

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
LAHONTAN REGION**

**MEETING OF NOVEMBER 28-29, 2007  
Barstow/Lancaster**

**ITEM: 17**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING- CONSIDERATION OF BASIN PLAN  
AMENDMENTS TO REVISE STANDARDS FOR SURFACE  
WATERS OF THE ANTELOPE HYDROLOGIC UNIT AND A  
RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT**

**DISCUSSION:** Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 14 (LACSD No. 14) treats wastewater from the City of Lancaster and part of the City of Palmdale. Much of the District's secondary effluent has historically been discharged to lower Amargosa Creek, a tributary of Rosamond Dry Lake. The effluent was impounded behind a dike, creating a complex of ponds and wetlands known as "Piute Ponds."

Work on the proposed Basin Plan amendments was undertaken in response to requests from LACSD No. 14 for the removal of certain designated beneficial uses from its receiving waters and the development of site-specific water quality objectives (SSOs) for ammonia toxicity.

In 2004, Water Board staff prepared preliminary draft Basin Plan amendments incorporating ammonia SSOs developed by LACSD No. 14's consultants. These amendments and a draft technical staff report were reviewed by two external scientific peer reviewers pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 57004. Both reviewers were critical of the toxicity studies used to develop the SSOs. Copies of the peer review comments and staff's responses are included with this agenda item. Also in 2004, LACSD No. 14 approved a new facilities plan that includes future maintenance of the Paiute Ponds and wetlands with tertiary, rather than secondary effluent.

In response to the peer reviewers' comments, more stringent SSOs for ammonia toxicity are now being proposed. They are based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 1999 nationwide freshwater ammonia criteria, and would be implemented through the Water Board's existing permitting and enforcement authority. LACSD No. 14 is expected to be able to meet effluent limitations based on these objectives with the use

of tertiary effluent. The Basin Plan amendments would also involve changes to designated beneficial uses for lower Amargosa Creek, the Piute Ponds and wetlands, and Rosamond Dry Lake, and miscellaneous editorial or informational changes.

A draft substitute environmental document prepared for the proposed amendments concludes that they will not have any significant or potentially significant adverse environmental impacts (defined as physical changes in the environment).

Three public comment letters were received. These comments and staff's responses are included in this agenda item. Staff will be prepared to respond to any late written comments and to public hearing testimony at the Board meeting.

**RECOM-  
MEND  
ATION:**

Adoption of Resolution R6T-2007-PROPOSED to certify the substitute environmental document and approve the Basin Plan amendments.

**Enclosures:**

1. Resolution R6T-2007-PROPOSED
2. Draft Basin Plan Amendments
3. Draft Substitute Environmental Document
4. Technical Staff Report
5. Scientific Peer Review Comments and Responses
6. Written Public Comments: letter dated October 5, 2007 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, letter dated October 5, 2007 from the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works, letter dated October 4, 2007 from the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
7. Responses to Written Public Comments