

Executive Officer's Summary Report
9:00 a.m., March 15, 2012
River Lodge Conference Center
1800 Riverwalk Drive
Fortuna, California

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: *Workshop on the Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region to Update Water Quality Objectives*

INTRODUCTION

On March 15, 2012, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) will conduct a public workshop on the proposed *Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region to Update Water Quality Objectives* (proposed WQO Update Amendment). Revisions to Chapter 3 (Water Quality Objectives) and Chapter 4 (Implementation Plans) of the *Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region* (Basin Plan) are included as part of this proposed amendment.

On February 3, 2012, a public notice announcing the availability of the *Staff Report for the Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region to Update Water Quality Objectives* (Staff Report) and the upcoming workshop was distributed through the State Water Board's electronic list server (Lyris list) to subscribed users. The public notice was also posted on the Regional Water Board's website at that time. A copy of the workshop notice is included with this Executive Officer's Summary Report (EOSR) as Attachment 1. The written public comment period for the proposed WQO Update Amendment will remain open until March 29, 2012.

The Staff Report is included with this EOSR as Attachment 2. The Staff Report includes the proposed amendment language as Appendices A, B, and C. Appendix A presents the proposed revisions to Chapter 3 – Water Quality Objectives as a “~~strikethrough/underline~~” version, while Appendix C presents the proposed revisions to the chapter in a “clean copy” version. Appendix B presents a “~~strikethrough/underline~~” version of Chapter 4 – Implementation Plans. No “clean copy” version of Chapter 4 was included at this time as so few revisions are proposed. The Staff Report contains the supporting information, including the environmental analysis, necessary to inform the Board and the public about the scope and potential effects from the proposed amendment.

The proposed WQO Update Amendment includes a number of actions relative to updating water quality objectives for both surface waters and groundwaters in the North Coast Region. The primary goals of the proposed WQO Update Amendment are to

develop a narrative groundwater toxicity objective, to replace the outdated information contained in Table 3-2, and to clarify the process the Regional Water Board uses when narrative objectives are translated into numeric limits for use in permits, orders, or other Board actions. Other revisions to the Basin Plan are included as part of this proposed amendment to utilize Regional Water Board resources as efficiently as possible. Additional proposed revisions include, but are not limited to, development of a general water quality objective for the protection of domestic and municipal beneficial uses of water to replace the provisions of Table 3-2, and revisions to the discussions on compliance schedules to provide a more complete description of this aspect of the Regional Water Board's authority.

PROPOSED WQO UPDATE AMENDMENT SUMMARY

Both substantive and non-substantive (editorial) revisions to Chapter 3 – Water Quality Objectives and Chapter 4 – Implementation Plans of the Basin Plan are included as part of the proposed WQO Update Amendment. In addition, the Table of Contents and other applicable portions of the Basin Plan will be revised as appropriate.

Proposed revisions to Chapter 3 - Water Quality Objectives are presented below:

- Addition of a new narrative toxicity objective for groundwater.
- Deletion of Table 3-2, *Inorganic, Organic, and Fluoride Concentrations Not to be Exceeded in Domestic or Municipal Supply*.
- Addition of a new general objective, Minimum Chemical Constituents Levels for Municipal and Domestic Water Supplies to replace Table 3-2.
- Revision of existing numeric and narrative objectives to update language, improve clarity, and reference the proposed Minimum Chemical Constituents Levels for Municipal and Domestic Water Supplies objective in place of Table 3-2 as appropriate.
- Minor revisions to Table 3-1, *Specific Water Quality Objectives for North Coast Region* and Table 3-1a. Includes reformatting of information contained in Table 3-1, relocating information contained in footnote 5 to a new Table 3-1b (*Specific Objectives for Temperature in the Upper Trinity River*), and addition of a title to Table 3-1a (*Site Specific Objectives (SSOs) for Dissolved Oxygen (DO) in the Mainstem Klamath River*). Tables have been relocated to end of chapter to improve readability.
- Revision of the Compliance with Water Quality Objectives section to include a discussion on compliance with water quality objectives for non-NPDES programs. Includes a discussion relative to the use of the proposed Narrative WQO Policy.

- Addition of references to the National Toxics Rule (NTR), California Toxics Rule (CTR), and the State Water Board *Policy for Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries* (SIP) to inform the reader of their applicability to surface waters in the North Coast Region.

Proposed revisions to Chapter 4 - Implementation Plans are presented below:

- Addition of a new section heading, “Regionwide Policies” to be inserted at the beginning of the chapter just after the introductory language.
- Addition of a new *Policy for the Application of Narrative Water Quality Objectives* (proposed Narrative WQO Policy) under the new “Regionwide Policies” heading. The proposed policy will describe the process the Regional Water Board uses when narrative objectives are translated into numeric limits for use in permits, orders, or other Board actions as appropriate.
- Editorial revisions to the Schedules of Compliance section to be consistent with the *Policy for Compliance Schedules in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits*.

Other non-substantive revisions will be made to both Chapters 3 and 4 to reflect revisions made as editorial amendments to previous chapters of the Basin Plan and to improve clarity and readability.

**PRELIMINARY STAFF
RECOMMENDATION:**

Informational item, no Regional Water Board action will be taken at this time.