

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Checklist

Proposed Amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin to Incorporate Applicable Provisions of Statewide Plans and Policies

(Resolution Number R3-2024-0003)

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Certified Regulatory Program

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CEQA Environmental Checklist

Appendix A to the State Water Board's CEQA regulations

California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 27, Sections 3720-3781

The CEQA Checklist below is based on the State Water Resources Control Board's CEQA Checklist for Exempt Regulatory Programs (23 CCR Appendix A), which became operative on February 18, 2011, and is also consistent with the State CEQA Guidelines Checklist for agencies (14 CCR Appendix G), which became operative on December 28, 2018.

Project Title:

Amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin to Incorporate Applicable Provisions of Statewide Plans and Policies

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Project Location:

Central Coast Hydrologic Region (Region 3)

Project Description:

This project amends the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan) to incorporate applicable provisions of statewide plans and policies that have been adopted by the State Water Board since 2015 (new and amended), correct typographical errors and punctuation, and comply with Assembly Bill 434 (AB 434) web accessibility requirements that require state agency websites to comply with Government Code section 7405 and 11135 and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, or a subsequent version, published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium at minimum Level AA success criteria.

The revisions are non-regulatory changes to the Basin Plan because they are editorial in nature or incorporate provisions that were adopted by the State Water Board and are already in effect statewide (and therefore, the Central Coast Water Board is already subject to and implementing those provisions). Consequently, the revisions are changes that do not materially alter any requirement, right, responsibility, condition, prescription, or other regulatory element of the Basin Plan, and are therefore without regulatory effect under California Code of Regulations ((CCR), title 1, section 100, subdivision (a)).

Rather, the revisions improve and clarify the application and implementation of the Basin Plan.

The State Water Board has adopted several amendments to their statewide plans and in some cases, the statewide water quality objectives established by those plans supersede the Basin Plan (i.e., mercury and bacteria objectives). In addition, the State Water Board has adopted new and revised existing statewide policies that are in effect and applicable to the Central Coastal Basin. Permit-writers and interested persons referring to the Basin Plan for applicable water quality objectives may be unaware of these statewide objectives or misguided about the objectives that have been superseded. This missing and outdated information may limit the ability of permit-writers to write, and interested persons and permittees to comply with, permits that effectively protect water quality.

The proposed action to amend the Basin Plan is not a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it will cause neither a direct physical change in the environment nor a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (Public Resources Code, section 21065; CCR, title 14, section 15378; Public Resources Code, section 21080.1). As a result, the non-regulatory Basin Plan amendment is not subject to CEQA and, therefore, not subject to the State Water Board’s certified regulatory program regulations for implementing CEQA (CCR, title 23, section 3720, subdivisions (b) and (c)(2)). However, consistent with the State Water Board’s CEQA implementation guidelines, the Central Coast Water Board prepared a written report and this Environmental Checklist Form.

The objectives of the Basin Plan amendments are consistent with the mission of the State Water Board and the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act and the California Water Code. These laws require the Central Coast Water Board to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of water in the Central Coast region.

CEQA Checklist:

This proposed action would have no direct or indirect impact on the environment, including aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and flora and humans. The “No Impact” box is checked in all the checklist categories. The basis for these responses is contained in the Project Report.

The CEQA Checklist is a series of questions grouped by subject that identify different types of potential environmental impacts that a project may cause. CEQA considers the existing conditions of the physical project site as a baseline. It then compares how much change will occur to the site if the project is implemented. Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the impact severity is rated on a scale of four impact levels. The four levels are: potentially significant impact, less than significant with mitigation incorporated, less than significant impact, or no impact.

Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099, would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				No Impact
B	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				No Impact
C	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				No Impact
D	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				No Impact

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Boards. Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				No Impact
B	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				No Impact
D	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				No Impact
E	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				No Impact

Air Quality

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				No Impact
B	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				No Impact
C	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				No Impact
D	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				No Impact

Biological Resources

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				No Impact
B	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				No Impact
C	Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal, pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				No Impact
E	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				No Impact
F	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				No Impact

Cultural Resources

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to section 15064.5?				No Impact
B	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to section 15064.5?				No Impact
C	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?				No Impact

Energy

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?				No Impact
B	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				No Impact

Geology and Soils

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				No Impact
	ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				No Impact
	iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				No Impact
	iv) Landslides?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				No Impact
C	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?				No Impact
D	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?				No Impact
E	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				No Impact
F	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				No Impact

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				No Impact
B	Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				No Impact

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				No Impact
B	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				No Impact
C	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				No Impact
D	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				No Impact
F	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				No Impact
G	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				No Impact

Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?				No Impact
B	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				No Impact
C	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: i) result in substantial erosion or silation on- or off-site?				No Impact
	ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or				No Impact
	iv) impede or redirect flood flows?				No Impact
D	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				No Impact
E	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				No Impact

Land Use and Planning

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Physically divide an established community?				No Impact
B	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				No Impact

Mineral Resources

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				No Impact
B	Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				No Impact

Noise

Would the project result in:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				No Impact
B	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				No Impact
C	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				No Impact

Population and Housing

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				No Impact
B	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				No Impact

Public Services

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Fire protection?				No Impact
B	Police protection?				No Impact
C	Schools?				No Impact
D	Parks?				No Impact
E	Other public facilities?				No Impact

Recreation

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				No Impact
B	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				No Impact

Transportation

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				No Impact
B	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				No Impact
C	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				No Impact
D	Result in inadequate emergency access?				No Impact

Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?				No Impact
B	A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				No Impact

Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				No Impact
B	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				No Impact
C	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				No Impact
D	Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				No Impact

Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				No Impact
B	Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?				No Impact
C	Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D	Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?				No Impact

Mandatory Findings of Significance

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				No Impact
B	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)				No Impact

Item	Impact Description	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				No Impact