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GOVERNOR

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## San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

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December 17, 2015

Via Email Only

Mr. Jon Van Rhyn  
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**In reply refer to/attn:**  
**Place ID:786088:ERyan**

**Subject: Acceptance of the Water Quality Equivalency Guidance Document and Water Quality Equivalency Automated Calculation Worksheets**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) reviewed the September 2015 Water Quality Equivalency Guidance Document and Automated Calculation Worksheets (WQE Guidance Documents). WQE Guidance Documents were developed through a combined effort by the San Diego, Orange, and Riverside County Copermittees (San Diego Regional Copermittees), interested stakeholders, and members of the public. The County of San Diego submitted the WQE Guidance Documents on behalf of the San Diego Regional Copermittees, pursuant to Provision E.3.c.(3)(a) of Order No. R9-2013-0001(Order).<sup>1</sup>

The WQE Guidance Documents form the regional and technical basis to calculate and determine the water quality benefits associated with development projects implemented as part of an alternative compliance program established in the Order. San Diego Water Board Executive Officer acceptance of a method to calculate water quality equivalency is required before a Copermittee can implement an alternative compliance program.

An alternative compliance program allows priority development projects that are required to include numerically-sized structural pollutant control and hydromodification management best management practices (BMPs) onsite to implement all or part of the structural BMPs offsite. A priority development project can participate in an alternative compliance program if it is offered by the local jurisdiction and if the proposed offsite project provides a greater water quality benefit to the watershed than implementing the structural BMPs onsite.

The San Diego Water Board accepts the WQE Guidance Documents. Accepted water quality equivalency calculations must be incorporated as part of any Copermittee alternative compliance program to evaluate candidate projects, project applicant-proposed alternative compliance projects, alternative compliance in-lieu fee structures, and alternative compliance water quality credit systems as described in Provisions E.3.c.(3)(b)-(e) of the Order.

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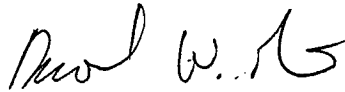
<sup>1</sup>Order No. R9-2013-0001 is the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Draining the Watersheds within the San Diego Region, as amended.

The effective date of the WQE Guidance Documents is the date of this letter and will serve as the single, region-wide, applicable date after which Copermittee-approved alternative compliance projects may begin generating credits for potential future banking, tracking, trading, and selling. Any alternative compliance water quality credit system that a Copermittee chooses to implement must be submitted to the San Diego Water Board Executive Officer for review and acceptance as part of the Water Quality Improvement Plan.

The San Diego Water Board appreciates the Copermittees efforts over the last two years to develop a method for calculating water quality benefits. These calculations will serve as the regional model for those Copermittees who move forward with establishing a jurisdictional alternative compliance program for land development.

In the subject line of any response, please include **PIN:786088:ERyan**. For questions pertaining to the subject matter, please contact Erica Ryan at (619) 521-8051 or [Erica.Ryan@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Erica.Ryan@waterboards.ca.gov).

Respectfully,



David W. Gibson  
Executive Officer  
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Orange County Copermittees  
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