

Public Comment
Draft Construction Permit
Deadline: 6/11/08 by 12 p.m.

American River College
Cosumnes River College
Folsom Lake College
Sacramento City College

1919 Spanos Court
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: 916 568-3021
Fax: 916 568-3023
www.losrios.edu

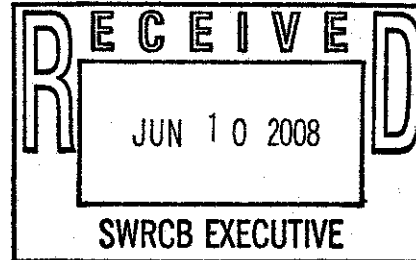
LOS RIOS

COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
DISTRICT



June 10, 2008

Ms. Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812



Dear Ms. Townsend:

The Draft Storm Water Construction General Permit (Draft Permit), proposed by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), will cause severe financial problems for the Los Rios Community College District and will take away funds reserved to educate students in our Colleges and populate the state's workforce with skilled workers. Additionally, the Draft Permit will result in the delay of the construction of needed classrooms, lab space, faculty offices, library space, and the other physical spaces necessary for the education of these students if the District is required to incorporate new post-construction design requirements and implement new on-site monitoring and reporting processes.

The Los Rios Community College District has approximately 35 new construction and modernization projects already designed and/or partially approved by the Division of the State Architect (DSA) and would have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to comply with the Draft Permit.

We believe that expenses related to site monitoring, water sampling, action exceedance reporting, annual reporting, and redesign and reconstruction to meet new post-construction requirements will not be eligible for funding under the current State of California Capital Facility funding. The cost of compliance would come from diverting education funds from our classrooms and education programs.

Our specific concerns are as follows:

- **Projects Already In Process**

School districts in California have over 885 pending new construction projects, all of which would be impacted by this permit. From design to completion, projects often take four to five years. The proposed implementation date for the final Construction General Permit is 100 days after SWRCB approval, with final approval expected in summer 2008. If districts are forced to redesign current projects to comply with the Draft Permit, project delays will result in the additional cost of millions of dollars statewide. It is doubtful that regional boards could review these plans without causing construction delay, and it is doubtful that the four state agencies involved in

the review process would allow revised plans to go forward without another review, causing further delay and expense.

We are requesting an exemption for those projects that are already in the approval process "pipeline." In 2003, a similar exemption was granted to school and community college districts and county offices of education for the Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (Small MS4).

- **Prior Treatment for Small MS4**

Many of the issues and problems associated with the revision of the construction Draft Permit were presented to the SWRCB during the 2003 discussion regarding the Small MS4. The SWRCB made a number of findings for education in the Small MS4 general permit, the most significant being that school and community college districts and county offices of education are "non-traditional" permittees and, as a result, should not be treated as other "traditional" permittees.

We believe that educational agencies should again be recognized as "non-traditional" permittees. We recommend that the SWRCB designate school and community college districts and county offices of education to comply with the Six Program Areas/Minimum Control Measures and Attachment 4, respectively, of the Small MS4, which stipulate policies for areas subject to high growth or serving a population of at least 50,000 for receiving water limitations and design standards. The Post - Construction "no redesign expectation" provision should be updated to allow the same amount of exemption time (20 months) as the Small MS4.

- **Fiscal Impact**

The Governor has proposed a revised 2008-09 budget for education that is ultimately less than the current budget. Every dollar spent on storm water programs results in less available funding for our core programs. To continue to provide a quality education to our students, we would require some type of financial relief from this added mandate.

We recommend that the SWRCB work with the State Allocation Board, and/or the State of California Community Colleges' Chancellor's office to provide financial relief to implement storm water permit programs.

- **Addition of Regional Water Quality Control Boards to the Review Process.**

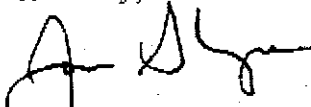
Community College district construction projects are already reviewed and approved by state agencies, (i.e., DSA, the Department of Finance, and the State Chancellor's office). By adding the regional boards to the review process, an already lengthy process will be further extended. Additionally, we are concerned that the Draft Permit does not specify a deadline for completing the regional board review process.

It is more economical and practical to have one of the above-mentioned state agencies also review the plans for storm water compliance. This is especially relevant because the regional boards have never been adequately staffed to even implement designation of school districts to participate in the Small MS4.

We recommend that: (1) the storm water construction permit and plan review function be given to one of the existing state agencies involved in performing related review activities or (2) a 30 day automatic approval be granted after the application is submitted to the regional board, if the regional board has not taken action on the application within that time frame.

The Los Rios Community College District requests that you consider our recommendations and respond to our concerns. Questions regarding this letter should be made to Brice Harris, Chancellor, Los Rios Community College District, 1919 Spanos Court, Sacramento, California, 95825.

Sincerely,



Ron Sharpe
Deputy Chancellor

cc: Ms. Doduc, Chair, SWRCB
Mr. Wolf, P.E., PhD, Vice Chair, SWRCB
Mr. Baggett, Jr., Member, SWRCB
Mr. Hoppin, Member, SWRCB
Ms. Spivy-Weber, Member, SWRCB
Mr. Chang, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)
Ms. Gibbs, LACOE