

State of California
Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
JUNE 24, 2015

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: **Tentative Resolution No. R9-2015-0086: Tentative Resolution in Support of Implementation of the Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay** (*Melissa Valdovinos*)

PURPOSE: To consider adoption of Tentative Resolution No. R9-2015-0086, which supports implementation of the June 2015 Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay (Strategy)

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Tentative Resolution No. R9-2015-0086

KEY ISSUES: None

PRACTICAL VISION: The Strategy is a pilot-scale implementation of Practical Vision Chapters 1 and 2 (PV1 and PV2).

In accordance with PV1, implementing the Strategy will ensure that the staff, funding, authority, tools, and influence of the San Diego Water Board applied to San Diego Bay (Bay) are put to the best possible use. The Strategy identifies seven iterative steps to ensure that the San Diego Water Board's Bay-related work is aligned with the most important goals and highest priorities in the Bay. Consistent with the PV1 process, the seven steps are to 1) identify key uses and key areas, 2) conduct assessments related to those uses and areas, 3) develop a prioritization process and set priorities accordingly, 4) set measurable goals, 5) realign work, 6) track progress, and 7) periodically reevaluate priorities.

In accordance with PV2, implementing the Strategy will result in a water body-oriented monitoring and assessment approach that answers specific questions about conditions of beneficial uses. The Strategy calls for an initial assessment of conditions, development and implementation of a Bay-wide monitoring program for subsequent assessments, and communication of results to decision makers and the public.

DISCUSSION:

Tentative Resolution No. R9-2015-0086 (Supporting Document No. 1) supports implementation of the Strategy (Supporting Document No. 2) with the purpose of guiding the San Diego Water Board in using its resources optimally to protect and restore the health of the Bay. This includes identifying a process for the Board to establish priorities in a scientifically sound, consistent, and transparent manner.

San Diego Bay is considered a high priority water body in the San Diego region due to its ecological value and because it supports tourism, commercial and subsistence fishing, and a variety of recreational, maritime, industrial, commercial, and military uses.

Because the San Diego Water Board devotes significant resources to this high priority water body, it is imperative to ensure that those resources are put to the best possible use to protect and restore the health of the Bay. Therefore, the Bay was chosen for pilot-scale implementation of Practical Vision Chapters 1 and 2, as this implementation is outlined in the Strategy.

Board staff conducted multiple meetings with select stakeholders (e.g. U.S. Navy, Port District, City of San Diego, Coastkeeper) and regulatory agencies (including U.S. E.P.A., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Coastal Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife) to seek input and assistance on the development of the Draft Strategy.

Board staff reviewed the Bay's 13 beneficial uses identified in the Basin Plan and determined that the categories of uses that are most critical to consider in protecting human and environmental health – the “key uses” – of the Bay are 1) recreation, 2) human consumption of fish and shellfish, and 3) habitats and ecosystems. These key uses are identified in Step 1 of the Strategy.

On April 16, 2015, San Diego Water Board staff made a draft version of the Strategy available to the public and accepted written comments through May 21, 2015.

San Diego Water Board staff hosted a public workshop on April 28, 2015 to provide an overview of the Strategy and gather the public's input on the Bay's "key areas"; locations within or along the Bay that are intensively used and/or that are significant for a key use. This input, as well as input from other meetings with government agencies active in the Bay, is being used to develop a proposed list of applicable key areas for each proposed key use.

Six sets of written comments on the draft Strategy were submitted (Supporting Document 3). Staff prepared written responses to all comments (Supporting Document 4) and made minor changes to clarify the meaning of key uses and to emphasize the role of the Regional Harbor Monitoring Program in the assessment step (Step 2).

LEGAL CONCERNS:

None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

1. Tentative Resolution No. R9-2015-0086
2. Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay (June 2015)
3. Written comments on the draft Strategy
4. Responses to comments on the draft Strategy

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Notice was provided on the San Diego Water Board's website and via Lyris list on April 8, 16, and 19, 2015 and in the mailed and on-line agenda for the June 24, 2015 Board Meeting.