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State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Water Quality

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

SECOND REVISED

NOTICE OF TWO PUBLIC CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SCOPING MEETINGS

PROPOSED WETLAND AND RIPARIAN AREA PROTECTION POLICY

Monday, April 9, 2007
10:30 a.m.

Sierra Hearing Room – Second Floor
Joe Serna Jr. / Cal/EPA Headquarters Building
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Thursday, April 19, 2007
10:30 a.m.

Carmel Room – First Floor
Junipero Serra Building
320 W. 4th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will be the Lead Agency and, in accordance with the State Water Board's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations, will prepare a staff report, equivalent to a CEQA document, for the adoption of the proposed project identified below. The State Water Board will work closely with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards in developing this document. In particular, the North Coast and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Boards have already undertaken some CEQA scoping meetings regarding this issue, and the record of their meetings will be incorporated into this process.

The purpose of the CEQA scoping meetings is to review the project alternatives and to accept public comments on the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the environmental analysis. Comments should be limited to identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and potential significant environmental effects to be analyzed in the development of this project. The public, organizations, agencies, tribes, and other interested parties are encouraged to attend and participate in these scoping meetings.

PROJECT TITLE: Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy (Proposed Policy)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this project is to protect California's wetlands and riparian areas, which play critical roles in protecting water quality. The ecological values of wetlands and riparian areas have not always been understood, and insufficient protections in the past led to significant historic losses of these waters in California. As a result, the remaining wetlands and riparian areas in the state are considered to be extremely valuable resources. This is reflected, for example, in the state's Wetlands Conservation Policy (Executive Order W-59-93), which requires state

agencies to “ensure no overall net loss and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California in a manner that fosters creativity, stewardship and respect for private property.”

In order to protect the quality of California waters and the beneficial uses for the people of the state, the State Water Board proposes to develop a “Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy.” Four alternative approaches to this proposed Policy have been identified, including no action. The alternatives address, to varying degrees, the need to improve the state’s current level of protection of wetland and riparian areas. The State Water Board and California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) committed to developing a statewide policy in their 2004 *Workplan: Filling the Gaps in Wetland Protection*.

A quorum of State Water Board members may be present at the scoping meetings. No action will be taken by the State Water Board at the scoping meetings.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:

An informational scoping document for the proposed Policy may be obtained via the internet on the State Water Board Web site at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cwa401/index.html#new>. You may also receive a paper copy by writing or calling: Glenda Marsh, Division of Water Quality, State Water Resources Control Board, 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, or by contacting Ms. Marsh at (916) 341-5558, email: gmarsh@waterboards.ca.gov. Interested parties may subscribe to an email list for future notifications about the proposed Policy at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lyrisforms/swrcb_subscribe.html; choose Dredge or Fill Policy.

SUBMISSION OF CEQA SCOPING COMMENTS:

The State Water Board will accept both written and oral suggestions on the scope and content of the information included in the scoping documents. Comments should be limited to identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and potential significant environmental effects to be analyzed in-depth in the development of these CEQA projects. All submissions must be received by **12:00 noon on April 19, 2007**. Written comments should be submitted to: Song Her, Clerk to the Board, Executive Office, State Water Resources Control Board, P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100. (Fax: 916-341-5620 or email: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov). Please indicate the project you are commenting upon in the subject line, “Comment Letter – Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy.” Electronic submission via email is preferred.

An audio broadcast of the meeting in Sacramento will be available via the internet and can be accessed at: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/broadcast/>.

PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY:

Joe Serna Jr. / Cal/EPA Building, Sacramento. There is a parking garage across from the building with entrances on 10th and 11th Streets between "I" and "J" Streets, and metered parking spaces are in the vicinity of the building. For a map see our Web site at: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EPAbldg/location.htm>.

Please note: All visitors to the Cal/EPA Building are required to sign in and receive a badge at the Visitor Services Center located inside the main entrance. Valid picture identification may be required due to the security level.

The Junipero Serra Building is located at 320 W. 4th St., Los Angeles, on the south side of the street between Hill and Broadway. Parking is available at the corner of 4th and Hill and at the corner of 4th and Spring. For a map, see the Web site at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/html/officemap.pdf>.

The Cal/EPA Building and Junipero Serra Building are accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals who require special accommodations are requested to contact Karen White at (916) 341-5883 for the Cal/EPA Building, or Gwendolyn Monroe at (213) 576-6631 for the Junipero Serra Building, at least five working days prior to the public meeting dates. Persons with hearing or speech impairments can contact us by using the California Relay Service Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD). TDD is reachable only from phones equipped with a TDD Device. HEARING IMPAIRED RELAY SERVICE: TDD to voice 1-800-735-2929; voice to TDD 1-800-735-2922.

April 5, 2007
Date



Song Her
Clerk to the Board