

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**

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Public Notice No. 7-12-29
August 3, 2012

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP

In the Matter of a
Proposed Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements
For
Discharges of Wastes from Agricultural Operations
in the Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Regional Water Board) staff will hold a Public Workshop from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., August 23, 2012 to seek public input regarding a proposed Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Discharges of Wastes from Agricultural Operations in the Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa.

California Water Code section 13269 provides the State and Regional Water Boards (Water Boards) with the authority to waive WDRs for a specific discharge or type of discharge if the Board determines after any necessary Board meeting that the Waiver is consistent with any applicable State or Regional Water Quality Control Plan and is in the public interest. The proposed Conditional Waiver would address the actual and potential impacts that agricultural wastewater discharges originating within the Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa have on water quality. Specifically, the Conditional Waiver would address: 1) storm water runoff from irrigated lands; and 2) irrigation return water, which includes surface discharges (also known as "tailwater"), and subsurface discharges (known as "tile water" in tiled areas, or "seepage" in areas not tiled).

BACKGROUND

At its January 20, 2011 meeting, the Regional Water Board approved a Conditional Prohibition Basin Plan amendment by adopting Resolution R7-2011-0014 to regulate the above-mentioned agricultural wastewater discharges. The Regional Water Board also complied with the CEQA environmental review requirements for the Conditional Prohibition. Section 13245 of the Water Code requires that any Basin Plan or Basin Plan amendment must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) before it can become effective. In accordance with this statutory requirement, the Regional Water Board submitted the Conditional Prohibition adopted at its January 20, 2011 meeting to the State Water Board for its review and approval. However, at its meeting on January 10, 2012, the State Water Board decided to disapprove the Conditional Prohibition. Its disapproval decision is reflected in State Water Board Resolution No. 2012-0004. In relevant part in its disapproval Resolution, the State Water Board remanded the Conditional Prohibition back to the Regional Water Board and directed it to adopt WDRs or a Waiver of WDRs in lieu of, or in addition to, the proposed Conditional Prohibition for agricultural wastewater discharges. In accordance with this directive, the Regional Water Board has drafted a proposed Conditional Waiver for the above-mentioned discharges of waste.

Accordingly, the purpose of the Workshop is:

- To present and discuss the relevant aspects of the Conditional Waiver, such as eligibility requirements, monitoring requirements, and ways to obtain coverage under the Conditional Waiver;
- To discuss the annual fees that apply to dischargers who obtain coverage under the Conditional Waiver; and
- To provide a forum for PVID and other affected stakeholders to discuss any other concerns they may have.

The Workshop is scheduled as follows:

Date: August 23, 2012
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Location: Palo Verde Irrigation District Headquarters
180 W. 14th Avenue
Blythe, CA 92225

By August 8, 2012, the draft Conditional Waiver and its supporting documentation, including California Environmental Quality Act documentation, will be mailed and posted for Public Review and comment at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/>.

To ensure the accuracy of the record, individuals with written statements for oral presentation are requested to submit their statements to Regional Water Board staff during or after the Workshop.

Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Ms. Hilda Vasquez at (760) 776-8950 at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1 (800) 735-2929 or voice line at 1 (800) 735-2922. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Jose L. Angel at (760) 776-8932.

Please bring the foregoing to the attention of anyone you believe may be interested in this matter.

File: Waiver for Agricultural Discharges in Palo Verde