

Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report  
Wednesday, June 15, 2016  
Regional Water Board Office  
Santa Rosa, California

ITEM: 4

SUBJECT: Nonpoint Source Grants in the North Coast: Highlights from the Past and Opportunities for the Future (*Rebecca Fitzgerald*)

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

BACKGROUND: Regional Water Board staff administers two grant programs which fund non-point pollution source control and restoration projects: the Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant Program and the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Grant Program.

The Water Boards allocate funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for nonpoint source grants. Approximately \$4 million is awarded each year from USEPA for projects throughout the State of California. The grants primarily fund the construction and implementation of on-the-ground management measures in alignment with watershed-based plans to address water quality problems in surface water and groundwater resulting from nonpoint source pollution. In the past, grants also funded nonpoint source planning and assessment projects.

The Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Grant Program is a new source of funds which began with Assembly Bill 1492 and the 2015-2016 California Budget Act. Approximately \$2 million per year is available statewide from the 1% sales tax on lumber products deposited into the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund. The grants pay for projects that implement forest management measures on forested lands to improve water quality.

To be eligible for nonpoint source and timber grants, an entity must be a nonprofit organization, tribe, public college, or federal, state, or local agency. Requests for initial concept proposals for both grants are released in the summer each year. Full proposals are due the following January and the State Water Board approves selection in April or May.

There are many other grants and loans available from other state and federal agencies for water quality and water use projects. One of the most significant funding sources is the Water Quality, Supply, and

Infrastructure Act of 2014, also known as the Water Bond or Proposition 1. Prop 1 authorized \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds, which are administered by the State Water Resources Control Board and other state agencies. A summary of Prop 1 and other grant and loan programs is provided in Attachment 1.

**DISCUSSION:**

Over the last ten years, over \$13.8 million have gone into nonpoint source and timber grant projects in the North Coast Region, including \$5.9 million in current, active grants. A summary of the current and completed grants from 2006 to 2016 is provided in Attachment 2.

These grants have been instrumental in reducing sediment discharges to impaired salmonid rivers and creeks by fixing roads, stream bank erosion and other sources. Grants have paid for irrigation improvements to get more cold water into hot rivers, riparian fencing, and riparian planting projects. Grants have helped ensure strong watershed science by funding studies, pollutant source inventories, and source control manuals. A few of these worthwhile projects will be highlighted during the presentation of this item.

**SUPPORTING  
DOCUMENTS:**

1. Grants and Loans for Water Quality and Water Use Projects
2. Current and Completed 319 Nonpoint Source & Timber Grants 2006-2016