

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
RESOLUTION NO. 78-15

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL  
PLAN, SAN DIEGO BASIN

WHEREAS:

1. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, adopted Resolution No. 78-6 on February 27, 1978, amending the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the San Diego Region;
2. The basin plan amendments provide for the deletion of all beneficial use designations and water quality objectives for groundwaters for coastal portions of 19 hydrographic subunits and four hydrographic subareas;
3. The amendments did not provide for a statement of Regional Board policy or intent regarding protection of the affected groundwater basins;
4. The basin plan amendments provide for less stringent numerical water quality objectives for groundwaters for total dissolved solids in two hydrographic subunits and three hydrographic subareas;
5. The review of existing basin plan water quality objectives for all groundwater basins where wastewater reclamation and reuse projects have been proposed was not addressed in the subject basin plan revisions;
6. The establishment of a policy for protection of groundwaters consistent with the Nondegradation Policy in lieu of maintenance of singular numerical water quality objectives for discrete groundwater basins should be considered by the Regional Board as a reasonable means of providing a basis for adequate water quality protection as well as allowing for flexibility to investigate alternative groundwater management programs to maximize beneficial use of water resources;
7. The basin plan amendments provide for the addition or deletion of beneficial uses for Warm Freshwater Habitat and Cold Freshwater Habitat for several surface water streams;
8. Insufficient information was provided by the Regional Board to determine the appropriateness of the deletion of Warm Freshwater Habitat and Cold Freshwater Habitat for surface streams;
9. Written comments from several local (San Diego) agencies were submitted to the State Board requesting review of the San Diego Basin Plan numerical objectives of nitrogen and phosphorus;
10. The basin plan numerical water quality objectives for nitrogen and phosphorus for surface waters, particularly for coastal lagoons, are based on literature guidelines which may be invalid for surface waters in the San Diego Region and, therefore, inappropriately preclude consideration of use of reclaimed wastewater for coastal lagoon restoration and replenishment;

11. The State Department of Fish and Game has commented to the Board that existing language in the basin plan precludes the designation of beneficial uses for ephemeral streams;
12. Where and when ephemeral or intermittent streams support beneficial uses, such uses should be identified and designated for protection.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Board:

1. Approves those portions of Resolution No. 78-6 of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board which revises the Water Quality Control Plan, San Diego Basin, for groundwater beneficial uses and water quality objectives and additions of surface water aquatic habitat beneficial use designations.
2. Remands, to the San Diego Regional Board for reconsideration, deletions of COLD and WARM habitat beneficial use designations contained in its Resolution No. 78-6.
3. Requests the San Diego Regional Board to:
  - a. Adopt a resolution which clarifies its intent to protect, under the Nondegradation Policy, those groundwater bodies where beneficial uses and water quality objectives have been entirely deleted.
  - b. Identify, within thirty days, those areas where proposed reclamation projects would provide a water supply of comparable or better quality than existing supplies and those groundwater basins where existing water quality is degraded to the point where beneficial uses are marginal or do not exist; for such areas and basins, modify beneficial uses/water quality objectives to foster wastewater reclamation.
  - c. Review beneficial uses and water quality objectives for groundwater basins in all areas of potential wastewater reclamation as a part of the continuing planning process and in coordination with the 201 Regional Wastewater Reclamation Study. The Regional Board should work with the Department of Water Resources to reach near-term decisions based on existing data for those specific reclamation projects identified in the draft San Diego Area 208 Plan.
  - d. Consider the elimination of all numerical objectives for groundwaters in favor of establishing a policy for protection of groundwaters consistent with the Nondegradation Policy which does allow for a controlled rate of degradation where reasonable and consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the State.

- e. Review numerical water quality objectives for nitrogen and phosphorus for surface waters, particularly for coastal lagoons where potential for replenishment with reclaimed water has been identified. Where existing numerical objectives are based on literature guidelines (e.g., basin planning Management Memorandum No. 20 "Water Quality Objectives"), such objectives should be reviewed for validity as applied to specific water bodies and, where reasonable and appropriate, eliminated in favor of narrative objectives.
- f. Review beneficial use designations for aquatic habitat for intermittent and ephemeral streams in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game.
- g. Provide the State Board with a status report on these requests by August 1, 1978.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, Executive Director of the State Water Resources Control Board, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on April 20, 1978.

  
Executive Director