STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 11-12, 2006
Prepared on April 13, 2006

ITEM NUMBER: 24

SUBJECT: Executive Officer's Report to the Board

Brief discussion of some items of interest to the Board follows. Upon request, staff can provide more detailed information about any particular item.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATIONS
[Dominic Roques 805/542-4870]

In general, staff recommends "Standard Certification" when the applicant proposes adequate mitigation. Measures included in the application must assure that beneficial uses will be protected, and water quality standards will be met.

Conditional Certification is appropriate when a project may adversely impact surface water quality. Conditions allow the project to proceed under an Army Corps permit, while upholding water quality standards.

Staff will recommend "No Action" when no discharge or adverse impacts are expected. Generally, a project must provide beneficial use and habitat enhancement for no action to be taken by the Regional Board. A chart on the following pages lists applications received from February 1, 2006 to February 28, 2006.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM FEBRUARY 1, 2006 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2006

Applicant	Project	Purpose	Location	County	Receiving Water	Received	Action
Steve Palmisano	Manabe Property Wetland Restoration	A wetland restoration project on Watsonville Slough in Santa Cruz that also provides pedestrian access to the implemented project by including pathways and informational signs.	Watsonville	Santa Cruz	Watsonville Slough	2-24-06	Pending

Watershed Reports

Storm Water Municipal General Permit [Ryan Lodge 805/549-3506]

The 60-day public comment periods for the County of Santa Barbara and the City of Santa Maria ended with interested parties submitting hearing requests for each community's Storm Water Management Program (SWMP). Water Board staff is currently developing the response to comments for the comment letters submitted by interested parties for Santa Maria, Lompoc, Buellton and the County of Santa Barbara. The University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) recently submitted a revised version of the UCSC SWMP, which Water Board staff will review. The current status of the Region's Phase II SWMP review is shown in **Attachment A.**

[See Attachment A]

Cleanup Reports

Underground Tanks Summary Report dated April 10, 2006 [Burton Chadwick 805/542-4786]

[See Attachment B]

San Miguel Cadmium Issues [Sheila Soderberg 805/549-3592]

Union Pacific Property, Proposed Eda/Colin Weyrick Subdivision, San Miguel: During the public comment period at the March 2006 Water Board meeting, David Broadwater requested Water Board staff review soil investigation data for the former Union Pacific property **(Attachment C)**. Mr. Broadwater was concerned that San Luis Obispo County Planning Department was going to allow residential development on the subject property without complete investigation and remediation of suspected contamination.

Water Board staff contacted Mr. Broadwater, County Planning staff, and County Environmental Health staff for additional information. Documents provided by Mr. Broadwater indicated that the developer performed an environmental records review for the subject property. In the 1940s, a "creosote spur" and several railroad buildings were located on the property. By the 1950s, the land use changed to agricultural activities, and several grain elevators, grain tanks, truck scales, and shed were seen in aerial photographs and are still located on the property **(Attachment D)**. As a follow up to a historical records review, the developer performed a limited site investigation in 2004 by drilling twelve borings on the 5.28-acre property **(Attachment E)**. Soil samples were collected at five inches, five feet, and ten feet below ground surface (bgs). All soil samples were analyzed for polychlorinated byphenols (PCBs), petroleum hydrocarbons as motor oil, gasoline, and diesel (TPH), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), organochlorine pesticides, pH, and metals. No PCBs, TPH, VOCs, or pesticides were detected in the soil samples. In three of the surface soil samples, PAH concentrations ranged from 0.005 milligram per kilogram (mg/kg) to 0.024 mg/kg. Information provided to the Water Board did not indicate what specific PAHs were

detected. Lead was detected in two surface soil samples, GP1-5" and GP9-5", at 56 mg/kg and 150 mg/kg, respectively. Cadmium was detected at 24 mg/kg in one soil sample (GP12-5') collected at five feet bgs. Leachablility tests were performed on the three soil samples that had detectable metals. Leachability tests are used to evaluate if metals in soil could dissolve and potentially impact underlying groundwater. The lead in the two samples was below the Soluble Threshold Limit Concentration (STLC), which is a numeric target to characterize hazardous waste. However, the soluble cadmium in sample GP12-5' was detected at 2.4 milligrams per Liter (mg/L), which is above the STLC for cadmium (1 mg/L). The San Francisco Bay Water Board established Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs) for contaminants in soil to evaluate the potential for groundwater to be impacted by contaminants. The lead concentrations in soil are below residential ESLs (200 mg/kg). The cadmium concentration in soil is above the residential ESL of 1.7 mg/kg.

With regard to water quality, groundwater was not encountered during the site investigation. However, the Water Board is currently is the lead agency for two nearby underground storage tank (UST) cases located at 1010 K Street and 998 K Street in San Miguel. During groundwater monitoring activities in 2005, groundwater was encountered at approximately 17 feet bgs at one of the former service station sites. The subject site is in closer proximity to the Salinas River than the UST site, thus it is reasonable to conclude that groundwater is also expected to be as shallow at the subject site.

County Environmental Health staff reported to the Water Board that they were contacted by County Planning to review the site investigation reports for the subject property. County Environmental Health staff indicated they are preparing a letter to Union Pacific Railroad directing additional assessment of cadmium found in soil, in addition to requiring further assessment along the railroad spur, since only two of the soil borings were in the vicinity. County Environmental Health staff indicated that they have also been in contact with Mr. Broadwater and are keeping him updated on their directives to the railroad. County Environmental Health indicated that they would keep the Water Board apprised of future investigation results.

For soil contamination issues without known water quality impacts, County Environmental Health is typically the lead agency and can also evaluate public health risk. In the event that water quality is threatened or impacted by pollutants, County Environmental Health will transfer regulatory oversight to the Water Board.

Regional Reports

Regional Monitoring Report [Karen Worcester 805/549-3333]

The Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program is beginning to develop technical tools to support tracking of the Central Coast Region's new measurable goals. We are examining our monitoring and assessment toolkit to determine what additional data and staffing resources will be required to successfully address organizational

goals. We anticipate that we will need to supplement or adjust our activities in order to support the new program, and that this may require additional monitoring resources. For example, the integrated multi-parameter approach to tracking riparian health will make use of water column data, bioassessment data, geomorphological data and riparian habitat data. Though we already collect much of this information, we may need to add key missing information and/or adjust the spatial coverage of our monitoring efforts to support this effort. We are currently inventorying resources that are available through other agencies, and are developing a framework for integrating data of various types and scales of detail.

Monitoring activities were completed for the Pajaro and North Coast watershed rotation in March, 2006. One striking difference we noted between our first monitoring cycle in 1998 and the 2005 sampling year in the Pajaro watershed was the serious increase in trash at many of the sites. We have begun notifying appropriate City and County officials about these problem areas. We will begin looking at this year's data along with our first year of data to see if any significant changes are evident since 1998. Sampling began in the Salinas watershed in January. Because of the late spring rains this season we have had to postpone our benthic invertebrate and sediment toxicity sampling until later in the Spring.

CCAMP staff has been transitioning management of agricultural waiver program data to ag program staff. The first year of data has been delivered as of the end of March, and many details associated with the electronic data delivery system have been resolved over the course of the past year. Our goal this coming year will be to utilize CCAMP software to set up online and desktop analytic tools for use by ag program staff and Central Coast Water Quality Preservations Inc.

Karen Worcester attended the "kickoff " meeting for the Ecosystem-Based Management Program in Morro Bay. This $3 million program has been funded by several sources, including the Packard Foundation, the Ocean Protection Council, the Cal Poly Foundation, and the Resources Legacy Foundation. The program plans to use state of the art technology to develop information to support resource management decisions in the Morro Bay watershed. The program has six primary components, including water quality, biological indicators of ecosystem health, socioeconomic indicators, critical spawning and nursery areas, human access and linkage of information to resource management decisions. The water quality component will include instrumentation of the creek mouths, bay and near shore areas with probes for continuous monitoring of nutrients, chlorophyll, and other parameters, with the intent of understanding how pollutants from the watershed impact the marine environment. Biological indicator development will focus measurement of stress proteins in test organisms that are responsive to specific types of pollution, including nitrate. More about the program can be found at http://www.marine.calpoly.edu/researchprograms/morrobayecosystemmanagement.htm.

The final meeting of the Scientific Planning and Advisory Committee (SPARC) for the Surface Water Ambient

Monitoring Program review was held in March. The final SPARC report will be completed by the end of April. The reviewers felt that SWAMP needs a business plan that better defines timelines, performance targets, and budget scenarios, and should make better and more frequent use of technical expertise outside of the program, including at the National level. The reviewers also recognized the need for better institutional support and integration with other programs. SWAMP needs both more funding and more stable funding so that we have the capacity to plan and carry out programs as designed.

Clean Beaches Initiative Update [John Robertson 805/542-4630]

Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program: The Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program began with the Budget Act of 2001, which appropriated $32.3 million from Proposition 13 to implement 38 specific projects. The projects addressed postings and closures caused by bacterial contamination, at California public beaches. This portion of the Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program closed on June 30, 2004.

"The Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act" was signed into law on September 20, 2002. The Act appropriated an additional $43.7 million from Proposition 40 for new Clean Beaches Initiative grants to help local agencies, non-profit organizations, and public agencies implement projects that protect and restore California's coastal water quality. The State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) administers Proposition 40 Clean Beaches Initiative funding, and unlike many of their other grant programs, the State Water Board retains management responsibilities over these grants after funding. During Phase 1, the State Water Board approved $21.5 million for 28 eligible projects. The Cities of Santa Cruz [Main and Cowell Beaches] and Pacific Grove each currently have active Clean Beaches Initiative projects within this region.

Phase 2 of the Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program provides an additional $22.2 million for eligible projects at beaches identified on the State Water Board's Competitive Location List. The State Water Board developed this list in consultation with the Clean Beaches Task Force, Regional Water Boards, and coastal County Environmental Health Directors. The Competitive Location List covers beaches throughout California that have exhibited poor water quality over the last three years, due to excessive bacterial loads. Projects must protect or restore water quality at a beach named on the Competitive Location List. The list can be accessed at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cwphome/beaches/docs/draft_phase2priority_location_list.pdf.

As part of the ongoing Phase 2 Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program, the Clean Beaches Task Force has recommended funding 15 proposed projects, valued at $17.4 million, leaving approximately $4.8 million available. DFA continues to accept applications for Proposition 40 funds for projects on the Competitive Location List and for projects that provide justification for placement on this list. Phase 2 Clean Beaches Initiative funds will remain available on a competitive first-come, first-serve basis until all funding is

committed or December 31, 2006, whichever coves first. Additional funds may be made available through Proposition 50 after May 2006. More information on the entire Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program can be found at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cwphome/beaches/docs/presentation_prop40.pdf.

Nutrient Numeric Endpoints for California [Roger Briggs 805/549-3140]

The California Nutrient Numeric Endpoints approach is being developed by the USEPA Region IX, and the State Water Board for use in several water quality programs at the Regional Water Boards. The approach provides a methodology for setting numeric limitations in NPDES requirements, setting numeric targets in nutrient TMDLs, and for those Regional Water Boards that choose to, developing numeric nutrient criteria. The nutrient numeric endpoints approach selects nutrient response indicators that can be used to evaluate risk of use impairment, rather than using pre-defined nutrient limits that may or may not result in nuisance algae growth or eutrophication for a particular waterbody. Karen Worcester, Howard Kolb, Chris Rose and Larry Harlan, from our office, have participated in past workshops and meetings to develop the endpoints. Karen Worcester provided a substantial portion of the data from monitoring we conducted in central coast streams via CCAMP and Chris Rose provided a literature review that served as a foundation for development of the endpoints.

Chris Rose from our office attended the workshop on the California Nutrient Numeric Endpoints approach in Los Angeles on March 29, 2005. The workshop topics included an overview of the risk-based approach, rationale for secondary indicator ranges, and an introduction to the new spreadsheet tools that have been developed for easy use by staff. The tools include the nutrient numeric endpoints for secondary indicators for each of seven different beneficial uses. Secondary endpoints are used because these are the environmental factors that impact aquatic life and other beneficial uses in response to nutrient enrichment. These secondary endpoints include: chlorophyll a in the water column, benthic algal density, water clarity, dissolved oxygen, and pH.

The spreadsheet tool predicts the response of secondary endpoints to changes in nutrient loading in a waterbody. The tool was designed by simplifying an EPA-approved model and by developing regression equations. The spreadsheet appears to be easy to use for Regional Board TMDL staff without modeling expertise.

The USEPA and State Water Board are in the process of responding to comments from the Regional Water Boards on the California Nutrient Numeric Endpoints. Scientific peer review of this method will be achieved through application of the method to five or six nutrient TMDL projects in the Regions. The method will be peer reviewed as part of the TMDL peer review. USEPA and the State Water Board are planning to provide support for these preliminary TMDL applications of the California Nutrient Numeric Endpoints. These methods will be piloted in our region for Chorro Creek, in the Morro Bay Watershed.

Update on the 2005-2006 Consolidated Grants Program [Bill Hoffmann 805/549-3691]

The first step in the Consolidated Grants Program process was recently completed. This step consisted of reviewing, scoring, and selecting conceptual proposals that have now been invited back for the second step of the process; a full proposal submittal. The Consolidated Grants Program consists of six different sources that totals approximately $165M in available funding. These sources include: Coastal Non-Point Source (Prop 50 & Prop 13), Non-Point Source (Prop 40 & Prop 13), 319h (EPA), Integrated Watershed Management (Prop 40 & Prop 13), Urban Storm Water (Prop 40), and Agricultural Water Quality (Prop 40 & 50).

Throughout the state, 470 grant proposals were received, requesting $625M. Region 3 received 46 eligible grant proposals for a total of $49M. Of the 46 proposals, 32 proposals, for a total of $34M, have been invited back for full proposal submittal and potential funding. These 32 proposals are strong competitive projects that address high priority issues for our Region. State and Regional Water Board staff held an informational workshop for these potential grantees on April 18, 2006 at the Water Board office in San Luis Obispo.

Statewide, approximately 220 proposals, for approximately $260M, have been invited to submit full proposals. The schedule for full proposal submittal is split into two batches: the first one is due May 9th, for the Ocean Protection Council program, and the second is due June 9th, for all other programs. Regional Water Board staff will compile recommended project lists between July and September for consideration by the State Water Board at their July, September, and October Board Meetings.

Additional information on the Step 2 call-back is available on-line at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/funding/consolidgrants0506.html

Agriculture Field Trip [Roger Briggs 805/549-3140]

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) organized a field trip to spotlight agricultural water quality improvement efforts in response to MBNMS's Water Quality Protection Program and our requirements (conditions) for irrigated agriculture in our general waiver. Board Members Hunter, Bowker and Jeffries attended, as did State Board Members Doduc and Secundy. From our staff, Alison Jones, John Robertson, and Roger Briggs attended. Other agencies represented were US EPA, CA Department of Food and Ag, U.C. Extension, the industry's Central Coast Ag WQ Coalition, the Resource Conservation Districts of Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties, the Ag Commissioner for Monterey County, the NRCS, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation, and the Coalition of Family Farmers.

We gathered at the Ag Commissioner's conference room in Salinas on April 12. Roger Briggs kicked off the discussion with some opening remarks on the ag waiver conditions and monitoring, and we heard from most of the other

representatives about their perspectives. Alison Jones was the master of ceremonies and provided further explanation of our ag program. To give an idea of the intensity of agriculture (year round growing via triple cropping in many areas), Ag Commissioner Eric Lauritzen said that ag production in Monterey County is a $3.4B per year enterprise, which constitutes 10% of California ag production. California ranks number one in the US in ag production, and if Monterey County were a state, it would be ranked 15th in the nation. Single crops in Monterey County such as head lettuce and leaf lettuce are each of higher value than all the grapes in Napa. Our region does about $7B in ag production.

We visited several sites employing various Best Management Practices in Monterey and Santa Cruz County. Practices included soil moisture monitors for increased irrigation efficiency, cover crops, grassed swales and ditches (rather than blading clean or using herbicides), and hedgerows. Hedgerows can act as filter strips to help solve erosion problems. By planting specific plants in hedgerows, farmers can attract beneficial insects, which are able to minimize harmful crop pests enough that in some cases, pesticide use has been eliminated (ye olde Integrated Pest Management or IPM). By ceasing application of pesticides, these toxic chemicals will, of course, not be available to runoff into surface waters. By using a grassy swale, a farmer was able to avoid use of expensive piping to solve a gullying problem. These were examples of BMPs that were not only beneficial to water quality but actually saved the farmer money compared to conventional methods.

Administrative Reports

Presentations and Training [Roger Briggs 805/549-3140]

Karen Worcester participated in an Environmental Career Panel at Cal Poly State University on February 28, 2006. Karen Worcester presented a lecture on water quality monitoring, particularly focused on biological tools, to a class at Cal Poly on Conservation Biology on February 22, 2006.

Karen Worcester and Dave Paradies were invited to discuss data and data management approaches taken by the CCAMP program at a Ventura County meeting of their watershed permitting group on March 14, 2006.

Groundwater cleanup program staff from the Central Coast Region, State Board, and the other eight Water Boards attended a statewide "all cleanup programs roundtable" in San Diego on April 4 through April 6, 2006. Approximately 20 Central Coast Water Board staff from the Land Disposal, Spills Leaks Investigation and Cleanup, Underground Storage Tank, and DOD/Perchlorate Units heard presentations on site investigation technologies, environmental risk assessment tools, indoor air/vapor intrusion risk modeling, the use of institutional controls, and a panel discussion lead by the State Board Executive Director, Celeste Cantu.

Larry Harlan attended TMDL Project Management Training that was held in Sacramento on May 29 –30, 2006.

Cecile DeMartini attended the "Nitrate in California's Groundwater: Are We Making Progress?" symposium held in Modesto, California from April 4-5, 2006, sponsored by the Groundwater Resources Association. She attended workshops discussing nitrate impacts to groundwater, nitrate geochemistry, and tracking of nitrate sources. State, county, and other region wide organizational committees were present to discuss their successes in regulation and management of nitrates originating from California dairies and agricultural facilities.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Phase II SWMP Review
B. Underground Tanks Summary Report dated April 10, 2006
C. Topo Map of San Miguel
D. Tentative Parcel Map
E. Site Map with Sampling Locations

H/ALLMYDOCS/EO Report/EOrptMAY06/ch