

**27-28 APRIL 2023 BOARD MEETING  
UNCONTESTED AGENDA ITEM**

**AGENDA ITEM: 16**

**SUBJECT:**

Following are proposed Waste Discharge Requirements Orders that prohibit discharge to surface waters. All agencies and the dischargers concur or have offered no comments. Items indicated as updates on the summary agenda make the requirements consistent with current plans and policies of the Board.

**BOARD ACTION:**

Consideration of Waste Discharge Requirements.

**A. AZTECA MILLING, L.P. DBA VALLEY GRAIN PRODUCTS, INC., AZTECA MADERA MASA PLANT, MADERA COUNTY**

**BACKGROUND:**

Azteca Milling L.P. (Azteca) dba Valley Grain Products is an industrial food processor that produces corn masa at its Madera Masa Plant (Facility). The Facility is currently regulated under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order 70-208. Azteca has owned and operated the Facility at 23865 Avenue 18 just northwest of Madera in Madera County since 1996. Wastewater is produced from the cooking, product rinse, and equipment cleaning operations at the Facility. The process wastewater is treated with hydrochloric acid (HCL) to lower the pH, screened to remove solids, and then discharged to a land application area designated LAA-1.

On 6 June 2019, the Central Valley Water Board issued Azteca Milling a 13260/13267 letter requiring submittal of a Report of Waste Discharge (RWD). An initial RWD was submitted on 19 December 2019. Subsequent discussions with Azteca staff led to the collection of effluent samples to better characterize Azteca's discharge. As a result of discussions with staff, the Discharger, in December 2021, submitted plans to apply wastewater at agronomic rates to the existing land application area (LAA-1), purchase additional land application area (LAA-2), and modify an existing onsite pond by expanding the pond and installing a double-walled high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pond liner equipped with a leachate collection and removal system. The tentative WDRs establish timelines for expanding the land application area, applying wastewater at agronomic rates to the land application area, and installing the proposed double-walled pond liner.

The WDRs for the Facility are being updated to ensure the discharge is consistent with current water quality plans and policies and to reflect changes to the Facility since 1970. WDRs Order 70-208 will be rescinded and replaced with the tentative WDRs. The tentative WDRs specifies a monthly average flow limitation of 0.21 million gallons per day (mgd) based on the Facility's existing flows (i.e., not authorizing an expansion of the

Facility). Azteca has selected to participate in the Prioritization and Optimization Study for the Salt Control Program. Therefore, the tentative WDRs sets a performance-based effluent limit for fixed dissolved solids (FDS) of 1,900 mg/L. This Order also requires preparation of a Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan and an Updated Wastewater Nutrient Management Plan. Comments were received from Azteca and from Ms. Jo Anne Kipps.

Chemical Waste Management, Inc., hereinafter referred to “Discharger,” owns the Bakersfield Facility (Facility). The Facility is located approximately 13 northeast of Bakersfield in Kern County. On 10 June 2011, the Central Valley Water Boards adopted WDRs Order R5-2011-0046, which incorporated the applicable provisions of California Code of Regulations title 27 and the California Water Code. This Order continues such classifications. This Order updates the WDRs for the Facility, as part of an administrative policy of periodic review, to incorporate revisions to regulations and policies adopted thereunder, for post-closure maintenance and corrective action.

The Facility covers 142.31 acres, comprised of Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) 189-330-27 and 189-330-27. The Facility consists of two closed, unlined Waste Management Units (WMUs) covering 104.17 acres. The WMUs do not have a leachate collection and removal systems.

**ISSUES:**

Azteca and Ms. Jo Anne Kipps provided various comments on the tentative WDRs and Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP). In response to the comments received, staff revised the tentative WDRs and MRP. Staff’s response to comments are included in the agenda package.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed revised Waste Discharge Requirements.

**B. HOMESTAKE MINING COMPANY, MCLAUGHLIN MINE, LAKE, NAPA, AND YOLO COUNTIES**

**BACKGROUND:**

Homestake Mining Company of California (Discharger or Homestake), a subsidiary of Barrick Gold Corporation, owns and operates the McLaughlin Mine (Facility), which is located approximately 13 miles southeast of Lower Lake in Lake County. The Facility is now a part of the Donald and Sylvia McLaughlin Natural Reserve (the Reserve), a contiguous block of 6,430 acres. The Reserve is owned jointly by the Discharger and the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). The Discharger continues to own and retains responsibility for the approximately 1,200 acres disturbed by mining.

McLaughlin Mine operated from 1984 to 2002. Mining ended in 1997, but the processing of stockpiled ore continued until 2002, at which time the mine closed. During mining

operations, Homestake excavated gold ore from two mining pits (North and South Pit) and discharged waste rock to four Waste Rock Facilities (East, West, North and South Waste Rock Facilities). Mill tailings from the processing facilities were discharged to Tailings Management Facility. Solid and liquid waste contained all facility mining units is classified as Group B mining waste.

During reclamation following the end of mining and processing activities, onsite facilities were decommissioned, disturbed areas and Waste Rock Facilities (WRFs) were regraded, covered, and reclaimed, and the North and South MPs allowed to fill with mining-influenced water (MIW).

The Tailings Impoundment Facility (TIF) consists of a 155-foot high earth-fill dam that blocks a small dry valley. The impoundment contains 38 million tons of tailings on approximately 400 acres. Because the Discharger demonstrated that the TIF can be maintained as a zero-discharge facility, previous Order permitted an engineered alternative to the prescriptive Title 27 closure standard which consisted of placing a soil cover over areas with thin tailings deposits, approximately 320 acres. The remaining 80 acres of tailings, near the center of the impoundment were to remain an uncovered low area with an internal pond. The internal pond was expected to expand and contract seasonally and in response to long term weather patterns.

The tentative Orders were issued for a 30-day public comment period on 16 February 2023 with comments due on 17 March 2023. Public comments were received from the Discharger only. Details of the comment and responses are included in the Staff Response to Comments document included in the agenda package.

#### **ISSUE #1:**

Previous Order specified maximum water elevations in each pit to ensure hydraulic containment of Group B mining-influenced water. This Order continues these requirements. To manage the water levels, Homestake has been using enhanced spray evaporation and water treatment, however, these systems are energy intensive and costly and depend on system reliability to maintain water balance. The Discharger proposed to replace them with a series of semi-passive evaporation ponds.

#### **Board Staff Response**

This Order regulates construction and operation of evaporation ponds in compliance with approved technical documentation and discharge and management of pit MIW after approval of Construction Quality Assurance report.

#### **ISSUE #2:**

By 2015, Homestake covered 247 acres of the required 315 acres of TIF surface however, because of the considerable extent of the internal pond, they have not been able to cover the remaining surface. The 2021 ROWD included a revised closure plan which includes

several measures to reduce the amount of MIW in the central pond but does not propose to cover any additional TIF tailings areas. The two main measures are to divert outflows from the Duck Pond from the TIF pond, and to cease pumping of the pump back liquids into the TIF pond but instead direct them to an infiltration gallery at the toe of the dam, but didn't provide sufficient information to allow for evaluation of regulatory compliance of diversion of pump back liquids to the infiltration gallery.

**Board Staff Response**

This Order allows diversion of outflows from Duck Pond but requires submittal of an Updated TIF Closure Plan to provide a strategy to place additional cover on the uncovered areas if that becomes feasible and provide water quality evaluation and additional information to evaluate the feasibility of infiltration gallery.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements.

**C. LOST HILLS ENVIRONMENTAL, LOST HILLS ENVIRONMENTAL WASTE FACILITY, KERN COUNTY**

Lost Hills Environmental, LLC (hereafter referred to as Discharger) owns and operates the Lost Hills Environmental Facility (Facility) which is located approximately 45 miles northwest of the City of Bakersfield in Kern County. The 336-acre Facility contains three class III waste management units (WMUs), Pits E, F, and G. The Facility is currently regulated by existing Waste Discharge Requirements Orders R5-2022-0028 and R5-2010-0123. The proposed WDRs prescribe requirements regulating monitoring and operation of the Facility. The tentative WDRs were updated as part of a policy of administrative review, and the proposed order updates the existing WDRs for monitoring and operations. Minor comments were received and incorporated into the tentative order.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements.

**D. MARIPOSA COUNTY, MARIPOSA COUNTY LANDFILL, MARIPOSA COUNTY**

**BACKGROUND:**

Mariposa County owns and operates the Mariposa County Landfill (Facility) which is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of Mariposa in Mariposa County. The proposed WDRs prescribe requirements regulating monitoring, corrective action, and operation of the Facility. The Facility currently consists of one unlined waste management unit (WMU) covering 26 acres. The Facility is currently regulated by existing Waste Discharge Requirements Orders R5-2003-0094. The tentative WDRs were updated as part of a policy of administrative review, and the proposed order updates the existing WDRs to incorporate a Corrective Action Program. Minor comments were received and incorporated into the tentative order.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements.

**E. MERCED COUNTY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY, BILLY WRIGHT SOLID WASTE LANDFILL, MERCED COUNTY**

**BACKGROUND:**

The Merced County Regional Waste Management Authority owns and operates the Billy Wright Solid Waste Landfill (Facility) which is located approximately eight miles west of the City of Los Banos in Merced County. The proposed WDRs prescribe requirements regulating construction, monitoring, corrective action, and operation of the Facility. The Facility currently consists of one unlined waste management unit (WMU) covering 39.8 acres (Phase 1) and three composite-lined WMUs (Phase 2A, 2B, and 2C). All of Phase 2 covers 24.8 acres. Phase 3 is planned for future expansion and will cover 37.2 acres. The Facility is currently regulated by existing Waste Discharge Requirements Orders R5-2022-0029 and R5-2011-0061. The tentative WDRs were updated as part of a policy of administrative review, and the proposed order updates the existing WDRs.

Minor comments from the discharger were received and incorporated into the tentative order.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements.

**REVIEWS:**

Management Review:	Various
Legal Review:	Various

**BOARD MEETING LOCATION:**

Kern County Board of Supervisors Chambers  
1115 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**AND VIA VIDEO AND TELECONFERENCE**