December 14, 2018

Dear Interested Parties:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SOLICITATION OF WATER QUALITY DATA AND INFORMATION FOR 2020 CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED REPORT – CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 305(b) SURFACE WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND 303(d) LIST OF IMPAIRED WATERS

This notice commences the solicitation period for the 2020 California Integrated Report. Data and information received will be used to assess overall surface water quality conditions including identifying impaired waters (i.e., waters not meeting water quality standards).

To be considered for the 2020 California Integrated Report:

- Data and information must be successfully submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board via the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN), except as otherwise noted.
- Data submissions must be accompanied by a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) submitted via the Integrated Report Upload Portal.

The 2020 California Integrated Report listing cycle will be conducted by the Central Coast, Central Valley, and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The other six Regional Water Boards may also assess data at their discretion.

All submittals must be received by the State Water Resources Control Board no later than 5:00 p.m., June 14, 2019.

See Enclosures 1-4 below for additional instructions and information about how to submit data:

- Enclosure 1: An overview of the data submittal process and a description of CEDEN compatible and non-CEDEN compatible data
- Enclosure 2: Instructions for submitting CEDEN compatible data
- Enclosure 3: Instructions for submitting non-CEDEN compatible data and information
- Enclosure 4: Instructions for submitting Quality Assurance Documentation

This notice, including enclosures, and additional information about the Integrated Report is available on the Surface Water Quality Assessment webpage, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment.

Questions regarding data or information submittals, or about other information included in this notice, should be directed to Lori Webber at (916) 341-5736 or lori.webber@waterboards.ca.gov.

Please bring this notice to the attention of anyone you believe may be interested in this matter.

Sincerely,

Karen Mogus, Deputy Director
Division of Water Quality

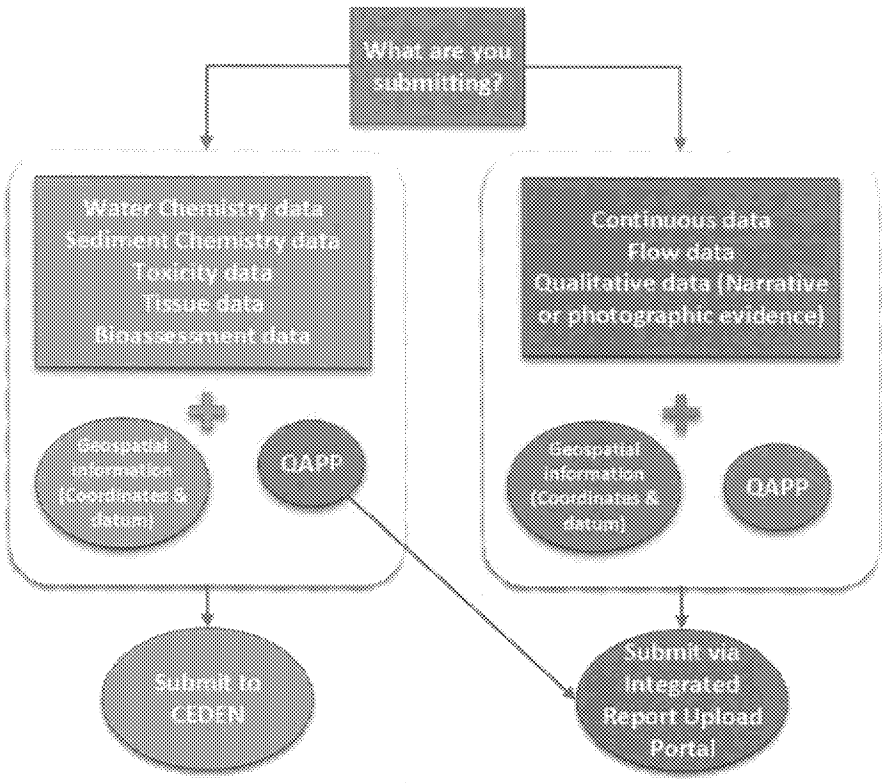
Enclosures (4)

cc: Mr. Tomas Torres, Director
Water Division (WTR-1)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Data Submittal Basics

What is the overall data submittal process?

The figure below illustrates the process for submitting data for the Integrated Report. Data that can be accepted by the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) must be submitted to CEDEN. Data that is not CEDEN compatible can be submitted via the Integrated Report Upload Portal (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/ir_upload_portal.html). In addition, all data submittals (both CEDEN compatible and non-CEDEN compatible) must be accompanied by a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), which is also submitted via the Integrated Report Upload Portal.



CEDEN Compatible:

If you are submitting a CEDEN compatible data type, your data should be submitted through CEDEN. This includes water chemistry, sediment chemistry, toxicity, tissue and bioassessment data. This data will also require geospatial information, comprised of latitude, longitude and datum. This can be submitted through CEDEN.

For instructions on submitting data to CEDEN, see Enclosure 2.

Your data are also required to have a QAPP. QAPPs cannot be submitted through CEDEN. This must be sent through the Integrated Report Upload Portal.

Non-CEDEN Compatible:

If you are submitting a data type that is not CEDEN compatible, you must follow the instructions for submitting non-CEDEN compatible data. This includes continuous monitoring data, and narrative or photographic evidence. Detailed instructions are found in Enclosure 3.

These submissions will also require geospatial information and a QAPP, again submitted via the Integrated Report Upload Portal.

For QAPP requirements and submittal instructions, see Enclosure 4.

When should data be submitted?
Data can be uploaded to CEDEN at any time. However, data must be submitted by June 14, 2019 to be evaluated for the 2020 California Integrated Report. Data submitted after June 14, 2019 will be considered in future integrated reports.

Who can submit data?
Any person or entity (including but not limited to private citizens; local, state, and federal governmental agencies; non-profit organizations; and businesses) possessing information regarding the quality of California's waters may submit data and information. The 2020 California Integrated Report will include listing assessments by the Central Coast, Central Valley and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Boards. However, we encourage a continual submittal of data regardless of region.

How do we define data and information?
"Data" are numeric measurements of water quality or environmental conditions (i.e., measurements of physical, chemical, or biological characteristics in aquatic environments).

"Information" includes any documentation, such as narrative of photographic evidence, that pertains to the attainment of existing water quality standards. Standards include beneficial uses of water and water quality objectives/criteria as listed in the Regional Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans), statewide water quality control plans (e.g., the California Ocean Plan), the California Code of Regulations, and pertinent federal laws and regulations.

Data and information submitted may pertain to individual waterbody segments, entire waterbodies, or whole watersheds in California.

How do we define "readily available data and information?"
"Readily available data and information" is defined in Section 6.1.1 of the Water Quality Control Policy for Developing California's Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List (Listing Policy) . This includes data that are submitted to CEDEN. If CEDEN is unable to accept a subset of data and information, we will accept that data and information if submitted via the procedure described in Enclosure 3, and described here, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/data_requirements.html.

What kind of data should be submitted?
All new "readily available data and information" will be considered. Any data and information that contribute to a more complete understanding of the quality of the state's surface waters should be submitted. This includes data that show water quality standards are being exceeded or not being exceeded. Any data not captured in the previous data solicitation periods should be submitted. This includes data collected since the end of the last solicitation period (May 2017) as well as data collected prior to that date but not submitted.

The California Integrated Report uses both quantitative and qualitative information. The bulk of the data used in the California Integrated Report is quantitative, or numeric-based. These data provide the basis for primary lines of evidence (LOEs). Qualitative information consists of non-numeric evidence such as photographs or narrative data. These are used as ancillary evidence in the development of LOEs. For greater detail on how different data types are used to develop the Section 303(d) list, see Section 3 of the Listing Policy.

What kind of data should not be submitted?
Please do not submit:

- Data previously submitted as part of a past Integrated Report listing cycle
- Data already submitted into CEDEN
- Data pertaining to groundwater

What if I have already submitted data to federal systems like U.S. EPA's Water Quality Exchange?
We recognize that federal, tribal, and other entities submit data directly to the U.S. EPA following the water quality exchange framework and it is not feasible to require that those datasets also be uploaded into CEDEN. Consequently, Water Board staff will pull data directly from the National Water Qualify Portal (https://www.waterqualitydata.us) which connects to the Water Quality Exchange as well as other federal databases and attempt to translate that data into a CEDEN compatible format for use in the Integrated Report process. Datasets will only be used for the California Integrated Report if they conform to the minimum data elements and quality requirements outlined in Enclosures 2 and 4.

Instructions for submitting data to CEDEN

The California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) is a central location to locate and share information about California's waterbodies, including streams, lakes, rivers, and coastal ocean waters. Many groups in California monitor water quality, aquatic habitat, and wildlife health to ensure good stewardship of ecological resources. CEDEN aggregates these data and makes it accessible to environmental managers and the public.

The CEDEN website provides information about preparing and submitting data to CEDEN, including data templates that prescribe the CEDEN formats; detailed documentation that defines data elements; and lists that contain the current controlled vocabulary values that can be used in your submittals. Vocabulary that isn't currently listed can be requested through a vocabulary process, which is also outlined on the website.

Click here to access the CEDEN website: http://ceden.org/index.shtml.

CEDEN accepts the following data types:

- Chemistry: laboratory results from water samples or sediment samples
- Field collection: measurements collected in the field, including field probes and habitat
- Toxicity: results from water column or sediment toxicity tests
- Tissue: laboratory results from fish tissue or other tissue samples
- Bioassessment: habitat measures and observations, benthic macroinvertebrate and algae taxonomy

Prior to submitting your data, please review the minimum data elements required for your data type(s). Click here for more information about CEDEN data templates: http://ceden.org/ceden_submitdata.shtml

Be prepared to include this critical information for assessment. Your data may be un-assessable without this information:

- Latitude, longitude, and datum of site locations
- Minimum detection limit (MDL) and reporting limit (RL). These are especially important if data results include "non-detect" (ND), "detected not quantified" (DNQ), or "too numerous to count" (TNC)
- Quality assurance (QA) codes, when applicable
- Batch verification codes, when applicable

Regional Data Center Assistance

Any party collecting water quality data in California can work with a Regional Data Center to submit data to CEDEN.

There are two CEDEN Regional Data Centers (RDCs) available to help you upload your data. Click on the links below to access step-by-step instructions for working with them:

1. Moss Landing Pollution Studies Laboratory RDC: https://www.mlml.calstate.edu/mpsl-mlml/data-center/how-to-submit-data/

2. San Francisco Estuary Institute RDC: https://www.sfei.org/rdc_tools#sthash.xHC7M9xM.BiaUAkql.dpbs

Instructions for Submitting Non-CEDEN compatible Data and Information

Data and information that cannot be uploaded into CEDEN must be submitted directly via the Integrated Report Upload Portal (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/ir_upload_portal.html).

Numeric data must be in electronic format that can be manipulated by Water Board staff for assessment (e.g., spreadsheet, comma separated text file). Numeric data will not be assessed if submitted in portable document format (PDF) or as a web link reference. Qualitative information (such as a photograph) can be submitted in a PDF.

Prior to submitting your data, please assemble the following:

- Contact information of person/organization submitting the data
- Applicable regional water board
- Applicable pollutant categories
- Time-period over which the data were collected
- Summary of submittal or list of submittal contents and any instructions required for assessment, which may include:
    a. Definitions for codes or abbreviations used
    b. Whether additional summaries or instructions are attached to the cover sheet or where they are included in the submittal
- Sampling location information:
    a. Station Name(s)
    b. Station Code(s) (if available)
    c. Latitude, longitude, and datum

Numeric data must include:

- Date and time of measurements
- Number of samples
- Analytes
- Units of measurement
- Methods, detection and reporting limits
- Supporting or associated analytical data (e.g. hardness data with dissolved metals samples, temperature, salinity, and pH data with ammonia measurements)
- Other relevant factors

Qualitative information must:

- Describe events or conditions that indicate impacts on water quality
- Provide linkage between the measurement endpoint (e.g., a study that may have been performed for some other purpose) and the water quality standard of interest
- Be scientifically defensible
- Provide analyst's credentials and training
- Be verifiable by the State Water Board or Regional Water Board staff

Photographic documentation must include description of:

- Date and time photograph(s) taken
- The spatial representation of the photographs, (e.g., reach, location)
- The temporal representation, (e.g., time of year)

- The linkage between photograph-represented condition and condition that indicates impacts on water quality
- The photographer's rationale for area photographed and camera settings used
- Any additional pertinent information about the photograph(s) to support assessment

Instructions for Submitting Quality Assurance Documentation

All data must be accompanied by a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) or equivalent document. Data cannot be assessed without a QAPP or equivalent document. This QAPP must be signed by the person who is responsible for the quality of the data submitted for this assessment.

The QAPP or equivalent document must be submitted via the Integrated Report Upload Portal.

The QAPP or equivalent document must contain the following:

- Objectives of the study, project, or monitoring program
- Descriptions of monitoring locations
- Monitoring schedule and frequency
- Methods used for sample collection and handling
- Field and laboratory measurement and analysis
- Data management, review and validation, and recordkeeping (including chain of custody) procedures
- Quality assurance and quality control requirements
- A statement certifying the adequacy of the QAPP plus name of person certifying the document
- Dates for which the QAPP is applicable
- Description of final data storage location (e.g., CEDEN)

For CEDEN compatible data, the CEDEN Parent Project Name and the dates for which the QAPP applies must be included.

For non-CEDEN compatible data, the QAPP must be submitted along with the data via the Integrated Report Upload Portal.