

AERA ENERGY LLC, HIGHWAY 33 WASTEWATER DISPOSAL FACILITY, SOUTH BELRIDGE OIL FIELD, Kern County

Aera Energy LLC (Aera) discharges non-hazardous oil field produced water, filter backwash water, and softener regeneration wastewater to 28 unlined surface impoundments at the Highway 33 Wastewater Disposal Facility in the South Belridge Oil Field, Kern County. The impoundments are used for the disposal of wastewater by evaporation and percolation. Beneficial uses of groundwater in the area are designated by the Basin Plan as municipal, agriculture, and industrial service supply. The wastewater salinity levels exceed the maximum salinity limits prescribed in the Basin Plan for oil field produced water. The facility is currently regulated by WDRs Resolution No. 58-193, which are outdated and are being updated to reflect current policy and regulations.

Aera has conducted an investigation to determine the hydrogeology and the extent of wastewater migration. Three stratigraphic intervals have been identified as water-bearing intervals. The uppermost two zones have been impacted by wastewater migrating from the impoundments. Aera has not delineated the lateral extent of wastewater migrating from the impoundments.

The new WDRs include a time schedule requiring Aera to cease the discharge of wastewater, submit a Closure Plan, complete the groundwater investigation, and submit a Corrective Action Plan. The action to adopt WDRs for an existing facility is exempt from provisions of the CEQA in accordance with Title 14, CCR, Section 15301 (DLW).