

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Vincent Christian)  
MEETING DATE: January 12, 2011

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **City of Petaluma, Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility and Its Collection System, Petaluma, Marin County – Reissuance of NPDES Permit**

CHRONOLOGY: October 2005 – NPDES Permit Reissued

DISCUSSION: This item would reissue the NPDES permit for the City of Petaluma. The City owns and operates the water recycling facility, which treats about 4.5 million gallons per day of domestic and industrial wastewater. About 48% of the facility's treated wastewater is recycled and used to irrigate pastures, golf courses, and vineyards. The remaining 52% is discharged to the Petaluma River.

The water recycling facility is a new facility that began operating in January 2009, replacing the City's aging wastewater treatment plant was constrained in size. The new facility includes 162 acres of oxidation ponds, 32 acres of constructed treatment wetlands, and 31 acres of polishing wetlands. The City's treatment performance has improved dramatically since the new facility began operating. Total suspended solids concentrations in the City's effluent decreased from about 30 milligrams per liter (mg/L) to about 1.6 mg/L.

Wastewater recycling is seasonal, done primarily in the summer when there is agricultural demand. The Revised Tentative Order (Appendix A) would continue to allow discharges to the river primarily during winter.

The City and the San Francisco Baykeeper submitted comments (Appendix B) on an earlier draft tentative order, and we prepared responses to these comments (Appendix C) and revised the draft order accordingly. All revisions are reflected in the attached Revised Tentative Order. Many of the Baykeeper's comments are reiterations of its comments on the East Bay Municipal Utility District's permit that the Board adopted in March 2010.

The City is satisfied with our responses. The Baykeeper's most significant comment concerns prohibiting all sanitary sewage overflows, not just those to waters of the U.S. or that cause pollution or nuisance. The prohibition and requirements for sanitary sewage overflows in the Revised Tentative Order are adequate for control of overflows most likely to cause water quality or human health problems. The proposed requirements are also consistent with statewide requirements. We anticipate that the Baykeeper may raise this issue and possibly a few others at the hearing.

RECOMMEN-  
DATION: Adoption of the Revised Tentative Order

CIWQS Place ID: 248087 (vc)

Appendices: A. Revised Tentative Order  
B. Comments  
C. Response to Comments