

**REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
AUGUST 8, 2018**

ITEM 4

SUBJECT

Information Item: Annual Update on the Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay (*Wayne Chiu*).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item and the Board will not take an action.

KEY ISSUE

To protect and restore the health of San Diego Bay, the Board needs to identify and then focus its staff and resources on what is most important. Priorities and goals are being refined by integrating recent assessments of key beneficial uses and progress from historical and current regulatory actions.

PRACTICAL VISION

Implementation of the [Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay](#) (Strategy) is an important part of [Chapter 1 \(Strategizing for Healthy Waters\)](#) of the [Practical Vision](#) because it is intended to ensure that the Board is focusing and aligning its work with the most important goals and highest priorities for San Diego Bay. The Strategy also implements Practical Vision [Chapter 2 \(Monitoring and Assessment\)](#) because it will implement a water body oriented monitoring framework for the applicable key beneficial use categories for San Diego Bay, which are recreation, fish and shellfish consumption, and habitats and ecosystems.

DISCUSSION

San Diego Bay is a high priority water body in the San Diego region due to its ecological value and because it supports fishing, recreation, tourism, and a variety of maritime, commercial, and military uses. At its [June 2015](#) meeting, the Board [endorsed](#) the Strategy, which guides the Board and its staff in making the most efficient and effective use of their resources when taking actions to protect and restore the health of the Bay.

After the Board endorsed the Strategy, staff began assessing the conditions in San Diego Bay with regards to the key beneficial uses for key areas. The initial assessments have been focused on understanding the Bay's current conditions based on available data. The initial assessments for the recreation and fish and shellfish consumption key beneficial uses were completed in 2017, and the initial assessment for the habitats and ecosystems key beneficial use has been initiated. Findings from the initial assessments for the recreation and fish and shellfish consumption key beneficial uses were provided to the Board at the [October 2016](#) and [August 2017](#) meetings.

While the Board staff has been assessing the conditions of the Bay, the Board's regulatory and monitoring programs have been aligning their work to better focus on the key beneficial uses in the Bay. Because of the time necessary to complete the initial assessments, programs have been benefitting more slowly than expected from the assessments when setting priorities for their work. Recent efforts have begun to help the programs better incorporate what has been learned from the assessments so they can focus on what is most important and will provide the most beneficial environmental outcomes.

As the assessment work continues, staff has also been implementing the next steps of the Strategy (i.e. identify priorities for protecting and restoring key beneficial uses in key areas, set goals for environmental outcomes, and realign the Board's work to achieve goals). The assessments help the Board, staff, and the public understand the conditions of the Bay, but

identifying priorities, setting goals, and realigning work to focus on what is most important needs to also consider other information. Critical to implementing the next steps of the Strategy is understanding what is known about stressors impacting the Bay's conditions, the sources of those stressors, as well as the progress already made from historical and current work.

This information item will review what Board staff understands about the stressors, sources, and work that has been completed or is currently being implemented, together with what has been learned from the initial assessment work completed thus far, and how that informs the implementation of the next steps of the Strategy.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This item was announced electronically through the "Healthy Waters: San Diego Bay" listserv email group on July 17, 2018. In addition, notice was provided in the Meeting Notice and Agenda for the August 8, 2018 meeting.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None