

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION**

MEETING DATE: August 13, 2025

ITEM: 4

Executive Officer's Report

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Cleanup Order for American Cleaners in Pleasanton (Katherine Ward)

In July 2025, the Executive Officer signed a cleanup order under Water Code section 13304 for a 2,000-foot-long groundwater plume caused by the former American Cleaners dry cleaner in Pleasanton. The dry cleaner operated at the site from the 1940s to 1992 and used tetrachloroethene (PCE) as a cleaning agent. The order was issued to the current property owner, two past property owners, and several former dry cleaner businesses dating back to 1943.

The PCE leaked into soil and caused contamination in soil vapor, indoor air, and groundwater. The Livermore Valley groundwater basin beneath Pleasanton is actively used as a source of drinking water. We are coordinating our regulatory oversight with Zone 7 Water Agency, the groundwater sustainability and water resource management agency for the basin. While the groundwater plume has affected the drinking water supply well at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, the water is treated with granular activated carbon to meet all state and federal drinking water requirements that safeguard public health.

There are also vapor intrusion concerns at the former dry cleaner building and several nearby buildings. The responsible parties are mitigating vapor intrusion by using a soil vapor extraction system, an exhaust fan at the former dry cleaner building, and by sealing the basement of a nearby building.

The responsible parties submitted a cleanup plan that includes the following elements:

- Groundwater treatment by enhanced bioremediation using 49 injection points into the groundwater aquifer
- Expansion of the soil vapor extraction treatment system
- Maintaining the vapor intrusion mitigation measures at the former dry cleaner building and a nearby building
- Installing nine additional groundwater monitoring wells
- Long-term monitoring of groundwater, soil vapor, and indoor air
- Wellhead treatment for an impacted drinking water well

The order sets cleanup levels and requires implementation of the cleanup plan. A startup report is due by January 30, 2026. Semi-annual effectiveness monitoring reports are due every 6 months, and the first five-year effectiveness review is due in 2031. The cleanup order also contains contingency tasks for potential additional investigation and cleanup, if needed. Several of the former dry cleaner operators have environmental insurance policies, which are helping to pay for the considerable cost of the investigation and cleanup.



Figure 1: Aerial image of former dry cleaner at 555 Main Street in Pleasanton

Pescadero Creek Watershed Roads Sediment Reduction Project (Nicole Fairley)

The State Water Resources Control Board receives federal funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under 319(h) of the Clean Water Act. This funding is to implement a nonpoint source grant program that funds projects to reduce nonpoint source pollution in runoff that flows to waters of the State. The program favors projects addressing nonpoint source pollution in impaired watersheds and further prioritizes improvements in watersheds with Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements. The implementation plan for the Pescadero - Butano Creek Watershed Sediment TMDL includes specific objectives for reducing fine sediment delivery from roads and explicit guidance for San Mateo County roads. This has made road improvements in this watershed a priority for our region's 319(h) grant program, allowing us to help facilitate progress toward these TMDL objectives. This year, the nonpoint source grant program awarded \$1 million in 319(h) grant funds to the County of San Mateo (Grantee) to implement their Pescadero Creek Watershed Roads Sediment Reduction Project (Project).

The Project aims to prevent approximately 2,675 tons of excess sediment delivery to Pescadero Creek tributaries by upgrading four deteriorating stream crossings on County-maintained roads identified as high priority in the Pescadero-Butano Watershed Sediment TMDL Implementation Plan. Project activities include replacing two deteriorating culverts and stabilizing active erosion on Wurr Road and upsizing two undersized culverts to convey the 100-year flow on Old Haul Road (see photos below). These implementation actions are intended to make meaningful progress towards achieving TMDL sediment reduction targets, improve in-stream habitat quality, and increase the resiliency of critically important access routes in the upper watershed.



Figure 1: Wurr Rd. at Bloomquist Creek. Erosion undercutting the outlet of existing 78" diameter culvert.



Figure 2: Wurr Rd. at Petersen Creek. Bottom of 84" diameter culvert shows signs of rusting out in 2021 and has continued to degrade.



Figure 3: Old Haul Rd at Schenly Creek. Erosion undercutting the outlet of existing undersized culvert (48" diameter).



Figure 4: Old Haul Rd at Rhododendron Creek. Inlet of undersized 24" diameter culvert.

The Grantee will coordinate Project implementation with their long-standing project partners, the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD), by forming an experienced project team that includes staff from the County Departments of Public Works, Parks, and Office of Sustainability, and the San Mateo RCD. The Grantee will provide local government matching funds and be responsible for grant management, project design, permitting, and long-term site maintenance, while the San Mateo RCD will oversee construction and manage the contractor bidding process. This project is one of many drainage improvement efforts that the Grantee and their partners are working to carry out within the watershed. We expect to see more 319(h) grant applications in the future as they continue focusing on reducing sediment runoff by improving high priority, county-maintained road crossings.

Staff Updates (Eileen M. White)



Sarah Doyle joined the TMDL and Basin Planning Division as a Scientific Aid. Sarah recently received a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and Sociology from the University of California Santa Cruz, where she focused on freshwater ecology. She is excited to be assisting the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) team with a variety of projects and field work. Sarah is coming to the Water Board from the USGS Ecosystems unit, where she worked with greater sage-grouse in Lassen County. Outside of work, Sarah enjoys backpacking and climbing. She is originally from Mount Shasta, California and is excited to explore the Bay Area.



I am also pleased to announce that Kevin Lunde has been selected for the new Environmental Program Manager position funded by U.S. EPA to support nutrient management in San Francisco Bay. In his new role Kevin will oversee science and stakeholder engagement in the Nutrient Management Strategy translating the science into information to be used in future Nutrient Watershed Permits.

Kevin recently served as a Senior Environmental Scientist in the Planning Division managing the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP), TMDL Program, Basin Planning, and Navigation Dredging. During that time, he worked with staff on many nutrient and eutrophication-related projects, including nutrient sampling and impairment assessments in the Petaluma River, Lagunitas and Walker Creeks, and Arroyo Las Positas and Arroyo Mocho. Kevin also served as chair of the Nutrient Management Strategy for the past year and ushered the group through a process to create a five-year science plan and represented our regional interests on the statewide nutrient and biostimulatory policy. Kevin earned his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley's Environmental Science, Policy, and Management program studying freshwater ecology, with a focus on biological assessment using macroinvertebrates.

Please join me congratulating Kevin on his well-deserved promotion.

Enforcement Actions (Brian Thompson and James Parrish)

On behalf of the Board, the Executive Officer approved the following settlement:

Discharger	Violation(s)	Imposed Penalty	Supplemental Environmental Project
City of Richmond and Richmond Municipal Sewer District No. 1	Discharge limit violations	\$336,000	\$168,000 ¹

- ¹ This amount will fund the Richmond Watershed Rangers Program, which will coordinate and supervise watershed stewardship and trash cleanup projects in the City of Richmond's disadvantaged communities with participation from local schools. Students will perform projects with assistance from their teachers and families with the primary goal of trash removal within neighborhoods, parks, and waterways.

401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received (Elizabeth Morrison)

The table below lists those applications received for Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification from June 12 through July 9, 2025. A check mark in the right-hand column indicates a project with work that may be in the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) jurisdiction.

Project Name	City/Location	County	May have BCDC Jurisdiction
Berkeley South Cove East Timber Pier Pile Repair	Berkeley	Alameda	X
Tidewater Pile Replacement	Oakland	Alameda	X
Port of Oakland Shoreline Maintenance	Oakland	Alameda	X
R36072 Collier Canyon Road MM 3.66 Storm Damage Repair	Unincorporated	Alameda	
Sausalito Ferry Terminal Improvements Project	Sausalito	Marin	X
Tiburon Seawall Emergency Repair	Tiburon	Marin	X
Southeast Bay Outfall Settlement Monitoring & 54-inch Pipe Repair Project	San Francisco	San Francisco	X
Peninsula Crossing Project	Burlingame	San Mateo	
Bay Rise Park	Burlingame	San Mateo	X
Mussel Rock Landfill - Emergency Revetment Installation	Daly City	San Mateo	
Butano Canyon Habitat and Streambank Restoration Project	Pescadero	San Mateo	
Hyde Creek Restoration Project	Sonoma	Sonoma	