

ITEM: 13

SUBJECT: United States Department of Agriculture and the University of California, Davis Aquatic Weed Control Laboratory, Yolo County

BOARD ACTION: Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal.

BACKGROUND: The University of California, Davis owns the land and the United States Department of Agriculture operates the USDA Aquatic Weed Control Laboratory. Activities at the facility can be divided into three general areas: fish culture, aquatic plant culture and weed control testing. Wastewater is discharged to Putah Creek. Effluent discharges from this facility occur very rarely (once per year or less). The maximum permitted flow is 0.075 mgd.

The NPDES permit authorizes a minor discharge. The Order carries forward the existing permit limits. Additional monitoring has been required for several parameters based on their use at the facility for research studies or to determine if they pose a reasonable potential to cause or contribute to an exceedance of a water quality standard, including numeric and narrative objectives within a standard.

ISSUES: The Discharger submitted comments on the tentative permit on 30 June 2008. The major issues discussed in the comments are summarized below. Further detail on all comments is included in Regional Water Board staff's Responses to Comments:

Monitoring Frequencies: The Discharger questioned the new monitoring requirements and increased monitoring frequencies in the tentative Order. The Discharger requested that sampling frequencies remain consistent with the current Order. Regional Water Board staff based the increase on monitoring frequency on the understanding that the Discharger had not submitted monitoring reports as required. In fact the Discharger did complete and submit the monitoring reports, however, it appears the incorrect zip code has been used and the location of the monitoring reports has yet to be determined. Based on the fact that the Discharger did complete and submit the required reports, monitoring frequencies have been changed to remain consistent with the current Order. .

Groundwater Monitoring Requirement: The Discharger commented that the groundwater monitoring requirement places an undue burden on the facility. The Discharger stated that the compounds used at the facility do not persist long in the environment and felt any discharges from the facility would have a de minimis impact on groundwater. In lieu of establishing groundwater monitoring at this time, Regional Water Board staff are proposing the Discharger complete and submit a study to determine if groundwater monitoring is necessary. The study will require the Discharger to examine the wastewaters for constituents present (both

herbicide active ingredients and their associated breakdown compounds), fate and transport, toxicity to both human and aquatic organisms, etc. It is understood the Discharger wishes to eventually cease discharge to surface waters. Results of this study will not only assist in determining if groundwater monitoring is necessary for this NPDES permit, but also will assist in the development of Waste Discharge Requirements for land application in the future.

Receiving Water Priority Pollutant Monitoring: The Discharger requested that the facility be allowed to consolidate receiving water priority pollutant monitoring with other campus sampling and analysis for discharges to Putah Creek. The rationale presented included:

1. The discharge from the facility is negligible (has not occurred in the past 5 years); and
2. The receiving waters receive other campus discharges upstream and downstream of the facility.

Regional Water Board staff agreed that consolidation of receiving water priority pollutant monitoring with other campus sampling and analysis efforts is appropriate for this particular discharge due to the infrequent discharge and low volumes. Language was added to the Order which allows the Discharger to submit priority pollutant receiving water monitoring from other campus discharges to Putah Creek upstream and downstream of the facility in those years where there is no discharge or coordinate with those other campus entities to obtain representative sampling during years where a discharge from the facility occurs. In addition, the Discharger will have the option to conduct priority pollutant receiving water monitoring as specified in the permit.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____

31 July/1 August 2008

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
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