

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

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July 2002

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NORTH BASIN

1. ***Use of the fish toxicant rotenone postponed by Department of Fish & Game, Silver King Creek, Alpine County - Jason Churchill***

Plans by the California Department of Fish & Game (DFG) to use the pesticide rotenone in September 2002 for restoration of the endangered Paiute Cutthroat Trout (PCT) at Silver King Creek have been postponed by the DFG until next fall. Rotenone is used to eradicate introduced fish species that can outcompete and interbreed with PCT. Details of the proposed project, which involves several miles of Silver King Creek, were described in the March 2002 Executive Officer's Report. Staff provided comments in June on a controversial Mitigated Negative Declaration circulated by the DFG for the project. Staff expressed concerns, based on monitoring data provided by the DFG, regarding recovery of benthic invertebrates following rotenone treatment. The project location is in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness Area on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Land. The project has been postponed to allow the USFS to complete an Environmental Assessment required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

PCT were successfully restored to upper portions of Silver King Creek following rotenone treatment in the early 1990's. The current proposal would extend the PCT population downstream more than five additional miles. The DFG has filed for coverage for this project under the State Board's statewide Aquatic Pesticides

General NPDES Permit (General Permit). Rotenone use by DFG in the Lahontan Region is also regulated under Basin Plan provisions that allow for a variance to water quality objectives when Rotenone is used, provided specific conditions are met. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between the DFG and the Regional Board in 1990 to implement the Basin Plan provisions. The DFG submitted project-specific information pursuant to the MOU terms on July 16, 2002. The DFG is expected to reschedule the project for next fall. DFG management has indicated its commitment to working with our staff to resolve remaining concerns regarding potential effects on benthic invertebrates, and to develop an appropriate invertebrate and water quality monitoring plan.

2. ***Update on proposed herbicide use to control Eurasian watermilfoil in the Tahoe Keys, Lake Tahoe - Jason Churchill***

Last year, the Tahoe Keys Property Owner's Association (TKPOA) indicated that it might seek coverage under the statewide Aquatic Pesticides General NPDES Permit (General Permit) for a limited-scale experimental project to control the invasive aquatic weed Eurasian watermilfoil in the Tahoe Keys using herbicides. Following discussion of this matter at the January 2002 Regional Board meeting, I issued a Notice of Exclusion (NOE) on February 5, denying TKPOA coverage under the General Permit. At the time, TKPOA indicated that it would prepare and submit a formal proposal

addressing our concerns, and request that the NOE be withdrawn. The proposal was expected sometime in spring or early summer 2002, but no formal proposal has been submitted as of this date. It is now too late in the season for effective chemical treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil, so TKPOA is not expected to propose a treatment date earlier than spring 2003. I do not plan to provide any further updates on this matter until a formal proposal has been received, or other significant developments take place.

3. ***Truckee River TMDL Public Forum, Placer County - Cadie Olsen***

The Regional Board, the Truckee River Watershed Council, and the California Center for Public Dispute Resolution are convening a forum seeking assistance from the community for developing the Truckee River Sediment TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load). The purpose of the workshop is to inform the community of the project, hear the community's interests with respect to sediment and water quality, and begin to craft a sediment control plan that takes the community's interests into consideration and uses the collective knowledge and experience of the community members. The goal of the project is to develop the Truckee River Sediment TMDL through collaborative community involvement. The forum is scheduled for Monday, September 9, 2002 at the Truckee Town Hall Council Chambers. This meeting will be the first in a series, continuing through March of 2003. Community business and government leaders and planners, along with the general public, have been invited.

4. ***Update on Squaw Valley Public Service District's Water Supply Well No. 3 and the Opera House UST Diesel Contamination, Placer County - Tammy Lundquist***

The Squaw Valley Public Service District (SVPSD) is in the process of re-activating its Municipal Well No. 3. SVPSD shut down Well No. 3 in 1998 when diesel contamination in groundwater was detected

nearby during removal of an underground storage tank on the Squaw Valley Ski Corporation (Ski Corp) property. As part of the investigation and monitoring program at the former UST site, Ski Corp installed a mid-level groundwater monitoring well, MW-9, in March 2001 to check potential migration of diesel contamination into a deeper zone of the aquifer. This deeper zone is potentially in the capture zone of SVPSD Well No. 3. Since testing of well MW-9 began in March 2001, concentrations of TPHd have ranged from 73 to 380 µg/L. The taste and odor threshold for TPHd is 100 µg/L. Although TPHd contamination has never been detected in SVPSD's Well No. 3, the TPHd contamination in the groundwater continues to threaten the municipal well.

I have directed Ski Corp to perform a rigorous sampling and analysis program at the SVPSD Well No. 3, as it is re-activated. This purpose of the monitoring program is 1) to rapidly identify whether the well has been impacted by contamination as it is started back up and 2) to assure the SVPSD and its customers that the well's water meets drinking water standards and is not impacted by petroleum hydrocarbons. Ski Corp and SVPSD are cooperating on the logistics of implementing the testing program. SVPSD plans to re-activate Well No. 3 in August or September 2002.

SOUTH BASIN

5. ***Air Force Proposes Changing Remedy at Site OT-51 from Bioventing to Soil Vapor Extraction at Former George Air Force Base - Jehiel Cass***

Site OT-51 at the former George Air Force Base (AFB) was where jet engines were tested. A number of underground storage tanks to hold jet fuel JP-4 were located at the site. The tanks were removed in the late 1980's and a soil and water investigation in 1993/94 determined that JP-4 was released. Bioventing systems were installed at this site in 1996 to force air into the subsurface and enhance bioremediation of petroleum hydrocarbons. With the concurrence of the

Regional Board, I signed a Record of Decision for Operable Unit Three (OU-3 ROD) that was finalized in November 1998 authorizing bioventing as the cleanup remedy. Because of low petroleum hydrocarbon destruction, a soil vapor extraction (SVE) system pilot test was performed in 2000. A full-scale SVE system was installed and has removed over 37,000 pounds of petroleum hydrocarbons from early 2001 through early 2002. Installation of a larger capacity SVE unit along with additional extraction wells and other modifications to enhance system performance are planned for the summer 2002. Site cleanup using SVE is currently estimated to take about 5 years less time than with using bioventing. The Air Force circulated an "Explanation of Significant Differences" to the OU-3 ROD describing why the remedy for this site should be SVE instead of bioventing. I intend to sign this document after clarifying modifications are made in the document.

6. ***Pine Creek Community Development Project-Rovana – Doug Feay***

Inyo County released a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Pine Creek Community Development at Rovana near Bishop, Inyo County. The project includes development of approximately 355 dwelling-units on 280 acres. Board staff will be commenting on water quality issues with regards to wetlands, creek riparian habitat, sewage treatment, and stormwater sediment control.

Wetlands have been delineated in two separate reports, which are contained in the DEIR. Some alternatives avoid wetlands and some alternatives impact wetlands, but include compensatory mitigation, such as wetland creation. Inyo County will respond to Regional Board comments, select a preferred alternative and submit a final EIR at a future date. Sewage treatment issues involve upgrading the existing Rovana facilities to address the discharge from the proposed Pine Creek Community. The current permit will need to be revised, if appropriate, to accommodate the proposed

365 residences. Stormwater runoff will be regulated by a Statewide General Permit for Stormwater discharges from construction sites.

7. ***Stormwater Phase II Issues - Gene Rondash***

On June 19, 21, and 25, 2002; Board staff held a Stormwater Phase II workshop with representatives of the City of Palmdale, City of Lancaster, Edwards Air Force Base, Los Angeles County, California City, Town of Apple Valley, City of Victorville, San Bernardino County and City of Hesperia. The purpose of the workshops was to further assist municipal stormwater dischargers regarding their obligations under the Phase II Municipal program.

The statewide general permit which is still in draft, would require all designated cities/counties, state and federal facilities, and school/universities to have permit coverage for their stormwater discharges.

The statewide draft permit would require submittal of a Notice of Intent, fee, and a Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) by March 2003. The SWMP must characterize stormwater sewer systems and propose methods to achieve non-point source pollutant discharge reduction to the maximum extent practicable by March 2008.

8. ***IMC Chemicals Inc., (IMCC) Trona – Kai Dunn***

Compliance Status

Daily reporting data from IMCC shows that the Argus plant injection brine exceeded the interim effluent limit for total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbon (TRPH) once during the month of June 2002. Twenty-one bird deaths were reported during the same period. The total number of birds picked up thus far through the first five months of 2002 is 132, with 78 of the birds being dead and 54 were alive.

Vacuum trucks are used as needed to remove surface hydrocarbons at the Trona

and Argus channels and skimmers, at the dredge pond, and at the Trona in-plant skimmer.

Improving Technology

During a July 1, 2002 meeting, Board staff and IMCC representatives discussed the project scope and design description for a new Argus skimmer. IMCC indicated that the purpose of the skimmer is to prevent formation of any surface oil film on solar evaporation and percolation ponds at Searles Lake. Board staff is reviewing the design proposal and will provide feedback to IMCC.

Basin Plan Beneficial Uses

Board staff met with Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) staff and IMCC's consultant on July 2, 2002 to discuss differences between interpretation of information collected regarding bird mortality at Searles Lake and respective rationale for conclusions drawn from available information. Both DFG staff and IMCC's consultant presented information on waterfowl use and mortality at Searles Lake at the Board's July 24, 2002 workshop regarding surface water quality and beneficial uses of Searles Lake.