

FEB 13 2008

February 4, 2008

John Muller, Chair
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Muller and members of the Board:

We are writing to express our support for including trash as a pollutant of concern in the Water Board's pending Municipal Regional Permit (MRP). Trash and marine debris are an urgent concern affecting our waterways that have not yet been effectively addressed by local water quality regulations. The permit should require **measurable, enforceable reductions in trash discharged to creeks and the Bay**. The trash provisions in the Tentative Order could be a historic step in reducing trash and marine debris in San Francisco Bay, but we strongly recommend that the Board increase accountability and oversight as well as tighten up the timeline before adopting them in the Final Order.

Trash in the Bay is a serious problem: it is widespread, growing, and harms protected water uses. The Water Board's own study found that, on average, there are three pieces of trash along every foot of stream and creek leading to the Bay. Because much of the trash in our water is plastic, it never biodegrades and accumulates in massive amounts. Trash affects water quality and wildlife. Animals get entangled by trash, suffer and die. Further, wildlife frequently cannot tell trash apart from their regular diets, and eating this "junk" food with no nutrients leads to starvation. Trash pollution deters recreation at creeks, shorelines, and beaches.

Trash may be the most controllable urban runoff pollutant: proven cleanup measures and infrastructure can prevent trash from reaching receiving waters. Please ensure that trash provisions in the upcoming MRP require measurable reductions in trash discharge, specify enforceable measures and timelines for implementation, and require cities and counties to make their trash data accessible to the public.

Preventing trash pollution of our waterways is an important priority; we encourage the Board to take action on this problem.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Tye - Co-Coordinator
STIRISAN BEACH Village Ass
&
Marin County Chapter
SURFRIDER Foundation