

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 17, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

**Watsonville City Council Chambers
275 Main Street, 4th Floor, Watsonville**

Friday, April 18, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

**McFadden Woodchip Bioreactor
Between 179 and 181 McFadden Road, Salinas
(in person only)**

Video and teleconference recordings of the meeting are currently available on the following website: <https://cal-span.org/static/meetings-RWQCB-CC.php>

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Chair Gray called the meeting to order on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 9:15 a.m.

Board Business

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum
[Harvey Packard, Clerk to the Board, 805/549-3140]

Present: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Rodriguez, Member Hoskins, and Member Harlan

Absent: none

Chair Gray declared quorum for the meeting in person.

2. Introductions
[Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, 805/549-3140]
Executive Officer Lodge made the following introductions:

- Angela Schroeter, Assistant Executive Officer; Sophie Froelich legal counsel; temporary clerk to the board Harvey Packard.

3. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes, February 20-21, 2025,

Motion: Member Harlan moved to approve the February 20-21, 2025, Board meeting minutes.

JANE GRAY, CHAIR | RYAN E. LODGE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Second: Vice Chair Wolff

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hoskins, Member Harlan

Abstain: Member Rodriguez

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 4 to 0

4. Reports by Regional Board Members

Member Hoskins:

- March 21, 2025 – Attended a tour of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant with Chair Gray and Executive Officer Lodge.
- April 10, 2025 – Attended a Board briefing.

Vice Chair Wolff:

- February 27, 2025 – Participated, along with Chair Gray, in an exit interview with Thea Tryon.
- March 5 and 12, 2025 – Hosted Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences field trip and presentation on irrigated land management focused on irrigation.
- March 27, 2025 – Attended a tour of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant with Member Rodriguez and Executive Officer Lodge.
- April 8, 2025 – Attended community advisory group meeting for the San Luis Obispo County Airport PFAS project.
- April 8, 2025 – Attended a meeting with city of San Luis Obispo biologist regarding creeks within the city of San Luis Obispo.
- April 14, 2025 – Attended a Board briefing.

Member Rodriguez

- March 25, 2025 – Received an email from a citizen regarding AB 303 introduced by Assemblymember Dawn Addis.
- March 27, 2025 – Attended a tour of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant with Vice Chair Wolff and Executive Officer Lodge.
- April 8, 2025 – Short call with the Governor's appointment office regarding intent to seek reappointment to the Central Coast Water Board.
- April 9, 2025 – Attended a Board briefing.
- April 11, 2025 – Participated in the National Algae Association's webinar on nutrient runoff.

Member Harlan:

- April 4, 2025 – Attended a tour of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant with Executive Officer Lodge.
- April 10, 2025 – Attended a board briefing.

Chair Gray:

- February 25, 2025 – Attended community advisory group meeting for the San Luis Obispo County Airport PFAS project.
- February 27, 2025 – Participated, along with Vice Chair Wolff, in an exit interview with Thea Tryon.
- March 5, 2025 – Met with Brandon Bollinger from Community Water Center related to the Central Coast Water Board Ag Order and alternative water supply program.
- March 6, 2025 – Met with Chelsea Tu, former Executive Director and new Board Member of the Monterey Bay Waterkeeper and new Executive Director Natalie Herendeen to discuss the Ag Order and the alternative water supply project.
- March 6, 2025 – Attended a community meeting in San Lucas related to ongoing drinking water issues.
- March 7, 2025 – Met with Ted Morton at Santa Barbara Channelkeeper related to the alternative water supply program.
- March 13, 2025 – Met with Congressman Salud Carbajal regarding the Diablo Canyon Power Plant permitting project.
- March 13, 2025 – Attended a town hall meeting on the Sable pipeline project in Santa Barbara.
- March 21, 2025 – Attended a tour of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant with Member Hoskins and Executive Officer Lodge.
- March 31, 2025 – Met with Natalie Herendeen at Monterey Waterkeeper on the alternative water supply program.
- April 1, 2025 – Met with Brandon Bollinger from Community Water Center.
- April 9, 2025 – Met with Senator Limon's office regarding the Sable pipeline.
- April 15, 2025 – Met with Jeremy Frankel and Brian Trautwein at Environmental Defense Center.

Public Comments: none

5. Report by State Water Resources Control Board Liaison
[Sean Maguire, 916/341-5877]

Minutes: State Water Board Member Maguire did not provide an update.

6. Public Forum

The following members of the public provided comment on drinking water well contamination in the region and the need for clean drinking water.

- Roberto Ramirez, Royal Oaks
- Saul Reyes, Community Water Center
- Vida Sanchez, Community Water Center
- Kia Rivers, Community Water Center

- Enrique Serrano
- Rosa Carrillo, San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
- Silverio Perez
- Leonel Morales

7. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Programs Update
[Mary Hamilton, Environmental Program Manager, 805/542-4768, Mary.Hamilton@waterboards.ca.gov, and Daniel Ellis, Senior Environmental Scientist, 805/549-3889, Daniel.Ellis@waterboards.ca.gov]

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) staff provided an informational update. Karen Grimmer, the MBNMS Resource Protection Coordinator, provided an overview of the MBNMS boundaries, biodiversity, history, and authority. Board members engaged with Karen Grimmer on the history of the sanctuary as well as its unique boundaries. Karen Grimer discussed MBNMS's role in funding projects to improve water quality throughout the central coast and MBNMS's coordination with Central Coast Water Board staff.

Following Ms. Grimmer, Pam Krone, the MBNMS Water Quality Program Manager, presented multiple topics including volunteer opportunities and annual events, monitoring work, projects reducing pollutant loading, and collaborations with university and agricultural groups. The Board members discussed the various water quality improvement projects in depth with Pam Krone. The Board members also engaged with Pam Krone regarding ongoing research to understand and reduce plastic pollution associated with agricultural practices.

No action was taken as the item was informational.

8. State Water Resources Control Board Office of Enforcement Board, Enforcement Presentation [Tamara Anderson, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, 805/549-3334, Tamara.Anderson@waterboards.ca.gov]

Central Coast Water Board Enforcement Coordinator, Tamara Anderson, introduced the item. David Boyers, Assistant Chief Counsel, Paul Cicarelli, Attorney IV, and Catherine Hawe, Attorney IV, from the State Water Resources Control Board Office of Enforcement Regional Boards Branch presented on the new 2024 Enforcement Policy, the Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Policy, progressive enforcement, settlement considerations, and other general enforcement topics.

Board members discussed enforcement case prioritization and Office of Enforcement attorneys explained that there are more violations than can be addressed, so enforcement staff prioritize cases based on factors, such as public health and environmental impacts, and the Water Boards are required to address

mandatory minimum penalties. Board members discussed the selection of expert witnesses and consultants conducting the economic benefit portion of the liability calculation. Office of Enforcement attorneys explained that the State Water Board selects consultants to conduct economic benefit analyses, that economic benefit is intended to be a deterrent for non-compliance, and typically the Water Boards rely on Water Board staff and other agencies to provide testimony for cases.

Board members requested to have an opportunity to generally discuss SEPs, types of SEP projects and potential board preferences, and to set goals for settlements brought to the board. Office of Enforcement attorneys recommended having this discussion at a future board meeting, potentially the upcoming June 2025 meeting, and encouraged board members to ensure the guidance provided is flexible and not unnecessarily limiting, because aspects of enforcement are unpredictable, and the Water Boards must adhere to specific SEP guidelines.

9. Active Oilfield Program Update

[Megan Mortimer-Lamb, Engineering Geologist, 805/549-3395, Megan.Mortimer-Lamb@Waterboards.ca.gov; Joey Sisk, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, 805/542-4638, Joey.Sisk@waterboards.ca.gov]

Minutes: Item was not heard.

10. Department of Defense Program Update

[Karyn Steckling, Water Resource Control Engineer, 805/549-3465, Karyn.Steckling@waterboards.ca.gov, Bryan Little, Engineering Geologist, 805/549-3887, Bryan.Little@waterboards.ca.gov; Amber Sellinger, Senior Engineering Geologist, 805/549-3866, Amber.Sellinger@waterboards.ca.gov]

Minutes: Item was not heard.

11. Executive Officer's Report

[Ryan Lodge, Executive Officer, 805/549-3140, Ryan.Lodge@waterboards.ca.gov]

Minutes: Executive Office Lodge provided a general overview of the information in the Executive Officer's report associated with the Vistra Moss Landing Battery Fire. Senior Engineering Geologist Greg Bishop answered Board member questions related to the Vistra Moss Landing Battery Fire including coordination with local, state, and federal agencies and development of a community sampling plan.

Public Comments: None

12. Consideration of a proposed resolution to refer the Sable Offshore Corp. matter to the California Attorney General for potential judicial enforcement. [Tamara Anderson, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, 805/549-3334, Tamara.Anderson@waterboards.ca.gov, Naomi Rubin, Attorney Supervisor, 916/341-5677, Naomi.Rubin@waterboards.ca.gov]

Tamara Anderson, Central Coast Water Board enforcement coordinator, and Naomi Rubin, State Water Board Office of Enforcement attorney supervisor, provided a brief background on the pipelines related to the matter, summarized alleged violations, explained the California Attorney General referral process and potential remedies through that process, and recommended approval of the proposed resolution to refer the Sable Offshore Corp. (Sable) matter to the California Attorney General.

Sophie Froelich, State Water Board Office of Chief Counsel attorney, described the change sheet [Attachment 2 to item 12 staff report] with the deleted petition language from the proposed resolution. Froelich explained that the State Water Board's policy is not to accept petitions related to regional water board referrals to the Attorney General.

Board members asked if Sable's pipelines are on easements and ownership of those lands. Phil Hammer, Central Coast Water Board staff, explained that there are multiple property owners and listed some of the property owners.

Board members asked about other public agencies involved in this matter and options for addressing violations with other agencies. Naomi Rubin summarized other agency enforcement actions and explained that this proposed referral to the Attorney General is based solely on an assessment of California Water Code violations within the Central Coast Water Board's jurisdiction.

Board members asked questions about if the referral to the Attorney General is made, would board members be the final decision maker and Naomi Rubin clarified that board members would be the client and ultimate decision maker.

Board members asked if Sable was provided notice of today's hearing, and the Prosecution Team verified that Sable was provided notice and that Sable's outside counsel submitted a speaker card to provide public comment.

Board members asked what waters of the United States that Sable's pipelines cross and Phil Hammer provided a summary of some of the major waters of the United States that the pipelines cross.

Board members commented that there appear to be continuing violations and asked if the referral to the Attorney's General would cover ongoing violations if those occur after the referral is made. Naomi Rubin clarified that the resolution is written broadly to encompass most potential future claims.

Board members asked about the Attorney General's legal tools to stop ongoing work and Naomi Rubin explained that the Attorney General has a broader suite of tools to implement faster, and more effective options compared to the Water Board's available administrative tools.

Board members asked if there is anything that California State Parks can do to stop work within state parks and Naomi Rubin explained this is outside of the Water Board's purview.

Representatives of elected officials, environmental organizations, and individual citizens provided comments in support of the referral of the Sable matter to the Attorney General. Sable's outside counsel explained that Sable seeks expeditious resolution of any outstanding issues, thinks referral of the Sable matter to the Attorney General is unnecessary, and committed to working with Central Coast Water Board staff.

Public comment (submitted speaker card):

Ruth Hellier

Bill Hickman, Surfrider Foundation

Gunnar Langenhuizen, Assemblymember Gregg Hart's Office

Jeremy Frankel, Environmental Defense Center

Brian Trautwein, Environmental Defense Center

Brady Bradshaw, Center for Biological Diversity

Noah Boland, Heal the Ocean

Katie Thompson, Save Our Shores

Molly Troup, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

Fifer Garbesi

Natalie Jones, Center for Biological Diversity

Christopher Cogan (submitted speaker card, but was not present)

Rafael Garcia (submitted speaker card, but was not present)

Michael N. Mills, Stoel Rives LLP

Motion: Member Rodriguez moved to adopt Resolution R3-2025-0024, with the change sheet proposed by the Advisory Team

Second: Vice Chair Wolff

Aye: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Hoskins, Member Rodriguez, and Member Harlan

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 5 to 0

Chair Gray adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

Friday, April 18, 2025

Chair Gray called the meeting to order on Friday, April 18, 2025, at 9:05 a.m.

13. Roll Call

Present: Chair Gray, Vice Chair Wolff, Member Rodriguez, and Member Hoskins

Absent: Member Harlan

14. Field Trip – Tour of McFadden Woodchip Bioreactor and Castroville Wetland Treatment Systems [Katie McNeill, Environmental Scientist, 805/549-3336, Katie.McNeill@waterboards.ca.gov and Daniel Ellis, Senior Environmental Scientist, 805/549-3889, Daniel.Ellis@waterboards.ca.gov]

Chair Gray adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Jane Gray, Chair

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