

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Colorado River Basin



Executive Officer's Report
September 15, 2016

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Staff Activities

A. Basin Planning Unit

Unit Chief: Joan Stormo, Senior Engineering Geologist, P.G.

The priority activities for the Unit are to continue working on the 2014 Triennial Review priority issues, the Salt Nutrients Management Plan for the Coachella Valley, and special SWAMP studies, and to ensure the Basin Plan Amendment that revised the Septic Tank Discharge Prohibition for Yucca Valley is approved by the State Water Board and the Office of Administrative Law.

Triennial Review Issue: Beneficial Uses of Constructed Wetlands—Staff has drafted a report summarizing the findings of the surface water survey conducted to identify beneficial uses and water quality objectives for constructed wetlands in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys. Following revision of the staff report to address management concerns, CEQA documents will be completed and a scoping meeting conducted at the earliest practicable time (by spring 2017) to draft a Basin Plan amendment to establish the beneficial uses and water quality objectives to protect the uses. The scientific basis for establishing the water quality standards for the wetlands will have to be peer-reviewed by experts from the University of California system, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sec. 57004. [*Jeff Geraci, ES; Maria Davydova, ES*]

Triennial Review Issue: Threat of Septic Systems in the La Quinta Cove Area--This item was expanded to investigate and address high nitrate concentrations in groundwater throughout the Coachella Valley, focusing on locations identified by the proposed Salt-Nutrients Management Plan for the Coachella Valley. Land use areas of interest include: agriculture (current or historical), golf courses, areas utilizing septic systems for wastewater disposal, and/or serviced by "old," potentially failing, infrastructure. Currently, Regional Water Board staff is evaluating groundwater data from our local Water District websites (Palm Springs Water District, Coachella Sanitary District, Desert Water Agency, Valley Sanitary District, Mission Springs Water District, and Coachella Valley Water District), the State's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment program (GAMA), the United States Geological Survey, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Geotracker. Staff also reviewed internal Board records and databases to document locations of sewer releases within the Valley, and requested maps/layouts of sewer networks from water agencies and wastewater treatment system facilities. Most have complied with this request. However, data received from Coachella Valley Water District was inadequate to determine sewer infrastructure. Therefore, the District was requested to submit additional data [revised format]. Staff's preliminary research results indicate there is a predominant location with higher nitrate concentrations in central Coachella Valley [Cathedral City, Palm Desert to Indian Wells]. Staff will prepare a presentation summarizing the efforts and findings to date for the November or January Regional Board meeting. [*Cathy Sanford, P.G.*]

Yucca Valley Septic Tank Discharge Prohibition Basin Plan Amendment— The administrative record was completed for the subject amendment, which was adopted by the Regional Water Board on March 10, 2016. The record was sent to the State Water Resources Control Board, which has scheduled consideration of adoption at the September 20, 2016 State

Water Board Meeting in Sacramento. Regional Water Board staff briefed State Water Board Members Steven Moore, Frances Spivy-Weber and Deputy Director Jonathan Bishop about the amendment on August 29, 2016. State Water Board briefings are optional and a courtesy for Board members with questions or the need for further information on actions scheduled for adoption/approval. Further, Regional Water Board staff will attend the State Water Board meeting to address questions and comments that may come up during the meeting. Once the State Water Board approves the amendment, the administrative record on the amendment will be updated to include the State Water Board hearing documents and forwarded to the Office of Administrative Law for approval of the regulatory portions of the amendment. [Jose L. Angel, P.E.; Joan Stormo, P.G.]

On August 9, 2016, Mr. Angel met with Mark Ban (Hi-Desert Water District Assistant General Manager), Jennifer Poland (HDWD Public Information Officer) and Camden O'Toole (John Carollo Engineers) to discuss implementation of the Prohibition and general procedural matters for people who failure to comply with the Prohibition. [Jose L. Angel, P.E.]

On August 23, 2016, and as required by the March 2016 Amendment, Tom Vandenberg (OCC) and Mr. Angel met with Messrs. Curtis Yakimow (Town Manager), Shane Stueckle (Town Assistant Manager), and Mark Ban to discuss updating the Regional Water Board Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Town and the District. The MOA was established to identify roles and responsibilities of the Regional Water Board staff, HDWD, and the Town to address groundwater contamination in Yucca Valley and the centralized sewage collection and treatment system proposed by HDWD, while the original Discharge Prohibition was being developed. The MOA is outdated and does not reflect the current requirements of the Prohibition. A new MOA is being drafted and is expected to be finalized by October 2016. [Jose L. Angel, P.E.]

Coachella Valley Salt-Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP)—Board Staff prepared a work plan and began to develop site-specific water quality objectives for total dissolved solids for groundwater in the Coachella Valley. [Jose L. Angel, P.E.]

Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)—Board staff is currently preparing for the SWAMP trend sampling event scheduled for this Region in October. A “kick-off” meeting with various participants (Department of Fish and Wildlife, data management teams, laboratories, State Water Board SWAMP staff, etc.) is planned for the first week in September to coordinate and finalize the logistics of this sampling effort. Staff is also preparing the Region’s next three-year SWAMP contract. A special study to evaluate bioaccumulation through the food web in the Imperial wetlands (Shank Road, and possibly others) will be included in this contract, in addition to trend monitoring (fall/spring), and minor monitoring requests from the TMDL unit. The special study will focus on bioaccumulation of selenium, mercury, organophosphates, and organochlorides. [Jeff Geraci, ES]

A report summarizing SWAMP data collected biannually in the spring and fall titled *Water Quality in the Colorado River Basin Region, Assessment of Surface Water Quality Data Collected From Fall 2009 through fall 2013 by the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program*. (M.J. Roberson, 2016), has been finalized and is posted on the State Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/docs/reglrpts/r7_sw_assessment.pdf

Finally, to work constructively with public agencies, staff overseeing this effort recently attended two training classes: *Interest-Based Negotiations for Water Resources Management*, and *Meeting Facilitation Skills for Waterboard Staff*. [Joan Stormo, PG; Cathy Sanford, PG]

B. Underground Storage Tank/Cleanup Unit

Unit Chief: John Carmona, Senior WRC Engineer, P.E.

USEPA Brownfields Program—Unit staff is working with USEPA and the State Water Board on the process to deal with Open/Inactive Underground Storage Tank sites where no responsible party has been found. Staff has identified eleven (11) of these sites in the region, and this office is the first region to work on this state-wide issue. [Phan Le, WRCE]

Anders Wistrom, WRCE, has been assigned to the unit. Anders will be handling enrollees under the State Water Resources Control Board General Order for Composting and workload for the Landfill Unit. Also, Anders will be providing training on fate and transport of contaminants in groundwater to staff. [Anders Wistrom, WRCE, PhD, P.E.]

Theresa Kimsey, ES, has been assigned to the unit. Theresa will be handling Underground Storage Tank and Site Cleanup projects in the Underground Storage Tank (UST) and Site Cleanup Programs (SCP), respectively. Theresa has sent out annual estimation cost letters for SCP sites, and is working on one SCP project site and one UST project site for closure. As a new staff in this unit, Theresa will be mentored and provided training in the SCP and UST programs.

Staff has enrolled four (4) new sites from Union Pacific into the Site Cleanup programs. The sites had spills in the late 1990's. Staff also was able to establish cost recovery agreements with Union Pacific to begin review of these sites for closure or remediation. [Phan Le, WRCE]

Staff is working on four (4) sites for closure in the Underground Storage Tank program and working with the State Water Board UST funding Unit on another three (3) sites under the new State Board Expedited Claim Account Program. [Kola Olatunbosun, WRCE]

C. Total Maximum Daily Load Unit

Unit Chief: Nadim Shukry-Zeywar, Senior Environmental Scientist, Ph.D.

TMDL staffs continue to implement four Conditional Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for agricultural discharges in Bard Unit, Coachella Valley, Imperial Valley, and Palo Verde Valley and Mesa. Essentially, all agricultural areas in the region (99.7%) are now regulated by Conditional Waivers.

Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa Agricultural Conditional Waiver of WDRs—Palo Verde Irrigation District has formed a Coalition to assist the farming community in the Valley and Mesa comply with the Waiver. The Coalition is in full compliance with the Waiver. This Waiver expires in September 2017. Staff is proposing to replace this Waiver with General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). A draft on the proposed WDRs Order and supporting CEQA documents are being reviewed by the Board's management team. In July 2016, the Regional

Water Board staff discussed with USEPA staff: (1) the proposal to have a General WDRs Order to replace the Conditional Waiver; and (2) to include in the Order key requirements for DDT and Toxaphene in lieu of developing and implementing Total Maximum Daily Loads to comply with Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Board staff believes this is a more effective and practicable way to address the DDT and Toxaphene water quality impairments in the Palo Verde Outfall Drain, which is a tributary to the Colorado River downstream from Blythe. USEPA staff were generally satisfied with this alternative approach. Board staff is on schedule to bring the proposed General WDRs Order before the Regional Water Board for consideration of adoption at the Board's January or March 2017 meeting. Board staff plans to conduct a Public Workshop in Blythe, in late October/early November 2016, to provide for public input into the proposed Order and alternative approach. [*Francisco Costa, Ph.D., ES*]

Imperial Valley Agricultural Conditional Waiver of WDRs—The Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and Imperial County Farm Bureau formed a Coalition to assist the farming community in the Imperial Valley comply with the Waiver. In June and July 2016, the Regional Water Board Executive Officer approved the Compliance Program Plan and the Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting Plans submitted by the Imperial Irrigation District-Imperial County Farm Bureau Coalition, respectively. Monitoring in the Imperial Valley began in July. The Coalition is in full compliance with the Waiver. [*Logan Raub, ES*]

On July 20, 2016, the Executive Officer met with executive staff of the Coalition in El Centro to address the Coalition's concern about the applicability of the Conditional Waiver to farmland that is not currently irrigated, but discharges or has the potential to discharge storm water runoff into drains and rivers tributary to the Salton Sea. Other meeting participants included Ms. Kari Fisher of the California Farm Bureau Federation, who teleconferenced the meeting, and Al Kalin, who serves as the ICFB TMDL Technical advisor. The Executive Officer is presently recommending that the Board amend the Conditional Waiver so that it more explicitly addresses its applicability to such farmland and other farmland that discharges or has the potential to discharge wastes to waters of the State. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Coachella Valley Agricultural Conditional Waiver of WDRs—The Coachella Valley Irrigated Lands Coalition (Coalition) is in full compliance with the Waiver Requirements. Regional Water Board staff is working with the State Water Board Office of Public Participation to schedule two informational workshops (one in Spanish and one in English) during the Fall, as part of essential outreach and education that should take place to maximize farmer's enrollment into the Waiver before enforcement takes place against people who need to obtain coverage under the Waiver but have not yet obtained such coverage. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Bard Valley Agricultural Conditional Waiver of WDRs—The Bard Unit Coalition is in full compliance with the Conditional Waiver. [*Francisco Costa, Ph.D., ES*]

TMDL Implementation—Unit staff has drafted reports to update the Regional Water Board on the status of implementation of the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel Bacteria TMDL and the Imperial Valley Sediment TMDLs. Staff plans to present these updates to the Regional Water Board at a public informational workshop in October 2016. [*Nadim Shukry-Zeywar, Senior ES, Ph.D.*]

TMDL Roundtable—Nadim Shukry-Zeywar will be representing the office at the September 28 and 29 TMDL Roundtable, which is being hosted by Region 8 in Lake Tahoe.

D. NPDES Unit

Unit Chief, Kai Dunn, Senior WRC Engineer, P.E., Ph.D.

Brawley Slaughterhouse—One World Beef (OWB) plans to restart its operations at the slaughterhouse in late September/early October 2016. It submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) on June 30, 2016, and applied for an NPDES Permit for proposed discharges of treated wastewater from its slaughterhouse to a drain adjacent to the slaughterhouse and to 40-acres of farmland for irrigation purposes. The drain is a tributary to the New River and thus, is considered a “waters of the U.S.” Consequently, any point source discharge to the drain is subject to the NPDES permitting program under section 402 of the Clean Water Act. Under this proposal, OWB plans to discharge on an interim basis its process wastewater to the City of Brawley sewage collection system and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), while it upgrades its onsite wastewater treatment and obtains an NPDES permit from Regional Water Board. Board staff reviewed the ROWD and determined that the ROWD is incomplete. Board staff then met with representatives from OWB on July 29, 2016, to discuss the ROWD. During the meeting, OWB representatives provided additional information that now requires OWB to submit an amended ROWD also. Board staff provided written comments regarding the deficiencies of the original ROWD on August 4, 2016. [Jose L. Angel, P.E.; Jeong-Hee Lim, PhD., P.E.]

Project Falcon—In July 2016, Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC) informed Regional Water Board staff that Imperial County has been selected as a preferred site for “Project Falcon” (Project). This Project consists of a \$450-million dollar wood/forest product processing facility that purportedly would bring 450 jobs to the Imperial Valley. The County reports the facility would generate up to 5 million gallons per day of wastewater. Board staff has participated in two meetings via teleconference (on July 29, 2016 and August 2, 2016) to provide regulatory and permitting information to the County and company representatives. Imperial County is competing with other areas to have the company build the facility in Imperial County. [Jeong-Hee Lim, PhD., P.E.]

Storm Water Annual Report Reminder—Regional Water Board staff sent a courtesy letter reminding Storm Water Permittees for construction activities to submit their Annual Report, which was due September 1, 2016. Enforcement against permittees who failed to submit the report will ensue in October 2016. [Suhas Chakraborty, WRCE]

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Phase 1 - Inspection of City of Rancho Mirage, Phase 1 MS4 Program—On April 26 and 27, 2016, Regional Water Board staff conducted an inspection of the City of Rancho Mirage, California, Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program. Subsequent to finalizing a preliminary draft of the inspection report, Board staff met with representatives of the City of Rancho Mirage to discuss the inspection on August 16, 2016. Board staff expects to finalize the inspection report on or before the end of September 2016. [Kai Dunn, PhD., P.E.]

Water Quality Certification—The following table shows the status of all of the Water Quality Certifications received by the Regional Water Board in 2016 through August 23, 2016. [Jay Mirpour, WRCE]

| Applications Received | Orders Issued/Denied | Applicant | Project | WDID# |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 08/12/2016 | In review process | Coachillin' Holdings LLC | Coachillin' MMJ Industrial & Business Park | 7A333161001 |
| 08/15/2016 | In review process | TransCanada | Milpitas Wash Project | 7B133040001 |
| 08/15/2016 | In review process | Caltrans | Emergency Bridge Scour Repair Project | 7A133146001 |
| 04/07/2016 | In review process | Ocotillo Solar LLC | Ocotillo Wells Solar | 7B133038001 |
| 03/02/2016 | 4/19/2016 | County of Riverside | Avenue 66 Grade Separation Project | 7A333158001 |
| 02/02/2016 | 03/24/2016 | Union Pacific Railroad | Union Pacific Railroad - Milepost (MP) 657.99 Culvert Installation Project | 7A133145001 |
| 02/01/2016 | 03/09/2016 | Coachella Valley Water District | CVWD Whitewater Park Concrete Slope Protection | 7A333155001 |

E. Non-Chapter 15, Chapter 15 Unit

Unit Chief: Doug Wylie, Senior WRC Engineer, P.E.

Local Agency Management Programs (LAMP) Development—Board staff continues to work with Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) staff to finalize the County's LAMP in accordance with the procedural requirements prescribed in the State Water Board's Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) Policy. On July 21, 2016, DEH staff submitted its final draft to Board staff for comments. The tentative resolution approving the Riverside County LAMP should be ready for Board consideration of approval in early 2017. [*Doug Wylie, P.E., and Jose Cortez, P.E., WRCE*]

Palm Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)—On August 5, 2016, Regional Water Board staff met with the City of Palm Springs WWTP owner/operators to discuss the proposed update of Board Order 93-076, which currently regulates the discharges of wastewater from the City's WWTP. The tentative Order should be ready for Board consideration of adoption in early 2017. [*Jose Cortez, P.E., WRCE*]

Recycled Water for Landscape Irrigation—Board staff is coordinating with staff from the State Water Board Division of Water Quality and Drinking Water to begin implementation of the State Water Resources Control Board General Water Reclamation Requirements for Recycled Water Use (Order WQ 2016-0028-DDW). This Order became effective on August 6, 2016, and its main objectives are to streamline permitting for water reclamation and ensure regulatory consistency. The Regional Water Board has in effect General WDRs Order 97-700 for Discharge of Recycled Water for Golf Course and Landscape Irrigation. Board staff began to phase out using Order 97-700, as required by the State Water Board Order, and instead started enrolling Dischargers who reclaim wastewater on golf courses into the State Water Board Order. Board staff will meet with CVWD staff on September 7, 2016, to discuss transitioning 97-700 enrollees into the new State Water Board Order. [*Abid Khalaf, WRCE*]

One World Beef—On July 20, 2016, the Executive Officer approved Special Board Order R7-2016-0031 amending Time Schedule Order (TSO) R7-2016-0008 for One World Beef Brawley Beef Plant Wastewater Treatment Plant with a five month extension of the deadlines specified in the TSO. No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period. [*Doug Wylie, P.E., Senior WRCE*]

Mesquite Landfill—On September 1, 2016, Regional Water Board staff met with representatives for the Los Angeles Sanitary Districts (LA SAN) to discuss permitting issue for the Mesquite Landfill. LA San owns the Landfill. There has been no discharge of solid wastes at the landfill though. There is also a pile of inert wastes on the site. Staff also discussed regulatory issues to deal with the inert wastes.

F. Administrative Unit

Unit Chief: Hilda Vasquez, Staff Services Manager I

Board Meeting Room Audio-Visual Improvement Project—Once the SFY 16-17 budget was approved, Unit staff and the State Water Board's Division of Information Technology (DIT) staff moved forward with a request for approval to implement the audio/visual and related improvements to the Board meeting room. The State Department of General Services (DGS) is reviewing the request. Staff expects approval from DGS within a couple of weeks. Following approval of the request, it is expected the improvements will be completed within a week. [*Mary Castañeda, AGPA*]

Board June 30, 2016 Meeting; and July 11, 2016 Closed Session—On June 15, 2016, the Unit completed the Agenda for the June 30, 2016 Board Meeting, and assisted in preparing and posting related notices for the Closed Session Board meeting held on July 11, 2016. [*Mary Castañeda, AGPA*]

Office Visitors and Public Records Act (PRA) Requests—During the June 11 to August 22, 2016 period:

- The office had 25 visitors. [*Terry Barnes, Office Technician*]
- The office received and responded to 21 Public Records Act requests. [*Soni Wells, AGPA*]

Records Retention Project—Unit staff has completed the Records Retention Schedule (list of office records in cubic feet and retention periods) and will be submitting the schedule to the

State Water Board and Department of General Services for approval. [*Terry Barnes, OT; and Soni Wells, AGPA*]

Business Management Property—The Department of General Services has approved transferring the Regional Water Board’s Boston whaler boat to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Approval was also obtained to dispose of: (1) outdated IT equipment, which was donated to and picked up by Desert Arc Indio on August 23, 2016; and (2) surplus lab supplies (e.g., bottles and other glassware), which will be donated to the City of Calexico. [*Soni Wells, AGPA*]

Issues of Regional Significance

A. New River Pollution from Mexico

New River in Calexico—On August 31, 2016, the State Legislature approved Senate Bill 859. Although the bill originated in the Senate, when the bill was forwarded to the Assembly for reading, it was introduced by Assemblyman Garcia (D-Coachella), who explained the bill would address New River pollution in the Calexico area. The bill makes various changes to existing law. Of relevance to our Region is a key provision in the bill that appropriates \$1.4 million from the State Water Board’s Waste Permit Discharge Fund penalty account to essentially fund Phase 1 of the revised recommendations of the New River Improvement Project Strategic Plan for the New River in Calexico. Phase 1 consists of completing the design and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation for the construction of: (1) a trash screen for the New River downstream from the Border with Mexico; (2) a conveyance system to pipe the New River wastewater from the Border with Mexico to a point immediately downstream from the crossing of the New River and the All-American Canal; and (3) a booster pumping station and associated piping (hereafter “booster pump-back system”) to pump treated wastewater from the City of Calexico Wastewater Treatment Plant back to the New River immediately downstream from the Border. Phase 2 consists of the installation and construction of the trash screen, booster pump-back system, and the conveyance system. This is a major accomplishment for our Region. Regional Water Board staff has been working diligently with representatives from the Governor’s Office, Assemblyman Garcia, CalEPA executive staff, State Water Board executive staff, Comite Civico del Valle, Natural Resources Agency staff, and CalTrans to secure funding for Phase 1 and Phase 2. The bill is pending action from our Governor, who has until the end of September to sign or veto the bill. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

On July 28, 2016, Jose L. Angel attended a meeting in El Centro to brief Border Patrol Acting Sector Chief Briones and key members of his staff about the revised recommendations for the New River in Calexico. The meeting was organized by staff from Assemblyman Garcia. Other meeting participants included field representatives from the offices of Senator Ben Hueso (D-Chula Vista), and Congressman Juan Vargas (D-Chula Vista).

CalEPA Deputy Secretary for Border Affairs Alexa Kleystauber, CalEPA Assistant Secretary Alex Rodarte, Regional Water Board Chair Ms. Wright, and Mr. Angel will be meeting with representatives from the US Customs and US General Services Administration in Calexico on September 7, 2016, to discuss the proposed New River projects for Calexico. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Mr. Angel will be participating on the US International Boundary and Water Commission's Colorado River Citizen Forum September 28, 2016 meeting in El Centro, to brief the Forum on the status of the New River Improvement Project.

New River in Mexicali—Jose Figueroa-Acevedo participated in the Binational Observation Tour of the New River in Mexicali and meeting of the Binational Technical Committee (BTC) for the Mexicali/New River Sanitation Program on June 23, 2016. The next BTC meeting and observation tour will be held on October 27, 2016. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.; Jose Figueroa-Acevedo, WRCE*]

Based on New River sampling results and on observation of the New River in Mexicali near the Border, the US IBWC Section requested its Mexican counterpart on July 28, 2016, to investigate for potential bypasses of raw sewage into the New River. On August 18, 2016, Mexico identified a bypass of raw sewage from a 15-inch PVC pipe that was connected to Drain 134, which is a tributary to the New River near the Border. Mexico eliminated the bypass the same day.



B. Salton Sea

Salton Sea Management Program—The California Natural Resources Agency is the State lead for the Salton Sea Management Program. The budget approved for SFY 16-17 includes \$84 million for the Agency's Management Program. The short-term focus of the Agency is to create up to 9,000 to 12,000 acres of habitat and dust suppression projects.

Regional Water Board staff are members of the Agency's Long-range Planning Committee, Science Committee, and Outreach and Education Committee.

- Regional Water Board staff Maria Davydova has been assisting the Agency with preparations for a series of community workshops designed to inform and get feedback from the public about the Agency's Management activities for the Sea. From July through August 2016, the Agency held six (6) additional workshops, including workshops in Calipatria, Niland, and Los Angeles;
- Regional Water Board Staff Jeff Geraci attended the Public Workshop held by the State Water Board on August 16, 2016, in Sacramento. During the Workshop, various stakeholders expressed concerns about the overall lack of progress and availability of funds to implement long-term measures [to address the Sea's problems] and mitigate dust emissions from exposed playa. State Water Board members also requested the Agency to provide more detail information about the Management Program.
- Mr. Geraci represented the Regional Water Board at the Agency's Long-range Planning Committee meeting held on August 25, 2016.

- Jose L. Angel continues to periodically meet with Salton Sea Authority Executive Director Phil Rosentrater and Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary of Salton Sea Policy Bruce Wilcox since January 2016 to discuss water quality control policy for the Salton Sea, restoration and management efforts, and opportunities to partner with the Authority and assist the Agency to implement projects for restoration and management of the Sea. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Federal Strategic Actions—On August 31, 2016, President Obama announced a series of actions by his Administration to address the Salton Sea problems, enhance the region’s climate change resilience, spur economic growth in the [Salton Sea area] through development of new clean energy sources, improve public health in the area, and establish a path forward for the Sea:

- California and the Department of the Interior (DOI) entered into an Agreement that prioritizes long-term coordination between the State and Federal government that will facilitate prompt and informed decision-making regarding the future of the Salton Sea.
- The Department of Energy (DOE) has published a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) to gather industry input on options available to the federal government to purchase an additional 100 to 250 Megawatts (MW) of new geothermal energy from around the Imperial Valley's Salton Sea to meet the nation’s clean energy and sustainability goals, while striking a balance to conserve the critical wildlife habitats in and around the Salton Sea. Further, DOE is presently finalizing its *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan*, which will include provisions to help facilitate permitting of renewable energy and transmission projects in the Imperial Valley.
- DOE will be leading a technical forum with the State of California and the Geothermal Resources Council in October 2016 to accelerate development of geothermal energy resources in California, particularly around the Imperial Valley’s Salton Sea.
- DOE is announcing two projects selected for a total of up to \$29 million for the pioneering Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy: (1) the Sandia National Laboratories’ Fallon, Nevada site; and (2) the University of Utah’s Milford, Utah site. The research can help improve the technical and economic feasibility of geothermal energy nationwide, including in the Salton Sea area.
- The US Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service is finalizing agreements with the Sierra Valley Conservation Planning Program and the Salton Sea Authority totaling more than \$17 million for innovative partnerships that will help spur critical air, water, and wildlife habitat conservation planning for the Sierra Valley as well as the Salton Sea in California. Partners to these agreements propose to contribute another \$60 million, more than tripling the Federal investment.
- The federal government will be raising \$10 million through the Water Funder Initiative, a collaborative of philanthropic foundations (e.g., the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Energy Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Walton Family Foundation) over five years to support implementation of a comprehensive plan to protect public health and the environment, enhance drought resilience, and promote renewable energy and restoration at the Salton Sea.

Regional Water Board Salton Sea Initiative—Regional Water Board staff is finalizing work plans to implement a comprehensive and cohesive water quality control strategy based on the Watershed Management approach that (a) represents the Regional Water Board’s Salton Sea interests; and (b) supports and complements the California Natural Resources Agency’s Salton Sea Management Program. A Charter to implement the Initiative has been finalized. The Charter prioritizes the Board’s programs to address the Sea’s and its tributaries’ water quality programs to achieve the above-mentioned two objectives. It also establishes roles and responsibilities of various Units and staff in the office to address the Salton Sea as a matter of priority. Board Chair Wright and Board members Ms. Garcia and Ms. Powell are providing Executive Sponsorship to this initiative. Unit Chiefs Joan Stormo and Doug Wylie have been designated as Coordinators for the initiative. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.; Joan Stormo, P.G.; Doug Wylie, P.E.*]

C. Environmental Justice

Ms. Maria Davydova, Environmental Scientist, has been designated as the Regional Water Board’s Environmental Justice (EJ) Coordinator. In this capacity, she is responsible for representing the office at various EJ Task Forces and community events. The following paragraphs describe some of the recent Board staff activities in this area.

Environmental Justice—Unit staff participated in the Imperial Valley Environmental Justice Task Force’s July and August 2016 regularly scheduled meetings. Staff also co-chaired the July 20 and August 17, 2016 Eastern Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Task Force regularly scheduled meetings. [*Jose Figueroa-Acevedo, WRCE; Maria Davydova, ES*]

“Polanco” Mobile Home Trailer Parks (MHTPs)—Unit staff is regularly attending meetings with the Riverside County Economic Development Agency to help address water and sewer infrastructure problems faced by Polancos. [*Maria Davydova, ES*]

On July 15, 2016, Mr. Angel participated in a meeting with Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary Bruce Wilcox and staff from Comite Civico del Valle. The meeting was hosted by Comite Civico del Valle in Brawley to discuss community outreach efforts and environmental justice issues. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

D. PG&E’s Topock Compressor Station Cleanup

The PG&E Topock Compressor Station is south of Needles adjacent to the Colorado River. Decades ago, Hexavalent Chromium (Cr+6) was released from the Station’s cooling towers to Groundwater. To clean up the Cr+6 GW plume, PG&E is using an active groundwater pump-and-treat system (a.k.a. “Intermediate Measure 3”), which has processed over 700 million gallons of groundwater and removed more than 3.5 tons of Cr+6. In November 2015, PG&E submitted the final design for a Final Groundwater Remedy to clean up the chromium plume at the site. The project is working towards implementing the Final Remedy cleanup, which flushes groundwater, pushing the Cr+6 Chrome plume through more oxidizing sediments, thereby converting Cr+6 into the innocuous Cr+3 oxidation state. Also, PG&E has been operating and maintaining four Class II Wastewater Ponds about 0.6 miles west of the compressor station since 1989.

On April 14, 2016, PG&E submitted a revised Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) for its facility's Class II ponds, which are regulated by Board Order R7-2004-0080. To accommodate the additional volume of non-hazardous wastewater associated with the Remedy injection well start-up, operation and maintenance, PG&E will make improvements to the ponds for disposal of this non-hazardous wastewater to enhance their evaporation rate. Board staff will meet with PG&E and its consultants on September 22, 2016, in the Board's office to discuss permitting issues associated with the ROWD. [*Jose Cortez, WRCE*]

Additionally, Regional Water Board staff is participating in the Consultative Work Group (CWG) and the Clearinghouse Task Force (CTF), which include tribal, federal, DTSC, Arizona State, Metropolitan Water District and PG&E stakeholders along with their respective consultants and legal counsels. WDRs cannot be adopted for the remedy until outstanding CEQA issues are resolved. [*Robert E. Perdue, Supervising EG; Jose Cortez, WRCE, P.E.*]

Personnel and Administration

All-Staff Meeting—No all-staff meetings were held in July and August because a good number of staff take vacation during this period. The next all-staff meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2016. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Management Team Meetings—Since June 30, 2016, to date, the Management Team met on eight (8) different occasions. At the most recent Management Team meeting (9/6/2016), managers provided an update on the status of items for the September 15, 2016, Board meeting and of other key projects in the office, including the New River Improvement Project, water recycling in the Coachella Valley, and Salton Sea restoration efforts. The Executive Officer provided an update on the recruitment process to backfill the Assistant Executive Officer vacancy. He also asked all managers that they ensure their staff is up-to-date with all of the required health and safety training by the end of September 2016. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Leadership Training—On August 22 and 23, 2016, Greg Bourne from UC Davis continued to work with the management team on team building and facilitated work on the Regional Water Board Salton Sea Initiative. He is also working with the Executive Officer on organizational leadership. [*Jose L. Angel, P.E.*]

Vacancies—The office has 34 full-time allocated positions, and has one vacancy: the Assistant Executive Officer position. The recruitment process to fill that vacancy with a Career Executive Assignment incumbent has been completed. An announcement regarding who the incumbent for the position will be is expected before the Board's September 15, 2016, meeting. Jay Mirpour, WRCE, announced that he will be retiring from State service in October 2016. The recruitment to backfill his position will begin once State Water Board provides approval to do so. [*Hilda Vazquez, SSMI*]

Staff Rotational Opportunities and Reassignments—To provide additional opportunities for staff development, increase institutional capacity, and address programmatic needs, the following staff have been reassigned internally:

| Staff | Previous Unit Assignment | New Unit Assignment |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Maria Davydova, ES | UST/Cleanup | Basin Planning |
| Rosalyn Fleming, WRCE | UST/Cleanup | TMDL |
| Dr. Jeong-Hee Lim, WRCE, P.E. | TMDL | NPDES |
| Theresa Kimsey, ES | Basin Planning | UST/Cleanup |
| Dr. Anders Wistrom, WRCE, P.E. | NPDES | UST/Cleanup |

CalHR and the State Water Board approved the internal transfers effective August 2, 2016.

Regional Water Board Action Items

The following table shows the status of requests made by Regional Water Board Members.

| Item | Requested by | Date Requested | Status |
|---|---------------|----------------|--|
| Monitors/video screens for the back of Board Meeting Room | Board Members | 11/19/2015 | Progress is ongoing. Please see write up on Board Meeting Room Audio-Visual Improvement Project (p. 7) [<i>Hilda Vasquez, Mary Castaneda</i>] |
| Topock Tour and Cleanup Project Update | Board Members | 11/19/2015 | Board staff is making arrangements to have the tour during Spring 2017 [<i>Robert Perdue</i>] |
| Board Workshops for Informational Items | Board Members | 1/14/2016 | Ongoing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Public Workshop for the proposed General Order for Agricultural Runoff in the Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa is being scheduled for October or November 2016 in Blythe; • A Public Workshop to discuss progress regarding the Silt TMDLs for the Imperial Valley is being Planned for November 2016; • A Public Workshop for the Board to establish Enforcement Priorities is being scheduled for December 2016. |

| Item | Requested by | Date Requested | Status |
|--|------------------------|----------------|--|
| Board member would like to accompany staff on an inspection of a Wastewater Treatment Plant to see what the inspection entails | Board Member Crites | 2/20/2016 | Arrangements are in place for a typical Wastewater Treatment Plant inspection in the Coachella and Imperial Valleys. Field Awareness Training for Board members is also now available and can be taken by Board members who wish to participate in field activities. |
| Triennial Review progress updates | Board Members | 9/17/2015 | Ongoing. Updates are included in the EO Report (please see p. 2) |
| Imperial Valley Wetlands Tour | Then-Vice Chair Wright | 2/20/2016 | Arrangements have been made with Desert Wildlife Unlimited for a tour for Board members in the Fall/early Spring. |
| Board directed the Executive Officer to prepare report with pros and cons regarding the role of the EO on formal enforcement matters | Board Members | June 30, 2016 | Report is presently being provided to Board members. |