

Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report  
December 10 & 11, 2020

**ITEM:** 2

**SUBJECT:** Public Hearing on Order R1-2020-0032 to consider adoption of proposed Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) and Clean Water Act section 401 Water Quality Certification (401 Certification) and attached Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) for Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) Stream Maintenance Program, WDID 1B09026WNSO (Kaete King).

**BOARD ACTION:** The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) will consider adoption of proposed Order No. R-2020-0032 (Proposed Order).

**BACKGROUND:** This Proposed Order and MRP regulate Sonoma Water's Stream Maintenance Program (SMP) routine stream maintenance activities within the North Coast Region. Order R1-2020-0032 supersedes Order R1-2009-0049 (referred to as the "2009 Order"), which was adopted on July 23, 2009. On June 20, 2014, the Water Quality Certification portion of the 2009 Order was administratively amended to extend the expiration date by 5 years to July 23, 2019. On June 26, 2019, the 2009 Order was administratively amended to extend the expiration date to December 31, 2020, to allow for continued operation of the SMP while allowing for inter-agency review of the revised SMP Manual and inter-agency permit coordination.

Sonoma Water performs activities as described in the SMP Manual, including sediment management, vegetation management, bank stabilization, and a group of minor activities in stream channels within its maintenance jurisdiction. The maintenance jurisdiction includes approximately 205 miles of stream channels (waters of the state) within Sonoma County including in portions of the Russian River, Bodega Bay, and Gualala River watersheds. The San Pablo Bay Basin draining portions of Sonoma County is located within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, for which Sonoma Water has obtained separate authorization.

The purpose of the SMP is to provide flood protection and maintain channel conveyance capacity while enhancing natural resources and recreational opportunities. This Proposed Order will authorize SMP activities and require implementation of best management practices, compensatory mitigation, monitoring, and reporting. The 2009 Order includes an MRP which the Executive Officer revised on July 29, 2010, and April 29, 2016.

**DISCUSSION:** The Proposed Order does not include substantive changes to the 2009 Order and MRP. Revisions reflect language updates to correspond to adaptive management changes to the SMP Manual that were completed in 2019. The 2009 Order included a 5-year expiration date for the 401 Certification portion and a 10-year

expiration date for the WDRs. This Proposed Order will not expire and instead includes the requirement that staff update the Regional Water Board every five years to demonstrate the status and effectiveness of the Order in regulating the SMP.

MRP R1-2020-0032 has been updated, after 10 years of sampling, monitoring and reporting, to remove Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) from the list of analytes to be sampled and analyzed prior to removal of sediment. Sonoma Water requested that PAHs be removed because PAH levels in repeated samples were consistent with anthropogenic background levels from aerial fallout of combustion-related particles. Regional Water Board staff concur with these findings and this request given many years of consistent results.

A copy of the draft Order was posted on the Regional Water Board website and was available for public comment from August 18, 2020, through September 17, 2020. No written comments were received. Regional Water Board staff reviewed the draft Order with the Discharger during the public comment period. Minor editorial corrections and clarifications were made to the Proposed Order. Though Regional Water Board staff anticipate the Proposed Order will be uncontested, a staff presentation will be provided along with a presentation by Sonoma Water staff.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Order No. R1-2020-0032 and MRP, as proposed.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

1. Proposed Order No. R1-2020-0032
2. Monitoring and Reporting Program
3. Notice of Public Hearing
4. SMP Manual