



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region



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To: Interested Persons

From: Renee Purdy 
Section Chief, Regional Programs

Date: February 17, 2011

Subject: Notice of Regional Board Consideration of Tentative Resolution to Support the Disbursement of Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) Funds to the City of Long Beach for the Remediation of Contaminated Sediment to Restore Colorado Lagoon

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Regional Board) will consider a Resolution to support the disbursement of Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) funds by the State Water Resources Control Board to the City of Long Beach for the remediation of contaminated sediment to restore Colorado Lagoon consistent with TMDL requirements established through Regional Board Resolution No. R09-005. The Regional Board will act on the tentative Resolution after hearing staff's presentation and public comments.

The Board meeting is scheduled as follows:

March 3, 2011, 9:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
700 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, California

At the board meeting, the public will have opportunity to comment on the tentative Resolution. Please note that the Regional Board may limit public comments to three (3) minutes each. Copies of the tentative Resolution can be obtained from the Regional Board website at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/board_decisions/basin_plan_amendments/technical_documents/bpa_65_R09-005_td.shtml. Please contact Dr. Eric Wu at (213) 576-6683 for additional information.

Background

Colorado Lagoon has been identified on the State's 303(d) List since 1998 due to sediment toxicity and elevated levels of organochlorine (OC) pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals in the sediment and fish tissue.

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These pollutants are impairing the beneficial uses of the lagoon, including recreation (REC-1 and REC-2), commercial and sport fishing (COMM), warm freshwater habitat (WARM), wildlife habitat (WILD), and shellfish harvesting (SHELL).

Colorado Lagoon is a unique resource amidst the urbanized environment of the Los Angeles metropolitan area. It is located within the City of Long Beach, California. The lagoon is a 15-acre, V-shaped tidal lagoon connected to Alamitos Bay and the Pacific Ocean via a box culvert to Marine Stadium. It has the potential to provide valuable natural habitat for local wildlife and aquatic species, as well as for thousands of migratory birds, including some endangered species. The lagoon and surrounding area are also heavily used for recreational activities, including wildlife viewing and picnicking, and have the potential to provide enhanced recreational opportunities such as swimming and fishing if sediment quality is improved.

On October 1, 2009, the Regional Board held a public hearing and adopted the Colorado Lagoon OC Pesticides, PCBs, Sediment Toxicity, PAHs, and Metals TMDL and established a seven-year implementation schedule. The TMDL sets forth a plan for restoring and maintaining sediment quality to levels necessary to fully support the lagoon's beneficial uses. On November 16, 2010, the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) conducted a public meeting and subsequently approved the Colorado Lagoon TMDL. The TMDL will be submitted to the Office of Administrative Law and USEPA for final approval.

The Colorado Lagoon TMDL requires responsible parties to mitigate the discharge of pollutants to the lagoon and to remove the contaminated sediment in Colorado Lagoon to levels corresponding to the Effect Range Low (ERL) thresholds developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The ERL thresholds are those below which adverse biological effects are not expected to occur, and are therefore the most appropriate for restoring and protecting the lagoon. The removal of contaminated sediments will benefit the area's flora and fauna and make it a much more attractive place to recreate. Water quality will be significantly improved as a result of the dredging and recontouring of contaminated bottom sediments.

The current estimate of the cost to dredge and dispose of the contaminated sediment is \$7.9 million. Approximately \$4.6 million in funding is secured, while an additional \$3.3 million is critically needed to complete the project. Under California Water Code section 13342, the State Board may order moneys to be paid to public agencies, such as the City of Long Beach, who have authority to clean up a waste, from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Accounts (CAA). On March 3, 2011, the Regional Board will consider adoption of a tentative Resolution supporting disbursement of CAA funds to the City of Long Beach in the amount of \$3.3 million to dredge and properly dispose of the contaminated sediments in the lagoon in order to fully restore Colorado Lagoon as a natural habitat for wildlife and aquatic life and as a valuable recreational resource.