

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

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

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ITEM NUMBER: 13

SUBJECT: Consideration of Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0040 to Augment the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program Endowment and Low Impact Development Fund Update

STAFF CONTACTS: Julia Dyer, (805) 542-4624
julia.dyer@waterboards.ca.gov
Melissa Daugherty, (805) 542-4643
melissa.daugherty@waterboards.ca.gov
Leah Lemoine, (805) 549-3159
leah.lemoine@waterboards.ca.gov
Trent Buchanan, (805) 542-4762,
trent.buchanan@waterboards.ca.gov

ACTION: Consider Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0040

SUMMARY

This item is for the Central Coast Water Board to consider Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0040 which directs the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay (Bay Foundation) to allocate available funds to augment the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) Endowment. The available funds are currently maintained in Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program – Groundwater Assessment and Protection (CCAMP-GAP) and Low Impact Development (LID) accounts and were originally allocated for priority basin planning amendment projects and LID projects. The Basin Planning Program did not have sufficient program resources to develop and implement basin planning amendment projects and staff recommend reallocating these funds to the CCAMP Endowment. An LID project is planned that will support the evaluation of stormwater treatment and retention performance requirements, assist municipalities in implementing Post Construction Requirements (PCRs), and improve performance of stormwater capture measures. Staff recommend that any remaining funds available after completion of the LID project be reallocated to the CCAMP Endowment. Augmentation of the CCAMP Endowment is necessary to continue the long-term regional surface water monitoring program and to address a significant funding shortfall caused by recent statewide budget reductions.

DISCUSSION

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program

In 1998, CCAMP began conducting surface water quality monitoring on the Central Coast by partnering with local agencies and using existing laboratory contracts. CCAMP's main goal and objective is to serve as the region's primary, scientifically robust source of water quality information. CCAMP accomplishes this by collecting high-quality, comparable data; assessing conditions and long-term trends across watersheds; supporting regulatory and planning programs; identifying and investigating priority or emerging water quality issues; providing data and analyses that inform decisions across Central Coast Water Board programs, partner agencies, and the public; and advancing water quality protection through monitoring, reporting, and broad coordination with internal programs, statewide Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) initiatives, and external scientific partners.

From 1999 to 2008, the Central Coast Water Board took a series of actions to establish and build the CCAMP Fund. On May 27, 1999, the Board approved Resolution 99-02 establishing a \$2 million endowment for CCAMP with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. On May 9, 2003, the Board entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Community Foundation for Monterey County, designating \$950,000 from a settlement related to back-flushing of hot water into Elkhorn Slough. On March 2, 2007, the Board approved Resolution R3-2007-0042, which amended Resolution 99-02 and established the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay as the project proponent for the CCAMP Fund. On June 29, 2007, the Board approved Resolution R3-2007-0064 augmenting the CCAMP Fund with an additional \$4.65 million. These actions culminated in a July 1, 2008 Grant Agreement between the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay and the Central Coast Water Board, formally establishing the Bay Foundation as the sole third-party administrator of the CCAMP Fund.

Basin Plan Amendment Funds

In 2012, the Central Coast Water Board approved Resolution R3-2012-0024, which established CCAMP-GAP. As part the resolution, the Central Coast Water Board reserved approximately \$500,000 for priority basin planning amendment projects.¹ This proposed funding was to provide technical support for basin plan amendments and stated, in part, that "[a]ny funds that are not used for this purpose would roll over into the CCAMP-GAP endowment". Due to limited Basin Planning Program resources, the \$500,000 has not been allocated to any project. Approval of Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0040 would direct the Bay Foundation to distribute the \$500,000 previously reserved for basin planning amendment projects to the CCAMP endowment to increase principal and provide additional long-term earnings for CCAMP implementation.

¹ Item No. 12 "Proposed Funding for a Regional Groundwater Assessment and Protection Program and Specific Projects" (May 2012) starting on pg. 2

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2012/may/Item_12/12_stfrpt.pdf

Low Impact Development Initiative Funds

In February 2008, the Central Coast Water Board authorized allocation of \$2.1 million from Guadalupe Settlement funds to establish a LID Fund and the Low Impact Development Initiative (LIDI). The LID Fund is administered by the Bay Foundation with the endowment. Low Impact Development (LID) is a post-construction stormwater management approach and set of engineering design principles that promote healthy, functioning watersheds by preserving watersheds' natural "spongelike" properties. LIDI's goals were to provide technical assistance to help Central Coast communities and Central Coast Water Board staff understand the practical aspects of implementing LID, hydromodification controls, and watershed protection efforts. This work included support for planning, design, and implementation of projects and programs, assisting municipalities to develop their own criteria for hydromodification control, and coordinating grant efforts. LIDI's work was instrumental in helping municipalities gain an early understanding of LID design and construction principles, facilitating demonstration projects, and assisting municipalities with code revisions and grant writing. LIDI's legacy continues today through a library of resources available to view and download from the LIDI website.²

Although LIDI is no longer active, there is approximately \$760,000³ currently remaining in the LID Fund. Stormwater Program staff plan to use the LID Fund to support technical work necessary to evaluate and optimize post-construction stormwater management strategies in the region. The Bay Foundation will establish and manage the contract(s) to implement the post-construction stormwater optimization project, in coordination with Stormwater Program staff. Once the post-construction stormwater optimization project is completed, the Bay Foundation will transfer the remaining balance of the LID Fund to the CCAMP endowment following fulfillment of contract deliverables. This transfer of funds will close out the LID Fund accounts with the Bay Foundation.

Need for CCAMP Endowment Augmentation

CCAMP is a well-established and valuable regionwide resource. The Bay Foundation and Central Coast Water Board have coordinated together to successfully implement CCAMP for nearly 30 years. The investment earnings from the additional allocations to the CCAMP Endowment will result in an increase of the CCAMP operating budget on an annual basis⁴ in perpetuity.

The additional funding will be directed toward CCAMP priorities described in the Strategic Plan.⁵ CCAMP priorities include, but are not limited to, employing and retaining qualified Bay Foundation staff, planning and saving for long-term major expenses (e.g., anticipated vehicle service milestones and eventual replacement of a

³ \$763,403.44 as of March 31, 2026.

⁴ Investment earnings are estimated and dependent on market fluctuations.

⁵ Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Strategic Plan Fiscal Year 2025-2026:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2025/oct/Item10_SP.pdf

field truck), maintaining/replacing aging and outdated monitoring equipment, investing in newer technology and tools, stocking necessary calibration standards and consumable supplies, and maintaining routine monthly monitoring of conventional water quality parameters (e.g., subset of nutrients, solids, and salts) at long-term coastal confluence trend sites. Additional funding will also enable CCAMP to consider reintroducing important monitoring program elements that were previously eliminated due to state budget reductions, including reintroducing previous analytes (such as indicator bacteria, additional nutrients, etc.), reintroducing targeted Watershed Rotation Area monitoring to capture changes in water quality conditions at greater geographic and spatial scales and with finer tributary-based resolution, supplementing new or additional analytes during routine water quality assessments more frequently, pursuing increased collaborations and leveraging monitoring partnerships for special studies (such as toxicity, bioassessment, bioaccumulation monitoring, increased HABs monitoring, monitoring for contaminants of emerging concerns, etc.), and working with third-party contractors to incorporate improvements and upgrades to CCAMP Data Navigator.

An important consideration is that these are the last of secured funds eligible for transfer to the CCAMP endowment because they were allocated prior to a 2017 Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Policy⁶ which restricts the use of enforcement settlement funds and specifies criteria for SEPs. This restriction means that future sources of SEP funds are not eligible to be placed into an endowment. Therefore, this is a unique opportunity to support CCAMP and to continue the long-term regional surface water monitoring throughout the Central Coast region.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution R3-2026-0040 instructing the Bay Foundation to redirect the \$500,000 originally allocated for basin planning amendment projects and any remaining funds available after the completion of the post-construction stormwater optimization project to augment the CCAMP Endowment.

ATTACHMENT

1. Proposed Resolution R3-2026-0040 – Allocate Funds to Augment the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program's Endowment

⁶ State Water Resources Control Board Policy on Supplemental Environmental Projects:
https://waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/enforcement/docs/seps/20180503_sep_policy_amd.pdf