TENTATIVE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD LOS ANGELES REGION

TIME SCHEDULE ORDER NO. R4-2019-XXXX

REQUIRING SANTA CLARITA VALLEY SANITATION DISTRICT (VALENCIA WATER RECLAMATION PLANT) TO COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN ORDER NO. R4-2015-0071 (NPDES PERMIT NO. CA0054216)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (hereafter Regional Water Board) finds:

- 1. Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (hereafter SCVSD or Permittee) owns and operates the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant (hereafter Valencia WRP), a tertiary wastewater treatment plant located at 28185 The Old Road, Valencia, California.
- 2. The Valencia WRP discharges tertiary-treated wastewater under waste discharge requirements contained in Order No. R4-2015-0071, which was adopted by this Regional Water Board on April 9, 2015, and administratively amended on September 3, 2015 and September 25, 2015 to make a typographical correction and minor modifications to a subtask. Order No. R4-2015-0071 serves as a permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES Permit No. CA0054216) and regulates the discharge of treated wastewater to Reach 5 of the Santa Clara River, as designated in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan), which is a water of the United States and of the State of California, within the Santa Clara River Watershed. It is set to expire on April 30, 2020.
- 3. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) prepared the California 2014 and 2016 Integrated Report based on a compilation of the Regional Water Boards' Integrated Reports. These Integrated Reports contain both the Clean Water Act (CWA) section 305(b) water quality assessment and section 303(d) list of impaired waters. In developing the Integrated Reports, the Water Boards solicit data, information and comments from the public and other interested persons. On October 3, 2017, the State Water Board approved the CWA Section 303(d) List portion of the State's 2014 and 2016 Integrated Report (State Water Board Resolution No. 2017-0059). On April 6, 2018, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approved California's 2014 and 2016 list of water quality limited segments requiring a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) under CWA section 303(d) for the Los Angeles Region as well as the rest of California. The CWA section 303(d) list can be found at the following https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2014_2016.shtml. Reach 5 of the Santa Clara River, to which SCVSD discharges from its Valencia WRP, is impaired for chloride, according to the most recent section 303(d) list. Elevated levels of chloride primarily impact two beneficial uses: agricultural supply (AGR) and ground water recharge (GWR). Other beneficial uses of Reach 5 are: warm freshwater habitat (WARM), wildlife habitat (WILD), rare, threatened, or endangered species (RARE), industrial service supply (IND), industrial process supply (PROC), water contact recreation (REC-1), and noncontact recreation (REC-2).

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- 4. On October 9, 2014, the Regional Water Board adopted an Amendment to the Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region to Incorporate an Averaging Period for Chloride Water Quality Objectives in Reaches 4B, 5 and 6; Incorporate New Site Specific Objectives for Chloride in Reaches 5 and 6; and Revise the Total Maximum Daily Load for Chloride in the Upper Santa Clara River (Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL) (Resolution No. R14-010). On December 16, 2014, the State Water Board approved the Basin Plan amendments adopted by the Regional Water Board (Resolution No. 2014-0069). On March 18, 2015, and April 28, 2015, respectively, the State Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and USEPA approved the Basin Plan amendments and they became effective on April 28, 2015.
- 5. The NPDES permit for the Valencia WRP (Order No. R4-2015-0071), which was issued by this Regional Water Board on April 9, 2015, prescribed the following final effluent limitation for chloride, consistent with the assumptions and requirements of the Waste Load Allocation (WLA) specified in the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL:

Table 1. Final Effluent Limitations

		Effluent Limitations	
Constituent	Units	3-Month Rolling Average	Daily Maximum
Chloride	mg/L	$C_{VAL,3mo.av}^{1,2}$	230

6. Order No. R4-2015-0071 also prescribed the following interim effluent limitations for chloride:

Table 2. Interim Effluent Limitations

		Effluent Limitations	
Constituent	Units	12-Month Rolling Average	Daily Maximum
Chloride	mg/L	3	230

The following three-month rolling average effluent limitation is derived from the WLA for chloride.

$$C_{VAL,3mo.av} = \frac{1}{3} * \sum_{mi=1}^{3} \left[\frac{Q_{SAU,mi}(100 - C_{SAU,mi})}{Q_{VAL_{mi}}} + 100 \right]$$

Where: mi = monthly

 $Q_{SAU,mi}$ = Saugus WRP monthly effluent flow in million gallons per day (MGD);

 $Q_{VAL,mi}$ = Valencia WRP monthly effluent flow in MGD;

 $C_{SAU,mi}$ = Saugus WRP monthly effluent chloride level in mg/L;

 $C_{VAL,mi}$ = Valencia WRP monthly effluent chloride level in mg/L;

 $Q_{SAU,mi}$ and $Q_{VAL,mi}$ Shall not exceed the design flow during dry-weather periods.

- This is a three-month rolling average effluent limitation, not the typical monthly average effluent limitation.
- The chloride interim effluent limitation is equal to the sum of the State Water Project treated potable water supply chloride concentration plus 97 mg/L, expressed as a 12-month rolling average, not to exceed a daily maximum of 230 mg/L, where 97 mg/L is the maximum difference in the chloride concentration of the potable water supply (State Water Project treated water) and the Valencia WRP treated effluent for the period of January 2005 to June 2014.

The interim effluent limitations for chloride are consistent with the assumptions and requirements of the interim WLAs in the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL. The interim WLAs expire on July 1, 2019.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

- 7. SCVSD has been providing status reports on a semi-annual basis, as required by the Upper Santa Clara River TMDL, notifying the Regional Water Board of progress made in completing the various milestone tasks associated with the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL.
- 8. SCVSD has spent more than ten years seeking the least costly solution to achieve the chloride effluent limitation necessary to support attainment of water quality standards and protection of beneficial uses in the Santa Clara River. The SCVSD's two wastewater treatment plants (Saugus and Valencia WRPs) are not designed to remove chloride. To meet the TMDL-based chloride final effluent limitation, additional treatment equipment must be designed, constructed and fully operational by the TMDL-established deadline of July 2019. SCVSD's Chloride Compliance Facilities Plan and Environmental Impact Report (Facilities Plan and EIR) recommended adding microfiltration and reverse osmosis (MF/RO) treatment at the Valencia WRP and replacing the existing chlorine-based disinfection process with ultraviolet (UV) disinfection at both the Saugus and Valencia WRPs. On October 28, 2013, after extensive public input, meetings, hearings, and environmental review, the SCVSD Board of Directors approved the highest-ranked, feasible alternative from the Facilities Plan and certified that the associated EIR was completed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- 9. The 2013 EIR was challenged by the Affordable Clean Water Alliance (ACWA), who filed a petition for writ to set aside SCVSD's certification on the grounds that the document failed to comply with CEQA. In February 2016, the Los Angeles County Superior Court found that two aspects of the 2013 EIR did not fully comply with CEQA. First, the Court directed the SCVSD to conduct additional environmental study on potential impacts to the unarmored threespine stickleback (UTS), a state and federally listed endangered species. Second, the Court considered the SCVSD's pursuit of the trucking method of brine management to be an "abandonment" of the method approved in the 2013 EIR, leaving the SCVSD with an incomplete chloride compliance project. The Court did not find fault with the environmental review related to the chloride compliance project components. However, the Court set aside the 2013 EIR and related approvals until the SCVSD addresses both issues. To address the first issue, the SCVSD Board of Directors sought to separate the Recycled Water Project from the Chloride Compliance Project.
- 10. To address the second issue, on March 23, 2016, the SCVSD Board of Directors recertified the 2013 EIR and certified the final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (2016 Trucking SEIR), which included trucking as a brine disposal method rather than deep well injection. The SCVSD Board of Directors sought to defer implementation of the Recycled Water Project until further study of UTS could be completed. Therefore, the recertified EIR did not contain a component for the Recycled Water Project.
- 11. Subsequently, SCVSD began the design of the capital improvement projects. However, on June 2016, pursuant to an injunctive relief order from the Los Angeles County Superior

Court in Affordable Clean Water Alliance v. Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County (Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. BS 145869), SCVSD had to cease work to comply with the court order.

- 12. On August 4, 2016, SCVSD issued a Notice of Preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report of Impacts to the Unarmored Threespine Stickleback Fish under Reduced Discharge Conditions from the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District's Water Reclamation Plants (Stickleback SEIR). The intent of the Stickleback SEIR was to maintain support of both the Chloride Compliance Project and the Recycled Water Project. SCVSD and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife have been working together to determine the appropriate criteria for analyzing potential impacts to UTS. Based on these discussions and the projected work remaining to complete the study to evaluate the potential impacts to UTS caused by the Recycled Water Project, SCVSD decided to pursue the Recycled Water Project separately from the Chloride Compliance Project and recirculate the EIR. The SCVSD Board of Directors approved a resolution to cease environmental studies related to the Recycled Water Project. Future recycled water planning is anticipated to be led by the recently formed Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, which delivers all recycled water and nearly all drinking water in the Valley. SCVSD will continue to produce high-quality reclaimed water and will assist the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency in its efforts for future recycled water projects. The Recycled Water Project and the Chloride Compliance Project are not interdependent. The Chloride Compliance Project may proceed independently and should proceed as quickly as possible to protect beneficial uses.
- 13. In response to the Court ruling with regard to the Chloride Compliance Project, in May 2017, SCVSD prepared and circulated a Final Recirculated Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District Chloride Compliance Project Environmental Impact Report Separation of Recycled Water Project (Final Recirculated EIR) for its Chloride Compliance Project. The purpose of this Final Recirculated EIR is to allow SCVSD to evaluate the potential approval of the Chloride Compliance Project alone, independent of the Recycled Water Project. The final recirculated EIR was certified on August 30, 2017.
- 14. On November 16, 2017, a court decision allowed SCVSD to resume work. By then, the mandated work stoppage had already resulted in SCVSD's failure to meet various TMDL-established deadlines that had been incorporated into the Saugus and Valencia WRPs' NPDES Permits. Despite the setback, SCVSD is moving forward. On August 9, 2018, the SCVSD Board of Directors unanimously approved recommendations to hire contractors to begin installing the UV equipment at the Saugus and Valencia WRPs. The UV technology is designed to disinfect the treated effluent, but will also lower the amounts of disinfection byproducts produced, as well as reduce chloride concentrations by 7 mg/L. The design plans for the advanced water treatment facility and brine management facilities have also been completed.

REQUEST FOR TIME SCHEDULE ORDER AND CURRENT STATUS

15. On January 3, 2019, SCVSD staff met with Regional Water Board staff to request a Time Schedule Order (TSO), with interim effluent limitations, because they will be unable to achieve the final effluent limitations by the July 1, 2019 deadline imposed by the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL and included in the Valencia and Saugus WRPs' NPDES

Permits. The interim effluent limitations in the NPDES permits expire on July 1, 2019, coinciding with the TMDL requirement.

- 16. Based on an evaluation of Valencia WRP effluent chloride data, Saugus WRP effluent chloride data, and State Water Project chloride concentration data for the period of March 2011 to November 2018, the Discharger cannot consistently meet the final effluent limitation for chloride listed in Table 1, Finding 5, above. This is because influent coming into the Valencia WRP contains chloride concentrations that vary in part because the potable water supply served to the residents in the service area has varying chloride concentrations ranging from 50.9 to 93.4 mg/L for the State Water Project water; 45 to 100.7 mg/L for the Newhall County Water District water; and, 61.2 to 125 mg/L for the alluvial aquifer groundwater. As potable water is consumed, the wastewater that is generated from homes and businesses is sent to the Valencia WRP through the sewer system infrastructure. While the Valencia WRP has the capability of removing certain pollutants, the existing treatment system is not designed to remove chloride, and in fact contributes to chloride levels as a result of the chlorine-based disinfection process.
- In addition to the delays due to litigation and the injunction on SCVSD's construction, SCVSD staff also expressed concern about the potential for additional delays in the initiation of construction due to the pending approval of the State Revolving Fund (SRF) application. The SRF funds are vital to financing the advanced treatment project. SCVSD staff are in communication with State Water Board staff and await approval of their SRF funds in order to be able to begin construction. On January 7, 2019, the State Water Board sent a letter to USEPA recommending that USEPA make a "not likely to adversely affect" determination for the Chloride Compliance Project (Project), along with an analysis of the basis for the recommendation. The USEPA has reviewed the State Water Board's recommendation, the biological assessment, a site map and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. Based on that record, and for the reasons contained in the State Water Board's letter of recommendation, USEPA has determined that the project "may affect" but is "not likely to adversely affect" listed species or their critical habitat. On February 5, 2019, USEPA sent a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) requesting that they provide written concurrence under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with the USEPA's determination that the Project is not likely to adversely affect listed species or critical habitat. A response from USFWS is pending.
- 18. On January 31, 2019, SCVSD notified the Regional Water Board that the SCVSD Board of Directors awarded a \$87 million contract to Obrascon Huarte Lain (OHL), U.S.A. to construct the advanced water treatment facility (AWTF) at the Valencia WRP. SCVSD also submitted a table of proposed milestone tasks and completion dates to the Regional Water Board.
- SCVSD has completed the following milestones required by Order No. R4-2015-0071 and the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL:

Task	Completion Date
Complete design of UV facilities	May 25, 2018
Award contract for UV facilities	August 9, 2018

Task	Completion Date
Complete design of Advanced Water Treatment Facilities (AWTF)	August 9, 2018
Complete design of brine concentration treatment facilities	August 9, 2018
Complete design of brine management facility	August 9, 2018
Start onsite construction of UV facilities	November 6, 2018
Award contract for AWTF at Valencia WRP	January 31, 2019

REGULATORY AUTHORITIES

20. Section 13300 of the California Water Code states:

"Whenever a regional board finds that a discharge of waste is taking place or threatening to take place that violates or will violate requirements prescribed by the regional board, or the state board, or that the waste collection, treatment, or disposal facilities of a discharger are approaching capacity, the board may require the discharger to submit for approval of the board, with such modifications as it may deem necessary, a detailed time schedule of specific actions the discharger shall take in order to correct or prevent a violation of requirements."

- 21. Based on monitoring data, the Permittee cannot consistently achieve compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride in Order No. R4-2015-0071. Accordingly, pursuant to California Water Code section 13300, a discharge of waste is taking place and/or threatens to take place that violates requirements prescribed by the Regional Water Board.
- 22. Water Code section 13385, subdivisions (h) and (i), require the Regional Water Board to impose mandatory minimum penalties upon dischargers that violate certain effluent limitations. Section 13385(j)(3) exempts violations of an effluent limitation from mandatory minimum penalties "where the waste discharge is in compliance with either a cease and desist order issued pursuant to Section 13301 or a time schedule order issued pursuant to Section 13300 ..."
- 23. In accordance with California Water Code section 13385(j)(3)(B)(i), the Regional Water Board finds the following: the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL imposed a new, more stringent requirement with which compliance must be achieved after the effective date of the NPDES permit; new or modified control measures to control chloride will be necessary; due to the litigation and the injunction on SCVSD's construction, that deadline cannot be met; neither can the new or modified control measures be designed, installed, and put into operation within 30 days.
- 24. Pursuant to California Water Code section 13385 (j)(3)(C)(ii)(II), a regional board may extend the time schedule for an additional period not exceeding five years in length, if the discharger demonstrates that the additional time is necessary to comply with the effluent limitation.

The time schedule for compliance with the chloride effluent limitation as provided in this Order exceeds five years from the date that a time schedule for compliance was initially provided in Order No. R4-2015-0071. In this case, the Regional Water Board finds that the additional

- period provided to achieve compliance with the chloride final effluent limitation is justified because SCVSD has demonstrated that additional time is necessary to construct capital improvement projects to comply with this effluent limitation as noted in Findings 7 through 19.
- 25. Since the time schedule for completion of the actions necessary to bring the waste discharge into compliance exceeds one year from the effective date of this TSO, this TSO includes interim requirements and dates for their achievement. The interim requirements include both interim effluent limitations for chloride and actions and milestones leading to compliance with the final effluent limitation for this pollutant. This TSO does not exceed five years.
- 26. This TSO establishes interim effluent limitations for chloride and requires the Permittee to undertake specific actions to achieve compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride in Order No. R4-2015-0071. The established time schedule is as short as possible, taking into account the technological, operational, and economic factors that affect the design, development, and implementation of the control measures that are necessary to comply with the final effluent limitations for chloride. SCVSD will upgrade the Valencia WRP by installing UV disinfection and an AWTF, consisting of microfiltration and reverse osmosis treatment. SCVSD will dispose of the brine by trucking it to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in Carson, California, which has an ocean outfall.
- 27. The 12-month rolling average interim effluent limitation for chloride prescribed in this TSO is a performance-based value set equal to the maximum difference in the chloride concentration of the potable water supply (State Water Project treated water) and the Valencia WRP treated effluent, consistent with how the interim WLA was established in the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL.
- 28. California Water Code section 13385(j)(3)(D) requires the Permittee to prepare and implement a Pollution Prevention Plan (PPP) pursuant to California Water Code section 13263.3. Therefore, a PPP will be necessary for chloride.
- 29. A TSO is appropriate in these circumstances to allow time for the Permittee to complete capital improvement projects that will bring the Valencia WRP into compliance with the final effluent limitation for chloride. Prescribing interim effluent limitations for chloride is in the public interest given the significant environmental benefits associated with the removal of chloride that will be provided by the capital improvement project as the means to achieving compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride.
- 30. It is the policy of the State of California that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes. This Order promotes that policy by requiring discharges into waterbodies with a GWR beneficial use designation, which incidentally recharge underlying groundwater basins, to meet the chloride secondary maximum contaminant level (MCL).
- 31. Pursuant to California Water Code section 13385(j)(3), full compliance with the requirements of this TSO exempts the Permittee from mandatory minimum penalties only for violations of the final effluent limitations for chloride in Order No. R4-2015-0071 that occur after May 9, 2019.

- 32. This TSO authorizes an existing facility to continue operating with the same effluent limitations. Issuance of this TSO is exempt from the provisions of CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21100, et.seq.) in accordance with section 15301 of title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).
- 33. The Regional Water Board has notified the Permittee and interested agencies and persons of its intent to issue this TSO concerning compliance with waste discharge requirements. The Regional Water Board considered all comments pertinent to this matter.
- 34. Any person aggrieved by this action of the Regional Water Board may petition the State Water Board to review the action in accordance with California Water Code section 13320 and CCR, title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the Regional Water Board action, except that if the thirtieth day following the action falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of the law and regulations filing petitions applicable found Internet to may be on the http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public notices/petitions/water quality or will be provided upon request.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, pursuant to California Water Code section 13300, SCVSD, as owner and operator of the Valencia WRP, shall comply with the requirements listed below to ensure compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride contained in Order No. R4-2015-0071:

1. Comply immediately with the following interim effluent limitations, which will apply all year round, and which shall be deemed effective from May 9, 2019 to January 31, 2022:

Constituent	Units	12-Month Rolling Average	Daily Maximum
Chloride	mg/L	4	230

If the analytical result of a single sample, monitored monthly, exceeds the 12-month rolling average interim effluent limitation for that constituent, SCVSD may collect up to four additional samples, at approximately equal intervals during that calendar month, and average all the results collected during a given calendar month, to determine compliance with the 12-month rolling average interim effluent limitation.

2. Complete the capital improvement projects according to the schedule proposed by SCVSD in their correspondence dated January 31, 2019, with modifications, as follows:

Item	Completion Date
Submit a Pollution Prevention Plan (PPP) to the Regional Water Board	July 15, 2019

The chloride interim effluent limitation is equal to the sum of the State Water Project treated potable water supply chloride concentration plus 77 mg/L, expressed as a 12-month rolling average, not to exceed a daily maximum of 230 mg/L, where 77 mg/L is the maximum difference in chloride concentration between the potable water supply (State Water Project treated water) and the Valencia WRP treated effluent, from March 2011 to November 2018.

Item	Completion Date
Start construction of flow diversion structure for UV disinfection	July 31, 2019
Finish concrete construction phase of flow diversion structure for UV disinfection	December 31, 2019
Start installation of UV disinfection system	July 31, 2020
Start up UV disinfection system	December 31, 2020
Start commissioning of AWTF	July 31, 2021
Start up AWTF	January 31, 2022

- 3. Achieve full compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride as soon as possible, but no later than January 31, 2022.
- 4. Submit quarterly progress reports of efforts taken by the Permittee towards achieving compliance with the final effluent limitations for chloride. The reports shall summarize the progress to date, activities conducted during that quarter, and the activities planned for the upcoming quarters. The reports shall also state whether or not SCVSD was in compliance with the interim effluent limitations for chloride during the reporting period. Each quarterly report shall be received by the Regional Water Board by the 15th day of the first month following the reporting period (January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15). The first progress report shall be received by the Regional Water Board by July 15, 2019, and will cover the months of May 2019 through June 2019.
- 5. Any person signing a document submitted under this TSO shall make the following certification:
 - "I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."
- 6. If the Permittee fails to comply with any provision of this TSO, the Regional Water Board may take any further action authorized by law. The Executive Officer, or his/her delegee, is authorized to take appropriate enforcement action pursuant, but not limited to, California Water Code sections 13350 and 13385. The Regional Water Board may also refer any violations to the Attorney General for judicial enforcement, including injunction and civil monetary remedies.
- 7. All other provisions of Order No. R4-2015-0071 not in conflict with this TSO are in full force and effect.

- 8. The Regional Water Board may reopen this TSO at its discretion or at the request of the Permittee, if warranted. Lack of progress towards compliance with this TSO may be cause for the Regional Water Board to modify the conditions of this TSO.
- 9. This TSO becomes effective immediately upon adoption by the Regional Water Board. This TSO expires on January 31, 2022.

I, Deborah J. Smith, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of an order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, on May 9, 2019.

Deborah J. Smith, Executive Officer