

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 18, 2010**

Prepared February 22, 2010

**ITEM NUMBER: 6**

**SUBJECT: Low Threat and General Discharge Cases**

**DISCUSSION** The following items serve as notification that the subject sites have been enrolled under the noted General WDR or General Waiver of WDRs.

**General Waiver for Specific Types of Discharges, Resolution No. R3-2008-0010**

**Whittaker Corporation, 2751 San Juan Rd, Hollister, San Benito County (Kristina Seley 805-549-3121)**

Central Coast staff enrolled Whittaker Corporation (Whittaker) under Resolution No. R3-2008-0010, *General Waiver for Specific Types of Discharges* (General Waiver) on January 28, 2010. Based on Water Board staff's review of Whittaker's Application/Report of Waste Discharge, and existing correspondence and technical information, the request complies with the conditions of the General Waiver, Attachment A, Section B.5 (Treated Groundwater).

In August 2009, Whittaker began operation of its groundwater containment and treatment system to prevent polluted groundwater from migrating offsite. The system extracts groundwater along the site boundary and treats it with granular activated carbon for volatile organic compound removal and with bioreactors for perchlorate, hexavalent chromium, and selenium removal. Typically, Whittaker discharges treated water to the San Benito River pursuant to our General NPDES Permit for Discharges of Highly Treated Water.

On January 21, 2010, Whittaker notified Water Board staff that the selenium effluent concentration was 11 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ), which exceeds the surface water effluent limit of 5  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , which is protective of aquatic species. Whittaker immediately ceased discharge, and contained the water. Whittaker proposed to discharge the contained water (180,000 gallons) to a stormwater detention basin at a vacant parcel of land at 2351 San Juan Road, a neighboring property. Selenium concentrations in the contained water were less than background concentrations in groundwater (receiving water) at the proposed site; therefore, Water Board staff allowed Whittaker to conduct a one-time only discharge of the water to land pursuant to the General Waiver. The selenium contained in the discharge is naturally occurring in groundwater beneath the Whittaker facility, and not the result of discharges from the site.

With the property owner's approval, on February 1, 2010, Whittaker completed discharge of the water and notified staff that water infiltrated immediately, and no erosion occurred as a result of the discharge. Whittaker is currently making upgrades to the existing bioreactor system to comply with the surface water discharge permit, evaluating other Selenium treatment options, and evaluating alternative land disposal options.

### **General NPDES Permit for Discharges with Low Threat to Water Quality**

#### **Davenport County Sanitation District, Santa Cruz County (Mike Higgins 805-542-4649)**

On November 9, 2009, Davenport County Sanitation District (Discharger) submitted a Notice of Intent and fee for enrollment under the Low-Threat Discharge General Permit, WDR Order No. R3-2006-0063. The Discharger proposes to discharge tertiary-treated, disinfected and dechlorinated effluent to a short agricultural drainage tributary to the Pacific Ocean when rainfall runoff into treatment ponds causes the pond depths to reach 15 feet. Discharge will occur randomly and infrequently. The highly treated, nontoxic discharge should pose no threat to beneficial uses of the Pacific Ocean.

During discharge, Revised Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R3-2006-0063 requires the Discharger to monitor the discharge for flow, pH, dissolved oxygen, total coliform, and turbidity. The Executive Officer enrolled the Discharger under the Low-threat permit in a December 8, 2009 letter.

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