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## North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

### Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region Staff Summary Report Wednesday, February 5, 2025

#### ITEM: 3

**SUBJECT: Overview of the Draft 2026 Integrated Report for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters and 305(b) Surface Water Quality Assessment (*Mary Bartholomew*)**

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

**BACKGROUND:** The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires that California report on the quality of its surface waters every two years. The report, known as the California Integrated Report, combines two Clean Water Act reporting requirements into a single document. CWA Section 305(b) requires states to identify the condition of surface waterbodies in general and CWA Section 303(d) requires states to identify impaired waterbodies that do not support beneficial uses, commonly known as the 303(d) list. Waterbodies placed on the 303(d) list are then prioritized for development of either corrective action plans called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or alternative watershed recovery plans.

State Water Board and Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) staff collaborate on the development of the Integrated Report. Three of nine Regional Water Boards share a biennial Integrated Report, so that each Regional Water Board is “on-cycle” to contribute to the Integrated Report once every six years. While the 2020-2022 Integrated Report is the most recent statewide report, the North Coast Region last participated in evaluating new data during the 2018 Integrated Report. Due to statewide delays associated with other Regional Boards, the normal six-year cycle was delayed for the North Coast region, resulting in a shift from the 2024 to 2026 Integrated Report cycle.

For the 2026 Integrated Report submittal, North Coast Regional Water Board staff evaluated all readily available data and information from both the public and Water Board programs submitted in accordance with publicly noticed requirements on or before October 21, 2022. The exception to this is continuous temperature data

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submitted for the Gualala River watershed, which will be evaluated in the 2028 Integrated Report cycle. Readily available data and information were assessed using the rules described in the *Water Quality Control Policy for Developing California's Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List*, also known as the Listing Policy. Data assessments and comparisons to water quality standards were summarized in lines of evidence (LOEs) which were then used to inform staff's proposal to list, not list, delist, or not delist a waterbody-pollutant pair as impaired on the 303(d) list. A waterbody-pollutant pair is a specific reach of a waterbody and a single pollutant for which it has been assessed. For example, the Klamath River and sediment are a waterbody-pollutant pair, as is the mainstem of Santa Rosa Creek and fecal indicator bacteria.

The State Water Board administers the public process for the Integrated Report . All listing and delisting recommendations in the Draft Staff Report for the 2026 Integrated Report (Draft Staff Report) are available for public review and written comment to the State Water Board from January 30, 2025, to April 2, 2025. The staff report will be available on the [State Water Board's website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2028-integrated-report.html) ([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/water\\_quality\\_assessment/2028-integrated-report.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2028-integrated-report.html)). The public hearing will be held at the State Water Board on March 18, 2025, where the State Water Board will receive oral comments on the Draft Staff Report, including waterbodies proposed for addition or deletion from the 303(d) list. Regional Board staff will work with the State Water Board to provide timely responses to written and oral comments received during the public review period. A revised Draft Staff Report informed by public review comments will be released prior to the January 20, 2026, State Water Board meeting, where the State Water Board will consider adopting the 2026 303(d) list for the North Coast region.

**DISCUSSION:** For the North Coast portion of the Draft Staff Report, Regional Board staff developed over 36,229 LOEs, which involved assessing over 500,000 sample results for 187 waterbody segments, resulting in 6,275 decisions. Based on these assessments, staff recommend removing 13 waterbody-pollutant pairs (Table 1) and adding 64 waterbody-pollutant pairs (Table 2) to the 303(d) list.

At the February 5th Regional Water Board Meeting, staff will present an overview of the proposed 303(d) listing and delisting recommendations for the North Coast region and outline the process for public comment submittal to the State Water Board. Draft Staff Report comments submitted either orally or in writing to the North Coast Regional Water Board will not be recorded as part of the State Water Board's 2026 Integrated Report public review process.

## **Indicator Bacteria**

Section 6.1.5.3 of the Listing Policy asserts that data should represent the critical timing when the pollutant is expected to impact the waterbody. Lacking constant inputs, indicator bacteria do not persist in the environment for a long period and effects are of relatively short duration. Because recent bacteria data are a better indicator of current risks to human health, only data collected on or after October 21, 2012 (i.e., data collected less than 10 years before the 2026 data solicitation cutoff date), were compared with the bacteria water quality objectives in Part 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (ISWEBE Plan). For previously assessed waterbody segments without data collected after October 21, 2012, data collected before that date were used to compare to the water quality objectives.

Prior to 2018, the Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) beneficial use was assessed using fecal coliform. In 2018, Part 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California – Bacteria Provisions and a Water Quality Standards Variance Policy updated the pollutants to be *Escherichia coli* for fresh water and *Enterococcus* for saline water to assess the REC-1 beneficial use. The 2026 Integrated Report is the first North Coast Regional Water Board integrated report assessment using the updated pollutants and so all indicator bacteria data were reevaluated to determine compliance with the new REC-1 water quality objective. When there is a new water quality objective, the assessment is conducted as though no waterbodies are on the 303(d) list for that pollutant. All waterbodies are reevaluated to determine if a listing is warranted under the new water quality objective.

### Indicator Bacteria in the Russian River Watershed

In the Russian River watershed, three waterbody segments are proposed for delisting, one proposed as a new listing, and two waterbody segments were given updated listing extents.

Due to concerns raised with some of the Russian River bacteria assessments during development of the 2018 Integrated Report, the 2018 Integrated Report maintained the bacteria assessments from the previous Integrated Report with the expectation that the 2026 Integrated Report would include reassessed bacteria data for twelve Russian River subwatersheds. The 2026 Integrated Report includes reassessments of these watersheds using bacteria data from previous integrated reports and new data submitted prior to the data solicitation cutoff date for the 2026 Integrated Report. All data were assessed consistent with the methodology outlined in the Listing Policy.

Impacts of indicator bacteria to the Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) beneficial use were assessed for the 2026 Integrated Report. Data were assessed by analyzing

*Enterococcus* samples collected from saline sampling stations at the mouth of the Russian River and *E. coli* samples collected from freshwater sampling stations in the remainder of the Russian River watershed.

Table 3 summarizes the outcomes of assessments for indicator bacteria in the Russian River hydrologic unit. Table 3 also details the changes in the extents of the waterbody segments from the 2018 California Integrated Report to the 2026 California Integrated Report.

Indicator Bacteria, Other than the Russian River HU

Staff are proposing to delist seven ocean beaches and three inland waterbodies from the 303(d) list and add two inland waterbodies to the 303(d) list for indicator bacteria. New data was assessed and older data was reassessed to determine if the REC-1 beneficial use was impacted given new *E. coli* and *enterococcus* objectives. A Coastal Pathogens 4b demonstration (an alternative to a total maximum daily load [TMDL]) is currently under development, which will identify the source(s) of beach and coastal indicator bacteria impairments within the North Coast region and provide an Action Plan for addressing the impairments. Table 4 summarizes the outcomes of the assessments and identifies the impacted REC-1 and Shellfish Harvesting (SHELL) beneficial uses.

**RECOMMENDATION: N/A; this is an informational item.**

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS:**

The Draft Staff Report for the 2026 Integrated Report will be available on the [State Water Board’s website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2028-integrated-report.html) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\_issues/programs/water\_quality\_assessment/2028-integrated-report.html), starting January 30, 2025.

Information for North Coast Waterbodies is as follows:

Table 1. Proposed 303(d) List Delistings.

Waterbody	Pollutant	Listing Extent
Big River Beach at Mendocino Bay	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Campbell Cove	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Eureka Plain HU, Elk River Watershed, Lower Elk River and Martin Slough	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Eureka Plain HU, Gannon Slough	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody

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MacKerricher State Park (near Mill Creek)	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Mackerricher State Park (near Virgin Creek)	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Mad River HU, Norton Creek	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Old Home Beach	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, tributaries to the Laguna de Santa Rosa (except Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries)	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, tributaries to Santa Rosa Creek	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Trinidad HU, Little River HA	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody
Van Damme State Park (beach area)	Indicator Bacteria	entire waterbody

Table 2. Proposed 303(d) list new listings

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Listing Extent</b>
Cape Mendocino HU, Mattole River HA, Mattole River Watershed	Specific Conductivity	Mattole River Estuary
Eel River HU, South Fork HA	Anatoxin-A	mainstem South Fork Eel River
Eel River HU, South Fork HA	Microcystins	mainstem South Fork Eel River
Eel River HU, South Fork HA	Specific Conductivity	mainstem South Fork Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Anatoxin-A	mainstem Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Microcystins	mainstem Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Oxygen, Dissolved	mainstem Eel River

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<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Listing Extent</b>
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Saxitoxins	mainstem Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Specific Conductivity	mainstem Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Total Dissolved Solids	mainstem Eel River
Eel River HU, Upper Main HA (Includes Tomki Creek)	Turbidity	mainstem Eel River
Klamath River HU, Butte Valley HA	Oxygen, Dissolved	Butte Creek
Klamath River HU, Butte Valley HA	pH	Butte Creek
Klamath River HU, Lost River HA, Tule Lake and Mt Dome HSAs	Chlorophyll-a	Tulelake Canyon drain
Klamath River HU, Lost River HA, Tule Lake and Mt Dome HSAs	pH	entire waterbody
Klamath River HU, Lost River HA, Tule Lake and Mt Dome HSAs	Temperature	entire waterbody
Klamath River HU, Lost River HA, Tule Lake and Mt Dome HSAs	Turbidity	entire waterbody
Klamath River HU, Middle HA and Lower HA, Scott River to Trinity River	Microcystins	mainstem Klamath River
Klamath River HU, Middle HA, Iron Gate Dam to Scott River	Turbidity	Bogus Creek
Klamath River HU, Scott River HA	Indicator Bacteria	Snitkaw Creek
Klamath River HU, Scott River HA	Turbidity	mainstem Scott River
Klamath River HU, Shasta River HA	Indicator Bacteria	Big Springs Creek, Parks Creek, mainstem Shasta River
Klamath River HU, Shasta River HA	Specific Conductivity	mainstem Shasta River
Mad River HU, Mad River	Specific Conductivity	mainstem Mad River

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<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Listing Extent</b>
Mendocino Coast HU, Navarro River HA	Specific Conductivity	mainstem Navarro River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	Anatoxin-A	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	Mercury	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	Oxygen, Dissolved	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	Total Dissolved Solids	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	Turbidity	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA, Green Valley Creek watershed	Imidacloprid	Jonine Creek
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA, Green Valley Creek watershed	pH	Atascadero Creek Marsh Ecological Reserve and Lake Graton
Russian River HU, Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA, Green Valley Creek watershed	Specific Conductivity	Atascadero Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	Anatoxin-A	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	Copper	mainstem Russian River, Big Sulphur Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	Manganese	mainstem Russian River, Big Sulphur Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	Oxygen, Dissolved	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, mainstem Laguna de Santa Rosa	Turbidity	entire waterbody

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<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Listing Extent</b>
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, tributaries to the Laguna de Santa Rosa (except Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries)	Sodium	Colgan Creek, Copeland Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, tributaries to the Laguna de Santa Rosa (except Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries)	Specific Conductivity	Bellevue Wilfred
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, tributaries to the Laguna de Santa Rosa (except Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries)	Turbidity	Bellevue Wilfred, Colgan Creek, Copeland Creek, Gossage Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, mainstem Mark West Creek downstream of the confluence with the Laguna de Santa Rosa	Specific Conductivity	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, Windsor Creek and its tributaries	Imidacloprid	Windsor Creek
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, Windsor Creek and its tributaries	Sediment	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, mainstem Santa Rosa Creek	Aluminum	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, mainstem Santa Rosa Creek	Oxygen, Dissolved	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, mainstem Santa Rosa Creek	Specific Conductivity	entire waterbody
Russian River HU, Middle Russian River HA, Warm Springs HSA	Indicator Bacteria	Foss Creek
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Forsythe Creek HSA	Oxygen, Dissolved	Forsythe Creek
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Forsythe Creek HSA	pH	Forsythe Creek



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<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Listing Extent</b>
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Forsythe Creek HSA	Turbidity	Forsythe Creek
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Ukiah HSA	Copper	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Ukiah HSA	Mercury	mainstem Russian River
Russian River HU, Upper Russian River HA, Ukiah HSA	Turbidity	mainstem Russian River
Smith River HU, Delilah Creek	Alkalinity as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	entire waterbody
Smith River HU, Morrison Creek	Diuron	entire waterbody
Smith River HU, Ritmer Creek	Diuron	entire waterbody
Smith River HU, Smith River Estuary	Temperature, water	entire waterbody
Smith River HU, Smith River watershed	Diuron	Mello Creek
Trinidad HU, Big Lagoon HA, Freshwater Lagoon	Mercury	entire waterbody
Trinidad HU, Big Lagoon HA, McConnahas Mill Creek	pH	entire waterbody
Trinidad HU, Big Lagoon HA, McConnahas Mill Creek	Turbidity	entire waterbody
Trinity River HU, Lower Trinity HA	Temperature, water	mainstem Trinity River
Trinity River HU, South Fork HA	Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	Potato Creek
Trinity River HU, South Fork HA	Specific Conductivity	Potato Creek

Table 3. Proposed changes in 303(d) list for Indicator Bacteria in the Russian River watershed due to the change in the Water Quality Objective

<b>Russian River HU Water Body Segment</b>	<b>Current 303(d) List Status</b>	<b>Proposed 303(d) Listing</b>
Lower Russian River HA, Austin Creek HSA	Do Not List	Do Not List

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Russian River HU Water Body Segment	Current 303(d) List Status	Proposed 303(d) Listing
Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA	303(d) List mainstem Russian River at Healdsburg Memorial Beach from the railroad bridge to the Highway 101 bridge mainstem Russian River from Fife Creek to Dutch Bill Creek the mainstem of Dutch Bill Creek	303(d) List mainstem Russian River from 200 meters upstream of Monte Rio Beach to 200 meters downstream of Monte Rio Beach
Lower Russian River HA, Guerneville HSA, Green Valley Creek watershed	303(d) List entire waterbody	303(d) List mainstem Green Valley Creek
Middle Russian River HA, Geyserville HSA	303(d) List Stream 1 on Fitch Mountain	Delist Stream 1 on Fitch Mountain
Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, mainstem Laguna de Santa Rosa	303(d) List entire waterbody	303(d) List entire waterbody
Middle Russian River HA, Laguna HSA, tributaries to the Laguna de Santa Rosa (except Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries)	303(d) List entire waterbody	Delist entire waterbody
Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, mainstem Mark West Creek downstream of the confluence with the Laguna de Santa Rosa	Do Not List	Do Not List

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<b>Russian River HU Water Body Segment</b>	<b>Current 303(d) List Status</b>	<b>Proposed 303(d) Listing</b>
Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, mainstem Mark West Creek upstream of the confluence with the Laguna de Santa Rosa	Do Not List	Do Not List
Middle Russian River HA, Mark West HSA, tributaries to Mark West Creek (except Windsor Creek and its tributaries)	Do Not List	Do Not List
Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, mainstem Santa Rosa Creek	303(d) List entire waterbody	303(d) List entire waterbody
Middle Russian River HA, Santa Rosa HSA, tributaries to Santa Rosa Creek	303(d) List entire waterbody	Delist entire waterbody
Middle Russian River HA, Warm Springs HSA	Do Not List	List Foss Creek
Upper Russian River HA, Coyote Valley HSA	Do Not List	Do Not List
Upper Russian River HA, Forsythe Creek HSA	Do Not List	Do Not List
Upper Russian River HA, Ukiah HSA	Do Not List	Do Not List

Table 4. Proposed changes to Indicator Bacteria 303(d) listings in the North Coast Region due to the change in the Water Quality Objective, other than for the Russian River, based upon the Water Contact Recreation (REC-1) and Shellfish Harvesting (SHELL) beneficial uses.

<b>Waterbody Name</b>	<b>Current 303(d) List Status</b>	<b>Proposed 303(d) List Status</b>
Big River Beach at Mendocino Bay	303(d) List (SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (SHELL) entire waterbody

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<b>Waterbody Name</b>	<b>Current 303(d) List Status</b>	<b>Proposed 303(d) List Status</b>
Campbell Cove	303(d) List (REC-1 + SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (REC-1 + SHELL) entire waterbody
Eureka Plain HU, Elk River Watershed, Lower Elk River and Martin Slough	303(d) List (REC-1) mainstem Elk River Martin Slough	Delist (REC-1) entire waterbody
Eureka Plain HU, Gannon Slough	303(d) List (REC-1) Campbell Creek	Delist (REC-1) entire waterbody
Klamath River HU, Scott River HA	Not Listed	303(d) List (REC-1) Snicktaw Creek
Klamath River HU, Shasta River HA	Not Listed	303(d) List (REC-1) mainstem Shasta River Big Springs Creek Parks Creek
MacKerricher State Park (near Mill Creek)	303(d) List (SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (SHELL) entire waterbody
Mackerricher State Park (near Virgin Creek)	303(d) List (SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (SHELL) entire waterbody
Mad River HU, Norton Creek	303(d) List (REC-1) Widow White Creek	Delist (REC-1) entire waterbody
Old Home Beach	303(d) List (SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (SHELL) entire waterbody
Trinidad HU, Little River HA	303(d) List (REC-1) mainstem Little River	Delist (REC-1) entire waterbody
Van Damme State Park (beach area)	303(d) List (SHELL) entire waterbody	Delist (SHELL) entire waterbody