

State Water Resources Control Board**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****November 15, 2001**

SWRCB 01-033

Contact: Myrllys L. Stockdale

Robert Miller

916-341-5254

\$1.8 Million State Water Board Grant to Reduce Flow of Contaminated Runoff into Will Rogers State Beach

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) today approved two grants totaling \$1,820,000 for the city of Los Angeles to divert dry weather runoff from the Temescal and Santa Monica canyon storm drains into the sanitary sewer system.

The beach, at the northern end of Santa Monica Bay, attracts nearly 5 million visitors each year. In 2001, the beach was posted or closed for a total of 116 days due to high bacteria levels.

Contaminated runoff flowing from these two canyons is a significant factor in the closings and postings of Will Rogers State Beach, where the drains currently empty. Currently, runoff from the canyons empties from storm drain outlets onto the beach or in the surf zone, depending on the tide.

The diversion structures will direct runoff into the sewer system and remove trash, debris, sediment, oil and grease that would normally enter Santa Monica Bay. The runoff will be redirected into the Hyperion Treatment facility. This redirection should lower the number of postings and closures at Will Rogers State Beach.

“Will Rogers State Beach is a coastal waters resource that is extremely important to protect,” said Arthur G. Baggett, Chairman of the SWRCB. “Helping Los Angeles divert the contamination before it can pollute the ocean waters is an excellent use of Clean Beaches Initiative funding.”

In 1996, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project released the findings of a study that found connections between adverse health effects and closeness to storm drains, and also between adverse health effects and the presence of viruses and bacteria.

In July 2001, Governor Gray Davis signed the 2001 budget act, which appropriated more than \$32 million for clean beaches projects. The Budget Act’s Coastal Nonpoint Source Control subaccount provides funding for projects that protect and restore the state’s coastal waters. The account uses funds from the Costa-Machado Act of 2000.

-30-

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>