

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

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 17-18, 2026**

**Prepared on June 2, 2026**

**ITEM NUMBER:** 8

**SUBJECT:** Executive Officer's Report to the Board

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**ACTION:** Information/Discussion

**KEY INFORMATION:** This item presents a brief overview of issues that may interest the Board. Upon request, staff can provide more detailed information about any item.

**Grants Program Update** [Katie McNeill 805/549-3336, [katie.mcneill@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:katie.mcneill@waterboards.ca.gov)]

The Clean Water Act (CWA) section 319 grants are United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) funds administered in California by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and managed by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards) to address water pollution from Nonpoint Sources (NPS). The funds are available for planning and implementation projects that restore water quality, rehabilitate post-fire areas, and protect high-quality waters.

During the 2026 grant cycle, approximately \$14M of funding requests were received from 25 applicants state-wide. A review panel, consisting of staff from the Regional Boards, State Water Board, and USEPA, recommended approximately \$3.2M for six projects throughout the state, including two agricultural implementation projects in the Central Coast Region that totaled approximately \$2M (see Table 1). Both projects listed in Table 1 address agricultural discharges of nutrients, sediment, and pesticides.

We anticipate State Water Board and USEPA approval of the review panel recommendations later in 2026. Grant agreement development will begin in 2027, and the projects will be completed in 2030.

Table 1. Summary information for grant projects recommended for funding.

Project Title	Applicant	Grant Award Amount	Matching Funds	Total Project
Enhancing Source Control in the Salinas River and Pajaro River Watersheds	Resource Conservation District of Monterey County	\$993,102	\$111,500	\$1,104,602
Implementing Vegetated Ditches and Management Practices for Water Quality Improvement in the Lower Salinas River Watershed	California Marine Sanctuary Foundation	\$999,767	\$352,496	\$1,352,264

Development of the Central Coast Region's project proposals involved extensive external outreach and internal cross-program coordination between the Grants Program and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Irrigated Lands Programs. The following sections summarize the two projects recommended for funding this year.

*Enhancing Source Control in the Salinas River and Pajaro River Watersheds:* The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC), along with the RCD of San Benito County (SBRC), private landowners, organizations such as the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA), and numerous public agencies, will collaborate to reduce nutrient and sediment loading from irrigated agricultural lands. They will implement a suite of source control practices (e.g., cover crops, nutrient management, and irrigation water management) on 70 small-scale farms in underrepresented areas of the lower Salinas and upper Pajaro Watersheds. These practices will benefit water quality and aquatic habitat and address, in part, implementation strategies defined in the Salinas and Pajaro TMDLs for nitrate, sediment, and pesticides. This project supports ongoing collaboration with Central Coast Water Quality Preservation Inc. (CCWQP), to assist growers in complying with the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Agricultural Order). The project will estimate load reductions to demonstrate results. Outreach includes two site tours with Central Coast Water Board staff and others at farms in the Salinas and Pajaro watersheds.

*Implementing Vegetated Ditches and Management Practices for Water Quality Improvement in the Lower Salinas River Watershed:* The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation (CMSF), along with partners such as the private landowners and

organizations such as the RCDMC, Central Coast Wetlands Group (CCWG), and CCWQP, will implement this project. At least two vegetated ditches will be installed in the watershed, covering a minimum of 1.5 acres and draining a minimum of 150 acres. At each site, a complimentary on-farm management practice will also be implemented (e.g., nutrient and irrigation management, cover cropping, minimum tillage). These practices will reduce agricultural pollutants to benefit water quality and aquatic habitat in the underrepresented areas of the Lower Salinas River watershed. These projects also address, in part, implementation strategies defined in the applicable TMDLs for nutrients, organophosphate pesticides and toxicity, sediment toxicity, and turbidity and the goals of the Agricultural Order to minimize pollutant discharges to surface waters. Downstream water quality monitoring will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of these practices. The outreach component of this project will work to address the educational and systemic barriers of implementing non-crop vegetation on farms, particularly regarding perceived food safety risks of vegetated ditches.

### **STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD FUNDING INFORMATION**

The State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) administers a number of funding programs supporting wastewater and drinking water infrastructure projects in addition to other water quality protection and restoration projects. See the [DFA website](#)<sup>1</sup> for information regarding available loan and grant programs administered by the State Water Board.

State Water Board DFA maintains the following online dashboards tracking project funding applications and funded projects:

[Application Status Search Tool](#),<sup>2</sup> allows users to search for the status of State Water Board drinking water and clean water State Revolving Fund (SRF) project applications that have been submitted for funding consideration and are currently under review (this portal does not include approved projects).

[Program funding dashboard](#),<sup>3</sup> documents funded projects and descriptions via pull down menu options and graphics by funding program and geographic area for the most recent fiscal year for which the funding cycle has ended.

### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Please see attachments 1 through 5 for performance measure information.

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<sup>1</sup> DFA website: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans)

<sup>2</sup> Application Search Tool: <https://public.waterboards.ca.gov/dfaAppSTAT/>

<sup>3</sup> State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance project funding dashboard: [2023-24 Performance Report | California State Water Resources Control Board](#)

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Table 1 - 401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received
2. Table 2 - 401 Water Quality Certifications Issued
3. Table 3 - Groundwater Section, Case Closure Performance Scoreboard
4. Table 4 - Groundwater Case Closures
5. Table 5 - Enrollments in General Orders/Waivers

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