

State of California
Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
June 9, 2010

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: Resolution Requesting Funding from the Cleanup and Abatement Account for County of San Diego, Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program (Tentative Resolution No. R9-2010-0091) (Eric Becker)

PURPOSE: To consider adoption of tentative Resolution No. R9-2010-0091 affirming and concurring with the Executive Officer's request for State Water Resources Control Board approval of funding from the State Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) for the County San Diego (County) to continue the Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program

PUBLIC NOTICE: None required.

DISCUSSION: The State of California's California Ocean Contact Water Sports Standard (COCWSS), enacted in 1999 requires public health agencies, subject to the appropriation of sufficient funds, to conduct weekly bacterial monitoring (enterococci bacteria, fecal coliform, and total coliform), between April 1 through October 31st, of waters adjacent to public beaches which have more than 50,000 visitors annually and are near storm drains which flow in the summer. If any one of the bacteria indicator organisms exceeds state water quality standards the local health officer is required to post conspicuous warning signs at the beach and to make the determination whether to close that beach in the case of extended exceedances. The COCWSS also requires the health officer to establish a telephone hotline to inform the public of all beaches that are closed, posted or otherwise restricted.

The County implements the requirements of COCWSS through its Beach and Water Quality Monitoring Program (Program). Under this Program, the County performs bacteriological water quality sampling at area beaches and acts as a clearing house for beach water quality monitoring data to notify the public when water quality standards are not

met at recreational beaches. The County also coordinates the sampling and posting of signs warning of contaminated water at beaches affected by sewage spills, when bacteria levels exceed State water quality standards, or during other events that may pose a threat to public health. The County has since 1999 implemented its Program using COCWSS grant funds allocated by the California Department of Public Health (DPH) or other alternative funding provided by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board).

In 2008, funding for the County's Program through the DPH COCWSS grant program was halted due to the on-going shortfall in state revenues. The Program is currently funded through October 31, 2010 using alternative bond funds and federal stimulus funds managed by the State Water Board. The County has not identified any funding source to continue funding the Program after January 1, 2011 and will have to terminate the Program unless a funding source is secured. The current annual cost of the County's Program is approximately \$350,000.

Water quality conditions at San Diego County's beaches are vital to the health and quality of life of San Diego County residents and to the San Diego Region's economy. Millions of tourists and residents visit the County's beaches each year and generate hundreds of millions of dollars for the local economy related to ocean water recreation and tourism. The County's Program helps ensure the public is informed on beach water quality conditions and health risks posed by coming into contact with polluted waters. The County's Program also provides the San Diego Water Board with comprehensive monitoring information to achieve a systematic understanding of the effects of nonpoint source pollution on beach water quality conditions and to measure the effectiveness of the San Diego Water Board's efforts to reduce and eliminate water pollution sources.

Based on these considerations, the San Diego Water Board Executive Officer requested, by memorandum dated May 27, 2010, that the State Water Board approve an allocation of \$345,897 from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) to the County of San Diego to continue the County's Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program during 2011. CAA funding procedures provide that the Executive Officer's request should be followed up with a San Diego Water Board resolution of support.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None.

SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS:

1. Tentative Resolution No. R9-2010-0091
2. Executive Officer CAA Funding Request Memorandum with Attachments dated May 27, 2010.
3. Scope of Work – County of San Diego Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program
4. Budget – County of San Diego Beach and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Program
5. Letter of Conditional Support from San Diego Coastkeeper, Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter, and WiLDCOAST dated May 10, 2010.

RECOMMENDATION(S): Adoption of the Resolution No. R9-2010-0091 is recommended.