EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-10-23

WHEREAS the State has experienced over thirty atmospheric rivers since December 2022, resulting in compounding and cumulative impacts across California, including record or near record amounts of snow in the Sierra Nevada; and

WHEREAS on January 4, 2023, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of severe winter storms related to an atmospheric river event beginning on December 27, 2022; and

WHEREAS on March 1, March 8, March 12, March 14, March 28, April 20, May 15, and June 16, 2023, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in 53 counties, cumulatively, as a result of a series of winter storms that initially struck California beginning in late February and continue to significantly impact the counties identified in my Proclamations; and

WHEREAS on April 21, May 10, July 8, and October 19, 2021, I proclaimed States of Emergency to exist due to drought conditions, and on February 13, 2023, I issued Executive Order N-3-23 and on March 10, 2023, I issued Executive Order N-4-23, to address evolving drought conditions due to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events and mitigate flooding by facilitating groundwater recharge; and

WHEREAS on March 31, 2023, I issued Executive Order N-6-23 to bolster the emergency response to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events, particularly in the Tulare Lake Basin that continues to be affected by historic flooding; and

WHEREAS on May 17, 2023, and on June 16, 2023, I issued Executive Order N-7-23 and N-9-23, respectively, to further bolster the emergency response to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events, in both the San Joaquin River and the Tulare Lake Basins; and

WHEREAS there remains a need for removal of floating vegetation and debris throughout impacted counties, including stretches of the Salinas River mainstem and tributaries, stretches of the Pajaro River mainstream and tributaries, and coastal streams along the Central Coast region from Santa Cruz County to Ventura County, and that removal must expeditiously occur before the next rainy season begins in fall 2023 in order to mitigate the risk of additional flooding and allow for continued recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS emergency repairs, debris removal, sediment removal, and vegetation management within waters of the United States are subject to federal approvals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344), and the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) has previously issued state water quality certifications corresponding to the Corps Regional General Permits 8, 5, or 63 for Repair and Protection Activities in Emergency Situations and the Nationwide Permit 3 for Maintenance Part (a) for repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of structure of fill (collectively Emergency or Repair Corps Orders), which provide a

pathway for emergency activities in many instances (hereinafter referred to as Water Board Emergency or Repair 401 Certification Orders); and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Order would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, and in particular, Government Code sections 8567, 8571, and 8627, do hereby issue the following Order to become effective immediately:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All provisions contained in the above-referenced Proclamations of a State of Emergency and Executive Orders shall remain in full force and effect, except as modified or withdrawn in subsequent proclamations and orders.

2. To protect health, safety, and the environment, and to reduce the risks of local catastrophic flooding, with respect to activities that take place in the San Joaquin River and tributaries, the Tulare Lake Basin and tributaries, including, but not limited to, the Kings, Tule, Kaweah, and Kern Rivers, the Salinas River and tributaries, the Pajaro River and tributaries, and other coastal streams between the Pajaro River (Santa Cruz/Monterey/San Benito Counties), to and including the Ventura River (Santa Barbara/Ventura County), but excluding tributaries to such other coastal streams, the following are suspended, subject to the conditions in Paragraphs 3 and 4, as applicable:

    a. Chapter 6 (commencing with section 1600) of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code, and regulations adopted pursuant to that Chapter.

    b. Certain statutes, rules, and requirements applicable to activities under the jurisdiction of the Water Board and the California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) as follows:

        i. For an activity in a water of the United States that receives an authorization by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act, any enrollment criteria that may limit the permitting of the activity under a Water Board Emergency or Repair 401 Certification Order, including criteria limiting the scope to only the Emergency or Repair Corps Orders, conditioned on compliance with all other provisions set forth in the relevant Water Board Emergency or Repair 401 Certification Order.

ii. For an activity not covered by paragraph 2.b.i, sections 13260 and 13263 of the Water Code, and regulations adopted pursuant to those sections.

c. Division 13 (commencing with section 21000) of the Public Resources Code, and regulations adopted pursuant to that division.

3. The suspensions in Paragraph 2 apply only to (i) the repair or replacement of existing levees, weirs, and other conveyance and flood-control infrastructure, (ii) debris removal, (iii) sediment removal, and (iv) vegetation management, provided that the activity meets all of the following conditions, as applicable:

   a. The activity is necessary to respond to conditions caused by the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events and is necessary to avoid future damage from high streamflow events in the upcoming rainy season.

   b. Removal of sediment or vegetation or both serves to either reestablish a functional low flow channel or reestablish channel capacity, or clear sediment and debris from the river channel near structures such as bridges.

   c. Removal of sediment or vegetation or both is carried out in a manner that (i) does not involve excavation resulting in the establishment of a new low flow channel that did not exist prior to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events, (ii) maintains the natural contour of the stream, (iii) maintains the downstream slope of the stream flow line, and (iv) does not impede fish passage or cause fish stranding.

   d. Removal of sediment or vegetation or both is limited to portions of the channel that are dry.

   e. No more than 30% of the total native vegetation within the stream channel and bank is removed from each river mile.

   f. Levees are either set back from their previous location (increasing channel capacity) or are rebuilt as configured prior to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events.

   g. The activity does not involve disposal or placement of flood-delivered sediments into waters of the state or at locations or in a manner where sediments may be washed into waters of the state by rainfall or runoff.

   h. The activity minimizes impacts to beneficial uses of the water body.

   i. The activity is completed by November 1, 2023.

4. The suspensions in Paragraph 2.b.ii apply only if the activity meets all of the following further conditions:

a. The project proponent shall provide notice to the appropriate Regional Water Board as early as possible, and no less than forty- eight (48) hours prior to initiating the project, that includes the scope and location of the activity, a description of the infrastructure, debris, sediment, and vegetation conditions relevant to the activity, with representative photos, and, as applicable, a description of how the activity serves to establish a functional low flow channel or reestablish channel capacity.

b. Following any accidental discharge of a reportable quantity of a hazardous material (as defined in Health and Safety Code section 25501), sewage, or an unknown material, the project proponent shall follow the notification and reporting procedures set forth in condition A.3.c of Water Quality Order No. 2019-0044-Exec Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Order.

c. The activity shall be undertaken so as to avoid causing a violation of any applicable water quality standards, including impairment of designated beneficial uses for receiving waters, as adopted in any applicable Regional Water Board or Water Board water quality control plan or state policy for water quality control, but in the event of a violation of water quality standards, the project proponent shall eliminate the source of any such discharge as soon as practicable. Water diversion activities must not result in the degradation of beneficial uses or exceedances of water quality objectives of any of the receiving waters. Any temporary dam or other constructed obstruction must only be built from materials that will cause little or no siltation (e.g., clean gravel). Normal flows must be restored to the affected water immediately upon completion of work at that location.

d. If there is a violation of a water quality standard, the project proponent shall notify the applicable Regional Water Board of any event causing a violation of compliance with water quality standards. Notification may be via telephone, e-mail, delivered written notice, or other verifiable means. This notification must be followed within three (3) working days by submission of a written report that includes the cause of the violation; the location shown on a map; and the period of the noncompliance including exact dates and times. If the noncompliance has not been corrected, include: the anticipated time it is expected to continue; the steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate, and prevent reoccurrence of the noncompliance; and any monitoring results.

e. If surface water is present, the project proponent shall conduct continuous visual surface water monitoring to detect accidental discharge of construction-related pollutants (e.g., oil and grease, turbidity plume, or uncured concrete).

f. The project proponent shall keep all repairs and construction to the minimum necessary to alleviate the emergency caused by the 2022- 2023 Winter Storm Events and limited to in-kind replacement or refurbishment of on-site features, although the project may undertake minor upgrading if bioremediation or other environmentally sensitive solutions are used.

g. The project proponent shall implement effective best management practices to control erosion and runoff from areas associated with the activity, including access roads. All areas of temporary impacts and all other areas of temporary disturbance that could result in a discharge or a threatened discharge to waters of the U.S. and/or state must be restored. Restoration must include grading of disturbed areas to pre-project contours and revegetation with native species.

h. Notification of completion, including representative photos showing completion, shall be submitted to the appropriate Regional Water Board within 30 days of completion of the activity.

5. To support adequate state staffing for all state agencies assigned response and/or recovery role related to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events in coastal streams including and between the Pajaro River (Santa Cruz/Monterey/San Benito Counties) and the Ventura River (Santa Barbara/Ventura County), consistent with applicable federal law, work hour limitations for retired annuitants, permanent and intermittent personnel, and state management and senior supervisors are suspended. Furthermore, reinstatement and work hour limitations in Government Code sections 21220, 21224(a), and 7522.56(b), (d), (f), and (g), and the time limitations in Government Code section 19888.1 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 300-303 are suspended. All other restrictions must be adhered to for retired annuitants. The Director of the California Department of Human Resources must be notified of any individual employed in state government pursuant to these suspensions. The suspension of statutes identified in this Paragraph shall also apply to local governments, as applicable, to ensure adequate staffing to appropriately respond to the damage from the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events in coastal streams including and between the Pajaro River (Santa Cruz/Monterey/San Benito Counties) and the Ventura River (Santa Barbara/Ventura County). Local governmental agencies shall notify the California Public Employees' Retirement System of any individual employed by an agency pursuant to this Paragraph.

6. The limitation for the period of employment for State Personnel Board emergency appointments, as provided in Government Code section 19888.1, is suspended for positions required for emergency response and/or recovery operations related to the 2022-2023 Winter Storm Events in coastal streams including and between the Pajaro River (Santa Cruz/Monterey/San Benito Counties) and the Ventura River (Santa Barbara/Ventura County). The requirements

and period of employment for such appointments will be determined by the Office of Emergency Services but shall not extend beyond the termination date of the State of Emergency.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order be filed with the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given to this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 4th day of August 2023.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D.
Secretary of State