

## **Practical Vision and Program Accomplishments for 2017**

The Practical Vision is a tool to focus our limited resources onto our region's highest priorities for the 2014 to 2020 time period. Twenty projects were undertaken in 2017 to implement the Practical Vision. An Operational Plan for implementing the projects was created to assign staff and budget resources, and establish milestones and schedules for the projects.

In concert with the work of the Practical Vision is the day-to-day programmatic work of the San Diego Water Board. This work falls into three broad categories; planning, permitting, and enforcement. Every year, San Diego Water Board staff prepares program work plans that include performance measures or commitments that are tracked by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and reported to the legislature. Although some of the Practical Vision projects overlap with program work plan commitments, there is a large body of work beyond the Practical Vision that is necessary to carry out the Board's core programmatic responsibilities.

This report describes some of the Practical Vision projects undertaken in 2017, and also describes the important program accomplishments submitted to the State Water Board for its annual report to the State Legislature.

### Chapter 1. Healthy Waters

**Key Uses and Key Areas.** The Board adopted Resolution No. R9-2017-0030 in March 2017 endorsing the key beneficial uses / key areas concept to help focus resources on what is most important. Key beneficial uses are those most critical to protecting human and environmental health, and, therefore, the uses for which protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters is most important. Key beneficial uses of waters in the San Diego Region are Drinking Water Supply, Fish and Shellfish Consumption, Recreation, and Habitats and Ecosystems. Key areas are the waters and places where protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters is most important for a key beneficial use. Applying the key beneficial uses / key areas concept to the Board's work, and to the work the Board directs other entities to undertake, can help the Board and those other entities focus on what is most important for the protection and restoration of the integrity, or health, of waters in the Region.

**Regulation of Commercial Agriculture.** The San Diego Water Board began implementation of Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Agriculture that were adopted in November 2016. Several workshops and meetings were conducted with growers to explain the permit requirements and to assist with enrollment. A major milestone was achieved when the Board was finally granted hiring authority to bring on-board their first staff dedicated to agricultural issues. As of mid-November 2017, 1,200 operations had enrolled in the permit. This represents an estimated 50 percent of those eligible for enrollment.

## Chapter 2. Monitoring and Assessment

**Chollas Creek TMDL Incorporates Water Effects Ratio for Metals.** The San Diego Water Board incorporated the latest science into Water Quality Objectives by amending the Basin Plan to incorporate site-specific water effect ratios for copper and zinc using a Water Effects Ratio approach for Chollas Creek, San Diego. This updates the Total Maximum Daily Load for the Creek to adjust upward the allowable loads of copper and zinc while still protecting beneficial uses.

## Chapter 3. Recovery of Stream, Wetland and Riparian Systems

**Restoration of Lake San Marcos and San Marcos Creek.** The San Diego Water Board adopted a Resolution Supporting a Path Forward for Nutrient Load Reductions in Lake San Marcos and the San Marcos Creek Watershed. An alum treatment pilot test was performed in the lake in spring 2017, and monitoring results show excellent progress in reducing phosphorus. Full-scale treatment of the lake is planned for spring 2018. The Board is working cooperatively with several diverse potentially responsible parties to address water quality impairments in the creek and lake. All stakeholders hope to avoid enforcement and TMDLs while restoring beneficial uses.

**Boat Channel Cleanup.** The San Diego Water Board approved a Record of Decision (ROD) to allow the United States Navy to remediate contaminated sediment in the area of San Diego Bay known as the Boat Channel, clearing the way for the eventual transfer of the property to the City of San Diego. Sediment removal by dredging began in November 2017 and will be completed in spring 2018. The Water Board has significantly improved its overall relationship with the Navy, and in addition to this ROD, the Water Board has authorized seven other RODs during the past two years and approved three NPDES Permits for Navy Region Southwest facilities without petition or objection. The Water Board and Navy are also collaborating on incorporating advanced technology in monitoring and assessment of San Diego Bay and coastal waters.

## Chapter 4. Proactive Public Outreach and Communication

**Water Body Fact Sheets.** The San Diego Water Board is conducting comprehensive assessments of the most important beneficial uses within San Diego Bay and producing 2-page "Status Sheets" for public distribution. In 2017, the Board posted status sheets for beneficial uses related to Fish and Shellfish Consumption, Contact Recreation, and Non-Contact Recreation. These provide accessible information to the public. By disseminating high level information about key issues with emphasis on environmental outcomes and water quality assessments, these status sheets improve meaningful communication on key challenges and actions.

**Community Outreach.** The San Diego Water Board continues to engage the community through adoption of a Community Outreach Strategy in November of 2016, conducting Board Member Outreach efforts throughout the region, hosting outreach booths at Earth Day and other local events, and by convening an Environmental Justice Symposium in the June of 2017.

## Chapter 5. Strategy for Achieving a Local Sustainable Water Supply

**Facilitating Regional Uses of Recycled Water.** The San Diego Water Board continues to facilitate the use of recycled water through the revision of Master Recycling Permits for the Carlsbad Water Recycling Facility and for the Ramona Municipal Water District. In August 2017, the Water Board and Santa Margarita Water District hosted a Water Reliability Summit to discuss several projects to effectively re-use recycled wastewater and to capture and harvest storm water runoff for water supply augmentation in the San Juan Basin.

### Core Program Accomplishments

**Enforcement.** The San Diego Water Board adopted Settlement Agreement/Stipulated ACL Order No. R9-2017-0056, Administrative Assessment of Civil Liability against the City of San Diego's Construction Management Program of \$3,220,664 for violations of the San Diego Water Board's Municipal Storm Water Permit in August of 2017. The Order settles numerous alleged violations discovered throughout the City of San Diego over several years. Investigations revealed that City inspectors were performing inspections and finding storm water best management practices (BMPs) to be adequate whereas San Diego Water Board inspectors observed no BMPs at all at the same sites. A subsequent audit of the two City departments responsible for construction storm water oversight revealed that the City's construction management program structure, responsibilities, and staffing were inadequate to implement the construction component of the municipal storm water permit, and that the City was in violation of its MS4 permit.

**Point Loma Waste Water Treatment Plant Permit Renewed and Indirect Potable Reuse.** The NPDES Permit for the City of San Diego's Point Loma Waste Water Treatment Plant was reissued in April of 2017 with significant commitments from the City to continue to reduce waste loads from the facility and to develop potable re-use of treated wastewater (Pure Water Program). In reviewing the City's operation of the Point Loma Treatment Facility and Ocean Outfall, the Water Board found that the City is in fact nearly meeting the NPDES secondary treatment standards for total suspended solids despite being regulated at an advanced primary treatment level. With the advance of the Pure Water Program, the City intends to develop approximately 33 percent of its daily water demand from recycled sources by the end of 2035 and may achieve the long sought total suspended solids secondary treatment standards by the next reissuance in 2022.

**San Diego Bay Sediment Cleanup at Former Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical Company (TDY) Industrial Sites.** Pursuant to a Cleanup and Abatement Order, TDY Industries remediated contaminated sediments in San Diego Bay at the mouth of a storm drain that had conveyed pollutants from its former facility. TDY dredged approximately 125 cubic yards of sediments contaminated with PCBs, PAHs, and metals from San Diego Bay in November. TDY also placed clean sand augmented with activated carbon over a one-acre treatment area. Post-remedial monitoring will commence after one year to let the sand cover and carbon amendment take effect, and to let the benthic community recover.

**Contact Recreation Beneficial Use Cost Benefit Analysis.** The Water Board and City and County of San Diego and the County of Orange completed a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) of Recreation Bacterial Water Quality Objectives for the Beaches and Creeks Bacteria TMDL adopted in 2010. It took into consideration the Surfer Health Study that was completed in 2016. The CBA analyzed several different storm water, restoration, time frame and source control scenarios. Such an ambitious effort was hindered by differing quantities and qualities of data, especially in adequately estimating the full range of benefits of increased compliance with the objectives. It does, however, provide some important insights regarding the challenge of human sources (homeless wastes, illicit dumping and possible issues with municipal sewerage collection or private lateral systems) of wastewater pathogens in the San Diego River watershed in particular.