

Comments

Response



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF MONO**

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February 21, 2012

Dr. Bruce Warden
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, California 96150

**Re: Renewal of General Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for
Grazing Operations in the East Walker River Watershed (Tentative)**

Dear Dr. Warden:

The Mono County Board of Supervisors would like to request an extension of the 30-day period provided for concerned persons and agencies to comment on the Renewal of General Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Grazing Operations in the East Walker River Watershed (hereafter the "Renewed Waiver" or "Waiver").

At the time it received the Renewed Waiver, the County's understanding was that the regulated operators and the LRWQCB were working together towards a mutually acceptable solution with respect to discharge levels for the East Walker Watershed, and that the Renewed Waiver was the product of that joint effort which was acceptable to all parties. Accordingly, the County did not prepare comments on the Waiver when it was initially released.

However, following recent discussions with representatives of the operators and more detailed review of the Renewed Waiver and the existing 2007 Waiver, the County has become concerned regarding certain provisions of the Renewed Waiver which would appear to unduly burden agricultural operations in the Bridgeport Valley. Given the critical role which agriculture plays in Mono County, the Board of Supervisors is concerned that these provisions will adversely impact the County's economy and its citizens.

Accordingly, the Board respectfully requests that LRWQCB provide an additional 30 days for review and comment on the Renewed Waiver in order to provide time for Mono County to gather further information and prepare written comments. In particular, the County will be looking at impacts which the Renewed Waiver, and the Basin Plan's discharge requirements for Bridgeport Valley, could have on the economic condition, recreational values, and historical ranching culture of Mono County. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely yours,
MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Vikki Magee Bauer, Chair

Larry Johnston - District One Duane 'Hap' Hazard - District Two
Vikki Magee Bauer - District Three Tim Hansen - District Four Byng Hunt - District Five

Mono Co. BOS-R1: Regional Water Board staff met with Bridgeport Ranchers Organization (BRO) members on March 12, 2012 to discuss this and other concerns. By mutual agreement, the Water Board hearing for the proposed adoption of the grazing waiver was delayed three months—from April 2012 to the July 2012 Water Board meeting. After revising the tentative waiver in response to BRO and other commenter concerns, a second tentative waiver was issued May 4, 2012 with comments due June 4, 2012. Another meeting of Water Board staff and BRO members was held May 31, 2012 to arrive at a mutually agreeable approach to address key issues of concern in the 2nd tentative waiver. Agreed-upon changes to the 2nd tentative waiver are reflected in the proposed grazing waiver.

