

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report
8:30 A.M., Thursday, June 13, 2013
Santa Rosa CA

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: Public Workshop to solicit comments on **Nonpoint Source Program Strategy and Five-Year Plan**

BOARD ACTION: This is an informational item. No action will be taken by the Regional Water Board.

BACKGROUND: The Nonpoint Source Program Plan, developed by the State Water Resource Control Board (State Water Board), the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) and the California Coastal Commission (CCC), is a comprehensive statewide program that represents a significant commitment by the State to focus its efforts over a 15-year period to reduce and prevent nonpoint source (NPS) pollution.

One of the Key Elements required under § 319 of the Clean Water Act is as follows: "The State periodically reviews and evaluates its nonpoint source management program using environmental and functional measures of success, and revises its nonpoint source assessment and management program at least every five years." The State NPS Program is currently updating the NPS Program Strategy, which is based on a 15-year planning horizon for 2013-2028, while the Regional Water Boards will be updating their NPS Program Five-Year Implementation Plans for 2013-2018 to meet this requirement. Our Region last went through this planning process in 2008, with the result being the Five Year Plan that has guided NPS regulation for the period of 2008-2013. Guidance from the USEPA and State Water Board emphasize the need to devise measureable milestones and performance measures.

What is Nonpoint Source Pollution?

The NPS Program identifies six categories of land use that contribute to nonpoint source pollutants that affect water quality in California's waterways—agriculture, forestry (silviculture), urban, marinas, hydromodification, and wetlands/riparian areas.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture contributes more than half of the pollutants entering our nation's waterbodies, the most well-documented being nutrients, sediment, animal wastes, pesticides, and salts. Agricultural activities may also affect habitat through physical disturbances caused by livestock or the control or diversion of waterways.

FORESTRY (SILVICULTURE)

Forestry operations have the potential to degrade water quality by:

- Increasing sediment concentration from accelerated erosion.
- Increasing water temperatures from loss of riparian shade.
- Depleting dissolved oxygen concentrations from the accumulation of organic debris.
- Increasing the concentrations of organic and inorganic chemicals from fertilizers and pesticides.

URBAN

Major pollutants that could affect water quality from urbanization include sediment, nutrients, oxygen demanding substances, road salts, heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, pathogenic bacteria, and viruses.

MARINAS

Marinas and boat maintenance areas may threaten the health of aquatic systems and pose environmental hazards. These sources include:

- Poorly flushed waterways.
- Pollutants discharged from boats (recreational, commercial, and "live-aboard" boats).
- Pollutants carried in stormwater runoff.
- Physical alteration of wetlands and shellfish or other benthic communities during construction of marinas, ramps, and related facilities.
- Pollutants generated from boat maintenance activities.

HYDROMODIFICATION

Channel hydromodification includes the modification of stream and river channels, dams and water impoundments, and streambank/shoreline erosion. These activities are undertaken in rivers or streams to straighten, enlarge, deepen, or relocate the channel and can affect water temperature; change the natural supply of fresh water to a water body; and alter rates and paths of sediment erosion, transport, and deposition.

WETLANDS, RIPARIAN AREAS

Wetlands and riparian areas reduce polluted runoff by filtering runoff-related contaminants such as sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorous. Changes in hydrology, substrate, geochemistry, or species composition can impair the ability of wetland or riparian areas to filter out excess sediment and nutrients. Harmful activities include:

- drainage of wetlands for cropland, roads, or other construction activities.
- overgrazing.
- encroachment into riparian areas for agricultural activities.
- hydromodification.
- deposition of dredged material.
- excavation for ports and marinas.

DISCUSSION:

In developing the Five-Year Plan for 2013-2018, staff is holding public workshops to allow for input from the Board and public. This will help staff to determine which NPS issues the Regional Water Board will focus on in the period 2013-2018. Once a list of issues has been compiled, staff will evaluate and prioritize them based on a number of factors, including:

- What is the level of threat to water quality?
- Are there on-going efforts underway by the Regional Water Board that we can build on?
- Are there on-going statewide efforts underway by the State Water Board?
- Are there opportunities to coordinate with other agencies or entities?
- Are there opportunities to defer action to other agencies or entities?
- Are there existing requirements or expectations that an issue be addressed?
- Is the issue consistent with the categories included in NPS Program and guidance from State Board?
- What is the estimation of the chances for successful completion?

Based on input from the Board and public and staff's evaluation, staff will develop recommendations. Draft Plan recommendations to the Regional Water Board will also reflect staff's knowledge and expertise of the Region's geography and waters, as well as programs that encompass our regulatory framework (i.e., dredge and fill, stormwater, timber harvest, and others).

A focus of this effort will be the development of “Numerical Performance Measurements” that will measure the success of our restoration, improvement, and protection efforts. They must be easily reportable, measurable milestones for the State Water Board and the USEPA.

The final form of the Five-Year Plan will contain three to five initiatives that our Region will focus on between 2013 and 2018, and The Plan will be in the following format:

1. North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 1)
 - a. Introduction – Region Description
 - b. Initiative 1.1 – XXXX
 - 1) Initiative Description
 - 2) Needs Statement
 - 3) Goals and Objectives
 - 4) Proposed Activities
 - 5) Performance Measures (Metrics)
 - c. Initiative 1.2 –
 - d. Initiative 1.3 –
 - e. Initiative 1.4 –
 - f. Initiative 1.5 –
 - g. Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation

Regional Water Board staff will present the draft Five-Year Plan for input from the Board and public at the August 22, 2013 Regional Water Board Meeting. The final Five-Year Plan will then be compiled into the Statewide Program Plan by the State Water Board for approval by the USEPA. There will be further opportunities for public comments throughout the process.

Attachment 1 is a guidance document from the State Water Board that shows the format of the draft Plan, and defines many of the terms used in the Report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

1. Guidance Document for NPS Five-Year Plan (including Appendix B)
2. Notice of Public Workshop (web posting) and Interested Parties mailing list