

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY  
MARCH 20, 2007**

**ITEM 8**

**SUBJECT**

WORKSHOP REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF A STATEWIDE WATER RECYCLING POLICY

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this item is to solicit public comment on whether the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) should develop a statewide Water Recycling Policy and on the issues such a policy would address. Recycled water is a major source of water supply in California and a major component in California's plan for meeting the state's growing water demand. The California Water Plan estimates that recycled water usage can increase from half a million acre-feet per year in 2003 to two million acre-feet per year in 2030. The Recycled Water Task Force issued a report in June 2003 that contained recommendations that California should implement to achieve this goal. Some of the recommendations concerned the need to consistently apply state statutes and regulations regarding water recycling and water quality. The purpose of a statewide policy would be to provide direction to the Regional Water Boards on how to interpret state statutes, regulations, plans, and policies with respect to water recycling projects, thus ensuring consistent interpretation of the requirements among the Regional Water Boards.

Staff has identified the following issues that could be addressed in a water recycling policy:

**Irrigation Projects and Salts**

- ◆ What should the State Water Board do to protect groundwater basins in the state from the accumulation of salt, including nitrate?
- ◆ To protect groundwater basins from the accumulation of salt, should the concentration of salt in recycled water used for irrigation be limited? If so, what procedures should be used to establish the limitations?
- ◆ To limit the discharge of nitrate to groundwater, should the State Water Board require recycled water users to prepare nutrient management plans?
- ◆ Should groundwater monitoring be required for recycled water irrigation projects?

### **Groundwater Recharge Reuse Projects**

- ◆ What requirements should be placed on groundwater recharge reuse projects to protect the public from toxic constituents?

### **Impoundments**

- ◆ What requirements should be placed on impoundments to prevent them from degrading underlying groundwater?

### **Anti-degradation Policy**

- ◆ Should the State Water Board modify Resolution 68-16 (Anti-degradation Policy) to encourage water recycling or to clarify the language? If so, what modifications should be made to the policy?
- ◆ Should the Water Recycling Policy define what is “maximum benefit to the people of the state” and/or what is “best practical treatment or control” for water recycling projects?

### **Agency Coordination**

- ◆ The Department of Health Substances is developing regulations for groundwater recharge reuse projects. Should the State Water Board not address some issues related to groundwater recharge reuse projects, since they may be addressed by the Department of Health Services regulations?

### **Aquifer Storage and Recovery Projects**

- ◆ Should the scope of the policy also cover aquifer storage and recovery projects?

Subsequent to this public workshop, the State Water Board will consider whether there is a need for further action on this issue.

### **POLICY ISSUE**

Should the State Water Board pursue development of a Water Recycling Policy?

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

State Water Board staff work associated with or resulting from the Board’s direction will be addressed with existing and future budgeted resources.

### **REGIONAL WATER BOARD IMPACT**

Yes, all Regional Water Boards.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the State Water Board direct staff to pursue development of a statewide Water Recycling Policy.