

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
DECEMBER 6, 2022**

ITEM 5

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY TO AWARD AND AMEND GRANT AGREEMENTS ADMINISTERING AN ALLOCATION FROM THE BUDGET ACT OF 2022 FOR DICHLORODIPHENYLTRICHLOROETHANE CLEANUP NEAR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

DISCUSSION

Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) is an insecticide used from the 1940s until its nationwide ban in 1972 due to its harmful impacts on wildlife and its probable carcinogenic effects on humans. Recent scientific findings and awareness of ocean DDT disposal sites have focused concerns about DDT contamination in the Pacific Ocean off the southern California coast.

Senate Bill 154 (2022) allocated \$5,600,000 to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) in item 3940-107-001, Provision 2, to provide financial assistance for DDT cleanup near southern California. This allocation must be encumbered by June 30, 2023 and liquidated by June 30, 2025.

The proposed resolution would authorize the Deputy Director of the Division of Water Quality to award and amend grant agreements to the Regents of the University of California, San Diego to provide funding to California Sea Grant to solicit for and fund research and community outreach projects. California Sea Grant is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the State of California, and universities across the state to create knowledge, products and services that benefit the economy, the environment, and the residents of California. California Sea Grant is within the Regents of the University of California, San Diego. Thus, the Regents of the University of California, San Diego directs funding to California Sea Grant to administer competitive research and outreach awards.

California Sea Grant, in collaboration with University of Southern California Sea Grant, has taken a lead role in scoping the research needed to understand the extent the DDT pollution and the impact to humans and the ecosystem. California Sea Grant co-hosted a research needs workshop in July 2022 and co-published a draft version of a report titled *A Deep Ocean DDT+ Research Needs Assessment for the Southern California Bight* in October 2022.

State Water Board staff is collaborating with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Ocean Protection Council to determine the types of research needed to determine appropriate DDT cleanup and mitigation measures along the southern California coast. Research topics may include the risks to human health and ecosystems, the chemistry and toxicity of DDT and its breakdown products, the sources of DDT, and community outreach.

POLICY ISSUE

Should the State Water Board:

1. Authorize the Deputy Director of the Division of Water Quality to execute and amend grant agreements to direct \$5,600,000 to the Regents of the University of California, San Diego to be directed to and administered by California Sea Grant for research and community outreach that will support DDT cleanup near southern California, consistent with the encumbrance and liquidation deadlines or as those encumbrance and liquidation deadlines may be amended by future legislation, and to do all things necessary and convenient to implement such agreements?
2. Direct State Water Board staff to continue to consult with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Ocean Protection Council to identify the scope of projects that meet the legislative intent and the budget act requirements?

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds were appropriated by the California Legislature through Senate Bill 154 for DDT cleanup near southern California. The Division of Water Quality, the Division of Financial Assistance, and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board will use existing funding sources to cover the modest expenses to prepare, execute, and manage the grant agreements and resulting deliverables.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board staff will assist in developing the scope of work for the grant agreements and will participate in reviewing proposed projects and grant deliverables.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that State Water Board adopt the proposed resolution.