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## Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

May 12, 2025

Via Email Only

Permittees of the Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program (VCSQMP) Group<sup>1</sup>

**APPROVAL OF THE VENTURA COUNTYWIDE STORMWATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GROUP'S WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (WMP) PURSUANT TO THE REGIONAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM (MS4) WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS AND NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PERMIT FOR THE LOS ANGELES REGION (NPDES PERMIT NO. CAS004004; ORDER NO. R4-2021-0105)**

Dear Permittees of the VCSQMP Group:

This letter (1) approves the Watershed Management Program (WMP) submitted by the Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program Group (Group), (2) clarifies compliance metrics for Water Body-Pollutant Combinations (WBPCs) and (3) specifies additional requirements including requirements for the adaptive management process.

*1) Review of the Watershed Management Program*

The Regional MS4 Permit (Order No. R4-2021-0105) authorizes discharges from the MS4 operated by 99 municipal Permittees within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (hereafter, Regional MS4 Permit or Order). The Regional MS4 Permit allows the Permittee(s) the option to use a Watershed Management Program (WMP) to implement many of the permit's requirements through customized strategies, control measures, and best management practices (BMPs).

### **Public Review and Comment**

On September 26, 2023, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Water Board or Board) provided public notice and a 62-day period to allow for public review and comment on the WMP. The Board received one joint comment letter

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<sup>1</sup> Permittees of the VCSQMP Group include Ventura County Watershed Protection District (VCWPD), the County of Ventura, and the cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura.

DAVID NAHAI, CHAIR | SUSANA ARREDONDO, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

from Heal the Bay and Los Angeles Waterkeeper. These comments were considered during staff's review of the WMP.

### **Approval of WMP**

On December 13, 2021, the Group submitted two Notices of Intent (NOIs) to the Board pursuant to Part IX.F.2 of the Order, where one letter was for joining the Malibu Creek WMP to address the Upper Malibu Creek subwatershed and the other letter was for developing a Ventura County-Wide WMP. After several NOI amendments and a meeting, the Board issued two Acceptance of the NOI letters on June 16, 2022, one for each NOI. Board staff met with the Group on June 15, 2022, August 25, 2022, March 15, 2023, and May 3, 2023 to discuss WMP development. During this time, it was determined that the Group will not be joining the Malibu Creek WMP. Instead, as proposed in the Ventura County-Wide NOI, the Ventura County WMP will encompass the entire Ventura County including the Upper Malibu Creek subwatershed.

Pursuant to Part IX.F.3 of the Order, the Los Angeles Water Board received the Group's draft WMP on September 8, 2023. Board staff met with the Group on October 9, 2023, February 27, 2024, and April 30, 2024, to discuss the draft WMP and provided comments through a review letter on May 14, 2024. The revised WMP was submitted to the Board on August 14, 2024. Board staff met with the Group on September 11, 2024 to discuss the revised WMP.

The Los Angeles Water Board has reviewed the revised WMP pursuant to Part IX of the Order and **hereby approves the Group's WMP**, dated August 2024, with some exceptions which are stated below.

Regarding Minimum Control Measure (MCM) modifications proposed in Appendix E of the WMP, pursuant to Part IX.B.6.a of the Order: 1) proposed modifications to the Construction Program MCM are not approved except for the proposed modification to Part VIII.G.5.c.i.(c) of the Order to clarify that the inspection would take place during the wet and dry "season" not "weather"; 2) proposed modifications to the Public Agency Activities Program MCM are not approved.

Per the Board's 2<sup>nd</sup> MCM Clarification letter dated July 23, 2024, pursuant to Part IX.F.4.a of the Order, the Group was required to implement the six MCMs under their existing stormwater management program until the WMP was approved after which the six MCMs in the Order shall be implemented. Accordingly, as of the date of this letter, the Group shall implement Part VIII of the Order.

Pursuant to Parts IX.C.1 and IX.F.5 of the Order, the Group **shall implement their approved WMP immediately**. The Group is subject to all applicable compliance schedules in Part IV.B and Attachments K through S of the Order.

## 2) Compliance Determinations

### 2.1 Compliance Determination for WBPCs other than Trash

**2.1.1 Compliance Metric:** Pursuant to Part IX.B.7.h of the Order, the WMP is required to specify the expected volume capture, load reductions, or other compliance metric(s) at regular milestones, and the methods by which these reductions will be measured and demonstrated for each WBPC and supported via the RAA. Based on the information provided in the WMP, the Board will determine deemed compliance with the Group's WMP based on the following compliance metric(s) with the approved compliance schedule:

- For nutrients, "Milestone Load Reduction" or "Equivalency Metrics" in Table 8-14 (Implementation schedule for pursuing the pollutant load reduction strategy for Malibu Creek 1. Responsible parties include Thousand Oaks and Unincorporated County) in Appendix D of the WMP where the Assessment Area for Malibu Creek 1 is defined by Table 1-1 in Appendix D and Figure 1-5 of the WMP

The Group must demonstrate compliance with final WQBELs through the direct demonstration of compliance options outlined in Part X.B.2.a of the Order or through the alternative demonstration of compliance option outlined in Part X.B.2.b.iii of the Order.

**2.1.2 WBPCs Eligible for Deemed Compliance Through Alternative Demonstration of Compliance:** The following WBPCs will receive deemed compliance through the WMP if the actions and schedules specified in the WMP are attained as outlined in Parts X.B.1.b and X.B.2.b of the Order:

- Table 4-4 (Malibu Creek Watershed Water Body-Pollutant Combination Categories Addressed in WMP) in Appendix B of the WMP:
  - Category 1B WBPCs except for E. coli (wet)
  - Category 2B and 2C WBPCs

Any WBPCs that are not listed above are not eligible for deemed compliance for the following reasons: (a) for Category 1 WBPCs with interim deadlines, the WMP proposes watershed control measures for which there are no quantitative analyses that satisfy the RAA requirements, (b) the final TMDL deadline(s) have passed and there is no approved Time Schedule Order (TSO) or retention of all non-stormwater runoff and the volume of stormwater runoff from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile 24-hour storm event, (c) the WMP only proposes implementing baseline Permit requirements only, and/or (d) the WMP does not propose implementing additional structural BMPs and proposes to demonstrate compliance through monitoring.

Pursuant to Part X.B.2.b.iv of the Order, the Group received deemed compliance for WBPCs specified in two Acceptance of the NOI letters dated June 16, 2022, from the date of the Permittees' NOI to develop a WMP (December 13, 2021), until the WMP is

approved. Accordingly, as of date of this letter, all WBPCs except those specified in Section 2.1.2 of this letter, have lost deemed compliance.

## **2.2 Compliance Determination for Trash WBPCs**

Trash WBPCs are not eligible for deemed compliance under the WMP. For Trash WBPCs, compliance shall be determined as outlined in Part X.C of the Order.

### *3) Other Requirements*

#### **Adaptive Management**

Pursuant to Part IX.E.1 of the Order, the Permittee(s) shall implement an adaptive management process for each approved WMP. An adaptive management process is a periodic, comprehensive program evaluation, including re-analysis of data and/or modeling, and modification process to determine progress toward achieving WQBELs and receiving water limitations and to adapt the Watershed Management Program to become more effective at achieving WQBELs and receiving water limitations. Pursuant to Part IX.E.4 of the Order, Permittee(s) shall submit the results of the adaptive management process with the Permittees' Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) to the Los Angeles Water Board no later than **March 15, 2026**.

Per Part IX.E.3 of the Order, the adaptive management process fulfills the requirements in Part V.D of the Order to address continuing exceedances of receiving water limitations.

#### **WMP Modifications**

As indicated in Part IX.E.2 of the Order, based on the results of the adaptive management process, the Permittee(s) may propose WMP modifications necessary to improve the effectiveness of the WMP. The Permittee(s) shall clearly identify any WMP modification proposals in their submittal of the adaptive management results.

Additionally, per Part IX.C.2 of the Order, notwithstanding Part IX.E (Adaptive Management) of the Order, the Permittee(s) may propose WMP modifications at any time during the term of the Order, as necessary as a standalone request. As explained in Attachment H of the Order, the Permittee(s) cannot submit WMP modification requests as part of the Annual Report. The Permittee(s) shall provide separate written requests explaining the nature of the proposed modification and justification for consideration by the Los Angeles Water Board.

#### **Receiving Water Limitations Compliance Report**

Per Part IX.B.9.c.iv of the Order and Part XIV.C.4 in Attachment E of the Order, implementation of actions to address water quality priorities in a Watershed Management Program related to addressing exceedances of receiving water limitations in Part V (Receiving Water Limitations) of the Order which is not otherwise addressed by TMDLs

in Part IV of the Order and Attachments K through S, fulfills the requirements in Part V.C of the Order to prepare a Receiving Water Limitations Compliance Report.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Erum Razzak with the Municipal Stormwater Permitting Unit at [Erum.Razzak@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Erum.Razzak@waterboards.ca.gov) or by phone at (213) 620-2095. Alternatively, you may also contact Ivar Ridgeway, Municipal Stormwater Permitting Unit Supervisor at [Ivar.Ridgeway@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Ivar.Ridgeway@waterboards.ca.gov) or by phone at (213) 620-2150.

Sincerely,

for Susana Arredondo  
Executive Officer

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