

State of California  
Regional Water Quality Control Board  
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT  
March 15, 2017

- ITEM: 12
- SUBJECT: Tentative Resolution: Resolution Supporting Use of the Key Beneficial Uses / Key Areas Concept to Help the San Diego Water Board Focus on What is Most Important (Tentative Resolution No. R9-2017-0030) (*Bruce Posthumus*)
- PURPOSE: Consider adoption of tentative Resolution No. R9-2017-0030.
- RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Tentative Resolution No. R9-2017-0030.
- KEY ISSUES: How can the Board prioritize its work and allocate and use its resources so as to be more effective?
- PRACTICAL VISION: The Tentative resolution (Supporting Document 1) and the attached staff report (Supporting Document 2) have their origins in the “Practical Vision” endorsed by the Board in November 2013. [Chapter 1](#) of the Practical Vision is about ensuring that the resources of the Board are put to the best possible use for the purpose of protecting and restoring the integrity, or health, of waters in the San Diego Region. To help the Board determine and focus on what is most important, that chapter, “Focusing on What is Most Important: Strategizing for Healthy Waters,” introduced the concept of key beneficial uses and key areas.
- DISCUSSION: The Tentative Resolution would support use of the key beneficial uses / key areas concept to help the Board focus on what is most important. The Tentative Resolution would also endorse the attached staff report, which outlines the key beneficial uses / key areas concept, identifies key beneficial uses and many key areas, and suggests how the key beneficial uses / key areas concept can help the Board focus on what is most important.

“Waters with chemical, physical, and biological integrity” is one way of expressing the desired outcome of the Board’s work. Accordingly, the Board’s work involves both protecting and restoring the integrity, or health, of waters in the San Diego Region. The reason for doing so is to ensure that beneficial uses of those waters are not adversely affected by anthropogenic influences on water body conditions. Because beneficial uses are at the core of the Board’s work, they are also at the core of determining what is most important for the Board.

### **Key Beneficial Uses**

As set forth in the Practical Vision, key beneficial uses are the individual beneficial uses and categories of beneficial uses that are most critical to protecting human and environmental health, and, therefore, the uses for which protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters is most important. Key beneficial uses of waters in the San Diego Region are:

- Drinking water supply;
- Fish and shellfish consumption;
- Recreation; and
- Habitats and ecosystems.

### **Key Areas**

Key areas are the waters and places where protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters is most important for a key beneficial use; for example, waters and places with a high intensity of recreational use are key areas for the key beneficial use of recreation. Key areas can be identified in terms of key water bodies (key water body *types* and key *individual* water bodies) and in terms of areas of special importance (*types* of areas of special importance and *specific* areas of special importance).

It may be useful to identify key areas at larger scales or with less specificity for some purposes and at smaller scales or with more specificity for other purposes. The staff report identifies key areas for each key beneficial use in the San Diego Region.

### **Applying Key Beneficial Uses and Key Areas**

Applying the key beneficial uses / key areas concept to the Board's work, and to the work the Board directs other entities to undertake, can help the Board and those other entities focus on what is most important for the protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters in the Region.

The attached staff report discusses some of the potential applications of the key beneficial uses / key areas concept.

The Board has limited resources with which to do its work, so there are limits on how much the Board can do, and decisions must be made about how to prioritize the Board's work and how to allocate and use the Board's resources. Although the Board may need to consider a variety of factors in making such decisions, key beneficial uses and key areas should always be among the factors considered in doing so.

**LEGAL CONCERNS:**

None.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

1. Tentative Resolution No. R9-2017-0030
2. Staff report: "Key Beneficial Uses and Key Areas – Focusing on What is Most Important" (February 2017)
3. Public Comments Received by February 28, 2017

**PUBLIC NOTICE:**

Public Notice for this item was provided in the meeting notice and agenda for the March 15, 2017 Board meeting, which was sent to those subscribed to the Board's Email list for "Board Meetings" and which is posted on the Board's website. A notice of opportunity to comment was also distributed to the "Board Meetings" and "Healthy San Diego Bay" Email lists and posted on-line on February 15, 2016.