

ITEM:

SUBJECT: City of Atwater, Wastewater Treatment Facility, Merced County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal*

BACKGROUND: The City of Atwater owns and operates a wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system (WWTF) that provides municipal sewerage service to residents of the City (population 23,000), Castle Aviation and Development Center, and the unincorporated community of Winton (population 11,000). The WWTF discharges disinfected secondary-treated wastewater under NPDES permit to the Atwater Drain, a water of the United States. To renew authorization, the proposed permit contains new effluent limitations for California Toxic Rule constituents, ammonia, chlorine residual, nitrite, nitrate, oil and grease, and turbidity and requires upgrade tertiary treatment to enhance the protection of the uses of the Atwater Drain. It also requires the City to evaluate whether the WWTF's sludge handling facilities have adversely impacted groundwater and, if necessary, implement corrective measures.

A proposed permit was recirculated the second time for comment on 11 July 2006. Written comments were received from the City and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance (CSPA). Based upon these comments, the proposed permit was revised again and recirculated for public comment on 12 October 2006. USEPA has identified this as a priority permit.

ISSUES

Written comments are not due until after completion of this agenda material. The City has ongoing concerns over the ammonia and electrical conductivity effluent limitations. CSPA has issues with the temperature and turbidity receiving water limitations and may have other issues similar to comment made on recent permits considered by the Regional Water Board. Comments, and Staff's response to them, will be provided to the Regional Water Board and interested parties as soon as possible.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____

7/8 December 2006
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