



North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region Staff's Summary Report December 12-13, 2023

ITEM: #9

SUBJECT: Report on Streets to Creeks Public Outreach Campaign (Nick Sudano, City of Santa Rosa)

BOARD ACTION: This is an informational item; no action will be taken by the Board.

BACKGROUND: The Water Boards' Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program regulates storm water discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). Storm water is runoff from rain or snow melt that runs off impervious surfaces such as rooftops, paved streets, highways or parking lots and can carry with it pollutants such as: oil, pesticides, herbicides, sediment, trash, nutrients, bacteria and metals. The runoff can then drain directly into a local stream, lake or bay.

MS4 permittees face the challenge of raising awareness among residents and businesses about neighborhood storm drains and their connection to the vitality of local waterways. Communities unknowingly impact local waterways through everyday activities, and contaminants such as trash, pet waste, and fertilizer regularly flow untreated directly into local creeks through storm drain systems. Community members often lack understanding of the impacts of their actions, and knowledge about what they can do to protect local waterways and create rain-ready systems.

In response to this challenge, the City of Santa Rosa partnered with the other co-permittees under the Regional Board's Phase I MS4 permit to develop the *Streets to Creeks: Ours to Protect* campaign. Streets to Creeks is an innovative public outreach campaign strategically engaging with communities in the Russian River Watershed and beyond to educate about how storm water drains directly into local waterways untreated, why storm water is a vital resource, and actions individuals and groups can take to protect creeks and watersheds. The Streets to Creeks campaign raises social awareness, motivates community engagement, and encourages action from individuals, neighborhoods, social groups, organizations, and businesses.

The California Stormwater Quality Association recognized the City of Santa Rosa and the Streets to Creeks program with its 2023 Outstanding Public Outreach/Engagement Program award.

Nick Sudano of Santa Rosa Water's Environmental Services Division will share information about the rollout of Streets to Creeks, resources available to the community through this program, and program accomplishments to date.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: [Streets to Creeks](https://www.streetstocreeks.org/) (https://www.streetstocreeks.org/)