

California Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region

Draft Order No. R1-2026-0041

Draft Water Code Section 13267 Informational Order
Directing Applicable Landowners¹ in the Gualala River
Watershed to Submit Technical Reports Pertaining to the
Inventory, Assessment, and Prioritization of Ownership-Wide
Road-Related Sediment Discharge Sites

Findings

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (North Coast Water Board) finds that:

A. Introduction

1. The Gualala River Watershed² occupies the mountainous and rugged terrain that spans the Mendocino and Sonoma County coastlines. The watershed consists of a complex network of streams that flow across a geologically unstable landscape characterized by the tectonically active San Andreas Fault.
2. The mainstem Gualala River flows into the Pacific Ocean near the Town of Gualala, 114 miles north of San Francisco, where it drains approximately 298 square miles, or 190,720 acres. Five subwatersheds drain to the mainstem Gualala River: North Fork Gualala, Rockpile Creek, Buckeye Creek, Wheatfield Fork, and South Fork Gualala.
3. Population centers in the Gualala River Watershed are concentrated on the coastline and include the towns of Gualala, Sea Ranch, Stewarts Point, and Annapolis. According to 2020 U.S. Census data, population in the watershed is estimated to be less than 5,000. Approximately 95 percent of the watershed is privately owned, primarily by timber operators, ranchers, and vineyard cultivators.
4. The Gualala River Watershed is impaired by excess sediment. Instream sediment levels are elevated above natural background conditions and exceed the sediment loading

¹ See Attachment A for list of Applicable Landowners.

² See Attachment B for a map of the Gualala River Watershed.

capacity of the system.³ Elevated sediment levels can increase rates of sediment deposition and turbidity, reducing water quality, limiting oxygen flow in spawning gravels for salmonids, altering stream morphology, and threatening municipal, domestic, and agricultural water supplies and other beneficial uses of water.⁴ Road-related sources account for approximately 85% of the human-caused sediment load in the watershed.⁵

5. Unpaved rural roads⁶ and their stream crossings can cause significant water quality problems when they lack proper drainage and erosion control measures. Hydrologically connected roads serve as chronic sources⁷ of sediment while failing and undersized stream crossings are examples of episodic sediment sources.⁸ Without efforts to reduce hydrologic connectivity⁹ (i.e., eliminating direct water flow paths from road surfaces to streams) and repair stream crossings that are at risk of failure, these rural roads can:
 - a. continuously deliver sediment to streams from road segments (including cutbanks, inboard ditches, and road drainage features) that are directly connected to them;
 - b. increase the risk of stream diversions, rill and gully erosion, and shallow landslides;
 - c. cause large amounts of earthen material to wash into waterways when stream crossing structures fail;

³ The loading capacity is the amount of a pollutant that the system can receive without negative impacts to the beneficial uses of water.

⁴ “Beneficial uses of water” is defined in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

⁵ See the [2001 US Environmental Protection Agency’s Gualala River Total Maximum Daily Load for Sediment](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/110707/gualalafinaltmdl.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/110707/gualalafinaltmdl.pdf).

⁶ “Rural road” is defined in Finding C.4 and in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

⁷ “Chronic sources of sediment” is defined in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

⁸ “Episodic sources of sediment” is defined in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

⁹ “Hydrologic connectivity” is defined in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

- d. create barriers to fish and wildlife movement and disrupt habitat connectivity; and
 - e. degrade the quality of surface water used for residential, municipal, and agricultural supplies, and other beneficial uses.
6. A comprehensive understanding of existing rural road conditions enables identification of locations where hydrologic connectivity, undersized or failing stream crossing structures, and unstable cut or fill slopes discharge or may discharge sediment to surface waters. Prioritizing treatments based in part on this information ensures that the highest risk sites are addressed first.
7. It is the responsibility of landowners to prevent, to the extent feasible, the unpermitted discharge of pollutants to waters of the state¹⁰ and to ensure that activities conducted on their property do not result in the pollution of waters of the state.
8. The North Coast Water Board regulates road-related activities through several other orders in the watershed, including vineyard production, cannabis cultivation, timber harvest, construction activities, and the use and maintenance of public roads. Road-related requirements of these regulatory programs include, among others: assessment of road conditions, inventory of potential sediment discharge sites, estimation of potential sediment discharge volume, installation of drainage features, application of appropriate road surface shaping, and erosion/sediment control effectiveness monitoring. Discharges from private, rural roads outside of these permitted activities constitute a significant sediment source in the watershed, the discharge of which is not controlled through an existing order.
9. The goal of this draft Order and required Road Management and Treatment Plans is to provide both the landowner and North Coast Water Board with the information necessary to assess the risk of sediment delivery from the landowner's roads as well as to determine the actions necessary to mitigate or eliminate that risk. Road Management and Treatment Plans can be used as means to seek funding opportunities to implement sediment reduction projects on landowners' roads and/or to prioritize the cost-effective means of progressing steadily towards greater water quality protections.

B. Regulatory Background

1. The Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan) contains the regulations adopted by the North Coast Water Board and establishes the criteria that must be considered in control mechanisms, such as Water Code section 13267

¹⁰ "Waters of the state" means any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.

informational orders, designed to control the discharge of waste and other controllable factors affecting the quality of the waters of the state within the boundaries of the North Coast Region. The Basin Plan establishes the beneficial uses of waters within the region,¹¹ the water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses, and the prohibitions, policies, and action plans by which protections are implemented.

2. The beneficial uses of water most sensitive to sediment pollution in the Gualala River Watershed are cold-water fisheries, specifically Commercial and Sport Fishing (COMM), Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD), Migration of Aquatic Organisms (MIGR), Spawning, Reproduction, and/or Early Development (SPWN), and Estuarine Habitat (EST). Protecting these uses is presumed to protect other beneficial uses that could also be negatively affected by sedimentation, such as Agricultural Supply (AGR) and Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN).
3. In 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved a sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Gualala River Watershed. The sediment TMDL (a) identified the natural and human-caused sediment sources in the watershed, (b) determined the pollutant loading capacity, and (c) established the load allocations for various sources necessary to support beneficial uses.
4. A 2021 lawsuit filed by Friends of Gualala River contended that the Gualala River Sediment TMDL had not been incorporated into the Basin Plan as required by the Clean Water Act sections 303(d)(2) and 303(e)(3). The resulting stipulated settlement agreement included two main components:
 - a. The North Coast Water Board will undertake a public process to incorporate the Gualala Sediment TMDL into the Basin Plan; and
 - b. The North Coast Water Board will undertake a public process to develop an order or orders to address road-related sediment discharge sites in the Gualala River Watershed.

On June 13, 2025, the North Coast Water Board passed Resolution R1-2025-0019, amending the Basin Plan to incorporate applicable statewide plans and policies and to improve clarity. The amendment incorporates by reference the Gualala Sediment TMDL into the Basin Plan, fulfilling requirement (a) of the stipulated settlement agreement.

This draft Order is intended to fulfill requirement (b).

¹¹ “Beneficial uses of water” is defined in Attachment C of this draft Order: Definitions and Acronyms.

5. On February 18, 2026, the North Coast Water Board passed Resolution R1-2026-0011, adopting the Basin Plan Amendment Regarding the Action Plan for the Gualala River Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL Action Plan). The TMDL Action Plan includes an action for the North Coast Water Board to issue order(s) to address the discharge of sediment from private rural roads in the Gualala River Watershed.
6. This draft Order implements aspects of the TMDL Action Plan by establishing a framework to reduce road-related sediment discharge sites in the Gualala River Watershed through requirements to inventory, assess, and prioritize treatment of sediment-generating roads and develop ownership-specific Road Management and Treatment Plans.

C. Order Scope

1. This draft Order applies to landowners in the Gualala River Watershed with aggregated ownership of 1,000 acres or more. A total of 26 landowners meet this threshold. These landowners, referred to in this draft Order as “Applicable Landowners,” are identified in Attachment A.
2. The 1,000-acre threshold for inclusion incorporates into the draft Order approximately 74% of the total road miles in the watershed,¹² addressing a portion of rural roads large enough to significantly reduce sediment delivery and make meaningful progress toward the necessary 89% reduction in road-related sediment load.¹³ The sediment source analysis presented in the Gualala River Watershed Technical Support Document for Sediment¹⁴ finds that sediment delivery in the Gualala River Watershed has been dramatically increased by human activity, especially the construction and existence of roads.
3. This draft Order requires Applicable Landowners to conduct an ownership-wide inventory, assessment, and prioritization of all rural roads on their property (collectively, “Assessments”) and develop Road Management and Treatment Plans that document

¹² [Sonoma Resource Conservation District, 2026: Gualala River Watershed Conditions Report](https://sonomarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/4.1.2-Gualala-River-Watershed-Conditions-Report.pdf) (https://sonomarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/4.1.2-Gualala-River-Watershed-Conditions-Report.pdf).

¹³ See Table 6.3.4-2 of the [TMDL Action Plan](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/02_2026/pdf/6/6-gualala-actionplan.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/02_2026/pdf/6/6-gualala-actionplan.pdf).

¹⁴ See section 6.4 of the [Technical Support Document](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/pdf/8_15_2001_gualala_river_watershed.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/gualala_river/pdf/8_15_2001_gualala_river_watershed.pdf).

the results of the Assessment. The Road Management and Treatment Plans must identify site-specific management measures and treatments designed to prevent and minimize road-related sediment discharge sites to surface waters pursuant to the requirements in Required Actions [B.1-B.7](#).

4. Rural roads are defined in this draft Order as the following:

Low-volume roads¹⁵ generally located in forested and rangeland settings that serve residential, recreational, and resource management uses. They are throughgoing and contiguous or have a terminal landing that allows for equipment or truck turnarounds.¹⁶ They include permanently maintained roads, seasonal use roads, and abandoned historic roads¹⁷ that have not been properly decommissioned. These roads have been constructed using natural materials such as native soil, gravel, or crushed rock, rather than asphalt or concrete.

Skid trails, which are temporary and discontinuous paths or benches developed to yard or “skid” logs to mainline roads or landings, are **not** considered rural roads for the purposes of this draft Order.

5. “Road-related sediment discharge sites” is defined in this draft Order as the following: “Any site or road length that is currently or has potential to discharge sediment to surface waters.”
6. This draft Order does not limit the North Coast Water Board’s authority to issue future California Water Code (Water Code) section 13267 informational orders to other landowners not included in Attachment A. If the Executive Officer of the North Coast Water Board (Executive Officer) determines that a road network may pose a risk to water quality, the North Coast Water Board may issue separate, property-specific informational orders.
7. Certain roads in the Gualala River Watershed may be subject to easements where the road is owned by a non-user owner. While maintenance of an easement may be the responsibility of the easement holders or users of the road rather than the owner of the

¹⁵ “Low-volume road” is defined Attachment C of this draft Order: [Definitions and Acronyms and Weaver and Hagans, 2015: Handbook for Forest, Ranch and Rural Roads](#) (<https://www.pacificwatershed.com/sites/default/files/RoadsEnglishBOOKapril2015b.pdf>)

¹⁶ Absence of a terminal landing is often indicative of skid trails rather than rural roads.

¹⁷ Abandoned roads are those roads on which measures have been taken to remove them from the permanent road network. Abandoned historic roads may not have been used for decades but still exist on the landscape and have sediment delivery potential.

road, such agreements do not restrict the North Coast Water Board's authority in issuing informational orders pursuant to Water Code section 13267 to any person discharging or proposing to discharge waste, which can include both the owner of the road and easement holder. The owner of a road is subject to regulatory orders addressing the discharge of waste if the owner has knowledge of the conditions that will lead to a discharge and ability to control the discharge.

D. Order Compliance Summary

1. This draft Order requires Applicable Landowners to evaluate the extent and nature of rural road-related sediment discharge sites on their property that are discharging or may discharge sediment to surface waters. Compliance with this draft Order is demonstrated through the following:
 - a. conducting rural road Assessments that adhere to approved road assessment protocols described in Required Action [A.4](#). For information on available support to conduct these assessments, see Finding [E](#). Landowner Support below;
 - b. submitting Road Management and Treatment Plans that adhere to Required Actions [B.1](#) to [B.7](#); and
 - c. submitting Annual Status Reports that adhere to Required Actions [C.1](#) and [C.2](#).
2. Applicable Landowners interested in receiving North Coast Water Board-funded Assessment support must contact North Coast Water Board staff at RB1-Gualala@waterboards.ca.gov to indicate their interest by **March 1, 2027**.
3. Information obtained from the first Annual Status Report, due on **July 1, 2027**, will serve as the baseline description of the status of road assessments on each ownership including possible reduction in Assessment scope based on any assessments or road treatments previously completed on a property (see Required Actions [A.2](#), [A.3](#), and [D.3](#) for information on previously completed work). The Annual Status Reports will be used by North Coast Water Board staff to determine compliance progress and if additional engagement may be needed for an Applicable Landowner.

E. Landowner Support

1. Assessments required by this draft Order may be completed either by the independent service of Qualified Professionals or through contract-funded support available through the North Coast Water Board. North Coast Water Board-funded Assessments and Road Management and Treatment Plan development will be conducted under separate contracts managed by North Coast Water Board staff. Applicable

Landowners who wish to have their ownership assessed free-of-cost through these funds should contact North Coast Water Board staff at RB1-Gualala@waterboards.ca.gov by **March 1, 2027**.

2. Applicable Landowners who wish to conduct Assessments independently may do so under the responsible charge of a Qualified Professional, as defined in Attachment C.
3. An Evaluation Methodology report, developed by the Sonoma Resource Conservation District, will be used as the road assessment protocol for North Coast Water Board-funded Assessments. Landowners who conduct Assessments independently, under the responsible charge of a Qualified Professional, may use the Evaluation Methodology or an alternative assessment protocol approved by the Executive Officer.
4. Applicable Landowners who experience challenges in making progress toward draft Order compliance are encouraged to contact North Coast Water Board staff as soon as possible.

F. Legal Authority

1. Water Code section 13267, subdivision (a), provides that the North Coast Water Board may investigate the quality of any waters of the state within its region in connection with any action relating to the Basin Plan. Water Code section 13267, subdivision (b), provides that the North Coast Water Board, in conducting an investigation, may require a discharger to furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring program reports.
2. Pursuant to Water Code section 13268, failure to submit the required technical reports as required by Water Code section 13267(b), or falsifying any information provided therein, may result in the imposition of administrative civil liability up to \$1,000 per violation per day.
3. Under Water Code section 13267, when the North Coast Water Board requests technical reports, it must consider whether the burden, including costs, of developing these reports bears a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and benefits to be obtained from the reports. The cost of conducting assessments of rural roads and preparing technical reports from assessment findings is estimated at \$3,685-\$4,800/mile. See Attachment D for calculation details. The burden of conducting assessments and preparing reports bears a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports as the information is necessary to understand the extent and nature of road-related sediment discharge sites to inform future actions and contribute to the recovery of water quality conditions in the sediment-impaired Gualala River Watershed.

4. The issuance of this draft Order is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15306 (Information Collection), 15307 (Protection of Natural Resources) and 15308 (Protection of the Environment). The submittal of plans is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act as submittal will not cause a direct or indirect physical change in the environment and will not have a significant effect on the environment.
5. The North Coast Water Board may rely upon access to Applicable Landowners' property to assess compliance, evaluate progress toward completing required inventories and assessments, and confirm that conditions reported in technical documents accurately reflect current site conditions. Access requests will be made with reasonable notice and at reasonable times. North Coast Water Board property access shall be obtained with the consent of the Applicable Landowner or possessor of the property.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, pursuant to Water Code section 13267, Applicable Landowners listed in Attachment A must provide the following information:

Required Actions

This section includes five subsections addressing requirements for (A) conducting Assessments, (B) submitting Road Management and Treatment Plans, (C) submitting Annual Status Reports, (D) submitting documents and alternative compliance requests, and (E) submitting an Appeal Notification.

A. Road Assessments

1. Applicable Landowners must conduct Assessments of all rural roads on their property to inform a Road Management and Treatment Plan for their ownership.
2. Landowners who have completed road assessments and/or treatments on all or portions of their property may request a reduction in Assessment scope pursuant to the process in Required Actions [D.3](#). Landowners seeking this alternative compliance request must verify that existing Assessments meet the following requirements:
 - a. completed no more than 10 years before the date of submission to the North Coast Water Board, or are otherwise demonstrated to remain valid; and
 - b. conducted under the responsible charge of a Qualified Professional, as defined in Attachment C.
3. Landowners approved for a reduction in Assessment scope must assess the remainder of their rural roads pursuant to this draft Order. Assessment results conducted prior to

and in compliance with this draft Order must be included in the Road Management and Treatment Plan.

4. Assessments must be conducted according to the Evaluation Methodology (Attachment E), which incorporates the California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual, Part X, or an alternative road assessment protocol. An alternative road assessment protocol must include the following elements:
 - a. site map(s) illustrating the full extent of the road network and associated road-related sediment discharge sites and location and classification of streams (e.g., Class I, II, and III streams¹⁸);
 - b. description of the current condition of road lengths;
 - c. identification of hydrologically connected road lengths;
 - d. description of existing and potential sediment discharge sites, including volumetric estimates of discharge potential;
 - e. identification of failing or improperly designed stream crossings and fish passage barriers;
 - f. descriptions of upslope and downslope hillslope drainage and instabilities affecting the road; and
 - g. description of how road treatment priorities are considered.
5. Applicable Landowners who wish to use an alternative road assessment protocol must request and obtain approval from the Executive Officer pursuant to the process described in Required Action [D.2](#).
6. Applicable Landowners must indicate their interest in receiving North Coast Water Board-funded Assessment support no later than **March 1, 2027** by emailing North Coast Water Board staff at RB1-Gualala@waterboards.ca.gov or mailing requests to the following address:

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attention: Matt Graves
5550 Skyline Blvd., Suite A

¹⁸ For a definition of Class I, II, and III streams, see the [2026 Forest Practice Rules, Section 916.5, Table 1](https://bof.fire.ca.gov/regulations-and-policies/bills-statutes-rules-and-annual-california-forest-practice-rules) (<https://bof.fire.ca.gov/regulations-and-policies/bills-statutes-rules-and-annual-california-forest-practice-rules>).

Santa Rosa, CA 95403-1072.

After this date, Assessment support is unlikely and may not be available.

7. Applicable Landowners who accept North Coast Water Board-funded Assessment support must enter into an access agreement with the Contractor to provide access to properties for the purposes of conducting Assessments. Access agreements and access arrangements will be coordinated directly between the Contractor and Applicable Landowners.
8. Applicable Landowners who elect not to participate or are unable to complete required Assessments through North Coast Water Board-funded Assessment support must conduct Assessments under the responsible charge of a Qualified Professional, as defined in Attachment C.
9. Applicable Landowners who hire an independent contractor to comply with the requirements of this draft Order must submit Attachment G, Independent Contractor Certification Form, for Executive Officer review and approval prior to beginning Assessments in compliance with this draft Order.

B. Road Management and Treatment Plans

1. By **April 1, 2030**, Applicable Landowners must submit a complete Road Management and Treatment Plan to the North Coast Water Board for review and approval by the Executive Officer.

Road Management and Treatment Plans prepared by North Coast Water Board Contractors will be submitted to the North Coast Water Board by the Contractors within one (1) month of completion and review, constituting Applicable Landowner compliance with this required action.

Instructions on submitting Road Management and Treatment Plans are provided in Required Action [D.1](#).

2. Landowners may request an extension of the Road Management and Treatment Plan submission deadline for review and approval by the Executive Officer. Requests must be submitted pursuant to the process described in Required Action [D.4](#).
3. The Road Management and Treatment Plan must be prepared by a Qualified Professional. This draft Order defines a Qualified Professional as one with relevant experience in the evaluation of rural road design and erosional processes who also holds a qualifying credential listed in Attachment C.

4. Road Management and Treatment Plans submitted to the North Coast Water Board must be signed by both (a) the Qualified Professional contracted to prepare the plan and (b) the Applicable Landowner or their designee.
5. The Road Management and Treatment Plan must include distinct sections discussing (a) hydrologically connected roads and (b) stream crossings and other episodic erosion sources.
 - a. The hydrologically connected roads section must describe the treatments and actions to be taken to manage roads in a way that minimizes road-related sediment discharge sites and ensures adequate road drainage and hydrologic disconnection from streams to the extent feasible. Treatments identified in this section will be informed by Assessment findings.
 - b. The stream crossing and other episodic erosion sources section must identify potential episodic sediment sources associated with failing culverted stream crossings (e.g., rusted, undersized, plugged), unstable fills, stream diversion potential, etc.¹⁹). Treatments identified in this section will be informed by Assessment findings.
6. The Road Management and Treatment Plan must provide inventories and detailed descriptions of ownership-wide road systems and all management measures required to prevent and minimize sediment discharge to surface waters including, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. descriptions of relevant road-related land management activities that may impact sediment delivery potential;
 - b. a map showing the location of all roads, streams, and road-related sediment sites, including all stream crossings on the ownership;
 - c. classification of the road use type for each road segment using the definitions in Attachment C;
 - d. an inventory of all road-related sediment discharge sites describing the current condition of each road segment, including the following:

¹⁹ Potential Class 1 fish barrier stream crossing sites will be identified in the assessment and characterized with data collected to a similar extent as non-bearing road-stream crossings; however, these sites may require additional engineering beyond the scope of this Order to ultimately implement site-specific fish passage remediation.

- i. road surface material;
 - ii. road and stream crossing conditions, and
 - iii. any use restrictions, i.e., seasonal, vehicle type, public access, weight limits, etc.;
 - e. a description of general measures that have been or can be implemented on roads to prevent or minimize sediment discharge, disperse runoff from road surfaces and prevent surface or gully erosion or failure of unstable fills, and hydrologically disconnect road surfaces from streams to the extent feasible according to the Pacific Watershed Associate's (PWA) Handbook for Forest, Ranch and Rural Roads²⁰ (Weaver and Hagans, 2015). Road Management and Treatment Plans must differentiate between past measures and measures planned for future implementation. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. outsloping;
 - ii. rolling dips;
 - iii. inboard ditches;
 - iv. waterbars; and
 - v. stabilization of road surfaces on segments that cannot be hydrologically disconnected by measures such as rocking, chip sealing, grass seeding or other methods; and
 - f. prioritization of all road-related treatments identified in the Assessment.
7. The Road Management and Treatment Plan must include the following statement, to be signed by the Qualified Professional under whose supervision it was developed:

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are

²⁰ The PWA Handbook can be found at the [Pacific Watershed Association website](https://www.pacificwatershed.com/sites/default/files/RoadsEnglishBOOKapril2015b.pdf) (<https://www.pacificwatershed.com/sites/default/files/RoadsEnglishBOOKapril2015b.pdf>) . Physical copies may also be obtained by contacting North Coast Water Board staff at RB1-Gualala@waterboards.ca.gov.

significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fines for knowing violations.”

C. Annual Status Reports

1. By **July 1 each year**, and until a Road Management and Treatment Plan has been approved by the North Coast Water Board, Applicable Landowners must submit an Annual Status Report (Attachment F) to report on draft Order compliance progress.
2. Applicable Landowners may provide information in the first Annual Status Report of any road Assessments or treatments already completed. Previously completed Assessments or treatments will be considered by the Executive Officer for adequacy and approval for a reduction in scope pursuant to the process in Required Actions [D.3](#). Upon written approval from the Executive Officer, the scope of required Assessments for that Applicable Landowner will be reduced to exclude the approved areas previously assessed or treated.

D. Document Submittal and Alternative Compliance Request Procedures

1. Reports required by this draft Order shall be mailed or submitted electronically to the North Coast Water Board subject to the deadlines outlined in the Required Actions.

Reports submitted via mail must be sent to the following address:

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attention: Matt Graves
5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403-1072.

Electronic submissions must be emailed to RB1-Gualala@waterboards.ca.gov. To ensure efficient regulatory review, Applicable Landowners are encouraged to use “Gualala Roads Assessment Order Compliance” in the subject heading of email submissions.

2. Applicable Landowners may propose alternative road assessment protocols for review and consideration for approval by the Executive Officer. Applicable Landowners must submit their request to use an alternative road assessment protocol to the Executive Officer in writing as soon as the need is recognized and prior to beginning Assessments and must include the following information:
 - a. a description of the alternative road assessment protocol;
 - b. verification that the alternative road assessment protocol includes the criteria in Required Action [A.4](#); and

- c. a copy of and/or supporting documentation for the alternative road assessment protocol.
- 3. Requests to use existing road assessments to reduce the scope of this draft Order are subject to approval by the Executive Officer and must meet the following conditions:
 - a. requests must be submitted with the first Annual Status Report by **July 1, 2027**; Applicable Landowners may submit supporting information prior to the submission of the first Annual Status Report if available in advance; and
 - b. the road assessment protocol used must meet the criteria described in Required Action [A.4](#).

Applicable Landowners requesting a reduction in the scope of this draft Order will be provided written notification of the Executive Officer's decision.

- 4. Road Management and Treatment Plan and Annual Status Report deadline extensions must be submitted for review and approval by the Executive Officer. Unless otherwise specified, the following requirements apply to deadline extension requests:
 - a. Applicable Landowners must comply with all deadlines in this draft Order unless the Executive Officer has approved a deadline extension request.
 - b. Annual Status Report deadline extension requests must be submitted to the Executive Officer in writing at least ten (10) working days prior to the due date.
 - c. Road Management and Treatment Plan deadline extension requests must be submitted to the Executive Officer in writing at least six (6) months prior to the due date.
 - d. All extension requests must include the following information:
 - i. reason(s) for the request;
 - ii. identification of the applicable requirement(s) subject to the extension request;
 - iii. a description of efforts completed to conform with the requirement(s); and
 - iv. a proposed time extension for conformance with the requirement(s), as applicable.
 - e. The Executive Officer will respond in writing to a landowner request for an alternative road assessment protocol or deadline extension by approving, denying, or providing comments and/or questions regarding the request.

E. Appeal Notification

1. Any person aggrieved by this action of the North Coast Water Board may petition the State Water Resources Control Board to review the action in accordance with Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Resources Control Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the date of this Order, except that if the thirtieth day following the date of this Order falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday (including mandatory furlough days), the petition must be received by the State Water Resources Control Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions may be found on the [State Water Resources Control Board website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality/) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality/) or will be provided upon request.

Attachments

- A. Applicable Landowners
- B. Watershed Map
- C. Definitions and Acronyms
- D. Calculations of Estimated Assessment Costs
- E. Evaluation Methodology
- F. Annual Status Report Form
- G. Independent Contractor Certification Form