



Media Release

State Water Board Adopts Order Providing Framework for Stormwater Capture and Use in Los Angeles

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SACRAMENTO – Today the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted an order largely upholding the Waste Discharge Requirements for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) discharges within the watersheds of Los Angeles County. The order makes minor revisions to requirements first established by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (L.A. Water Board) that provide a framework to promote integrated stormwater capture and reuse. Capture and reuse will improve water quality, protect local beaches, and supplement local water supplies.

“This innovative permit not only advances water quality protection, it also incentivizes the management of stormwater as a significant resource--for water supply, urban greening, and other uses,” said Felicia Marcus, Chair of the State Water Board. “Our collective objective should be to use each scarce drop of water, and each local dollar, for multiple local benefits--flood control, water supply, water quality, and urban greening in the face of climate change. The Board's order furthers these objectives, and we pledge to stay engaged in monitoring and oversight to achieve those results while protecting water quality.”

On November 8, 2012, the L.A. Water Board issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to control stormwater and non-stormwater discharges that enter coastal draining watersheds in Los Angeles County from MS4s owned or operated by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, Los Angeles County and 84 municipal permittees. The Los Angeles County MS4 Permit updated a previous permit issued by the L.A. Water Board in 2001.

In developing the permit, there was an unprecedented level of collaboration among the permittees and other stakeholders. The L.A. Water Board crafted a permit that implemented rigorous permit requirements, including the implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) requirements, water quality improvement-driving provisions consistent with the requirements of 33 Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and requirements for monitoring at outfalls which had not previously been required. Along with the strong permit requirements, the permit also laid out an option for municipalities to implement the permit on a watershed scale in order to incentivize coordinated watershed-based solutions; facilitate collaboration and cost-effectiveness; to prioritize actions; and to ensure improved water quality.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

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The State Water Board received 37 petitions challenging various provisions of the Los Angeles County MS4 Permit. On November 21, 2014, the State Water Board released a draft order for public comment resolving the contentions raised in the petitions, including the issue of compliance with receiving water limitations in MS4 permits generally. Following a public meeting in Los Angeles and multiple rounds of public comment, the State Water Board released revised drafts of its proposed order on April 24, 2015, and June 12, 2015. After receiving extensive oral and written comments from local communities, environmental groups, and other stakeholders, the State Water Board adopted a final order on June 16, 2015.

The State Water Board's order upholds the Los Angeles County MS4 Permit with some changes. Once again, the State Water Board affirms the requirement that municipal stormwater permits should include requirements to meet water quality standards. The order also upheld a number of additional challenged provisions of the Los Angeles County MS4 Permit, including specific pollutant limitations; monitoring and reporting requirements; and provisions to effectively prohibit non-storm water discharges.

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