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APPLICABILITY OF COVERAGE UNDER STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD ORDER WQ 2014-0153-DWQ; GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL DOMESTIC WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS; THE OAKS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY; AMADOR COUNTY

On 2 March 2020, the Oaks Community Association (hereafter Discharger) submitted a letter requesting to obtain coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) General Waste Discharge Requirements for Small Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems, Order WQ 2014-0153-DWQ (General Order). This memorandum provides a summary of the applicability of this discharge for coverage under the General Order.

REGULATORY BACKGROUND

WDRs 92-080, adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) on 24 April 1992, prescribes requirements for the Oaks Community Association Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), and allows a maximum discharge flow of 0.06 million gallons per day (MGD). WDRs Order 92-080 will be rescinded at an upcoming Central Valley Water Board meeting. Effective upon rescission of Order 92-080, the discharge described in this NOA shall be regulated pursuant to the General Order.

EXISTING FACILITY AND DISCHARGE DESCRIPTION

The WWTF is located at 5607 Jackson Valley Road, Lone, in Amador County (Section 18, T5N, R10E, MDB&M). The Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) is 012-070-066-501. The WWTF is owned and operated by the Discharger.

The WWTF provides wastewater treatment and disposal service for the Oaks Community and nearby businesses and unincorporated neighbors. The annual flow is approximately 12.5 MG with an average daily flow of 34,000 gallons per day (gpd). Potable water has total dissolved solids (TDS) concentration of 41 mg/L based on a sample collected on 25 September 2019.

The WWTF consists of a gravity collection system, a wet well with grinder pumps, three clay lined ponds in series and 11 acres of Land Application Areas (LAAs). Ponds 1 and 2 contain aerators and Pond 3 is an overflow storage pond. Each pond has a surface area of 0.47 acres and an average depth of 10 feet. The total capacity of three ponds is

4.6 million gallons based on two feet of free board. Undisinfected treated water from storage Pond 2 is applied to the LAAs via sprinklers. Tailwater is prevented from entering Jackson Creek by a three-foot high earthen berm that borders the south side of the property.

Based on the September 2020 monthly monitoring report, the effluent had a BOD₅ concentration of 24 mg/L and EC concentration of 435 µmhos/cm. There are no effluent data available for nitrate and total kjeldahl nitrogen concentrations. Because MRP 92-080 does not contain monitoring requirements for these constituents, MRP WQ 2014-0153-DWQ-R5343 will include requirements for these constituent monitoring.

GROUNDWATER CONCERNS

There are three monitoring wells MW-1 through MW-3 onsite. Currently the discharger only collects electrical conductivity and total coliform data. Based on the July 2019 groundwater monitoring report, electrical conductivity has a range of 300 to 450 µmhos/cm. There are no groundwater elevation data available to determine the direction of groundwater flow. The MRP WQ 2014-0153-DWQ-R5343 will require the Discharger to collect all elevation and other constitute data to determine groundwater degradation.

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Monitoring requirements included in the following sections from Attachment C of the General Order are appropriate for this discharge:

- Land Application Area Monitoring
- Pond System Monitoring
- Solids Disposal Monitoring

SALT AND NITRATE CONTROL PROGRAMS

The Central Valley Water Board adopted Basin Plan amendments incorporating new programs for addressing ongoing salt and nitrate accumulation in the Central Valley at its 31 May 2018 Board Meeting. The Basin Plan amendments were conditionally approved by the State Water Board on 16 October 2019 (Resolution 2019-0057) and by the Office of Administrative Law on 15 January 2020 (OAL Matter No. 2019-1203-03).

For nitrate, dischargers that are unable to comply with stringent nitrate requirements will be required to take on alternate compliance approaches that involve providing replacement drinking water to persons whose drinking water is affected by nitrates. Dischargers may comply with the new nitrate program either individually or collectively with other dischargers. For the Nitrate Control Program, the facility falls within Non-Prioritized Groundwater Basins. Notices to Comply for Non-Prioritized Basins will be issued within two to four years after the effective date of the Nitrate Control Program.

For salinity, dischargers that are unable to comply with stringent salinity requirements will instead need to meet performance-based requirements and participate in a basin-wide effort to develop a long-term salinity strategy for the Central Valley. Dischargers received a Notice to Comply with instructions and obligations for the Salt Control Program within one year of 17 January 2020, the effective date of the amendments. Upon receipt of the Notice to Comply, the discharger had no more than six months to inform the Central Valley Water Board of their choice between Option 1 (Conservative Option for Salt Permitting) or Option 2 (Alternative Option for Salt Permitting).

As these strategies are implemented, the Central Valley Water Board may find it necessary to modify the requirements of this Order to ensure the goals of the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs are met. This order may be amended or modified to incorporate newly applicable requirements. More information regarding this regulatory planning process can be found on the [Central Valley Water Board CV-SALTS website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity).