



North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

August 29, 2025

John Smith
City of Fort Bragg
416 North Franklin Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
jsmith@fortbragg.com

Dear Mr. John Smith:

Subject: Notice of Applicability of Coverage under Order No. R1-2020-0006 General NPDES Permit for Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters of the North Coast Region

File: City of Fort Bragg, Oneka Desalination Buoy Project, 416 North Franklin Street, Fort Bragg, Mendocino County, WDID No. 1B25030RMEN

The City of Fort Bragg (Permittee) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll for coverage under the NPDES Permit for Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters of the North Coast Region, Order No. R1-2020-0006 (General Order) on October 10, 2024. Based on information provided in the NOI and the document titled City of Fort Bragg, Oneka Desalination Buoy Pilot Project Description (Project Description), dated October 8, 2024, for discharges of brine from the desalination buoy, Regional Water Board staff determined that the Permittee's discharge, as described in their NOI and Project Description, qualifies as a low threat discharge and is eligible for coverage under the General Order. Therefore, this NOA serves as formal notice that Order R1-2020-0006 is applicable to Fort Bragg. The uses described in the submitted NOI and Project Description, and authorized under this permit enrollment include:

- The City of Fort Bragg's Oneka Desalination Buoy Pilot Project: Desalination Buoy brine discharge within the Pacific Ocean.

California Water Code (Water Code) section 13142.5, subdivision (b) (section 13142.5(b)) requires that each new or expanded coastal powerplant or other industrial installation using seawater for cooling, heating, or industrial processing must make use of the best available site, design, technology, and mitigation measures feasible to minimize the intake and mortality of all forms of marine life. The proposed City of Fort

Bragg, Oneka Desalination Buoy Project (Project), constitutes a new facility and the Regional Water Board's section 13142.5(b) determination letter is included as Attachment A. As a portable desalination facility that withdraws less than 0.10 million gallons per day of seawater and is operated by a government agency, Chapter III.M.2, M.3, and M.4 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California (Ocean Plan) do not apply to this determination.

A copy of the General Order is included as Attachment B, and available electronically at the [Regional Water Board website](#) for adopted Orders for 2020. Monitoring and Reporting Program Order No. R1-2025-0041 (MRP) replaces the MRP contained within the General Order and is included as Attachment C to this NOA. Please carefully review the General Order and MRP and familiarize yourself with all its requirements and provisions.

If you have any questions regarding this NOA or your enrollment under the General Order, or if you find it necessary to make a change to your permitted operations, you may contact Matthew Herman, by telephone at 707-576-2683 or email at Matthew.Herman@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Valerie Quinto
Executive Officer

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Attachments:

Attachment A: Regional Water Board 13142.5(b) Determination Letter for the City of Fort Bragg, Oneka Desalination Buoy Project

Attachment B: Waste Discharge Requirements for Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters in the North Coast Region, Order No. R1-2020-0006

Attachment C: Monitoring and Reporting Program for the City of Fort Bragg, Oneka Desalination Buoy Project, Order No. R1-2025-0041

cc: Ms. Kelsey Husted, U.S. EPA, Region 9, NPDES Permits Section,
husted.Kelsey@epa.gov

Mr. Eric Miller, Miller Marine Science & Consulting, Inc.,
ericm@millermarinescience.com

Ms. Jeanie Mascia, SWRCB, Division of Water Quality, Ocean Desalination Unit, mascia.Jeanie@waterboards.ca.gov

Ms. Gintare Huckeba, SWRCB, Division of Water Quality, Ocean Desalination Unit, huckeba.Gintare@waterboards.ca.gov

Ms. Christine Day, California State Lands Commission, christine.day@slc.ca.gov

Mr. Joseph Street, California Coastal Commission, joseph.street@coastal.ca.gov

Mendocino County Health Department, enviroh@mendocinocounty.gov

ATTACHMENT A

**REGIONAL WATER BOARD 13142.5(b) DETERMINATION LETTER FOR THE
CITY OF FORT BRAGG, ONEKA DESALINATION BUOY PROJECT**

ATTACHMENT B

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR LOW THREAT DISCHARGES
TO SURFACE WATERS IN THE NORTH COAST REGION
ORDER NO. R1-2020-0006**

Here is a link to Attachment A on the [North Coast Regional Water Board Website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/pdf/2020/20_0006_Low%20Threat%20Discharges%20to%20Surface%20Waters.pdf):

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/pdf/2020/20_0006_Low%20Threat%20Discharges%20to%20Surface%20Waters.pdf)

ATTACHMENT C

**MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM
ORDER NO. R1-2025-0041**