

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

**BOARD ORDER R6V-2017-(TENTATIVE)  
WDID NO. 6B368907001**

**RESCISSION OF WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS  
BOARD ORDER NO. 6-01-16**

**FOR**

**ACE COGENERATION COMPANY  
INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC WASTEWATER DISCHARGES**

\_\_\_\_\_San Bernardino County\_\_\_\_\_

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region (Water Board) finds:

1. Discharger

ACE Cogeneration Company L.P. (ACE) owned and operated a solid fuel (coal and/or petroleum coke) atmospheric fluidized bed combustor boiler at an electrical power and process steam cogenerating plant (Facility). The land on which the plant is located is owned by Searles Valley Minerals and is located on the west side of Searles Dry Lake, west of the community of Trona, San Bernardino County. ACE and Searles Valley Minerals are identified as the Dischargers.

2. Facility

ACE discharged cooling-tower blowdown and industrial and domestic wastewater into a manhole junction with Searles Valley Minerals' Argus facility all-other-liquor (AOL) discharge pipeline, located south of the Facility. The AOL discharge is part of the depleted return brine Searles Valley Minerals discharges to the lake bed as part of the Searles Valley Minerals solution mining process in accordance with Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs), Board Order No. R6V-2005-0024. The cooling tower blowdown wastewater contained minor concentrations of biocide and scale or corrosion inhibitors. The industrial wastewater (noncooling-tower blowdown) consisted of various supply treatment wastewater, boiler-blowdown water, and plant washdown water. Domestic wastewater consisted of septic tank effluent. After receiving pretreatment by oil-water separation and septic tank solids removal, the waste streams were combined and discharged via a manhole junction to the existing Searles Valley Minerals Argus facility AOL discharge pipeline for final disposal as either underground injection or surface water recharge on Searles Dry Lake Bed pursuant to WDRs, Board Order No. R6V-2005-0024. Solid waste ash from the ACE Cogeneration Plant was regulated under a separate order (Board Order No. 6-00-92) and disposed at the inert solid waste landfill northwest of the power plant.

3. Order History

- a. The Water Board adopted WDRs, Board Order No. 6-90-16, on March 8, 1990, allowing ACE to discharge cooling tower blowdown water and industrial and domestic wastewater. On October 23, 1991, the Water Board's Executive Officer issued a revised Monitoring and Reporting Program. The Searles Valley Minerals Argus Plant effluent is regulated under a separate Order.
- b. On April 11, 2001, the Water Board adopted revised WDRs, Board Order No. 6-01-16, as part of a statewide program to periodically review and update WDRs and to incorporate changes in regulations and regulatory policies that applied to the operation of the Facility.

4. Basis for Rescission

- a. On October 1, 2014, ACE ceased operating the plant and, therefore, ceased discharging from the Facility other than minor discharges of domestic wastewater from the occasional use of restroom facilities a few days a month. The discharges of domestic wastewater ended on January 26, 2017. This results in zero discharge of any waste from ACE to the Searles Valley Minerals AOL discharge system.
- b. Section II. Provisions, E. Closure and Post-Closure, of Board Order No. 6-01-16, requires ACE to submit a revised Closure Post Closure Maintenance Plan (CPCMP) when there would be a substantial change in operations. However, as the Facility will be completely decommissioned (torn down) and no further discharge will occur, there is no need to submit a CPCMP. Searles Valley Minerals continues to monitor effluent discharges to the AOL pursuant to WDRs, Board Order No. R6V-2005-0024.
- c. The beneficial use of the groundwaters of Searles Valley is limited to Industrial Service Supply (IND).
- d. The beneficial uses of surface waters include IND, contact water recreation (REC-1), noncontact water recreation (REC-2), wildlife habitat (WILD), and saline water habitat (SAL).

5. Conclusion

- a. Discharges regulated under Board Order No. 6-01-16 have ceased, and therefore the Board Order is no longer relevant or necessary. The wastewater that has been discharged from the Facility does not pose a threat to water quality and, therefore, requiring continued monitoring of the site under WDRs would not be in the public interest. Rescinding WDRs, Board Order No. 6-01-16, is appropriate and is in the interest of the public.

6. Notification of Interested Parties

The Water Board has notified the Dischargers and interested persons of its intent to rescind WDRs, Board Order No. 6-01-16.

7. Public Meeting

The Water Board, in a public meeting, heard and considered all comments pertaining to this Rescission Order.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that Waste Discharge Requirements, Board Order No. 6-01-16, is hereby rescinded.

I, Patty Z. Kouyoumdjian, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region, on April 19, 2017.

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PATTY Z. KOUYOUMDJIAN  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER