

SUMMARY OF WATER QUALITY ORDER

| | |
|---|---|
| ORDER NO. | WQ 2012-0013 |
| DATE ADOPTED | December 4, 2012 |
| PETITION TITLE | PETITIONS OF SACRAMENTO REGIONAL COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT AND CALIFORNIA SPORTFISHING PROTECTION ALLIANCE (WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER NO. R5-2010-0114 [NPDES NO. CA0077682] FOR THE SACRAMENTO REGIONAL COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT, SACRAMENTO REGIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT, SACRAMENTO COUNTY), CENTRAL VALLEY WATER BOARD |
| POPULAR NAME <i>[if applicable]</i> | |
| REGIONAL BOARD | Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board |
| FILE NO[S] | SWRCB/OCC Files A-2144(a) and A-2144(b) |

PRECEDENTIAL DECISION¹

On December 9, 2010, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) issued Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R5-2010-0014 [NPDES No. CA0077682] (Permit) to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (District) authorizing discharges from its Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (Facility). The Permit is a renewal of the District's prior permit and contains several new or more stringent requirements, requiring substantial changes to the character of the District's discharge and upgrades to the Facility.

Both the District and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance filed timely petitions for review with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). Between the two petitions, a total of over 80 contentions were raised claiming fault with nearly every aspect of the Permit. This Order addresses only a few topics – primarily pathogens, ammonia, and nitrate; all issues not addressed in the Order are dismissed.

The Order concludes that the Central Valley Water Board appropriately adopted effluent limitations for total coliform organisms (i.e., pathogens) and “tertiary” filtration requirements for the protection of beneficial uses at and near the outfall as well as existing downstream beneficial uses for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta). Regarding ammonia, the Order concludes that the Central Valley Water Board correctly denied dilution credits and a mixing zone for ammonia, but amends the Permit's final effluent limitations because of a calculation error. The Order concludes that the Central Valley Water Board inappropriately denied dilution credit and a mixing zone for nitrates based on the Primary MCL, however the Order upholds the effluent limitation as an interim effluent limitation necessary to reduce excessive cultural eutrophication and protect beneficial uses in the Delta and the San Francisco Bay. The Order also concludes that the Central Valley Water Board did not violate public noticing requirements by revising the draft Permit in response to comments received and not recirculating the draft permit for a second time.

¹ Except for the discussion in the Nitrates (Nutrients) section that begins with Cultural Eutrophication on page 29 and continues up to the Public Notice Requirements section on page 39, this decision is precedential.