

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

**MEETING OF OCTOBER 12, 2011  
VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

**ITEM:** 6

**SUBJECT:** COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT NO. 14 OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY (DISTRICT), LANCASTER WATER RECLAMATION PLANT, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CEASE AND DESIST ORDER STATUS REPORT

**CHRONOLOGY:**

September 11, 2002	Waste Discharge Requirements adopted
October 13, 2004	Cease and Desist Order adopted
November 8, 2006	Waste Discharge Requirements (storage reservoirs) adopted
March 14, 2007	Waste Discharge Requirements amended
November 29, 2007	Amended Cease and Desist Order adopted

**ISSUE:** Has the District complied with the provisions of the amended Cease and Desist Order?

**DISCUSSION:** Historically, the District discharges secondary treated effluent to Piute Ponds (also known as Paiute Ponds). By 2000, the increased magnitude of the District's discharge caused effluent-induced overflows from Piute Ponds to Rosamond Dry Lake. The Air Force submitted information describing how these overflows interfere with air flight operations on Rosamond Dry Lake. Based on this information the Water Board concluded that the effluent-induced overflows constitute a nuisance because the discharges interfere with the free use of the Air Force property. Therefore, the Water Board, in Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) adopted in 2002, established a time schedule for the District to eliminate effluent-induced overflows.

To eliminate these overflows, the District proposed three projects:

- A plant upgrade to provide tertiary treatment,
- Construct lined storage reservoirs to contain tertiary effluent in the winter when reuse demand is low, and
- Develop an agricultural reuse site to reuse some of the wastewater that was being discharged to Piute Ponds.

When it became known that the District would miss the final compliance date, the Water Board issued a Cease and Desist Order (CDO) in 2004 and an amended CDO in 2007. The amended CDO has interim and final compliance standards. Of importance, the District must:

- Divert 192 million gallons or more to a legal point of disposal other than Piute Ponds from April 1, 2010 to October 31, 2010, and
- Eliminate effluent-induced overflows by November 1, 2010, by completing the facility project or implementing an alternative method.

The District met the interim diversion standard in 2010. From April 1 to October 31, 2010, the District diverted 207.5 million gallons to disposal locations other than Piute Ponds.

The District did not complete its planned treatment plant upgrade by November 1, 2010 so was unable to store treated secondary wastewater in its storage ponds. However, the District implemented an alternative during the 2010-2011 winter season. The alternative was to assist the Air Force's study to evaluate the Piute Pond habitat and Rosamond Dry Lake habitat through a set of seasonal flushing tests in 2010 and 2011 at Piute Ponds.

The Air Force began implementing the study in August 2010 when the District, at the Air Force's request, began increasing discharges to Piute Ponds. The Air Force requested the District to increase discharges to Piute Ponds during the periods shown in Figure 1 thereby causing overflows of Piute Ponds into Rosamond Dry Lake, between August 2010 and June 2011. In each request, the Air Force placed no limit on the quantity of the discharge. As shown in Figure 1, there were overflows only during those periods when the Air Force requested the District to increase discharges to Piute Ponds.

Because the District's discharges to Piute Ponds are consistent with the terms of the Air Force study, Water Board staff believes that the alternative method resulted in *no* effluent-induced overflows during the 2010-2011 winter season. Therefore, Water Board staff concludes that the District complied with both the interim requirements and has been in compliance with its WDRs since November 1, 2010.

The District's plan for the coming winter (2011-2012) is to use both the alternative method and the facility project completion. The Air Force may request the District to increase discharges during the 2011-2012 winter season. As of August 1, 2011, the District plans to complete the plant upgrade on November 17, 2011 and be fully operational by January 16, 2012. The District could begin producing tertiary effluent in late November 2011, with a gradual flow increase to February 2012. This would allow winter diversions to the storage reservoirs. Nevertheless, Water Board staff cannot yet determine if the District will meet the final compliance standard in the 2011-2011 winter season.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This is an information item. The Water Board may provide direction to staff.

Enclosure: Figure 1, Piute Pond Overflows

# **ENCLOSURE 1**

Figure 1. Piute Pond Overflows

