
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

June 29, 2015

Permittees of the Rio Hondo / San Gabriel River Water Quality Group¹
(See Distribution List)

APPROVAL OF THE RIO HONDO / SAN GABRIEL RIVER WATER QUALITY GROUP COORDINATED INTEGRATED MONITORING PROGRAM, PURSUANT TO ATTACHMENT E, PART IV.B OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM (MS4) PERMIT (NPDES PERMIT NO. CAS004001; ORDER NO. R4-2012-0175)

Dear Permittees of the Rio Hondo / San Gabriel River Water Quality Group:

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Water Board or Board) has reviewed the revised monitoring program submitted on May 11, 2015 by the Rio Hondo / San Gabriel River Water Quality Group (Group). This monitoring program was submitted pursuant to the provisions of NPDES Permit No. CAS004001 (Order No. R4-2012-0175), which authorizes discharges from the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) operated by 86 municipal Permittees within Los Angeles County (hereafter, LA County MS4 Permit). The LA County MS4 Permit allows Permittees the option to develop and implement a coordinated integrated monitoring program (CIMP) that achieves the five Primary Objectives set forth in Part II.A of Attachment E and includes the elements set forth in Part II.E of Attachment E. These programs must be approved by the Executive Officer of the Los Angeles Water Board.

The Los Angeles Water Board has reviewed the Group's revised CIMP and has determined that the CIMP includes the elements set forth in Part II.E of Attachment E and will achieve the Primary Objectives set forth in Part II.A of Attachment E of the LA County MS4 Permit.

Public Review and Comment

On July 3, 2014, the Board provided public notice and a 46-day period to allow for public review and comment on the Group's draft CIMP. A separate notice of availability regarding the draft CIMPs, including the Group's CIMP, was directed to State Senators and Assembly Members within the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles County. The Board received three comment letters that had comments applicable to the Group's draft CIMP. One joint letter was from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Heal the Bay, and Los Angeles Waterkeeper, and the other letters were from the Construction Industry Coalition on Water Quality (CICWQ) and Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program. During the review of the draft

¹ Permittees of the Rio Hondo / San Gabriel River Water Quality Group CIMP include the County of Los Angeles; the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and the cities of Arcadia, Azusa, Bradbury, Duarte, Monrovia, and Sierra Madre.

and revised CIMP, the Los Angeles Water Board considered those comments applicable to the Group's proposed CIMP.

Los Angeles Water Board Review

Concurrent with the public review, the Los Angeles Water Board, along with U.S. EPA Region IX staff, reviewed the draft CIMPs. On February 10, 2015, the Los Angeles Water Board sent a letter to the Group detailing the Board's comments on the draft CIMP and identifying the revisions that needed to be addressed prior to the Board's approval of the Group's CIMP. The letter directed the Group to submit a revised CIMP addressing the Los Angeles Water Board's comments. Prior to the Group's submittal of its revised CIMP, the Los Angeles Water Board staff had email exchanges with the Group's representatives and consultants to discuss the Board's remaining comments and necessary revisions to the draft CIMP. The Group submitted its revised CIMP on May 11, 2015 for Los Angeles Water Board review and approval.

In separate correspondence to all Permittees developing CIMPs and Integrated Monitoring Programs (IMPs), the Los Angeles Water Board will also be providing clarification of requirements for toxicity monitoring – specifically regarding additional toxicity monitoring upstream and at outfalls where toxicity is identified during a sampling event at a receiving water monitoring site.

Los Angeles River Nitrogen Compounds and Related Effects TMDL

In March 2005, the County of Los Angeles and the Cities of Los Angeles and Calabasas submitted a Monitoring Work Plan on behalf of MS4 Permittees in the Los Angeles River watershed, which addressed the requirement for MS4 Permittees to submit a Monitoring Work Plan per the Los Angeles River Nitrogen Compounds and Related Effects TMDL (LAR Nitrogen TMDL). For MS4 discharges in the Rio Hondo Watershed, the Group's revised CIMP will now address MS4 monitoring requirements for the LAR Nitrogen TMDL.

CIMP Approval

The Los Angeles Water Board hereby approves the Group's May 11, 2015 revised CIMP. Pursuant to Attachment E, Part IV.C.6 of the LA County MS4 Permit, the Group must commence implementing its monitoring program within 90 days of this approval letter (September 27, 2015).

Please note that the Group is responsible for complying with all reporting provisions included in Attachment E, Part XIV – XVIII and Attachment D, Sections IV, V, and VII.A of the LA County MS4 Permit. The Group is also responsible for complying with applicable reporting provisions included in Attachment E Part XIX.C, "Reporting Requirements for Dominguez Channel and the Greater Harbor Waters WMA TMDLs;" Part XIX.D, "Reporting Requirements for the Los Angeles River WMA TMDLs;" and Part XIX.E, "Reporting Requirements for San Gabriel River WMA TMDLs." Finally, the Group is also responsible for complying with the following requirements under Annual Reporting and Adaptive Management.

Annual Reporting

Within the reporting year, through its Annual Report per Attachment E, Part XVIII of the LA County MS4 Permit, the Group shall report on the status of the phased initiation of monitoring established in the revised CIMP and specified below.

- Section 12 “CIMP Implementation Schedule”: The CIMP establishes a phased approach to initiating monitoring with the installation of Long Term Assessment receiving water sites on Rio Hondo and Little Dalton Wash and installation of stormwater outfall sites on Bradbury Drain and BI 0025 Peck Road Drain in Fiscal Year 2014-15; installation of stormwater outfall sites on BI 0404 – Line A and BI 1219 – Line C during Fiscal Year 2015-16; the installation of a TMDL receiving water site on Sawpit Wash and a stormwater outfall site on Beatty Canyon in Fiscal Year 2016-17; and installation of a TMDL receiving water site on Santa Anita Wash in Fiscal Year 2017-18. The CIMP notes that “sites subject to phased installation are anticipated to be available for use by July 1, of the identified monitoring year, pending permitting approvals, which may delay this objective.”

In addition, the Annual Report shall provide an Integrated Monitoring Report that summarizes all identified exceedances of:

- outfall-based stormwater monitoring data,
- wet weather receiving water monitoring data,
- dry weather receiving water monitoring data, and
- non-storm water outfall monitoring data

against all applicable receiving water limitations, water quality-based effluent limitations, non-storm water action levels, and aquatic toxicity thresholds as defined in Sections XII.F and G of this MRP. All sample results that exceeded one or more applicable thresholds shall be readily identified.

The Annual Report shall also include a Municipal Action Level (MAL) Assessment Report, which shall present the stormwater outfall monitoring data in comparison to the applicable MALs, and identify those subwatersheds with a running average of twenty percent or greater of exceedances of the MALs in discharges of stormwater from the MS4. Please note that beginning in Year 3 after the effective date of the LA County MS4 Permit, each Permittee or group of Permittees shall submit a MAL Action Plan with the Annual Report (first MAL Action Plan due with December 15, 2015 Annual Report) to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer, for those subwatersheds with a running average of twenty percent or greater of exceedances of the MALs in any discharge of storm water from the MS4. Please note that implementation of an approved Watershed Management Program (WMP) or Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) per Part VI.C of the LA County MS4 Permit fulfills all requirements related to the development and implementation of the MAL Action Plan, as per Attachment G of the LA County MS4 Permit, for those pollutants addressed by the WMP or EWMP.

Adaptive Management

The Regional Water Board or its Executive Officer, consistent with 40 CFR section 122.41, may approve changes to the Monitoring and Reporting Program, after providing the opportunity for public comment, either:

1. By request of the Group or by an interested person after submittal of the Monitoring Report. Such request shall be in writing and filed not later than 60 days after the Monitoring Report submittal date, or

2. As deemed necessary by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer, following notice to the Group.

As part of the adaptive management process, any modifications to the CIMP must be submitted to the Los Angeles Water Board for review and approval. The Group must implement any modifications to the CIMP upon approval by the Los Angeles Water Board or its Executive Officer, or within 60 days of submittal of modifications if the Los Angeles Water Board or its Executive Officer expresses no objections. Note that the Group's Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) is due no later than July 1, 2017. To align any modifications to the CIMP proposed through the adaptive management process with permit reissuance, results of the first adaptive management cycle should be submitted in conjunction with the Group's ROWD.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chris Lopez of the Storm Water Permitting Unit by electronic mail at Chris.Lopez@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (213) 576-6674. Alternatively, you may also contact Mr. Ivar Ridgeway, Chief of the Storm Water Permitting Unit, by electronic mail at Ivar.Ridgeway@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (213) 620-2150.

Sincerely,



Samuel Unger, P.E.
Executive Officer

Enclosures: Rio Hondo / San Gabriel River Water Quality Group Distribution List

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