

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

MEETING OF JULY 14, 2010

South Lake Tahoe/Victorville

ITEM: XX

SUBJECT: (1) RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATIONS AND (2) AMENDED WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY, DESERT VIEW DAIRY REVISED OPTIMIZATION PROJECT, HINKLEY, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

CHRONOLOGY: This is an amended item before the Water Board

July 27, 2004	Mitigated Negative Declaration and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) adopted for the Interim Plume Containment and Hexavalent Chromium Treatment Project at Desert View Dairy (Original Project).
Nov. 28, 2007	Mitigated Negative Declaration and amended WDRs adopted for the Interim Plume Containment Project at Desert View Dairy (Optimization Project).
Aug. 7, 2008	Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) directed the discharger to achieve containment of the chromium plume boundary and propose final clean up actions for hexavalent chromium in groundwater.

ISSUES: (1) Should the Water Board adopt an Addendum to the Negative Declarations for the Original Project and the Optimization Project, and
(2) Should the Water Board amend WDRs to enhance hydraulic control of the chromium plume in groundwater in Hinkley? This Board action will allow additional extraction wells on the Desert View Dairy and new extraction wells on adjacent properties owned by PG&E. This Board action will

also increase the discharge volume to the land treatment unit by 50 percent.

DISCUSSION:

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) has proposed to amend the existing optimized groundwater extraction system at the Desert View Dairy to enhance hydraulic control of the northeastern portion of the chromium plume. The chromium plume has migrated about 2,000 feet beyond the Dairy property, likely due to influence of an irrigation well located to the northeast.

The existing project extracts chromium-containing groundwater to help contain the northern portion of the chromium plume. The extracted groundwater is discharged to the land treatment unit at the Desert View Dairy, where the hexavalent chromium is converted to trivalent chromium and effectively removed from the water. The proposed project would add new groundwater extraction wells to contain the northeastern portion of the plume and restore groundwater quality in that area.

The project will also increase the volume of discharge to the land treatment unit by 50 percent. PG&E has demonstrated in a pilot test that increasing the volumetric flow rate from 0.497 million gallons per day (MGD) to 0.750 MGD, based on an annual average daily volume, will be taken up by crops and produce more plant growth while continuing to treat hexavalent chromium. Extracted groundwater will contain higher nitrate and total dissolved solids concentrations than currently discharged. The discharge of water and associated salts beneath the root zone is not expected to increase significantly. Therefore, the project will not result in additional impacts to water quality. The water quality protection standard for chromium and salts will remain the same as in the existing WDRs.

The amended WDRs will allow the project to proceed in a manner that accommodates site-specific conditions and that do not adversely impact water quality or beneficial uses beyond the project area. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan adopted in 2007 continues to be appropriate for the proposed project. While additional drawdown in groundwater levels is anticipated, primarily to the north and east, the proposed project is not expected to cause an adverse effect on private supply wells as a result of water level changes. Groundwater levels in monitoring wells and

private wells will be monitored and compared to trigger levels previously identified in the 2007 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan.

Because potential environmental impacts from the proposed project were not evaluated in the environmental documents for the Original Project and the Optimization Project, and because the changes are minor and would not result in the need for a subsequent environmental document, an Addendum to the previous negative declarations is appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the Resolution and Order as proposed.

Enclosures:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Addendum to the Negative Declarations
3. Proposed Board Order and Monitoring and Reporting Program