
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: L.B. Nye, Ph.D.
Manager, Regional Programs Section
California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region

DATE: February 18, 2022

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT;
PROPOSED ORDER EXTENDING EXPIRATION DATE OF CONDITIONAL
WAIVER OF WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCHARGES
FROM IRRIGATED AGRICULTURAL LANDS

On April 14, 2022, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Los Angeles Water Board) will consider a proposed Order to amend the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Agricultural Lands within the Los Angeles Region (proposed Order). The proposed Order would amend Order No. R4-2021-0045 to extend the expiration date from April 14, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

**A public hearing is scheduled for:
Thursday, April 14, 2022 at 9:00 AM
Location to be determined**

Please check the Los Angeles Water Board's website at: [Meetings and Workshops | Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board \(ca.gov\)](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/MeetingsandWorkshops) for the most up-to-date public hearing date and location as they are subject to change.

The Los Angeles Water Board is expected to act on the proposed Order after hearing staff's presentation and public comments. Written comments and evidence must be received by the Los Angeles Water Board no later than **5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2022**. Failure to comply with these requirements is grounds for the Board to refuse to admit the proposed written comment or evidence into the record (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Section 648.4). Comments should be submitted to Anna Bellini at anna.bellini@waterboards.ca.gov.

BACKGROUND

The existing Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Agricultural Lands within the Los Angeles Region, Order No. R4-2021-0045 (Conditional Waiver) is currently a limited one-year Order that carried over the findings and conditions of Order No. R4-2016-0143, which required agricultural operators (dischargers) to enroll irrigated agriculture property under the Conditional Waiver. The intent of Order No. R4-2016-0143 was to ensure that discharges from irrigated lands to waters of the State attain water quality benchmarks through a process that (1) quantitatively assesses water quality impacts of discharges from irrigated lands and (2) when necessary to attain water quality benchmarks, requires dischargers to implement effective management practices. Dischargers may enroll as an individual discharger or as a member of a discharger group. The Nursery Growers Association Los Angeles County Irrigated Lands Group (NGA-ILG) and the Ventura County Agriculture Irrigated Lands Group (VCAILG) are the two discharger groups in the Los Angeles Region that have formed to comply with the Conditional Waiver. Order No. R4-2021-0045 currently expires on April 14, 2022.

Incorporation of the precedential requirements in the State Water Resources Control Board's East San Joaquin Precedential Order (Order WQ 2018-0002) will be necessary in revised orders for discharges from irrigated agricultural lands.

The proposed Order is an extension of Order No. R4-2021-0045 without modification except for the expiration date. The proposed Order would extend the expiration date to December 31, 2022. The extension is needed to provide sufficient time for Los Angeles Water Board staff to develop general Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) instead of a Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for discharges from irrigated agricultural lands.

The extension will also provide sufficient time for the Los Angeles Water Board staff to incorporate into the new WDRs the requirements in Order WQ 2018-0002, including recommendations of the Expert Review Panel for the Eastern San Joaquin Surface Water Monitoring Program published in December 2020. In addition, the extension will allow for additional stakeholder engagement, including working meetings with discharger groups, consultation with Native American tribes, where requested, and input from environmental organizations and other interested persons to discuss potential changes before the tentative WDRs are presented to the Board by December 31, 2022.