

**State of California**  
**California Regional Water Quality Control Board Santa Ana Region**  
**February 3, 2023**  
**STAFF REPORT**

ITEM: 10

SUBJECT: 2024 Integrated Report

**BACKGROUND:**

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA), sections 305(b) and 303(d), requires each state to report biennially to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) on the conditions of the state's waters and provide a list of water bodies or segments that are "impaired or threatened," which are those that do not meet, or are not expected to meet, water quality standards ("303(d) List"). The information required under CWA 303(d) and 305(b) is combined into a single "Integrated Report." Staff will provide preliminary results of the 2024 Integrated Report, and a discussion about the public process that will be taking place this year. This public process is one result of a lawsuit that was filed against the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) in 2017 regarding missed deadlines for the Integrated Report. The outcome of the lawsuit is discussed in more detail below.

The data assessments that are used to generate the 2024 Integrated Report are a valuable part of the comprehensive assessment of current conditions in the water bodies in the Santa Ana Region and provide information about beneficial use attainment or impairment in specific water bodies.

In California, the Integrated Report is released in "cycles," with each cycle occurring every two years, on even numbered years, consisting of three Regional Water Boards per cycle. The Santa Ana Water Board is on-cycle for the 2024 Integrated Report.

In accordance with a public notice distributed by the State Water Board, data submitted to the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) prior to October 16, 2020 by any party were considered for the 2024 Integrated Report cycle. All high-quality data supported by a Quality Assurance Project Plan were used to generate lines of evidence (LOEs) for waterbodies or segments. Santa Ana Water Board staff analyzed over 7,000 LOEs, which were used to create approximately 2,300 draft impairment decisions about the quality of water bodies in the Santa Ana Region. These decisions include whether to list (as impaired), do not list, delist (no longer impaired) or do not delist the water body and pollutant combination from the existing 303(d) List of impaired water bodies. An overview of the draft resulting decisions will be provided in the staff

presentation. Specific proposed decisions will be available for public comment during the State Water Board's public comment period, which will commence on February 1, 2023.

The Integrated Report public review process changed as a result of a November 2017 lawsuit brought against State Water Board by Earth Law Center, Los Angeles Water Keeper, and San Diego Coastkeeper in response to late submissions of the Integrated Report and the lack of inclusion of the most current data available at that time. As a result of the lawsuit, a judgment was entered in September 2019 requiring the State Water Board to submit biennial Integrated Reports to USEPA by April 1st on even numbered years. The State Water Board was required to submit a corrective action plan in January 2020, which included efficacy measures for organizing and analyzing large volumes of data, a new Assessment Policy and Process Unit in the Division of Water Quality at State Board, and a major change in the public process.

Prior to the lawsuit, the nine Regional Boards conducted their own separate public processes that included a public comment period for the staff report, public workshops, and adoption hearings. This was followed by an additional similar public process at the State Water Board. The corrective action plan omits the separate processes at the Regional Board level, and combines all on-cycle regions for a public review process and hearing at the State Board.

In lieu of a Regional Board hearing to approve the Integrated Report, the purpose of this informational item is to provide a preview of the Santa Ana Region's 2024 Integrated Report and make the public aware of the modified participation process.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an Informational Item - no action is required.