

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 6-7, 2018**

Prepared on November 15, 2018

**ITEM NUMBER: 15**

**SUBJECT: Executive Officer's Report to the Board**

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**This item presents a brief discussion of issues that may interest the Board. Upon request, staff can provide more detailed information about any particular item.**

Note: The tables listing 401 water quality certification applications received and certifications issued are included as Attachments 1 and 2.

**ACTIVE OIL FIELD PROGRAM – STATUS OF THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE CAT CANYON AQUIFER EXEMPTION**

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At the January 2017 Board meeting ([Item No. 9](#)), staff provided an overview of the Active Oil Field Program, explaining the State Water Board and Regional Water Board roles in technical review of aquifer exemption applications, associated with the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources' (DOGGR) implementation of US Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program. Underground injection wells are oil and natural gas production wells that inject fluids (typically produced water or steam) into the subsurface for the purposes of disposal or to enhance oil recovery. The combined (State and Regional) Water Board's technical advisory role in reviewing aquifer exemption and UIC project applications is to ensure the protection of groundwater quality and beneficial uses, especially sources of drinking water. To date, the Central Coast Water Board has received aquifer exemption applications for six oil field areas, including the Arroyo Grande, Casmalia, Cat Canyon, Lompoc, Lynch Canyon, and San Ardo and McCool Ranch oil fields.

This is an update on the status of the proposed aquifer exemption expansion for the Cat Canyon Oil Field (Santa Barbara County) as requested by the Board at the June 28-29, 2018 Board meeting, in response to several public commenters expressing concern about the Cat Canyon Oil Field. Central Coast Water Board Active Oil Field Program staff met with the speakers during the June Board meeting to answer their questions and explain the Water Board's role in reviewing aquifer exemption and UIC project applications.

In January 2018, staff received an application for expansion of the existing Cat Canyon aquifer exemption. The foot print of the proposed Cat Canyon aquifer exemption expansion covers an approximately 40-square mile area primarily consisting of agricultural/grazing and industrial (oilfield) land use activities. The proposed exempted area, consisting of portions of the Sisquoc and Monterey [geologic] Formations, does not currently serve as a source of drinking water. Any oilfield produced wastewater injection operations allowed within the proposed exemption area will be directed to deeper, more isolated portions of the Sisquoc and Monterey Formations. While there are a number of water supply wells within the boundaries of the oil field, they are

completed at shallower depths into the surface alluvium, the Paso Robles Formation, and/or Careaga Formation. Furthermore, the water supply wells completed in the shallower formations are geologically and hydraulically separated from the proposed exempted area by hundreds of feet of vertically confining hydrogeologic features. Therefore, future injection within the proposed Cat Canyon aquifer exemption area should not threaten current or potential future beneficial uses provided that all injection activities are properly permitted, maintained, and monitored for compliance with applicable DOGGR regulations.

Consistent with the current memorandum of agreement between DOGGR and State Water Board, Central Coast Water Board staff reviewed the Cat Canyon aquifer exemption application for expansion and provided comments and recommended conditions of concurrence to the State Water Board in a memorandum dated April 3, 2018. After considering our comments, the State Water Board provided its preliminary concurrence for the proposed aquifer exemption expansion in a letter to DOGGR, dated October 11, 2018.

As the next step in the process, DOGGR will conduct a formal 30-day public comment period. Once DOGGR completes the response to comments, DOGGR and the State Water Board will schedule a joint public hearing to provide an additional opportunity for the public to provide comments on the proposed expansion of the existing Cat Canyon aquifer exemption. If, after consideration of all public comments, the State Water Board in collaboration with Central Coast Water Board staff, concur with DOGGR's determination that applicable State and Federal criteria are satisfied, DOGGR may then submit the application to the USEPA for final determination.

### **STATUS UPDATE OF LOCAL AGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS PURSUANT TO STATE POLICY FOR SITING, DESIGN, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS (OWTS POLICY)**

[Jennifer Epp 805/594-6181]

At the June 2018 Central Coast Water Board meeting, staff provided a status update on the development of Local Agency Management Programs (LAMPs) pursuant to the State Water Board's policy for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS Policy). This Executive Officer's report provides an update on LAMP development activities since June<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Summary**

Staff held several working meetings in July, August, and October to discuss outstanding LAMP comments with the City of Atascadero and the County of San Luis Obispo. Central Coast Water Board staff will recommend approval of the City of Atascadero's LAMP at this December 2018 Board meeting. San Luis Obispo County's LAMP has remaining comments that still need to be addressed by county staff. San Benito and Santa Cruz County have not provided any additional information to Central Coast Water Board staff on their LAMPs since our last update in June 2018. Staff are waiting for San Benito County and Santa Cruz County to submit revised draft LAMPs for our review.

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<sup>1</sup> The staff report and presentation from the June 2018 Board meeting can be found here as Item No. 10: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board\\_info/agendas/2018/june/index.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2018/june/index.html).

**Discussion**

Table 1 summarizes the status of submitted LAMPs in the central coast region.

Table 1. LAMP Approval Status

<b>Status</b>	<b>Local Agency</b>
Approved	Santa Barbara County (November 2015)
	Monterey County (May 2018)
	Santa Clara County (approved by the San Francisco Bay Water Board in December 2015)
	Ventura County (approved by the Los Angeles Water Board in 2018)
In Progress (Draft LAMP Submitted)	City of Atascadero (for consideration at this Board meeting)
	San Luis Obispo County
	Santa Cruz County
	San Benito County
	San Mateo County (assigned to San Francisco Bay Water Board)

Table 2 provides a summary of the remaining unapproved draft LAMPs submitted to Central Coast Water Board staff for review.

Table 2. Status of Unapproved LAMPs

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Status</b>
City of Atascadero	Staff held working meetings with Atascadero staff in August and October to work on remaining comments on the draft LAMP. The Atascadero LAMP is on this December Central Coast Water Board meeting agenda for Board consideration.
San Luis Obispo County	Central Coast Water Board and San Luis Obispo County staff met in July and August to work on remaining comments on the draft LAMP. Central Coast Water Board staff are awaiting a response from county staff to address our comments from the August meeting. Some of the remaining issues include provisions for parcels in Los Osos not served by the sewer, technical justification for proposed minimum lot sizes for new subdivisions, and other siting and design criteria (e.g., leach line sidewall calculations).
Santa Cruz County	No additional progress has been made on Santa Cruz County's LAMP. Staff is awaiting a revised draft LAMP from Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz County submitted a working draft LAMP in 2016 and is developing revisions to the LAMP to be consistent with the OWTS Policy. The county submitted a draft checklist and draft ordinance on February 8, 2018.
San Benito County	No additional progress has been made on San Benito County's LAMP. Staff provided comments to San Benito County on May 31, 2018 on the county's draft LAMP submitted in May 2018 and is awaiting a response. Staff is also awaiting the county's LAMP checklist.
San Mateo County	The San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board is currently working with San Mateo County on their draft LAMP.

Table 3 identifies local agencies with OWTS and those for which staff needs more information to make this determination. Some local agencies do not have any existing OWTS within their jurisdictional boundaries. Other local agencies have OWTS but do not plan to prepare a LAMP. For some local agencies, Central Coast Water Board staff do not know if OWTS exist within

their jurisdiction. Since our last update in June 2018, staff obtained information from previously non-responsive local agencies; Table 3 includes the following updates: Scotts Valley and Watsonville have existing OWTS within their jurisdiction but do not plan to prepare a LAMP and Morgan Hill, City of Santa Cruz, and Capitola have delegated OWTS approval to their respective counties. Staff plans to follow up in the future with the remaining local agencies that have not provided a response on whether they have existing OWTS within their jurisdictions. At this time, staff's current priority for OWTS-related work is 1) review of LAMPs that have been submitted for approval and 2) OWTS permit applications that Central Coast Water Board staff needs to evaluate.

Table 3. Local Agencies with OWTS

<b>OWTS</b>	<b>Local Agency</b>		
No existing OWTS within their jurisdiction	Solvang, Mission Hills Community Services District, and Carmel Area Wastewater District.		
Existing OWTS within their jurisdiction but does not plan to prepare a LAMP	Grover Beach, Pismo Beach, Guadalupe, Paso Robles, Vandenberg Air Force Base, Scotts Valley, Watsonville, Morgan Hill <sup>a</sup> , City of Santa Cruz <sup>a</sup> , and Capitola <sup>a</sup> .		
<b>OWTS</b>	<b>Local Agency</b>		
Existing OWTS within their jurisdiction and plan to enter into an agreement with another local agency to be covered by their LAMP	City of Santa Barbara and Santa Maria (potential agreements with Santa Barbara County).		
Unknown if existing OWTS within their jurisdiction	Arroyo Grande	Goleta	Pacific Grove
	Buellton	Gonzales	Salinas
	Carmel	Greenfield	Sand City
	Carpinteria	Hollister	Santa Ynez Community Services District
	City of Monterey	King City	Seaside
	City of San Luis Obispo	Lompoc	Soledad
	Del Rey Oaks	Marina	
	Gilroy	Morro Bay	
<sup>a</sup> Delegated OWTS approval to the respective county.			

**Attachments**

1. Table 1 - 401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received
2. Table 2 - 401 Water Quality Certifications Issued
3. Table 3 - Groundwater Section, Case Closure Performance Scoreboard
4. Table 4 - Groundwater Case Closures
5. Table 5 - Enrollments in General Orders/Waivers