

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
November 13, 2013

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: Resolution endorsing the San Diego Water Board Practical Vision (Tentative Resolution No. R9-2013-0153).
(David Gibson)

PURPOSE: To consider adopting Tentative Resolution No. R9-2013-0153 that endorses the San Diego Water Board Practical Vision.

RECOMMENDATION: Adoption of Tentative Resolution No. R9-2013-0153.

KEY ISSUES: None.

DISCUSSION: Resolution No. R9-2013-0153 (Supporting Document No. 1) endorses the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) Practical Vision: Healthy Waters, Healthy People. The Practical Vision is a strategy to guide the San Diego Water Board through a culture change to achieve healthy waters through collaboration, reliance on the latest science, prioritization of issues and actions based on environmental outcomes rather than programmatic dictates, and prudent use of its authorities in service to the people of California.

During the course of the development of the Practical Vision, the San Diego Water Board staff teams identified 7 focus areas, 5 of which are summarized in the Practical Vision. Two of the focus areas (“Supported, Empowered, and Energized Community” and “Effective, Efficient Mission Support”) are internal initiatives currently underway aimed at creating and reinforcing the culture at Water Board that brings out the best in our staff and inspires them to be and do the best they can as stewards of the environment, resources and public trust to achieve the Water Board’s Mission.

In 2013, Board Members and the Executive Officer met with many elected officials and representatives of local

governments and non-governmental organizations to solicit input on the broad framework of the Practical Vision. Many of those discussions raised similar issues concerning public participation, using of the best science in decision making, reducing the cost of compliance, increasing collaboration, and using environmental measures for setting goals and priorities, and measuring and assessing Water Board program efficacy.

The Practical Vision includes five chapters:

1. Strategizing for Healthy Waters
2. Monitoring and Assessment
3. Recovery of Stream, Wetlands, and Riparian Systems
4. Proactive Public Outreach and Communication
5. A Vision for Achieving a Sustainable Local Water Supply.

The Practical Vision includes several tasks that are already underway. In December 2012, the Water Board adopted Resolution R9-2012-0069 endorsing the Regional Monitoring Framework for waters in the San Diego Region. Other projects currently on going include the San Diego Bay Strategy (Chapter 1), San Diego River Monitoring and Assessment Coordination and Improvement (Chapter 2), and Salt and Nutrient Management Plans (Chapter 5).

Implementation of the Practical Vision during the next 7 years will provide guidance to the San Diego Water Board to match its regulatory and legislative obligations with regional goals and invite stakeholder participation to achieve environmental outcomes. Measures of biological integrity will be key in setting goals, prioritizing efforts and reporting progress of the Practical Vision. Biological integrity is the most comprehensive indicator of water body health. When the biology of a stream is healthy, the chemical and physical components of the stream are also typically in good condition.

To ensure year to year continuity and provide opportunities for discussion of progress, strategic prioritization, and course corrections, one San Diego Water Board meeting per year will be dedicated to reviewing an Annual Report that documents progress on Practical Vision goals. A work plan for the next year will be provided to the Water Board Members for discussion and consideration in open session.

Based on the feedback and direction of the Water Board Members, the staff will develop the required annual programmatic work plans for the State Water Board and US EPA and update staff level Individual Development Plans (“My Essential Part of the Practical Vision”) to incorporate San Diego Water Board priorities and direction.

The Practical Vision is not a task list or set of priorities in and of itself, but rather a tool for culture change necessary to achieve healthy waters consistent with the objective of the Clean Water Act for chemical, physical, and biological integrity. It will enhance our culture of stakeholder collaboration, consideration of costs, and scientific analysis to restore and maintain the quality of our waters and their beneficial uses.

LEGAL CONCERNS:

None.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

1. Tentative Resolution No. R9-2013-0153.
2. San Diego Water Board Practical Vision.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Notice was provided in the agenda for the November 13, 2013 Board Meeting, which was posted on the San Diego Water Board’s website on October 23, 2013.