

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

NOTICE OF CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin to Revise the Total Maximum Daily Loads for Fecal Coliform in Newport Bay

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region (Santa Ana Water Board) will hold a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting regarding a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan) to revise the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for fecal coliform in Newport Bay (Basin Plan amendment).

Members of the public are invited to participate in the meeting. The scoping meeting will provide participants with the opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the Substitute Environmental Document (SED) that will be prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.5, California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15251(g), and title 23, section 3777 for the proposed Basin Plan amendment.

The CEQA scoping meeting will be held on the following date and time, in person and virtually:

Date: February 25, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM Pacific Time
Location: Southern California Coastal Watershed Research Project
(SCCWRP)
3535 Harbor Blvd. Suite 110
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Virtual Participation Information:

Meeting Access Via Computer (Zoom):	
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87294134100?pwd=t7BZOluV5VxVfWNLVdLEhCpVNijKyW.1	
Meeting Access Via Telephone: 1 (669) 900-6833	
• Meeting ID: 872 9413 4100	• Meeting Password: 669643

The purpose of the scoping meeting is for Santa Ana Water Board staff to seek input from public agencies and members of the public on the range of project actions and alternatives, reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance, significant and cumulative impacts, and mitigation measures, if any, to be analyzed prior to the decision-making process on the proposed Basin Plan amendment. Comments received regarding the

scope and content of environmental issues will be considered in the SED that will be prepared for the proposed Basin Plan amendment. Scoping may also assist the Santa Ana Water Board in resolving concerns of affected federal, state, and local agencies and other interested persons. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3775.5.)

During the CEQA scoping meeting, Santa Ana Water Board staff will provide an overview of the SED process and the proposed Basin Plan amendment. Santa Ana Water Board staff will then solicit questions and written and verbal comments from the public regarding potential alternatives for the proposed Basin Plan amendment, potential significant environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for the proposed amendment that should be considered as part of the decision-making process. No formal action by the Santa Ana Water Board will be taken at the CEQA Scoping meeting.

BACKGROUND

In 1999, the Santa Ana Water Board adopted Resolution No. 99-10, establishing TMDLs for fecal coliform bacteria in Newport Bay (Fecal Coliform TMDL). The adopted Fecal Coliform TMDL included numeric water quality objectives for fecal coliform, specified in the Basin Plan, for the protection of water contact recreation (REC1) and shellfish harvesting (SHEL) beneficial uses. The dates for meeting the TMDLs varied. For REC1, TMDLs for fecal coliform needed to be met no later than December 30, 2014; and, for SHEL, TMDLs for fecal coliform needed to be met no later than December 30, 2019. The SHEL beneficial use will be addressed in a separate TMDL revision in the future. Since the original TMDLs adoption, Time Schedule Order (TSO), R8-2019-0050, was issued that extended the compliance date for REC1 to December 6, 2023, which was further extended by Order R8-2023-0063 to December 6, 2024, to provide additional time to comply with the fecal coliform effluent limitations. A second TSO was granted by Order R8-2025-0003, which extended the compliance date to December 6, 2027, and is currently in effect.

The agencies responsible for complying with the Newport Bay Fecal Coliform TMDLs are continuing to take actions to control sources of fecal coliform, implement adaptive approaches to prioritize, identify, and control sources of fecal coliform and a method to demonstrate the effectiveness of controls by monitoring and reporting. However, water quality objectives impacting REC1 beneficial uses are still not being attained for some monitoring stations as specified in TSO R8-2025-0030.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The Santa Ana Water Board will accept oral comments immediately following the CEQA scoping meeting and written comments. Persons wishing to submit written comments are requested to do so as soon as possible, but no later than **12:00 p.m. on March 11, 2026**.

Interested persons may submit written comments electronically to Lauren Hubbell at Lauren.Hubbell@waterboards.ca.gov using the subject line: "Comment Letter: CEQA Scoping NB FC TMDL".

Alternatively, comments may be submitted by hand delivery and mailed to:

Santa Ana Water Quality Control Board
Attn: Lauren Hubbell
3737 Main Street, Suite 500 Riverside CA
92501-3348

Santa Ana Water Board staff will not prepare written responses to comments received at this meeting or to written comments submitted. However, Santa Ana Water Board staff will address all significant environmental impacts in the draft and final environmental documents.

LANGUAGE SERVICES

This meeting will be offered in English. To request translation of written documents, interpretation services in another language, or sign language services, please use one of the following options at least 10 business days before the meeting, if possible:

- Submit a Language Services Request online (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/public_participation/language-access.html)
- Contact the Office of Public Engagement, Equity, and Tribal Affairs (OPEETA) at: 916-341-5254 or at: LanguageServices@waterboards.ca.gov

ACCESSIBILITY

Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD) users may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding the CEQA scoping meeting or the proposed project, please contact Lauren Hubbell, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (951) 320-6375, or by e-mail at Lauren.Hubbell@waterboards.ca.gov.

FUTURE NOTICES

Any change in the date, time, and place of the scoping meeting will be publicly noticed through GovDelivery e-mail list and on the Santa Ana Water Board's Public Notice webpage

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/public_notices/public_notices.html).

Any person desiring to receive future notices regarding the Newport Bay Fecal Coliform TMDL should sign up on the GovDelivery e-mail list by Subscribing to our Electronic Mailing List and selecting Newport Bay Fecal Coliform - TMDL in the TMDL section on the subscription webpage

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg8_subscribe.html).