STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
RESOLUTION NO. 91-23

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE CONTRACTS OR INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS FOR EVALUATION OF STORMWATER QUALITY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR THE SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION PROJECT

WHEREAS:

1. In July 1988, following the nomination of Santa Monica Bay by the Governor of California, a Management Conference was convened for the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project (SMBRP). The mission of the Management Conference is to develop a bay restoration plan that can be implemented.

2. The State Water Resources Control Board and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board are the agencies administering the SMBRP.

3. The initial workplan developed for the Restoration Project included contracts for a Public Involvement Program and Assessment of Contaminants in Stormdrains.

4. The SMBRP is beginning to implement the second-year workplan which includes $777,600 for contracts. The second-year contracts for this workplan were approved by the State Board in Resolution No. 90-62.

5. The SMBRP Management Committee has approved scopes of work for the Public Involvement Program and the Assessment of Contaminants in Stormdrain Project. Implementation of these contracts in the second year will require that the contracts be amended.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the State Board authorize the Executive Director or his designee to negotiate, and execute or amend, as necessary, contracts or interagency agreements in FY 1990-91 for the following areas:

   a. Implementation of the Public Involvement Program ($100,000).

   b. Assessment of Contaminants in Stormdrains: Biological Impacts ($130,000).

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 March 21, 1991.

Maureen Marché
Administrative Assistant to the Board

STAFF REPORT
BY THE
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

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INTRODUCTION

In December 1987, the Clean Water Act (CWA) was amended through the Congressional appropriations process to include Santa Monica Bay among the list of estuaries to receive priority considerations by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In July 1988, following the nomination of Santa Monica Bay by the Governor of California, a Management Conference was convened for the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project (SMBRP). The State Board accepted grant funds from EPA for FY 1990-91 in June 1990.

The purpose of this staff report is to present the scopes of work to support State Board authorization for contract amendments to: (1) implement the public involvement strategy started in Year 1, and (2) assess the biological impacts of stormdrain contaminants. Because of the size of the contract mandates associated with these efforts ($100,000 and $130,000, respectively in FY 1990-91), State Board approval is required to proceed.

BACKGROUND

Santa Monica Bay is one of the most heavily utilized areas in California. Approximately 8 million people live near the Bay and use it for swimming, boating, sport fishing and other forms of recreation. Many marine species, including at least five federally-listed endangered species, may be impacted by current activities in the Bay. The Bay is used as an industrial water supply and, to a lesser extent, for shipping. Nearly 800 million gallons per day (MGD) of treated sewage effluent, approximately 6 MGD of treated industrial waste and 6,000 MGD of power generation cooling water is discharged to the Bay. The Bay also receives pollutants from dozens of unregulated stormdrains. Even though many of the biggest dischargers have improved the quality of their effluent, significant problems remain from past discharge practices (e.g., sediment contamination) and the lack of adequate control on stormwater discharges (e.g., bacterial and chemical contamination) from storm drain discharge. These problems have had an actual or perceived impact on the Bay's marine ecosystem and the human use of those resources.

EPA awarded $690,000 to the State of California in July of 1989 for the purpose of implementing the first-year workplan of the SMBRP. Each award is based on 75 percent Federal and 25 percent State funds. For the second-year (FY 1990-91), EPA granted $1,000,000 to the State Board to continue the project with authority to carry over unspent funds into 1992.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

The specific scope of work for the Public Involvement Program for the second year builds on the first-year work. During the first year, the Program developed a public outreach strategy, preformed media relations, helped in the planning and presentation of special events and developed a public outreach presentation focused on educating the public about Santa Monica Bay.

The goals of the Program include supporting existing environmental curriculum development projects, begin an outreach program to ethnic communities isolated from the traditional media outlets, to ensure that the Project's technical reports receive wide exposure and to work closely with the media to ensure accuracy and appropriate placement of information released from the Project.

As anticipated in the public involvement strategy, the second-year work employs the approach of informing key players of the direction and importance of SMBRP activities, while raising public consciousness of Santa Monica Bay pollution issues. The workplan maintains some high profile activities, completes preparation of basic informational materials designed for key players as well as targeted public audiences, and makes a modest investment in long-term education and outreach activities.

II. GOALS

A. Support existing environmental curriculum development projects.

B. Begin an outreach program to ethnic communities isolated from traditional media outlets.

C. Ensure that the Project's technical reports receive wide exposure.

III. TASKS

A. Comprehensive public education requires more resources than is available to the SMBRP. An effective strategy for public education presented here is to the support coalition efforts, invest small amounts in high-return efforts, and begin to reach out to ethnic communities isolated from the traditional media outlets.

B. The public outreach strategy also calls for development of an educational curriculum as a means to reach an important target audience--children. Since curriculum development can be an expensive undertaking requiring special expertise, the workplan leverages Project funds by supporting existing environmental curriculum development projects rather than attempting to develop a new one for the Project alone.

C. Another focus of the public education strategy is clear translation and appropriate distribution of technical data that is of general interest. Over the next eight months, it is anticipated that 6-7 technical reports will be completed on behalf of the SMBRP. It is in the Project's best

interest to see that this information reaches the widest possible audience. Accomplishing this goal calls for working closely with the media to ensure accuracy and appropriate placement.

D. The Project intends to use the expertise of consultants to complement rather than duplicate the capabilities of the now expanded SMBRP staff. Staff efforts will focus on the drafting of technically sound written material, relying on our consultants to provide the creative interpretation through both written and artistic presentation. In the area of media, staff again will develop the key messages and recommend the appropriate spokespersons for SMBRP issues, depending on our consultants for the creation and placement of press releases, the organization of press events, and coordination with the media.

ASSESSMENT OF CONTAMINANTS IN STORMDRAINS

I. Purpose

Stormdrain runoff has been identified as an important source of pollutants to Santa Monica Bay. Ongoing work will characterize and attempt to quantify pollutant loadings from stormdrains. However, we have even less information on the biological impacts of pollutants in stormdrain discharge than on their presence and amount. The water chemistry and speciation of pollutants in urban runoff may be very different than in treated wastewater or solutions prepared in the laboratory. Such differences may affect biological availability and the environmental fate of pollutants. An assessment of the environmental impacts of pollutants in stormdrains is necessary for an informed evaluation of management options for the control or treatment of stormdrain discharge.

A thorough evaluation of the biological impacts of stormdrain runoff would be costly and technically difficult. This scope of work is intended as a pilot study of the feasibility and utility of measuring biological impacts from stormdrain runoff. The proposed approach is to evaluate biological impacts in the receiving waters of an assumed "worst case" stormdrain. If effects are found, the results may serve as a basis for a broader study of the biological effects of stormdrain runoff. If effects are not detected, either there is not a problem or we need to use different methods of environmental monitoring to describe the problem.

The approach described in the scope of work relies on the following assumptions and rationale:

A. Test dry weather flow, due to the difficulties in sampling storm events.

B. Assume toxicity of dry weather flow in the drain is a reasonable indicator of potential for toxic effects on the marine receiving environment.

C. Survey the receiving waters outside the "worst case" drain for effects of the stormdrain effluent on resident biota, within one dry season.

II. Goals

A. To assess the potential for biological impacts in the marine receiving environment from dry weather urban runoff.

B. To evaluate the effectiveness of stormdrain management and regulatory options in reducing the biological impacts of stormdrain runoff.

III. Objectives

A. Determine the toxicity of dry weather flow in stormdrains with continuous dry weather flows using several established chronic or critical life stage toxicity tests.

B. Near one drain where dry weather flow shows potential for impacting marine biota, analyze the ambient environment for toxic effects of dry weather flow.

IV. Tasks

A. Conduct screening study of toxicity in dry weather flow.

Select three stormdrains with continuous dry weather flow and test for toxicity. The toxicity tests shall include a minimum of three endpoints or species, and shall use organisms suited to the salinities of the selected sites.

B. Interim Report on results of screening tests and refined study design.

On the basis of Task A and data compilation results from the ongoing contract for dry weather flow characterization, choose the stormdrain which is best suited for studying ambient toxic effects. Refine the study proposal for Task C based on site specific characteristics at the selected stormdrain. Present the results of the screening study and the refined study design for Task C in a report.

C. Assessment of biological impacts of dry weather flow at one site.

Conduct a study to assess toxic effects from the dry weather flow in the marine environment. The study may include (but is not limited to) examination of water toxicity, sediment toxicity, bioaccumulation, and chemical analyses. This task is the major component of the project.