

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region
Executive Officer's Summary Report
February 2, 2023

ITEM: 5

SUBJECT: Public Hearing on Order No. R1-2023-0002 to consider adoption of proposed Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the Willow Creek Community Services District (CSD) Wastewater Treatment Facility, WDID No. 1B1414ORHUM (Roy O'Connor)

BOARD ACTION: The Board will consider adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R1-2023-0002 (Proposed Order).

BACKGROUND: The Proposed Order includes new Waste Discharge Requirements for the Town of Willow Creek's soon to be constructed wastewater treatment facility.

The Town of Willow Creek (hereinafter Discharger) plans to construct facilities for the collection, treatment, and disposal of municipal wastewater from within the service area of the community of Willow Creek. These facilities will consist of a collection system, pumping stations, septic tanks, screening, and Orenco Advantex textile media secondary treatment. The wastewater treatment facility (Facility) is scheduled for construction in 2023 and will be located at the northeast end of the Town, as shown on Attachments A, B, C and D in the Proposed Order. Treated effluent will be pumped to a leach field located adjacent to the Facility and south of the Trinity River.

The Facility has a design average daily dry weather flow of 0.038 million gallons per day (mgd) and a design peak daily wet weather flow of 0.114 mgd. The Discharger submitted a complete Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) on January 19, 2021. Further information to complete the ROWD was received on February 24, 2022.

This is a new facility, as no centralized wastewater collection and treatment facilities exist in Willow Creek. The community has pursued grant funding for centralized wastewater collection and treatment since the 1970's. Numerous efforts have been made through the years to access grant funding without success. Within the last ten years, however, the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Financial Assistance has awarded both planning and construction funding assistance to the community. To date, the Discharger has received nearly \$11,000,000 in grant assistance to construct the collection, treatment and disposal facilities associated with the project.

DISCUSSION: The Proposed Order has effluent limitations, source control provisions, discharge prohibitions and influent and effluent flow monitoring. The Proposed Order requires monthly effluent sampling and monthly monitoring and reporting, and annual reporting summarizing the Discharger's effluent monitoring results, solids handling activities, permit compliance status, and source control activities for the previous year. The Proposed Order requires groundwater monitoring and evaluation of the potential impacts of the permitted discharge to surface waters and groundwater to ensure protection of the beneficial uses of groundwater and the Trinity River. A source control program summary report is required by March 1 each year to assess industrial, commercial, and residential discharges to the Facility and prevent

toxic pollutants from passing through or interfering with the operation of the treatment system. Additionally, the Proposed Order requires a disaster preparedness assessment report and action plan to ensure that Facility operations are not disrupted, compliance with conditions of this Order are achieved, and receiving waters are not adversely impacted by permitted and unpermitted discharges during natural disasters.

Other noteworthy contents of the Proposed Order include the following:

1. An explanation of how the Proposed Order complies with the Antidegradation Policy to clarify maintaining higher quality water consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State and protection of the present and anticipated beneficial uses of water. (Order section II.G).
2. Inclusion of a finding that the order is consistent with the Human Right to Water Policy which provides that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes. (Order section II.H).
3. Inclusion of a finding that the order is consistent with the Recycled Water Policy. Although the Facility does not currently produce recycled water, the Discharger is required to submit monitoring data in accordance with the Recycled Water Policy and State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 2017-0012, Comprehensive Response to Climate Change (Order section II.J).
4. Inclusion of a discharge prohibition that clarifies accepting septage at an approved septage receiving station only upon approval of a septage management program by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer. A written septage management plan would need to be submitted for such approval. (Order section III.J).
5. Inclusion of a Compliance Determination section which provides clarity on how compliance with Order requirements will be determined. (Order section IX).
6. The Monitoring and Reporting Program, which includes annual volumetric reporting requirements to implement requirements of the State Water Board Recycled Water Policy (MRP section IV.B.4).

A copy of the draft Order was posted on the Regional Water Board website and was available for public comment from September 23, 2022, through October 24, 2022. Regional Water Board Staff (staff) received three comment letters within the allotted public comment period. An explanation of the comments and staff responses are provided in the attached Staff Response to Comments document. Most noteworthy of the changes in response to the comments received is the modification of the Average Monthly Effluent Limitation for Nitrogen from 10 mg/L to 13 mg/L. If groundwater monitoring indicates that actual concentrations of nitrogen in groundwater are greater than 10 mg/L, then the effluent limitation of 13 mg/L will be reassessed and the Order

may be reopened to include a more protective effluent limitation for nitrogen. Staff also initiated three changes to the draft Order: improving the finding that the Order complies with the California Environmental Quality Act, including a finding in accordance with newly codified Water Code section 189.7, and changes to ensure consistency with the newly adopted statewide General Order for Sanitary Sewer Systems (WQ 2022-0103-DWQ).

Regional Water Board staff met with the Discharger on multiple occasions and discussed the updated draft Order and explained new provisions and requirements contained in the draft Order. Staff anticipates that the Proposed Order will be uncontested.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Order No. R1-2023-0002, as proposed.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

1. Proposed Order R1-2023-0002
2. Staff Response to Comments
3. Notice of Public Hearing

Copies of the comment letters are available by emailing Roy.O'Connor@waterboards.ca.gov