NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND NOTICE OF BOARD WORKSHOP FOR THE NORTH COAST REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD DRAFT GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR IRRIGATED LANDS IN THE SCOTT AND SHASTA RIVER WATERSHEDS

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (North Coast Water Board) staff will hold a 60-day public comment period from September 17, 2026 – November 16, 2026 to seek input on the draft *General Waste Discharge Requirements for Irrigated Lands in the Scott and Shasta Watersheds* (Draft Order) and its supporting draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. A workshop on the Draft Scott and Shasta Order and Draft EIR will be held during the North Coast Water Board's regularly scheduled October 1, 2026 meeting in Yreka, California. The North Coast Water Board will not take any action at the public workshop; the Board will conduct a public hearing to consider adoption of the Scott and Shasta Order and EIR at a later date.

This Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment and Board Workshop includes the following:

I) Quick Information summarizing how to review the Draft Order and Draft EIR and how to submit comments;
II) Background on the Draft Order;
III) Details on how to review and comment on the Draft Order and Draft EIR;
IV) Links to available documents;
V) Notice and details with participation information on the October 2026 North Coast Water Board workshop;
VI) Accessibility and Language Services;
VII) Potential Future Changes to the Noticed Items; and
VIII) Staff contact information

I. Quick Information

- You can review the Draft Order and Environmental Impact Report on the North Coast Water Board's webpage here: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/10_2026/index.html.
- Send written comments to NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov by **5:00 pm on November 16, 2026.** More information on submitting comments is in Section III below.
- Provide oral comments at the Board workshop on October 1, 2026, at the Best Western Miner's Inn and Convention Center 122 E Miner St, Yreka, CA 96097 and via Zoom. More information in Section IV.

II. Background

Agricultural discharges in the Scott and Shasta River watersheds have long been regulated under Conditional Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements, first adopted to implement the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) Action Plans for temperature and sediment in the Scott River and for temperature and dissolved oxygen in the Shasta River. Over time, these waivers were updated to reflect improved scientific understanding, to incorporate more structured monitoring and reporting, and defined expectations for how agricultural operations must implement and maintain management practices to ameliorate water quality impacts and increase waste assimilative capacity.

Consistent with Finding 18 of the 2018 Scott and Shasta Conditional Waivers, the North Coast Water Board is now developing the Draft Order in these watersheds to replace the waivers and transition to a permitting program aligned with statewide Irrigated Lands regulatory approaches. Finding 18 states that the North Coast Water Board intends to address water quality impacts through a tiered permitting structure based on past compliance and current threat to water quality. The Draft Order implements this direction by establishing clear enrollment pathways, monitoring and reporting expectations, and requirements that ensure enrollees plan and implement management practices proportionate to their water quality risk. The Draft Order aims to:

- Prevent, minimize and control discharges of waste discharges from causing or contributing to exceedances of North Coast Basin Plan water quality objectives.
- Prevent adverse impacts to water resources and protect beneficial uses.
- Implement the applicable sediment, temperature, biostimulatory substances, and dissolved oxygen requirements under the North Coast Basin Plan and associated TMDLs.
- Fulfill the North Coast Water Board's responsibilities under the Non-Point Source Policy, the Anti-degradation Policy, advancing the region's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Programs.

Enrollment applies to owners and operators of irrigated lands irrigating a minimum of 25 acres under common ownership or operation, either individually or through an approved Coalition. The Draft Order includes a Stewardship Category for Irrigated Lands that

meet specific criteria, including sustained compliance, absence of ongoing or threatened discharges, and well maintained management measures that collectively reflect a low threat to water quality. This tier reflects operations that meet Draft Order requirements without needing additional BMPs or effectiveness monitoring.

The Draft EIR evaluates the potential environmental impacts of implementing the Draft Order at a programmatic level based on reasonably foreseeable management practices irrigated lands may adopt under the Order. The Draft EIR determined that impacts to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources are less than significant with mitigations, and most other resource categories result in either no impact or less than significant effects.

The Draft EIR also identifies significant and unavoidable impact to Agricultural Resources with no feasible mitigation resulting from the Riparian Vegetation Area tillage prohibition. This prohibition may convert an estimated 1,720 acres of Important Farmland (less than four percent of the approximately 44,000 acres of Important Farmland in the two watersheds) to a non-agricultural use or to a pastoral or non-arable agricultural use. Much of the affected land is zoned for agricultural use and/or is under Williamson Act contract, and the conversion would conflict with the intent of that zoning and those contracts. Because the prohibition implements Basin Plan and TMDL requirements for restoring riparian vegetation and effective shade, no feasible mitigation was identified.
Compliance with the tillage prohibition is required within three years of Order adoption. Although alternatives were evaluated, none were identified which would fully achieve the stated objectives of the Draft Order while reducing this specific impact.

Please refer to the Staff Summary Report and other Draft Scott and Shasta Order and Draft EIR supporting documents for further information on the proposed project. These documents may be viewed at the following webpage: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/10_2026/index.html.

III. Public Review and Comment Period

Notice is hereby given that the North Coast Water Board will receive public comments on the Draft Scott and Shasta Order and Draft EIR for a 60-day period from **September 17, 2026 – November 16, 2026.**

The public comment period will close at 5:00 p.m. on November 16, 2026. Please send comments by selecting from the following methods:

A. **Email** up to 15 megabytes to NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov with the heading “Comments on Draft EIR for Scott and Shasta Order” in the subject line. Staff request that comments on the Draft Scott and Shasta Order be submitted separately with “Comments on Draft Scott and Shasta Order” in the subject line. Follow electronic submittal guidelines for comments greater than 15 megabytes

B. **Mail or Hand Deliver to:**

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attention: Draft Scott and Shasta Order
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
Santa Rosa, California 95403-1072

IV. Availability of Documents

The Draft Scott and Shasta Order and Draft EIR may be reviewed at the North Coast Water Board offices during normal business hours[1] or at the following webpages:
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Scott River TMDL Project Page:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/scott_river/

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Shasta River TMDL Project Page:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/shasta_river/

V. Board Workshop

Notice is additionally hereby given that the North Coast Water Board will hold a workshop during the 60-day public comment period. The purpose of the Board workshop is to inform and invite comments from North Coast Water Board members, communities of interest, and the public on the Draft Scott and Shasta Order and Draft EIR. The Board will not take any action at the workshop; the North Coast Water Board will conduct a public hearing to consider adoption of the Scott and Shasta Order and EIR at a later date.

The workshop will be held during the following North Coast Water Board meeting:

Board Meeting Date:	October 1, 2026
Workshop Start Time:	1:00 p.m.
Physical Location:	Best Western Miner's Inn and Convention Center

[1] The Draft Scott and Shasta Order and EIR may be reviewed at the Santa Rosa office during normal business hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, and at the Eureka office by appointment only. Please email NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.govto schedule an appointment to the view the documents at the Eureka office.

122 E Miner St,
Yreka, CA 96097

Link to Meeting Agenda:
https://waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/10_2026/index.html

Video and Teleconference Options: The meeting may be viewed live at https://cal-span.org. If you wish to comment on the item from a remote location, please complete the virtual speaker card available here:
[Link to zoom speaker card to come]

Additional information about the North Coast Water Board workshop, including meeting procedures and information on making presentations, can be found at the North Coast Water Board's webpage.

Oral comments will be accepted at the workshop. The time limit for public oral comments will be 5 minutes; however, additional time may be provided, upon request, at the discretion of the North Coast Water Board Chair. A timer may be used, and speakers are expected to honor the time limits. Where speakers can be grouped by affiliation or interest, such groups will be expected to select a spokesperson and not be repetitive.

VI. Accessibility and Language Services

Parking for the meetings is available onsite. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Emma Cianfichi, Emma.Cianfichi@waterboards.ca.gov at least five days prior to the meeting.
TTY/TDD/Speech-to-Speech users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.
Language services, including interpretive services may be requested by contacting Emma Cianfichi, Emma.Cianfichi@waterboards.ca.gov at least five days prior to the meeting.

VII. Potential Future Changes to the Noticed Items

Any changes regarding the noticed items will be posted on the North Coast Water Board's webpage and noticed through the email distribution list. Any person desiring to receive future notices must sign up for the email distribution list by assessing the Email List Subscription Form webpage (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAWRCB/subscriber/new?qsp=north_coast) and subscribing to the "Scott River - TMDL" and/or "Shasta River - TMDL" email list.

VIII. North Coast Water Board Contact Information

Please direct questions about this public notice or the Draft Scott and Shasta Order and/or Draft EIR to Elias.Scott@waterboards.ca.gov.