WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN
FOR THE SAN DIEGO BASIN (9)

SEPTEMBER 8, 1994

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION

Complete document on CD.
WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN
FOR THE
SAN DIEGO BASIN (9)

Adopted by the
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region
on September 8, 1994

Approved by the
State Water Resources Control Board
on December 13, 1994
and the
Office of Administrative Law
on April 26, 1995

(Includes amendment adopted through October 13, 1994)

Cover Photograph: San Diego Bay Skyline (1989) by Greig Peters

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The most basic goal of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (Regional Board) is to preserve and enhance the quality of water resources in the San Diego Region for the benefit of present and future generations. The federal Clean Water Act and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act require that the Regional Board adopt a water quality control plan to guide and coordinate the management of water quality in the Region. The purpose of the plan is to: (1) designate beneficial uses of the Region's surface and ground waters; (2) designate water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of those uses; and (3) establish an implementation plan to achieve the objectives. In conformance with this legislative mandate, the Regional Board adopted the Comprehensive Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan) in 1975. The Regional Board subsequently adopted numerous amendments modifying specific Basin Plan water quality standards and policies to reflect current water quality conditions and priorities.

Over twenty years have passed since the Basin Plan was published in 1975. In the ensuing years the San Diego Region population has continued to grow and approaches to water quality management have changed. Water quality management has become a complex mix of public input, environmental legislation and regulations, regulatory programs, research, and litigation. Pollution from point source discharges such as sewage treatment plants and industry has largely been controlled through stringent pollution control laws and the efforts of the Regional Board and other agencies. The focus of the Regional Board's regulatory efforts in the coming years will be surface water bottom sediment contamination, ground water contamination and nonpoint sources of pollution. These concerns are the greatest remaining threats to water quality. To address these remaining challenges, pollution prevention needs to be emphasized and the cumulative effects of pollution on entire watersheds must be considered. These changes in the complexity and emphasis of the Regional Board's water quality program have resulted in the need for a major update and rewrite of the 1975 Basin Plan.

This Basin Plan, the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (9) was adopted by the Regional Board on September 8, 1994. It supersedes the previous 1975 Basin Plan and its amendments. Public involvement was extensive in the development and adoption of this Basin Plan. The Regional Board held several public hearings and workshops to allow interested persons, organizations, and governmental agencies an opportunity to comment on the content and adequacy of the Basin Plan prior to its adoption. All comments were responded to in writing and the Regional Board carefully considered them in developing the final Basin Plan. The Regional Board appreciates the efforts of all those who contributed a substantial amount of time and effort in commenting on the earlier administrative drafts.

The six chapters of this Basin Plan together comprise the "blueprint" plan the Regional Board will use for water quality management and control in the San Diego Region. Chapter 1 provides a summary overview of the physical features of the San Diego Region, the functions of the State and Regional Board, and the legal basis and authority for the Basin Plan. Chapter 2 designates the beneficial uses of surface and ground waters to be protected. Chapter 3 designates the water quality objectives necessary to ensure the reasonable protection of the beneficial uses. Chapter 4 describes the implementation plan for achieving and maintaining the beneficial uses and water quality objectives. The implementation plan describes the key Regional Board regulatory programs and policies the Board uses to manage and control water quality. The implementation plan also designates certain conditions and areas where waste discharges are prohibited. Chapter 5 describes applicable statewide water quality policies and plans developed by the State Water Resources Control Board. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a summary description of the Regional Board water quality monitoring and surveillance program.

This Basin Plan is a dynamic rather than fixed document and is always subject to modification based on changing needs and circumstances. Accordingly, the Regional Board will periodically consider changes to this Basin Plan as necessary and at a minimum of every three years. The Regional Board will continue to place a high priority on keeping the Basin Plan current with respect to applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions, and priorities in the Region.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUING PLANNING PROCESS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIN PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT PROCESS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIENNIAL REVIEW</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT PROCEDURES</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEX</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDNOTES</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTRODUCTION

September 8, 1994

12508
CHAPTER 3
WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION ............................................................. 1
WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES ........................................ 1
WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVE DESIGNATION UNDER THE PORTER-COLOGNE WATER QUALITY CONTROL ACT .................................................... 1
WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVE DESIGNATION UNDER THE CLEAN WATER ACT ............................................. 2
STATE AND FEDERAL ANTIDEGRADATION POLICIES ............ 2
FEDERAL ANTIDEGRADATION POLICY ................................. 3
STATE ANTIDEGRADATION POLICY ................................. 3

DESIGNATED WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES ....................... 3
GENERAL ANTIDEGRADATION OBJECTIVE ......................... 4
OCEAN WATERS ............................................................ 4
OCEAN PLAN AND THERMAL PLAN .................................... 4
DISSOLVED OXYGEN ....................................................... 4
HYDROGEN ION CONCENTRATION (pH) ............................... 4
INLAND SURFACE WATERS, ENCLOSED BAYS AND ESTUARIES, COASTAL LAGOONS AND GROUND WATERS ......................... 5
THERMAL PLAN ............................................................ 5
AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY BENEFICIAL USE ....................... 5
AMMONIA, UN-IONIZED .................................................. 5
BACTERIA - TOTAL AND FECAL COLIFORM ....................... 5
BACTERIA - E. COLI AND ENTEROCOCCI ......................... 6
BIOSTIMULATORY SUBSTANCES ....................................... 6
BORON ................................................................. 7
CHLORIDES ............................................................. 7
COLOR ................................................................. 7
DISSOLVED OXYGEN ..................................................... 8
FLOATING MATERIAL ..................................................... 8
FLUORIDE ............................................................. 8
HYDROGEN ION CONCENTRATION (pH) ............................... 8
INORGANIC CHEMICALS - PRIMARY STANDARDS ................. 8

TABLE 3.4. MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVELS FOR INORGANIC CHEMICALS SPECIFIED IN TABLE 64431-A OF SECTION 64431 OF TITLE 22 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS AS AMENDED JANUARY 3, 1995 ............................................ 9

TABLE 3-5. LIMITING AND OPTIMUM CONCENTRATIONS FOR FLUORIDE SPECIFIED IN TABLE 64431-B OF SECTION 64431 OF TITLE 22 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS AS AMENDED JANUARY 3, 1995 ............................................ 10

IRON ................................................................. 9
MANGANESE .......................................................... 9
METHYLENE BLUE - ACTIVATED SUBSTANCES (MBAS) .......... 9
NITRATE ............................................................. 10
OIL AND GREASE ..................................................... 10
ORGANIC CHEMICALS - PRIMARY STANDARDS .................. 10

TABLE 3-6. MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVELS FOR ORGANIC CHEMICALS SPECIFIED IN TABLE 64444-A OF SECTION 64444 OF TITLE 22 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS AS AMENDED JANUARY 3, 1995 ............................................ 11

PERCENT SODIUM AND ADJUSTED SODIUM ADSORPTION RATIO 12
PESTICIDES ............................................................ 13
CHAPTER 4
IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 1

CONTROL OF POINT SOURCE POLLUTANTS ........................................ 2
DEFINITION OF POINT SOURCE .................................................. 2
EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS ....................................................... 2
POINT SOURCE CONTROL CATEGORIES ........................................ 2

Table 4-1. NPDES and WDR Permitted Facilities in the San Diego Region ........ 3
Table 4-2. Examples of Industrial and Municipal Point Source Discharges to Surface and Ground Waters .... 4

REGIONAL BOARD PERMITTING PROGRAMS ................................... 5
Table 4-3. "Threat to Water Quality" and "Complexity" Definition .......... 6

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ............................................ 7

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) ........ 7

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENT WAIVER POLICY ............................ 9
Table 4-4. Types of Discharges Identified for Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements Pursuant to Resolution No. 83-21 ........ 10

WATER RECLAMATION REQUIREMENTS .................................... 9

WASTE DISCHARGE PROHIBITIONS ............................................ 17

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION (SECTION 401) ................................ 18

SELF MONITORING, COMPLIANCE MONITORING, AND INSPECTIONS .......... 19

ENFORCEMENT ................................................................. 19

LEVEL A ENFORCEMENT ACTION ............................................. 20
LEVEL B ENFORCEMENT ACTION ............................................. 20
LEVEL C ENFORCEMENT ACTION ............................................. 20

Time Schedule Orders .................................................................. 20
Cleanup and Abatement Orders ................................................ 20
Cease and Desist Orders .......................................................... 20
Administrative Civil Liability ..................................................... 20

LEVEL D ENFORCEMENT ACTION ............................................. 21
Referral to the Attorney General or District Attorney ....................... 21

SELECTION OF APPROPRIATE ENFORCEMENT ACTION ................. 21

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD PLANS AND POLICIES .... 21

HAZARDOUS WASTE SOURCE REDUCTION ................................ 21

MUNICIPAL AND DOMESTIC WASTEWATER ................................ 22

CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND LOANS ....................................... 23

INDIVIDUAL DOMESTIC SUBSURFACE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS ................. 23

GUIDELINES FOR NEW COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SEWERAGE FACILITIES ................. 24

Background .............................................................................. 24

Figure 4-1. Required Recharge Rates to Maintain 10 MG/L N Nitrate Standard .... 25

Principles ............................................................................... 25
Purpose .................................................................................. 25
Community Sewerage Systems .................................................. 26
Individual Sewerage Systems .................................................... 26
Alternative Systems ................................................................... 27

WATER RECLAMATION AND REUSE ...................................... 28

WATER RECLAMATION PROJECTS IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION .......... 29
Table 4-5. Permitted Uses and California Title 22 Health Requirements for Reclaimed Water .......................................................... 30
Table 4-6. Water Reclamation Projects as of March, 1993 ....................... 32

REGIONAL BOARD ACTION PLAN ON WATER RECLAMATION .......... 29

IMPLEMENTATION September 8, 1994

12512
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEDIMENT CONTROL POLICY (RESOLUTION NO. 92-21)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCE EXTRACTION</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAND, GRAVEL AND RELATED OPERATIONS</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLOOD CONTROL</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACTS OF CHANNELIZATION</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE DIRECTION: WATERSHED - BASED WATER QUALITY CONTROL</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMEDIATION OF POLLUTION</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPILLS, LEAKS, INVESTIGATION AND CLEANUP (SLIC)</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOVEGROUND PETROLEUM STORAGE TANKS</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FACILITIES</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT POLICY</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTAMINATED SOIL AND GROUND WATER</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE OF POLICY</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT PRINCIPLES</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT INVESTIGATIONS</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL of CLEANUP LEVELS</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUND WATER CLEANUP LEVELS</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOIL CLEANUP LEVELS</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME SCHEDULES</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER PROGRAMS</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT (WQA)</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA'S 303(d) PROCESS</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAN DIEGO BAY TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOAD (TMDL) WORKSHEETS</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAN PASQUAL VALLEY</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER SAN LUIS REY VALLEY</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santee</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER SWEETWATER RIVER BASIN</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER Tijuana RIVER BASIN</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER SANTA MARGARITA RIVER BASIN</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan Creek</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALTS BALANCE</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLE SOURCE AQUIFER PROGRAM</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEX</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5
PLANS AND POLICIES

INTRODUCTION ............................................................ 1

STATE BOARD PLANS AND POLICIES ............................................................ 1
ANTIDEGRADATION POLICY (STATE BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 68-16) .................. 1
STATE POLICY FOR WATER QUALITY CONTROL .............................................. 1
AREAS OF SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE (RESOLUTION NO. 74-28) ........... 2
ENCLOSED BAYS AND ESTUARIES POLICY (RESOLUTION NO. 74-43) ................. 3
POLICY ON THE USE AND DISPOSAL OF INLAND WATERS USED FOR POWERPLANT
   COOLING (RESOLUTION NO. 75-58) ...................................................... 4
THERMAL PLAN (RESOLUTION NO. 75-89) ................................................... 5
POLICY WITH RESPECT TO WATER RECLAMATION IN CALIFORNIA
   (RESOLUTION NO. 77-1) ....................................................................... 6
POLICY ON THE DISPOSAL OF SHREDDER WASTE (RESOLUTION NO. 87-22) ........ 6
SOURCES OF DRINKING WATER POLICY (RESOLUTION NO. 88-63) ..................... 7
NONPOINT SOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RESOLUTION NO. 88-123) ................... 7
CALIFORNIA OCEAN PLAN (RESOLUTION NO. 90-27) ....................................... 8
CALIFORNIA WETLANDS CONSERVATION POLICY .......................................... 9
CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (RESOLUTION NO. 92-49) 10

REGIONAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS ................................................................. 10

REPRINT OF RESOLUTION NO. 77-1, STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION
   77-1, POLICY WITH RESPECT TO WATER RECLAMATION IN CALIFORNIA ............. 13

REPRINT OF RESOLUTION NO. 88-63, STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION
   88-63, ADOPTION OF POLICY ENTITLED "SOURCES OF DRINKING WATER" ............ 15

INDEX ........................................................................................................... 17
CHAPTER 6
SURVEILLANCE, MONITORING
AND ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 1

STATE SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING PROGRAMS .................................................. 1
TOXIC SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAM ................................................................. 2
STATE MUSSEL WATCH PROGRAM .................................................................................. 3
BAY PROTECTION AND TOXIC CLEANUP PROGRAM ....................................................... 4

REGIONAL SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING PROGRAMS ......................................... 5
COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING .............................................................. 5
COMPLIANCE MONITORING ........................................................................................... 5
COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS ........................................................................................... 5
COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS ....................................................................................... 6
DEFINITION OF ACTIVITIES .......................................................................................... 6
NOTIFICATION TO OTHER AGENCIES .......................................................................... 6
REPORTABLE QUANTITIES OF HAZARDOUS WASTE AND SEWAGE DISCHARGES ...... 6
INSPECTION IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS ............................................................... 6
FINDINGS OF NONCOMPLIANCE ................................................................................... 7
INTENSIVE SURVEYS ....................................................................................................... 7
MUNICIPAL STORM WATER MONITORING .................................................................... 7
BIENNIAL WATER QUALITY INVENTORY / WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT REPORT ...... 8
CLEAN WATER STRATEGY ............................................................................................. 8
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY CONTROL ............................................................ 9

OTHER MONITORING PROGRAMS .................................................................................... 9

REFERENCES .................................................................................................................... 9

INDEX ................................................................................................................................ 10