

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
RESOLUTION NO. 87- 103

APPROVING ONE EXCEPTION AND DEFERRING A DECISION ON
A SECOND EXCEPTION TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN
FOR THE OCEAN WATERS OF CALIFORNIA REQUESTED BY
LOUISIANA-PACIFIC CORPORATION AND SIMPSON PAPER
COMPANY FOR PULP MILLS IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

WHEREAS:

1. Louisiana-Pacific Corporation and Simpson Paper Company (hereafter dischargers) own and operate bleached market kraft pulp mills on the Samoa Peninsula in Humboldt County which discharge wastes to the Pacific Ocean via submerged outfalls.
2. The State Board adopted a revised Water Quality Control Plan for the Ocean Waters of California (Ocean Plan) on November 17, 1983, which contains water quality objectives to protect all beneficial uses.
3. On April 30, 1986, the dischargers requested exceptions to the following Ocean Plan water quality objective:

Chapter II.B.3. Natural light shall not be significantly reduced at any point outside the initial dilution zone as a result of the discharge of waste.
4. The Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region, has recommended approval of the exception to the light transmittance objective.
5. On October 6, 1986, the dischargers requested exceptions to the following effluent limitation:

Table A. Dischargers shall, as a 30-day average, remove 75 percent of suspended solids from the influent stream before discharging wastewaters to the ocean.
6. Exceptions to the Ocean Plan can be granted by the State Board provided that: (a) the exception will not compromise protection of beneficial uses, and (b) the public interest will be served.
7. The dischargers have submitted material, including a laboratory study, which indicates that the discharge of suspended solids does not adversely affect beneficial uses of ocean waters, including marine habitat.
8. Compliance with the suspended solids limitation would be expensive and would cause significant disposal problems.

9. The dischargers have submitted material, including receiving water monitoring data and a modeling study, which indicates that the reduction of natural light which results from the waste discharges reduces the growth of phytoplankton and thereby has an impact on marine habitat.
10. Methods to reduce effluent color have unknown but possibly significant environmental effects, and it is in the public interest to determine those effects.
11. The State Water Resources Control Board held a hearing regarding the exceptions in Eureka, California on April 29, 1987.
12. The staff report has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
13. The exceptions, as approved, will not have a significant effect on the environment.
14. The exceptions, as approved, will serve the public interest.
15. It will be necessary to establish a time schedule for meeting the objectives of the Ocean Plan in an enforceable order issued pursuant to Water Code Section 13301.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the State Board hereby grants an exception to effluent limitations for suspended solids contained in Table A of the Ocean Plan for Louisiana-Pacific Corporation (NPDES No. CA0005894) and Simpson Paper Company (NPDES No. CA0005282).
2. That the State Board hereby defers a decision on exceptions to the light transmittance standard contained in Chapter II.B.3 of the Ocean Plan for Louisiana-Pacific Corporation (NPDES No. CA0005894) and Simpson Paper Company (NPDES No. CA0005282), pending completion of studies of the environmental effects of alternative actions.
3. That the companies shall evaluate the feasibility and environmental effects (including recreational impacts) of methods to reduce effluent color. Methods to be evaluated shall include, but not be limited to, extended digestion, oxygen delignification, improved brown stock washing, chlorine substitution, use of intensive mixers in the bleach towers, chemical oxidation of extraction filtrate, and extension of the outfalls into deeper water.

4. That the companies shall submit reports for State Board approval on the following time schedule: (1) six months from the effective date of this order, submit a report that (a) identifies the degree of color removal necessary to return phytoplankton growth in the wastewater plume to levels not significantly different from ambient, and (b) identifies the control options to be examined; (2) one year from the effective date of this order, submit a progress report on control options; (3) eighteen months from the effective date of this order, submit a final report that identifies the environmental impacts of all studied alternatives, including no action, identifies the most feasible option for color reduction, the associated costs, and the effectiveness of such option in terms of reducing the impact of the discharge on phytoplankton growth.
5. That the State Board directs the Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region, to adopt an order pursuant to Water Code Section 13301 establishing a time schedule for protection of water quality and for meeting the objectives of the Ocean Plan, consistent with this resolution.
6. That the State Board directs the Executive Director or his designee to transmit the decision on the exception requests to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, for approval.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, Administrative Assistant to the 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 November 17, 1987.

Maureen Marche

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Administrative Assistant to the Board

On a separate motion and vote dealing with an interim waiver from the Ocean Plan, pending the completion of studies which incorporated only Whereas clauses 3, 4, 9, 10, and 15 and Resolved clauses 2, 3, 4 and 5, Board Members Maughan, Finster, Walsh, and Samaniego voted aye, and Board Member Ruiz voted nay. The Board unanimously approved the remainder of the action.