
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Ginachi Amah, D.Env
Basin Planning Program

DATE: August 26, 2013

SUBJECT: Notice of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Scoping Meeting for a Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan) to adopt a Program of Implementation for Management of Salts and Nutrient in the Central Basin and West Coast Basin (CBWCB)

Notice is hereby given that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Regional Board), in conjunction with the stakeholders of the Central and West Coast Groundwater Basins (CBWCB), will hold a CEQA Scoping Meeting. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9, the purpose of this meeting is to receive comments on the appropriate scope and content of the substitute environmental documents supporting a Basin Plan amendment that would adopt implementation strategies for the management of salts, nutrients and other related constituents of concern in the of the Central and West Coast Groundwater Basins of the Los Angeles Region. The substitute environmental documents will be prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.5, and the State Water Resources Control Board's regulations related to its Certified Regulatory Program (23 C.C.R. § 3775 *et seq.*). The substitute environmental documents are intended to serve as program level environmental documents, consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21159.

BACKGROUND

Salt and Nutrient Management Plans (SNMPs) are required for each basin/sub-basin in California in accordance with the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board's) Recycled Water Policy (Policy), which was adopted by the State Water Board through Resolution No. 2009-0011 on February 3, 2009, and became effective on May 14, 2009. Per the Policy, SNMPs will be developed by local water and wastewater entities, together with local salt/nutrient contributing stakeholders, through a locally-driven and controlled, collaborative process. The SNMP should be completed and submitted to the Regional Board by May 2014.

The Policy encourages increased use of recycled water and stormwater as safe, local, drought-proof water sources. It is the intent of the Policy that salts and nutrients from all sources be managed on a basin-wide or watershed-wide basis in a manner that ensures attainment of water quality objectives and protection of groundwater's beneficial uses. The State Water Board finds that the appropriate way to address salt and nutrient issues is through the development of regional or sub-regional SNMPs rather than through imposing requirements solely on individual recycled water projects. The Resolution, Policy, Policy amendments, and other related information can be found at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_recycling_policy/

The Policy defines essential elements of the SNMPs, including: 1) a basin-wide monitoring plan; 2) a provision for annual monitoring of constituents of emerging concern (CECs) for basins with recycled water recharge projects; 3) water recycling and stormwater recharge/use goals and objectives; 4) salt and nutrient source identification, basin assimilative capacity analysis, and loading estimates, together with fate and transport of salts and nutrients; 5) implementation measures to manage salts and nutrient loading on a sustainable basis; and 6) an anti-degradation analysis demonstrating that the projects described in the SNMP will, collectively, satisfy the requirements of State Water Board Resolution No. 68-16.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CBWCB are groundwater basins located in Southern Los Angeles County that cover an area of approximately 420 square miles. Groundwater in the CBWCB meets approximately a third of the overall water supply needs of nearly 4 million residents and businesses in the 43 cities overlying the basins. Nitrate concentrations in groundwater, representing nutrients, are well below water quality objectives in both the CBWCB. Total dissolved solids (TDS) and chloride concentrations in groundwater, representing salts, are below water quality objectives in most of the inland areas of the CBWCB. However, due to historical over-pumping of the basins, seawater has intruded into some coastal aquifers in the CBWCB. Average TDS and chloride concentrations are currently below water quality objectives in the Central Basin, but due to the intrusion, are currently above water quality objectives on average in the West Coast Basin.

Several projects have been implemented and additional projects are planned for implementation in both basins to increase groundwater recharge, deter seawater intrusion, and improve groundwater quality. Projects are also planned to increase the use of recycled water and stormwater and reduce reliance on imported water. Analyses of the current and planned implementation measures indicate that salt and nutrient concentrations in groundwater will remain below water quality objectives in the Central Basin. The analyses also indicate that water quality conditions in the West Coast Basin will improve and that water quality objectives could be attained in the future.

The initial SNMP findings and implementation measures are described in more detail in the attached Project Summary. Various SNMP documents, including technical memoranda, stakeholder meeting presentations and notes, and other related materials are available on the CBWCB SNMP project website at:

<http://www.wrd.saltnutrient.com/>

The Regional Board proposes to adopt a program of implementation based on the implementation strategies contained in the SNMP for the CBWCB. This SNMP is being developed with the co-equal priorities of increasing recycled water use, which is strongly encouraged by the State Board's Recycled Water Policy as a means of ensuring sustainable local water supply into the future, and protecting groundwater quality. Specifically, the SNMP addresses potential increases in salts, nutrients and constituents of emerging concern (CECs) that could occur as a result of the increased use of recycled water. Per the State's policy, implementation strategies contained in the SNMPS must be consistent with the State's Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality of Waters in California (Antidegradation Policy, State Board Resolution No. 68-16). The purpose of the CEQA Scoping Meeting is to present the foreseeable management alternatives and to determine if these strategies would result in significant adverse impacts to the environment. Some of the proposed strategies are an expansion of already existing effective programs; others are yet to be implemented. All will be fully examined in the subsequent substitute environmental documents.

Interested persons are specifically requested to provide the following information:

- Other reasonably foreseeable strategies for management of salts, nutrients and CECs, not included in the Project Summary.
- The reasonably foreseeable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the strategies provided.
- Specific evidence supporting that such impacts are reasonably foreseeable and describing the magnitude (significance level) of the impacts.
- Reasonable alternative management strategies resulting in less significant environmental impacts.
- Reasonable mitigation measures that would minimize any unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed implementation strategies.

The proposed information and resulting analysis will be incorporated into the Draft Substitute Environmental Document. The CEQA Scoping Meeting will be held at:

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Junipero Serra Building

Carmel Meeting Room, 1st Floor

320 West 4th Street

Los Angeles, California 90013

QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General questions concerning this notice may be directed to Dr. Ginachi Amah at (213) 576-6685 or e-mail gamah@waterboards.ca.gov. You may also contact Ms. Phuong Ly at (562) 275-4246 or e-mail ply@wrd.org. Please bring the foregoing to the attention of any persons known to you who would be interested in this matter.

cc: Michael Lauffer, Office of Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board
Frances McChesney, Office of Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board