

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

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF August 20-21, 2026

Prepared on August 4, 2026

ITEM NUMBER: 10

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Proposed Resolution Adopting
Proposed Basin Plan Amendments to Make Editorial
Revisions

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ACTION: Adopt Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0053

SUMMARY

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin (Basin Plan)¹ forms the basis for regulatory actions taken by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board) to protect all waters of the state and to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including the California Water Code (CWC) and the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). The Basin Plan establishes beneficial uses for surface waters and groundwaters, water quality objectives to protect beneficial uses, and describes the programs, projects, prohibitions, and other actions that are necessary to achieve water quality objectives. A change to the Basin Plan requires a Basin Plan amendment. This staff report summarizes proposed Basin Plan amendments to make editorial revisions to existing Basin Plan language.

The Basin Plan amendments project is presented to the Central Coast Water Board for consideration as Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0053 (Attachment 1). The project includes non-regulatory amendments (i.e., without regulatory effect under California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 1, section 100, subdivision (a)) to the Basin Plan that make editorial corrections and clarifications (e.g., correcting typos, updating information, and following the Central Coast Water Board writing style) that improve the Basin Plan.

DISCUSSION

Background

¹ The Basin Plan is available on the Basin Planning Program website:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/docs/2024_basin_plan_r3.pdf

The Central Coast Water Board first adopted the Basin Plan in 1975 and has periodically amended it since. Amendments to the Basin Plan must undergo public review prior to adoption. Amendments are adopted by the Central Coast Water Board and subsequently approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), the California Office of Administrative Law, and USEPA.

CWC section 13240 requires that the Basin Plan be periodically reviewed and, as a result of such review, revised as needed. Similarly, CWA section 303(c) requires a “triennial review” for the purpose of reviewing applicable water quality standards. The Board’s 2024 Triennial Review² resulted in a prioritized list of suggestions for future Basin Plan amendments (proposals) that may be undertaken to improve Basin Plan clarity and usefulness. The 2024 Triennial Review included consideration of 45 proposals. Following both internal and external outreach to identify priority proposals and resources to develop the technical elements of the proposals (e.g., staff or external entities), the Central Coast Water Board approved the priority list, which contained five proposals.

Central Coast Water Board staff initiated these Basin Plan amendments to implement one of the 2024 Triennial Review’s priority list proposals titled *Proposal 28: Update Reference to Maximum Contaminant Levels*. *In addition, these Basin Plan amendments implement the following proposals that were not on the Central Coast Water Boards priority list: Proposal 1: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 1), Proposal 12: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 2), Proposal 29: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 3), and Proposal 37: Editorial Corrections and Minor Clarifications (Chapter 5).*

After seeking public comment and State Water Board staff feedback on the draft Basin Plan amendments, Central Coast Water Board staff decided to defer consideration of the amendments effectuating Triennial Review priority list Proposal 28 (i.e., incorporation of new water quality objectives) so that Scientific Peer Review of those values can be conducted (see Health and Safety Code, section 57004) prior to Board consideration. Subsequently, the Project Report and supporting documents were updated to reflect the narrowed scope of the proposed Basin Plan amendments, which now only include editorial corrections and minor clarifications to Basin Plan chapters one, two, three, and five (Triennial Review Proposal 1, 12, 29, and 37).

A detailed discussion of the Basin Plan amendments is provided in the Project Report (Attachment 1a). The non-regulatory amendments include the following key revisions:

- Improved description of Central Coast region boundaries (page 11)
- Updated Central Coast Water Board’s Vision and priorities adopted by the Central Coast Water Board in resolutions affirming our commitment to the human right to water, racial equity, and climate change response as well as our commitment to implementing the State Water Board Tribal Consultation Policy (page 16)

² 2024 Triennial Review Report:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2024/oct/item11_att2.pdf

- Updated Table 2-1 waterbody names (e.g., Lockhart Gulch instead of Lockhart Gulch creek, Kelly Lake instead of Kelley Lake) and, in one instance, hydrologic unit (HU) location (e.g., correcting the spelling of Werner Lake and listing the waterbody under Bolsa Nueva HU instead of Pajaro River HU) for accuracy and consistency purposes (pages 20-66)
- Revised Table 2-2 waterbody names for consistency with the State Water Board's Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California (page 67)
- Revised Table 3-5 and Table 3-6 headings to include full water quality parameter names for clarity (pages 76-78)

The non-regulatory amendments are editorial in nature and, therefore, not subject to CEQA. The non-regulatory amendments 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 CCR, title 1, section 100, subdivision (a).

Human Right to Water

CWC 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, 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.

The proposed Basin Plan amendments are consistent with Resolution R3-2017-0004 because they improve the accuracy and clarity of the Basin Plan. Additionally, the amendments include adding the Central Coast Water Board's Resolution R3-2017-0004 to regional priorities in the Central Coast Water Board's Vision, Basin Plan section 1.7.

Environmental Justice

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 include but 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.³

³ 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

Furthermore, the Central Coast Water Board is committed to providing all stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the public process and provide meaningful input to decisions that affect their communities.

The Basin Plan amendments improve the accuracy and clarity of information that applies to the entire Central Coast region and all underrepresented communities therein to protect surface waters and groundwaters. Additionally, the Basin Plan amendments include adding the Central Coast Water Board's Racial Equity Resolution R3-2023-0002 and the State Water Board's Tribal Consultation Policy (June 2019) to regional priorities in the Central Coast Water Board's Vision, Basin Plan section 1.7.

Staff conducted public outreach throughout the project development process. Outreach included contacting Tribes and underrepresented communities in the Central Coast region. On September 3, 2025, a letter noticing the revisions and opportunity for participation was sent via email and certified mail to Tribes pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1, subdivision (d), and California Assembly Bill 52 and via email and mail to Tribes consistent with the requirements and intent of California Assembly Bill 2108. On September 3, 2025, a letter noticing the revisions and opportunity for participation was also sent via email to the Central Coast Water Board's Racial Equity and Environmental Justice interested persons list consistent with the requirements and intent of California Assembly Bill 2108 to coordinate with environmental justice communities such that there is equitable engagement with potentially impacted communities regarding Water Board planning and policy processes. Public outreach also included the release of public notices in English and Spanish on the Central Coast Water Board and Basin Planning Program webpages and via email to the Basin Planning/Triennial Review interested persons list, which contains third party programs for underrepresented communities. In addition, a notice of public hearing was published on the Central Coast Water Board and Basin Planning Program webpages and sent via email to interested persons 45 days prior to the hearing date and published in major newspapers of the Central Coast region 10 days prior to the meeting date.

Climate Change

The Central Coast 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 has launched the Central Coast Water Board's Climate Action Initiative, which identifies

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 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 3.0 Mapping Tool 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 3.0.

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.

The Basin Plan amendments will not have direct climate change impact benefits; however, amendments will increase the Basin Plan's accuracy and clarity. Additionally, the Basin Plan amendments include adding the State Water Board's Climate Change Resolution 2017-0012 to regional priorities in the Central Coast Water Board's Vision, Basin Plan section 1.7.

COMMENTS

The proposed Basin Plan amendments Project Report was available for public review over a 45-day public comment period, from April 15, 2026, to June 3, 2026. A notice of opportunity for public comment in English and Spanish was emailed to interested persons subscribed to the Basin Planning/Triennial Review interested persons list and posted on the Basin Planning Program webpage. The notice of opportunity to comment included an internet link directing interested persons to the Basin Planning Program webpage with the draft proposed Basin Plan Amendments Project Report, and Resolution. No public comment letters were received during the public comment period. All documents related to this project including notices of opportunities for public participation are included on the Basin Planning Program, Amendments Under Development webpage.⁴

CONCLUSION

The Basin Plan amendments will make necessary revisions to the Basin Plan for improved accuracy and clarity. The Basin Plan amendments fulfill several secondary list proposals from the 2024 Triennial Review.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt proposed Resolution R3-2026-0053.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0053
 - a. Project Report

⁴ Basin Planning Program, Amendments Under Development:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/amend-development.html