an overall CalEnviroScreen score because of unreliable socioeconomic or health data are also designated as DACs (refer to the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Mapping Tool (or current version) or Results Excel Sheet); Fringe Community: communities that do not meet the established DAC, SDAC, and EDA definitions but can show that they score in the top 25 percent of either the Pollution Burden or Population Characteristics score using the CalEnviroScreen 4.0.

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water\\_issues/programs/enviro\\_justice/enviro\\_justice.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/enviro_justice/enviro_justice.html)

<sup>35</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/resolutions/2017/rs2017\\_0012.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/2017/rs2017_0012.pdf)

- Implement the Central Coast Drinking Water Well Testing Program in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties and evaluate the possibility to conduct regional trend-monitoring to identify long-term water quality patterns.
- Support the Technical Assistance for Limited Resource and Socially Disadvantaged Growers Project to conduct on-farm domestic well monitoring and reporting.
- Share groundwater quality data and tools with Central Coast Water Board program staff, water quality partners, and the public.
- Coordinate with the State Water Board SAFER Program, local agencies, and community organizations to support replacement water programs.
- Coordinate with the Rose Foundation to implement the Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program.

**ATTACHMENT**

1. Central Coast Community-Based Water Quality Grants Program Docket