

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 3, 2011
Prepared on January 10, 2011

ITEM NUMBER: 12

SUBJECT: Ocean Wastewater Discharge in the State of California

DISCUSSION

Last year, Heal the Ocean, headquartered in Santa Barbara, requested an opportunity to provide the Board with a 15 minute presentation on their recent report, California Ocean Wastewater Discharge Report and Inventory!. HTO will demonstrate their web page, as part of the presentation, which provides nice access for all parts of the report. The report includes identification of barriers to increased reclamation/recycling, and discusses ways to overcome those barriers.

About HTO, from their webpage:

"Our Mission:

Heal the Ocean focuses on wastewater infrastructure – sewers and septic systems – as well as ocean dumping practices that have contributed to ocean pollution. We are focused on Santa Barbara County, but our methods are now serving as a model for other coastal communities across the country.

Our mission maintains five definite goals:

1. **ZERO PATHOGENS IN SEWAGE.** Wastewater plants discharging into the Santa Barbara Channel must upgrade treatment of sewage effluent to avoid the addition of pathogens and bacteria to seawater.
2. **SEPTIC SYSTEMS.** Septic systems operate on the principle of leaching, and must be removed from inappropriate beach and creek areas. "Cluster overuse" must be dealt with by sewer hookup, which we facilitate by working with homeowner associations.
3. **NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION.** Heal the Ocean plays an active role in the development of storm water permits, and has initiated a study of groundwater ocean interaction; we lobby for increased street sweeping and enforcement to prevent illegal dumping into creeks and storm drains.
4. **OCEAN DUMPING.** Dredge and fill operations in the name of "restoring beaches" will not be performed unless materials are suitable and clean for beaches, and do not cause smothering of near-shore sea life.

5. **LANDFILLS.** We take an active role in the prevention of toxic pollutants leaching into the sea from landfills.

We employ engineers, researchers and scientists, lawyers, GIS mappers, and other experts to locate sources of pollution, assess their significance and find solutions. We perform cost feasibility studies for upgraded wastewater management methods. We have conducted DNA tests in watersheds as well as virus tests in the ocean. To meet our objectives, we work with city, county and state agencies to initiate new programs and comply with those that already exist."

RECOMMENDATION

This session is for discussion only.