



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

December 13, 2017

North Coast Regional Water Board community emerges stronger from the Sonoma and Mendocino fires

Matt St. John

The fires that ravaged Sonoma and Mendocino Counties in early October 2017 shook our communities to the core. I will never forget the night and early morning hours of October 9. Like others within our community I felt a sense of dread and hopelessness during the night of the fire and in the following days. The fires have impacted our communities significantly for a long time to come. And the community of the Board and staff of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is certainly no exception. Four of our staff lost their homes; four of our retired colleagues lost their homes; family members of staff lost their homes; and numerous Regional Water Board staff were evacuated, some for up to two weeks. Countless colleagues of partner agencies and organizations also lost homes or were evacuated. Everyone who lives in the effected counties was affected in some way. And yet, somehow, looking back now, I know that the fires have indeed made us stronger.

The month of October was the quickest, longest month of my life. Without a doubt the six weeks following the onset of the fires was the most demanding time of my professional career. The first week following the onset of the fires was incredibly trying – an exceptionally difficult aspect of this disaster was that during the fire and the days following it was difficult to know the status of all of our colleagues. Being without the means to communicate that we have all become so accustomed to - telephones, cell phones, and email, created a sense of helplessness within our

community. The response on the part of our community was to string together an informal communication network that allowed us to begin pulling the office back together and keep each other up-to-date. Due to power outage and the threat of the nearby fire at Shiloh Regional Park, our office was closed October 9th and reopened October 16th. During this time frame news of the status of all of our colleagues emerged – thankfully everyone was safe, though many have harrowing stories.

Once our office reopened on the 16th, we were able to begin the process of bringing our office community back together. Though I have always known it to be so, I was incredibly touched by the caring and support demonstrated by my colleagues at the North Coast Regional Water Board and the larger community of the Regional Water Boards and State Water Board. Regional Water Board staff quickly developed a community-giving campaign and the larger Water Boards community gave generously to those families directly impacted by the fires. The strength and resilience demonstrated by this community giving campaign to our colleagues in need was uplifting.

I was equally impressed by the passion and diligence with which the staff of the Regional Water Board jumped into action to protect against water quality threats posed by the fires. Staff members immediately began determining how to assist with emergency response measures and how best to work with the established Incident Command Center and in other ways with partner agencies.

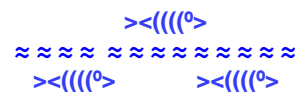
The Executive Officer’s Summary Report and associated staff presentation for Information Item # 11 – *Update on Regional Water Board’s Post Fire Response and Recovery Actions* provides the details of our office’s response and recovery actions since the fires, so I will not summarize this work here. I will though say that I am incredibly proud of the work accomplished by our office. Though the scale and extent of the water quality impacts and potential threats from the fires is still emerging, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board was a leader in responding to the water resource impacts of the fires. Along with our local, state, and federal agency and NGO partners, we all have done respectable work to minimize and mitigate the impacts to the water resources of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. We did not sit idly by; we sprung into action.

To date, Regional Water Board staff have devoted over 3000 combined hours into our fire response related activities. Our agency’s response to the fires required us to shift our priorities. The level of effort we have devoted to date is a demonstration of that shift in priorities. We did this because we had to and it was the right thing to do. One of the lessons learned from this disaster is that many of the existing sources of erosion and other threats to water quality only became more so due to the fires, increasing the urgency of implementing our water quality protection programs. Dedicating staff resources to the implementation of these emergency response measures has implications however – we chose to cancel the scheduled October 19th Board meeting in Siskiyou County, postponing scheduled Board action items; we had to postpone several Board hearings previously scheduled for December, including the Russian River Pathogen Total Maximum Daily Load Action Plan and the Laguna de Santa Rosa Water Quality Trading Framework. Each of these projects are postponed to forthcoming Board meetings. At the same time, despite the increased work load associated with responding to the fires and associated shifting of priorities, much of the work of the Regional Water Board cannot simply be postponed – there are

statutory requirements to renew certain permits, as well as regulatory programs that require oversight, and other projects are simply too important to delay. Therefore, we are in the process of adjusting to the new post-fire reality and reestablishing our priorities and the associated work load commitments. This will be a work in progress. It will be a process with critical input by Board members of the Regional Water Board, regulated entities, the public, and our partners. The North Coast is a big region with precious water resources throughout the region. We will continue to do all we can to preserve and protect all the water resources throughout the region.

The vision statement developed by the staff of the North Coast Regional Water Board in 2014 serves as a symbolic unifying focus for the very important work that we do now in this post-fire landscape and always:

**Healthy watersheds
Effective regulation
Strong partnerships.**



Announcing New Assistant Executive Officer of North Coast Regional Water Board
Matt St. John

On December 31, 2017 Shin-Roei Lee will retire as the Assistant Executive Officer of the North Coast Regional Water Board. During her tenure with the Water Boards, she started with the Division of Water Rights for a short period. In 1984, she transferred to the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board, working in numerous programs and positions. In September 2014, she came to the North Coast Regional Water Board as a Supervising Engineer at a time when our office just finished our strategic visioning and planning

systems and have negative impacts on municipal sewer systems and private septic systems.

the paper towel in the trash.

FOG includes:

- Canola oil
- Olive oil
- Vegetable oil
- Fats from pay-frying meats,
- Sauces
- Butter and margarine
- Food scraps

Don't dump that FOG down your sink! FOG combine into solids in your plumbing system and downstream in the public sewer or septic system. Primary problems include: partial or total flow blockage, contamination of downstream water resources, repair costs, snapped sewer pipes, and increases in sewer bill price due to an increase in operation and maintenance cost for the municipal sewer company.

In September of 2017, an 800-foot-long mega-FOG-blob was discovered weighing 130 metric tons [i]. The City of New York spent \$18M cleaning up FOG blobs in 2016. On September 28, 2017, one-million gallons of sewage was released into a stream in Maryland after a 130-ton FOG blob that was 300-yards long clogged the sewer system [ii].

For more information watch the video: <http://bit.ly/FOGpipe>. FOG buildup is a big deal and will have a negative impact on your sewer system.

What can you do instead?

1. For best results, pour excess grease into a container with a tight-fitting lid for storing. Use a scraper or spatula to remove all the grease from the pan. Freeze it, or allow it to harden on its own, and throw the hardened oil away on trash day.
2. Don't rinse greasy dishes! Before washing, use a paper towel to remove small amounts of grease or cooking oil, and then simply throw

If you have a restaurant or other business which generates FOG, check with your local building department on requirements for installation of grease interceptors/grease traps.

</28/fatberg-grease-wipes-blamed-baltimore-sewer-overflow/711574001>

This article was authored by Brian Wallace of LACO Associates for the November, 2017 RRWA Environmental Column.

For more information on the recycling or proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease, along with lots more great information on how to keep your community clean, in Sonoma County contact the Eco-Desk at (707) 565-DESK (3375) or go to www.recyclenow.org; and in Mendocino County call the Solid Waste Management Authority at (707) 468-9704 or go www.mendorecycle.org.



[i] National Geographic (2017) "Huge Blobs of Fat and Trash Are Filling the World's Sewers: <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/08/fatbergs-fat-cities-sewers-wet-wipes-science/>

[ii] USA Today (2017) "Fatberg of grease, wipes blamed in Baltimore sewer outflow." Accessed 10/23/2017. www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2017/09

Enforcement Report for December 2017 Executive Officer's Report

Diana Henrioulle

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
8/8/2017	Kellen Sibley and Kathy MacDonald	CAO	Unauthorized discharge to Waters of the State	Ongoing

Comments: On August 8, 2017, the Executive Officer (EO) issued Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) No. R1-2017-0041 to Kellen Sibley and Kathy MacDonald for unauthorized excavation and fill of a watercourse; construction of an on-stream dam and impoundment; development and use of roads and stream crossings for cannabis cultivation and associated activities; and placement of cultivation-related potting soil, and spoils generated through the development of cleared and graded areas in a manner and location where they can enter receiving waters. The CAO directs the Dischargers to submit and implement an Interim and a Final Restoration Mitigation and Monitoring Plan in order to correct these violations and restore the impacted and threatened receiving waters. This matter is ongoing.

Date	Discharger	Action	Violation Type	Status as of
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Issued		Type		November 7, 2017
8/18/17	Chris McCook Contracting	NOV & section 13267	Unauthorized discharge to Waters of the State	Resolved

Comments: On August 18, 2017, the Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) issued a Notice of Violation/Water Code section 13267 directive letter (NOV) to Chris McCook Contracting for performing instream bank stabilization activities at two locations without a permit and causing waste to discharge to receiving waters. The NOV directs the Discharger to submit technical report that describes the activities performed and a workplan for restoration and mitigation to address unpermitted impacts to receiving waters. This matter is ongoing.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
8/23/14	Don Roberts and Steven G. and Taylor Whitley	Rescission of CAO	Unauthorized modification of a wetland and pond complex	Closed

Comments: On August 23, 2017, the EO issued Order No. R1-2017-0043 to Don Roberts and Steven G and Taylor Whitley rescinding Cleanup and Abatement (CAO) and 13267 Order No. R1-2013-0007. The CAO required the Dischargers to correct violations associated with the unauthorized modification of a wetland and pond complex on the subject property. On January 8, 2014, staff of the North Coast Regional Water Board inspected the site and confirmed that water quality violations had been adequately corrected, and that all requirements of the CAO had been satisfactorily completed.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
8/24/17	Liz Seise and Scott Seise	Rescission of CAO	Unauthorized discharge to Waters of the State	Closed

Comments: On August 24, 2017 the EO issued Order No. R1-2017-0044 to Liz Seise and Scott Seise that rescinds CAO and 13267 Order No. R1-2013-0039. The CAO required the named Dischargers to correct violations associated with the unauthorized soil disturbance, vegetation removal, instream dredging, filling, excavation, pond construction, and burial of two unnamed tributaries to Mill Creek, a tributary to the Middle Main Eel River. On May 24, 2017, staff of the Regional Water Board received a site status report from Pacific Watershed and Associates, which indicated the site remediation was continuing to hold up satisfactorily. The monitoring report demonstrates that the site is adequately recovering.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
9/15/17	Daniel Taranto	NOV	Failure to obtain a Waiver for Timber Harvest Activities	Resolved

Comments: On September 19, 2017, the Nonpoint Source & Surface Water Protection Division Chief issued an NOV to Daniel Taranto for failure to obtain coverage under *Categorical Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges Related to Timber Harvest Activities on Non-Federal Lands in the North Coast Region* (No. R1-2014-0011). The NOV informed the Discharger that coverage was required and acknowledged that enrollment documentation had subsequently been received. No further action is required.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
9/26/17	Mendocino City CSD	EPP	Mandatory Minimum Penalties (MMPs)	Resolved

Comments: On September 26, 2017, the EO issued an Expedited Payment Program (EPP) Order No. R1-2017-0035 to the Mendocino City CSD WWTF for one effluent limit violation subject to penalties in the amount of \$3,000. On October 2, 2017, the Discharger paid the \$3,000. No further action is required.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
9/27/17	CDOT	NOV & section 13267	Unpermitted Discharge of Waste	Ongoing

Comments: On September 27, 2017, the AEO issued an NOV/Water Code section 13267 directive (NOV) to CDOT District 1, for unpermitted waste discharge at the Highway 101 Willits Bypass Project. During a site inspection, staff noticed that a berm had been constructed around an

established wetland area, forming a water retention pond. This was not an authorized wetland modification. The NOV directs the CDOT to submit a report detailing proposed remedies and explain why the constructions plans were not followed. The report is due November 10, 2017.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
9/27/17	Darryl Crawford and Black Mountain Developers, LLC	CAO & section 13267	Unauthorized discharges to Waters of the State	Ongoing

Comments: On September 27, 2017, the EO issued CAO/section 13267 Order No. R1-2017-0052 (CAO) to Darryl Crawford and Black Mountain Developers, LLC for failure to obtain necessary permits and unauthorized discharge of waste to receiving waters through site development and cannabis cultivation activities performed at the property without adequate erosion and sediment controls. The CAO directs the Discharger to clean up the wastes and abate the impacts to water quality, and requires that the Discharger provide technical information and submit and implement workplans to mitigate the site. This matter is ongoing.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of November 7, 2017
10/6/17	Fort Bragg Municipal Improvement District No.1	EPP	Mandatory Minimum Penalties (MMPs)	Resolved

Comments: On October 6, 2017, the EO issued an Expedited Payment Program Order No. R1-2017-0028 to the Fort Bragg Municipal Improvement District No. 1 for one effluent limit violation subject to mandatory minimum penalties in the amount of \$3,000. On September 30, 2017, the Discharged paid the \$3,000. No further action is required.

