

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

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

Prepared on June 1, 2026

ITEM NUMBER: 10

SUBJECT: Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0043 to Approve a One-Year Extension of a Voluntary Cleanup and Abatement Agreement to Address Per- And Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) Contamination at the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport

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KEY INFORMATION

Location: San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport and nearby community

Type of Discharge: Soil, sediment, and groundwater pollution due to discharge of PFAS containing aqueous film forming foam (AFFF)

Existing Orders: Water Code Section 13267 Order WQ 2019-0005-DWQ for the Determination of the Presence of PFAS Substances

ACTION: Information/Discussion

SUMMARY

On July 21, 2023, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board) adopted [Resolution R3-2023-0046](#)¹ which ratified a [Voluntary Cleanup and Abatement Agreement](#)² (VCAA) between the Central Coast Water Board Cleanup Team, San Luis Obispo County, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to address PFAS contamination at the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport (Airport) and nearby community. The three-year term as defined in section 1.1 of the VCAA is set to end on June 30, 2026. Section 1.2 of the VCAA allows San Luis Obispo County and CAL FIRE (collectively referred to hereafter as Airport Parties) to request an extension of the VCAA's term by an

¹ Resolution R3-2023-0046: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=asdut>

² VCAA: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=bhv3r>

additional year. In a letter³ dated March 30, 2026, the Airport Parties requested that the Central Coast Water Board extend the VCAA's term until June 30, 2027.

Since February 2026, Central Coast Water Board staff have met with the Airport Parties and/or their technical consultant Roux Inc. (Roux) five times to discuss the extension of the VCAA and negotiate additional deliverables to be submitted within the extended term. These additional deliverables include, but are not limited to, work plans to propose interim mitigation measures, collect site-specific data to refine the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA), and propose additional investigations to fill gaps identified by the Remedial Investigation and Site Conceptual Model. A complete list of deliverables and the submittal schedule are included in a side letter⁴ (Side Letter) dated May 26, 2026. No provisions of the original VCAA will be modified through this extension or Side Letter. Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0043 will provide approval by the Board of the extension of the term and the Side Letter.

DISCUSSION

Background

PFAS investigations in the Airport area began in 2019 in response to a March 20, 2019 State Water Resources Control Board order (WQ 2019-0005-DWQ)⁵ requiring certain airports in California to investigate soil and groundwater for the presence of PFAS caused by fire-fighting rescue and preparedness operations that incorporated aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) fire suppressants. AFFF are fluorinated foams that frequently contain diverse mixtures of PFAS.

Periodic performance testing of AFFF equipment (such as spray nozzles on fire trucks) is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and occurred at the Airport. Past testing of AFFF equipment resulted in accumulation of PFAS in surface soils, and ultimately degraded underlying groundwater. Practices at the Airport were modified to contain AFFF emitted during performance testing, instead of discharging it to the ground. In the summer 2025, AFFF was replaced with Fluorine Free Foam (F3) for Airport aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment.

After initial investigations at the Airport found elevated levels of PFAS in soil and groundwater, the Central Coast Water Board issued orders requiring San Luis Obispo County to conduct additional investigations in both onsite and offsite areas, including sampling of private domestic wells for PFAS in a rural residential and commercial area south and west of the Airport. Subsequent sampling indicated that 54 wells in the Airport vicinity (including two agricultural wells) had one or more PFAS exceeding either a

³ March 30, 2026 extension request: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=8rr3t>

⁴ May 26, 2026 Side Letter: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=amscc>

⁵ WQ 2019-0005-DWQ: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=tdre>

Federal Maximum Contaminant Level⁶ (MCL) and/or drinking water Response Level⁷ in raw (untreated) groundwater.

VCAA Status and Compliance Update

On July 21, 2023, the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution R3-2023-0046 which ratified the VCAA between the Central Coast Water Board and Airport Parties to address the PFAS contamination in lieu of consideration of adopting a cleanup and abatement order.⁸ The VCAA obligated the Airport Parties to:

- Provide and maintain point-of-use (POU) treatment systems to locations where primary drinking water exceeds a PFAS Standard, as defined in the VCAA, for Airport-related PFAS.
 - The Airport Parties have satisfied this provision of the VCAA for qualifying wells.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of, plan for, and implement point-of-entry (POE) treatment for those locations where groundwater is impacted by Airport-related PFAS above a PFAS Standard within 12 months of VCAA ratification.
 - The Airport Parties have satisfied this provision of the VCAA through the installation new POE systems, the modification of existing POE systems, and ongoing maintenance of these POE systems.
- Evaluate and plan for long-term water supply solutions.
 - The VCAA requires the submittal of a long-term water supply solution feasibility study by July 21, 2026. The State Water Resources Control Board, in collaboration with the Airport Parties and the Central Coast Water Board, released a public draft Water Supply Feasibility Study⁹ and presented the findings of the draft report in a public meeting on February 10, 2026. The Airport Parties have identified a need to assess a hybrid option of the five alternatives evaluated in the draft Water Supply Feasibility Study. The submittal of a hybrid assessment report and an updated long-term water supply evaluation report are included in the May 26, 2026 Side Letter.
- Continue investigation activities and develop remediation feasibility studies and remedial action plans and, where feasible, implement remedial action plans;
 - For various reasons, field work delays resulted in a delayed submittal of the Remedial Investigation^{10,11} and non-submittal of a Feasibility Study (FS)/Remedial Action Plan (RAP) work plan. While this work plan is late with respect to the VCAA, the May 26, 2026 Side Letter commits the Airport Parties to complete this work on an expeditious time schedule.

⁶ US EPA MCLs for PFAS: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>

⁷ Response Level is a concentration of a pollutant in drinking water above which the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water recommends taking a water source out of service to be protective of human health.

⁸ Draft CAO: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=140mu>

⁹ Draft Water Supply Feasibility Study: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=mmt97>

¹⁰ Remedial Investigation: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=wqi4z>

¹¹ Remedial Investigation Addendum Report: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=o79e1>

- Preparation and submittal of an HHRA.
 - The HHRA was delayed largely due to field work schedules. The Airport Parties satisfied this provision by submitting a model-based HHRA¹² on May 29, 2026. Through consultation with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the Central Coast Water Board and Airport Parties agree that site-specific data are needed to refine the HHRA. The May 26, 2026, Side Letter includes work plans to collect these data and a schedule to submit a refined HHRA.
- Ongoing groundwater, supply well, and post-treatment system monitoring and analysis.
 - The Airport Parties have satisfied the monitoring provisions of the VCAA.

Public Process

The Airport Parties maintain regular communications with community members through periodic email communications, recurring Community Advisory Group (CAG) meetings, and occasionally through larger-scale public meetings. Central Coast Water Board staff, management, and two board members regularly participate in the CAG meetings. On May 26, 2026, the Central Coast Water Board team provided CAG members with a copy of the Side Letter, explaining that the Side Letter summarized the scope of work that was agreed upon.

If the Central Coast Water Board adopts Resolution R3-2026-0043 to ratify the May 26, 2026 VCAA Side Letter, the parties will begin implementation of the agreement immediately. During implementation, the Board and interested persons will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide input to staff at any time and during public forum opportunities at regular Board meetings. The term of the extension is one year, unless terminated on an earlier date by the Central Coast Water Board Executive Officer or Airport Parties.

CONCLUSION

The May 26, 2026 VCAA Side Letter provides a one-year extension and represents an expedited implementation schedule and collaborative approach between the Central Coast Water Board Cleanup Team and the Airport Parties to address PFAS pollution in all applicable environmental media by including additional investigation tasks, groundwater monitoring, source remediation, and provisions for water replacement for affected users. To date, the Airport Parties have effectively managed the treatment systems in a manner that has ensured replacement water meets drinking water PFAS standards. The extension and Side Letter includes an additional level of protection in requiring preparation and submittal of a refined HHRA to help further inform decisions regarding replacement water where there may not be a PFAS drinking water standard and for non-domestic water uses and to help inform the scope of remediation. This extension terminates on June 30, 2027, before which date the Central Coast Water Board will negotiate with Airport Parties a potential successor agreement and may

¹² HHRA: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=5unn1>

consider issuing a CAO (if necessary) to implement additional cleanup and abatement-related actions in the Airport area.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt proposed Resolution R3-2026-0043.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Resolution No. R3-2026-0043, *Extension of the Settlement Agreement with the County of San Luis Obispo and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection*
2. May 26, 2026 Side Letter between the Central Coast Water Board and Airport Parties
3. Voluntary Cleanup and Abatement Agreement
4. Adopted Resolution R3-2023-0046, *Ratifying A Voluntary Cleanup and Abatement Agreement with the County of San Luis Obispo and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection*

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