



STATE WATER RESOURCES
 CONTROL BOARD
 2016 AUG -3 PM 1:44
 WATER RIGHTS
 SACRAMENTO

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: **SWRCB Division of Water Rights**
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

DATE: August 3, 2016

ATTENTION: **Ms. Barbara Evoy**
 PROJECT: Regional San South County Ag Program – Petition for Change Package
 REFERENCE #:

WE ARE SENDING YOU: ENCLOSED UNDER SEPARATE COVER VIA

The following items:

Copies	Description
1	Petition for Change
1	Environmental Information for Petition
1	Attachments 1 – 5
1	CD with copy of Draft Environmental Report, dated July 2016
1	Letter of Support from SWRCB dated May 30, 2013
1	\$1,000 and \$850 checks payable to SWRCB and CDFWS, respectively.

THESE ARE TRANSMITTED as checked below:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Approval | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved as submitted | <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed no additional comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Use | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved as noted | <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed see additional comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As Requested | <input type="checkbox"/> Returned for corrections | <input type="checkbox"/> Return corrected prints |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Review and Comment | <input type="checkbox"/> copies retained for our files | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign and return copies |

Please respond by:

REMARKS:

Ms. Evoy,

Attached to this letter of transmittal is the Petition for Change package for the Regional San South County Ag Program. The package was addressed to you per the instructions from Ms. Kate Gaffney. We look forward to working with you and your staff during the review and approval process for this Petition for Change.

SIGNED: *Jose R. Ramirez*
Jose R. Ramirez, P.E.
Senior Civil Engineer
 Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
 10060 Goethe Road
 Sacramento, CA 95827
 (916) 876-6059

cc: Lauren Mulloy, CA DFWS

REC'D 8-3-2016
 CHECK # 1102239135
 \$1,000.00
 CHECK # 1102239138- \$850.00
 GC

Please indicate County where your project is located here:

Sacramento

MAIL FORM AND ATTACHMENTS TO:
State Water Resources Control Board
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
Tel: (916) 341-5300 Fax: (916) 341-5400
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
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DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS SACRAMENTO

PETITION FOR CHANGE

Separate petitions are required for each water right. Mark all areas that apply to your proposed change(s). Incomplete forms may not be accepted. Location and area information must be provided on maps in accordance with established requirements. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 715 et seq.) Provide attachments if necessary.

- Point of Diversion, Point of Rediversion, Place of Use, Purpose of Use, Distribution of Storage, Temporary Urgency, Instream Flow Dedication, Waste Water, Split, Terms or Conditions, Other
Application, Permit, License, Statement

I (we) hereby petition for change(s) noted above and described as follows:

Point of Discharge - Provide source name and identify points using both Public Land Survey System descriptions to 1/4-1/4 level and California Coordinate System (NAD 83).

Present: SW 1/4 of SW 1/4, Sec. 13, T.7N, R.4E MDB&M. 6,704,855 E 1,927,612 N (NAD 83 Zone 02). See map in Attachment 2.
Proposed: Retain Existing: Present Point of Discharge. Add: Discharge to Proposed Place of Use as shown in Attachment 3.

Place of Use - Identify area using Public Land Survey System descriptions to 1/4-1/4 level; for irrigation, list number of acres irrigated.

Present: None. Discharged to Sacramento River.
Proposed: See map in Attachment 3. Privately-owned land: approx. 16,560 irrigated acres. Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge: approx. 400 acres.

Purpose of Use

Present: None. Discharged to Sacramento River.
Proposed: Irrigation, in-lieu recharge, and habitat enhancement.

Split

Provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers for all proposed water right holders.

Not applicable.

In addition, provide a separate sheet with a table describing how the water right will be split between the water right holders: for each party list amount by direct diversion and/or storage, season of diversion, maximum annual amount, maximum diversion to offstream storage, point(s) of diversion, place(s) of use, and purpose(s) of use. Maps showing the point(s) of diversion and place of use for each party should be provided.

Distribution of Storage

Present: Not applicable.
Proposed: Not applicable.

REC'D 8-3-2016
CHECK #1102239135 - \$1,000.00
CHECK #1102239138 - \$850.00
GC

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FOR PETITIONS

This form is required for all petitions.

Before the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) can approve a petition, the State Water Board must consider the information contained in an environmental document prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This form is not a CEQA document. If a CEQA document has not yet been prepared, a determination must be made of who is responsible for its preparation. As the petitioner, you are responsible for all costs associated with the environmental evaluation and preparation of the required CEQA documents. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability and submit any studies that have been conducted regarding the environmental evaluation of your project. If you need more space to completely answer the questions, please number and attach additional sheets.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGES OR WORK REMAINING TO BE COMPLETED

For a petition for change, provide a description of the proposed changes to your project including, but not limited to, type of construction activity, structures existing or to be built, area to be graded or excavated, increase in water diversion and use (up to the amount authorized by the permit), changes in land use, and project operational changes, including changes in how the water will be used. For a petition for extension of time, provide a description of what work has been completed and what remains to be done. Include in your description any of the above elements that will occur during the requested extension period.

The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) proposes to deliver up to 50,000 acre-feet per year of Title 22 disinfected, tertiary-treated recycled water for irrigation, in-lieu recharge, and habitat enhancement. The South Sacramento County Agriculture & Habitat Lands Recycled Water Program (Project) will convey recycled water from Regional San's Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to potential customers via a pump station at the WWTP and approximately 14 miles of transmission pipeline, about 25 miles of distribution mains, and a yet undetermined length of service connection laterals and customer turnouts.

Construction is estimated to begin in 2019 and could continue through 2041 for completion of all program-level components (e.g., distribution mains, service laterals, turnouts, on-site irrigation systems, potential recharge area and diluent wells, and connection to wetlands). The Project is expected to be constructed in phases to facilitate funding, institutional arrangements, permitting, and construction of all necessary facilities.

Regional San is the CEQA lead agency for the Project. A draft EIR has been prepared for the Project. An electronic copy of the draft EIR is included as Attachment 4.

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
SACRAMENTO
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Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

4

Coordination with Regional Water Quality Control Board

For change petitions only, you must request consultation with the Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding the potential effects of your proposed change on water quality and other instream beneficial uses. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 794.) In order to determine the appropriate office for consultation, see: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterboards_map.shtml. Provide the date you submitted your request for consultation here, then provide the following information.

Date of Request

July 13, 2016

Will your project, during construction or operation, (1) generate waste or wastewater containing such things as sewage, industrial chemicals, metals, or agricultural chemicals, or (2) cause erosion, turbidity or sedimentation?

Yes No

Will a waste discharge permit be required for the project?

Yes No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Construction of the Project or pipeline failures during Project operation may generate waste and wastewater, as well as cause erosion, turbidity, or sedimentation. The draft EIR (included as Attachment 4) lists all potential impacts and determines mitigation measures to ensure the impact is less than significant with mitigation. A water reclamation requirement will be required during the continued operation of the Project. The Project will operate under the new statewide General Order for Recycled Water Use as discussed in Chapter 3.10 (Hydrology and Water Quality) of the draft EIR and the current NPDES permit will be maintained.

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

Local Permits

For temporary transfers only, you must contact the board of supervisors for the county(ies) both for where you currently store or use water and where you propose to transfer the water. (Wat. Code § 1726.) Provide the date you submitted your request for consultation here.

Date of Contact

Not applicable.

For change petitions only, you should contact your local planning or public works department and provide the information below.

Person Contacted: Date of Contact:

Department: Phone Number:

County Zoning Designation:

Are any county permits required for your project? If yes, indicate type below. Yes No

- Grading Permit Use Permit Watercourse Obstruction Permit
- Change of Zoning General Plan Change Other (explain below)

If applicable, have you obtained any of the permits listed above? If yes, provide copies. Yes No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

As shown in Table 2 in Attachment 1, Sacramento County requires encroachment permits (for working within Sacramento County right of ways and well permits (for drilling the three diluent wells). A grading permit may also be necessary. Required permits will be acquired after the pending environmental review is complete.

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

Federal and State Permits

Check any additional agencies that may require permits or other approvals for your project:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board Department of Fish and Game
- Dept of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams California Coastal Commission
- State Reclamation Board U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

Have you obtained any of the permits listed above? If yes, provide copies. Yes No

For each agency from which a permit is required, provide the following information:

Agency	Permit Type	Person(s) Contacted	Contact Date	Phone Number

If necessary, provide additional information below:

See Table 2 in Attachment 1 for more information about the required permits for the Project. Required permits will be acquired after the pending environmental review is complete.

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

Construction or Grading Activity

Does the project involve any construction or grading-related activity that has significantly altered or would significantly alter the bed, bank or riparian habitat of any stream or lake? Yes No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

Not applicable.

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

Archeology

Has an archeological report been prepared for this project? If yes, provide a copy. Yes No

Will another public agency be preparing an archeological report? Yes No

Do you know of any archeological or historic sites in the area? If yes, explain below. Yes No

If necessary, provide additional information below:

See Chapter 3.6 (Cultural Resources) of the draft EIR included as Attachment 4.

Insert the attachment number here, if applicable:

Photographs

For all petitions other than time extensions, attach complete sets of color photographs, clearly dated and labeled, showing the vegetation that exists at the following three locations:

Along the stream channel immediately downstream from each point of diversion

Along the stream channel immediately upstream from each point of diversion

At the place where water subject to this water right will be used

See Attachment 5 for photographs. Because the location of use is over 16,000 acres of irrigated land, representative photographs are included instead.

Maps

For all petitions other than time extensions, attach maps labeled in accordance with the regulations showing all applicable features, both present and proposed, including but not limited to: point of diversion, point of rediversion, distribution of storage reservoirs, point of discharge of treated wastewater, place of use, and location of instream flow dedication reach. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, §§ 715 et seq., 794.)

Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 794, petitions for change submitted without maps may not be accepted.

All Water Right Holders Must Sign This Form:

I (we) hereby certify that the statements I (we) have furnished above and in the attachments are complete to the best of my (our) ability and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge. Dated at .

Prabhakar Sorevarajam
Water Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

Water Right Holder or Authorized Agent Signature

NOTE:

- **Petitions for Change** may not be accepted unless you include proof that a copy of the petition was served on the Department of Fish and Game. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 794.)
- **Petitions for Temporary Transfer** may not be accepted unless you include proof that a copy of the petition was served on the Department of Fish and Game and the board of supervisors for the county(ies) where you currently store or use water and the county(ies) where you propose to transfer the water. (Wat. Code § 1726.)

Attachment 1 - Project Information

Project Summary

The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) proposes to deliver up to 50,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of Title 22 disinfected, tertiary-treated recycled water for irrigation, in-lieu recharge, and habitat enhancement. The South Sacramento County Agriculture & Habitat Lands Recycled Water Program (Project) will convey recycled water from Regional San's Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) to potential customers via a pump station at the SRWTP and approximately 14 miles of transmission pipeline, about 25 miles of distribution mains, and a yet undetermined length of service connection laterals and customer turnouts.

Water recycling is required under California's constitutional mandate that the waters of the state be put to beneficial use to the maximum extent feasible (California Constitution, Article X, § 2; see also Water Code §§ 100, 275). The California Water Code, moreover, is replete with legislative declarations that the policy of this state is to maximize the use of recycled water throughout the state and to support local agencies in their efforts to reclaim water (Water Code §§ 461, 13510-13512, 13576). In addition, Water Code Section 1210 provides that Regional San has the exclusive right to the beneficial use of its recycled wastewater as against anyone who has supplied the water to be discharged. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) itself has established water reclamation as a major priority by adopting SWRCB Resolution 77-1, entitled "Policy with Respect to Water Reclamation in California." The SWRCB's Strategic Plan Update 2008-2012 also sets water recycling as a priority goal and objective. Finally, the SWRCB staff in its May 30, 2013 letter to Regional San (attached to this form as Exhibit A) expressed its specific encouragement for Regional San's continued development and pursuit of the Project, noting that it "could be an important component of the Sacramento region's and the state's water portfolio."

Project Description

Regional San treats and discharges wastewater for approximately 1.4 million customers in Sacramento County and the City of West Sacramento. A small amount of recycled water for urban landscaping is currently supplied to nearby communities in a project with Sacramento County Water Agency and another phase may occur in the future. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared with Sacramento Municipal Utility District and the City of Sacramento plans for recycled water to be used for power generation and urban irrigation. Regional San currently discharges secondary treatment effluent from the SRWTP to the Sacramento River near the community of Freeport (see Attachment 2 for point of discharge map). Per its recently updated April 2016 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit (Order No. R5-2016-0020), Regional San is required to discharge mainly disinfected, tertiary-treated recycled water for a portion of the year by 2023. As part of the Echo Water Project, Regional San is constructing the necessary facilities to treat the SRWTP effluent.

To evaluate beneficial reuse of this recycled water, Regional San completed a feasibility study in January 2015 to assess providing recycled water to landowners in southern Sacramento County that currently rely on irrigating with groundwater. The medium service area alternative was recommended by the feasibility study and was modified slightly and evaluated further in the draft EIR released in July 2016 (included as Attachment 4).

The Project consists of delivering up to 50,000 AFY of recycled water to 16,000 acres of irrigated land, 400 acres of managed wetlands, and a potential recharge area. Attachment 3 (point of use map) shows all of these areas and Table 1 summarizes the acreage and estimated recycled water use.

The Project aims for recycled water to account for up to two-thirds of the maximum monthly irrigation demand on the 16,000 acres of private land. Initially, an estimated average of 32,500 AFY of recycled water will be provided for summertime or growing season (May through September) irrigation to

landowners with whom written agreements will be developed. In the future, wintertime irrigation of about 12,000 AFY on these same lands may be considered to passively recharge the underlying groundwater basin. The 16,000 acres of irrigated land is currently outside of Regional San’s service area, but may be annexed with a limited services agreement to provide recycled water only. Written agreements with landowners will be developed in the meantime.

The Project also aims to supply 400 acres of wetlands with an annual average of 500 AF of recycled water, mainly delivered during spring and fall. The Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1994, includes approximately 17,640 acres of land generally to the north and west of the Project area. A portion of the 6,550 acres managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service could be supplied with recycled water. Currently, the wetlands are supported with water pumped from lakes.

As mentioned above, there are currently no plans to irrigate with recycled water in the winter months (October through April). An option to make beneficial use of recycled water during these months is to use 560 acres of irrigated agricultural land in the eastern part of the Project area near the Cosumnes River for active recharge of the South American groundwater subbasin underlying the Project area. California regulations covering groundwater recharge using recycled water (DPH-14-003E effective June 2014) set dilution requirements for recycled water prior to recharge. The Project estimates that 5,000 AFY of recycled water will be added to diluent water for recharge water with a dilution of 20 to 50 percent. Diluent water is expected to come from precipitation, as well as groundwater pumped from three nearby diluent wells that will be constructed as part of the Project. An estimated total of 10,000 AF of water may be recharged annually during the winter months.

Table 1: Project Recycled Water Use

Item	Area (acres)	Average Recycled Water Usage (AFY)
Growing Season Irrigation	16,560	32,500
Non-growing Season Irrigation	16,000	12,000
Managed Wetlands	400	500
Recharge Area	560	5,000
Total	16,960	50,000

*KMG
8/19/14*

Environmental Review

The Project requires the construction of a pump station at the SRWTP, approximately 14 miles of transmission pipelines, about 25 miles of distribution mains, and a yet undetermined length of service lateral connections. Construction is estimated to begin in 2019 and could continue through 2041 for completion of all program-level components (e.g., distribution mains, service laterals, turnouts, on-site irrigation systems, potential recharge area and diluent wells, and connection to wetlands). The Project is expected to be constructed in phases to facilitate funding, institutional arrangements, permitting, and construction of all necessary facilities. Recycled water not utilized by the Project will continue to be discharged to the current place of discharge on the Sacramento River.

One anticipated benefit of the Project aside from beneficial reuse of Regional San’s wastewater is the potential water quality benefit associated with the reduction in discharge to the Sacramento River by about 50,000 AFY with full program implementation. Furthermore, as an in-lieu recharge project, the application of the recycled water for irrigation purposes and the potential direct recharge area will help the underlying groundwater basin by raising groundwater levels, over time allowing for increased flows in the Cosumnes and Sacramento Rivers and enhancing the adjacent riparian habitat.

Regional San is the CEQA lead agency for the Project. A draft EIR has been prepared for the Project and is included (see Attachment 4) along with the Environmental Information Form. Most of the identified environmental impacts are related to construction activities and all are expected to be less than significant with mitigation.

Chapter 3.10 of the draft EIR discusses the potential impacts to hydrology and water quality. As discussed above, the Project is beneficial to the groundwater basin due to the reduction in groundwater pumping due to recycled water irrigation (supplying two-thirds of the maximum monthly demand during peak use periods and 100 percent of the demand during off-peak or winter months) and the in-lieu groundwater basin recharge or direct recharge with full project implementation. The reduction in groundwater pumping and subsequent recharge raises the groundwater levels in the basin and causes an estimated 300,000 AF or greater increase in groundwater storage with full project implementation after about 20 years. After 10 years with only growing season irrigation, groundwater storage in the underlying basin is estimated to increase by 200,000 AF. The Project may cause a measurable reduction in Sacramento River flows during multiyear drought conditions, but with the higher groundwater levels due to the Project, along with the small amount of total river flow being lost (less than 1 percent of total river flow on average), the impact on downstream users and ecology is expected to be negligible.

Additional Permits

Additional permits including the Petition for Change were discussed in the draft EIR (included as Attachment 4) and are summarized in Table 2.

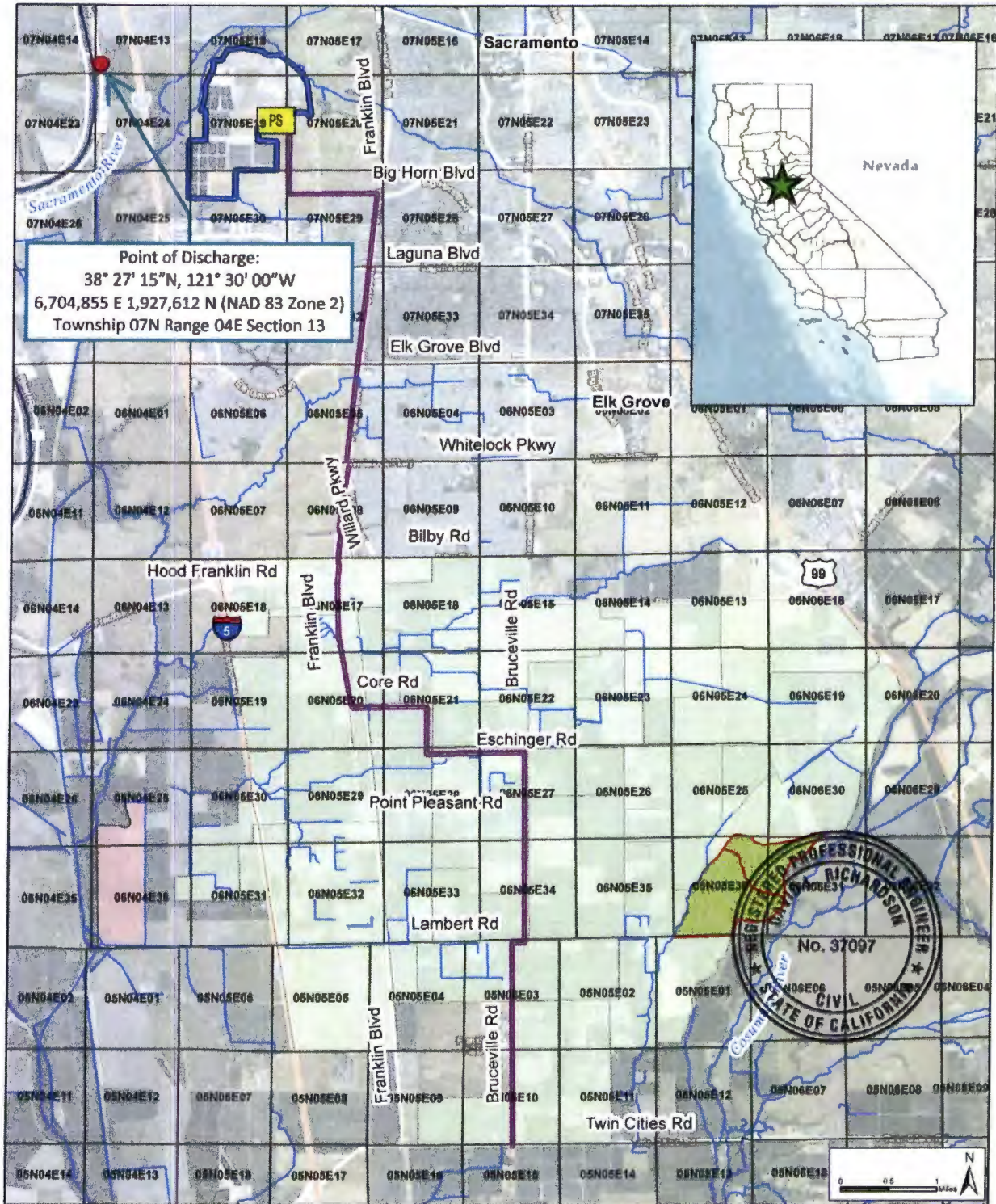
Table 2: Anticipated Permitting Requirements and Other Submittals

Agency	Type of Approval
FEDERAL	
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	Possible funding through Public Law 102-575, Title XVI
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act, Section 404 Permit for any fill of wetlands or waters of the US
U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) & National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service	Section 7 Consultation/Biological Opinions (for effects on Federally-listed species) —If adopted, effects on terrestrial biota will be covered by South County Habitat Conservation Plan
USFWS	Agreement (for provision of water to Stone Lakes NWR)
STATE	
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	Wastewater Change Petition for a change in the point of discharge, place of use, or purpose of use of treated water
SWRCB	Coverage under the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Recycled Water Use (Statewide Recycled Water Permit, Order WQ 2014-0090-DWQ) (for operation of the recycled water system)
SWRCB	Potential funding through Proposition 1 Water Recycling Funding Program or the Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan.
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB)	401 Water Quality Certification (required for 404 Permit)
CVRWQCB	Notice of Intent (NOI) for coverage under the Statewide Construction Stormwater Permit (for construction greater than 1 acre in size)

Attachments to Petition for Change and Environmental Information for Petitions

Agency	Type of Approval
CVRWQCB	NOI for coverage under General Permit for discharges with Low-Threat to Water Quality (for pipeline discharges for testing and startup)
California Division of Drinking Water	Title 22 Engineer's Report (production, distribution and use of recycled water)
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	Incidental Take Permit (for effects on State-listed species)—If adopted, effects on terrestrial biota will be covered by South County Habitat Conservation Plan
CDFW	Incidental Take Permit for California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
CDFW	Streambed Alteration Agreement (for pipeline crossings of creeks)
Cal/OSHA – Tunnel and Mining Unit	Construction Permit / Underground Classification for tunnels
California Office of Historic Preservation	Section 106 Consultation
California Department of Transportation	Encroachment Permit (for crossing Interstate 5 [I-5])
LOCAL	
City of Elk Grove	Encroachment Permits (for work within City rights-of-way [ROW])
Sacramento County	Encroachment Permits (for working within County ROWs) and Well Permits (for diluent wells)
Sacramento County Air Quality Management District	Authority to Construct (for building and operating equipment that will meet air quality standards)
Local Agency Formation Commission	Regional San annexation of Service Area for recycled water, with service limited to recycled water supply
PRIVATE	
Union Pacific Railroad	Easement to construct within right-of-way
Property Owners	Lease/purchase agreements with current landowners(s) to acquire property for development of recharge area

Attachment 2 - Point of Discharge Map

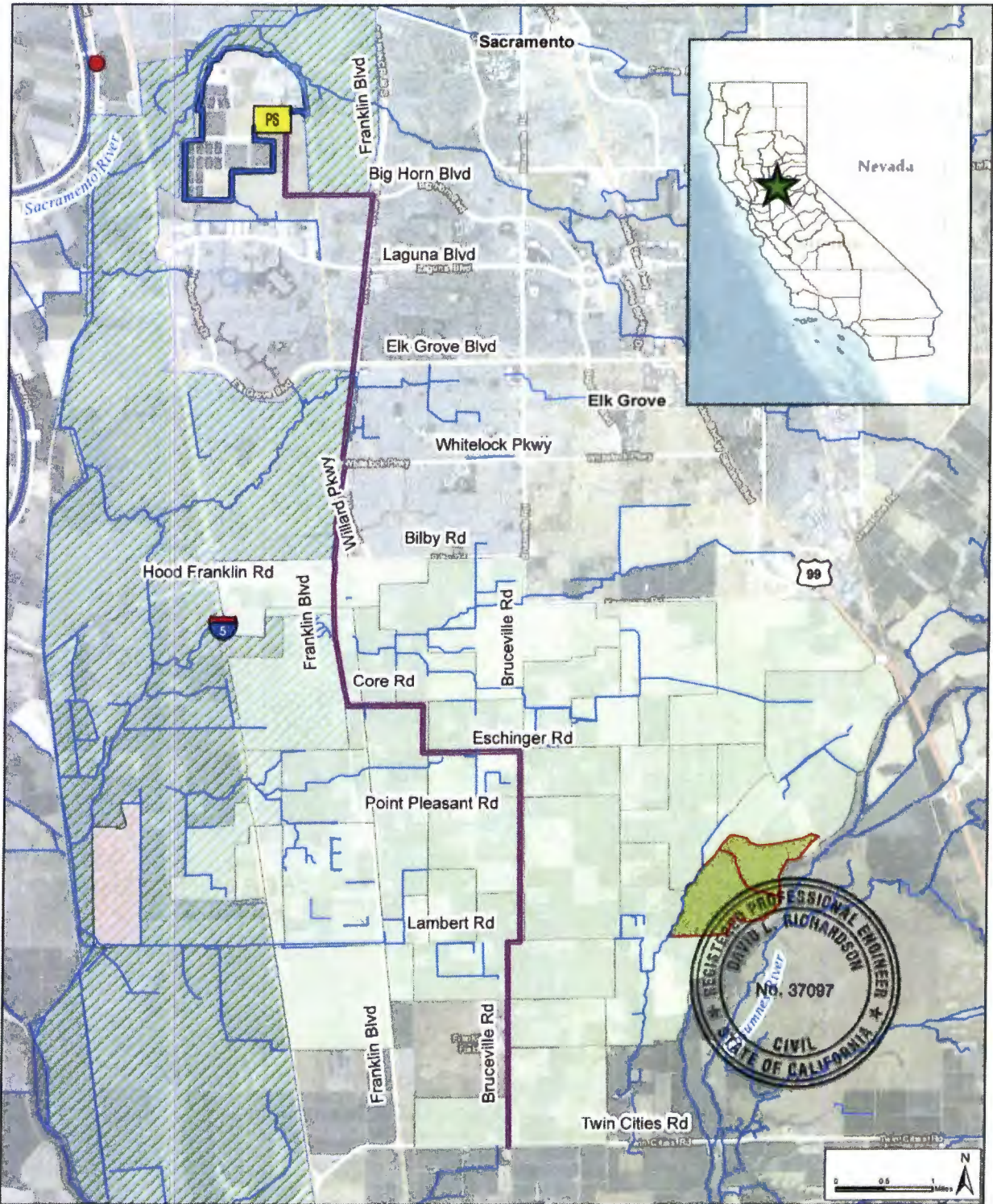


**South Sacramento County Agriculture & Habitat
Lands Recycled Water Program
Point of Discharge Map**



- Township Range Section Boundary
- Rivers and Streams
- Proposed Transmission Pipeline
- Proposed Pump Station
- SRWTP Discharge Location
- SRWTP Boundary
- Recycled Water Service Area
- Stone Lakes Managed Wetland
- Potential Recharge Area

Attachment 3 - Place of Use Map



South Sacramento County Agriculture & Habitat Lands Recycled Water Program
Place of Use Map



- Rivers and Streams
- Transmission Pipeline
- PS Proposed Pump Station
- SRWTP Discharge Location
- Recycled Water Service Area
- Stone Lakes Managed Wetlands
- Potential Recharge Area
- Stone Lakes NWR
- SRWTP Boundary

**Attachment 4 - Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's
South Sacramento County Agriculture and Habitat Lands
Recycled Water Program Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Provided on CD with this Petition for Change submission package

Attachment 5 - Photographs

Photographs of the Existing Point of Discharge (See Attachment 2 for map showing location)



Sacramento River immediately downstream of the point of discharge
July 2016



Sacramento River immediately upstream of the point of discharge
July 2016



Aerial view of Sacramento River at the point of discharge with upstream to the right and downstream to the left (i.e., river flows from right to left in the photograph)
July 2016

Representative Photographs of Irrigated Land in Southern Sacramento County (See Attachment 3 for map showing location)



Representative irrigated land
Date Unknown



Representative irrigated land
Date Unknown

Representative Photographs of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (See Attachment 3 for map showing location)



Representative Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
March 2015



Representative Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
March 2015

Exhibit A - Letter from State Water Resources Control Board

Letter from SWRCB to Regional San on May 30, 2013 expressing support for the Project



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR



MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

MAY 30 2013

Stanley R. Dean
District Engineer
Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
10060 Goethe Road
Sacramento, CA 95827

Dear Mr. Dean:

SOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE AND HABITAT LANDS RECYCLED WATER PROJECT

I am writing to encourage the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's (District) to continue work on the South County Agriculture and Habitat Lands Recycled Water Project (Project). Both the Legislature and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) have repeatedly stated their strong support for development of recycled water projects. When completed, this Project could provide up to about 50,000 acre-feet per year of tertiary-treated recycled water to irrigate up to about 17,000 acres of agricultural and habitat lands.

Local recycled water projects, such as the Project, advance a number of the State Water Board's goals set forth in its *Strategic Plan Update 2008-2012*, including the goals of: (1) increasing sustainable local water supplies; and (2) supporting beneficial uses by protecting both surface water and area groundwater. The Project, as proposed, uses tertiary-treated recycled water on allowed crops in lieu of pumped groundwater to irrigate permanent agriculture lands and habitat mitigation lands. It will do so using new recycled water transmission and distribution pipelines and treatment, pumping and storage facilities. Current Project analysis estimates that the amount of water saved is equivalent to the potable water needed to serve up to 100,000 homes annually in the Sacramento region. The Project also furthers similar goals set forth in the Delta Stewardship Council's *Delta Plan* and in the current draft of the *Bay Delta Conservation Plan*. Lastly, the Project will assist in meeting the State Water Board's *Recycled Water Policy's* goal of "[i]ncreasing the use of recycled water over 2002 levels by at least one million acre-feet per year (afy) by 2020 and by at least two million afy by 2030."

As currently proposed, the Project will also have a number of added environmental benefits. It will reduce the overdraft of local groundwater supplies. It will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by saving the electrical consumption required for production of the potable water it replaces. The Project will also support habitat for species such as the threatened Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) and reduce the amount of treated effluent discharged from the District's wastewater treatment plant to the Sacramento River.

It is noteworthy that the Project has already received positive endorsements from a wide variety of interest groups including the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, Ducks Unlimited, Sacramento

FELICIA MARCUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, Ca 95812-0100 | www.waterboards.ca.gov

Area Creeks Council, Sacramento County Farm Bureau, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority, and City of Elk Grove. Additionally, the Project has received the support of the Honorable Doris Matsui and Honorable Ami Bera with their introduction of H.R. 1540, which if enacted, would authorize to be appropriated \$30,000,000 for the Project.

I encourage the District to continue analysis of, and efforts to procure further funding for, the Project. If the early assessments are correct, the Project could be an important component of the Sacramento region's and the state's water portfolio.

Sincerely,


Thomas Howard
Executive Director

Checks to Pay Petition for Change Application Fees

- \$1,000 check payable to SWRCB Division of Water Rights (Regional San Check No. 1102239135)
- \$850 check payable to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Regional San Check No. 1102239138)

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