

**Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region**

Board Meeting – 30 November, 1, 2 December 2011

**Response to Written Comments on
Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements
for
Grizzly Ranch Community Services District
Grizzly Ranch Wastewater Reclamation Plant
Plumas County**

26 October 2011

At a public hearing scheduled for 30 November, 1, 2 December 2011, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Central Valley Water Board) will consider adoption of tentative Waste Discharge Requirements (NPDES No. CA0085162) for the Grizzly Ranch Wastewater Reclamation Plant. This document contains responses to comments received from interested parties in response to the Tentative Orders. Written comments from interested parties were required to be received by the Central Valley Water Board by 24 October 2011 in order to receive full consideration. Comments were received from:

1. VESTRA Resources Incorporated (VESTRA) at the request of the Grizzly Ranch Community Services District (Discharger)
2. Central Valley Clean Water Association (CVCWA)

Written comments from the above interested parties are summarized below, followed by the response of Central Valley Water Board staff.

DISCHARGER COMMENTS

DISCHARGER – COMMENT #1:

Effluent Limits

Pg. 10, IV.A.1(a), states that the discharger will maintain compliance with effluent limits at discharge point EFF-001, with compliance measured at monitoring location “Big Grizzly Creek”. We assume then that the actual compliance point is monitoring location RSW-002? Elsewhere in the document the compliance point is specified as EFF-001 and identified as the outfall diffuser sampling port. Clarification as to the compliance point is needed.

RESPONSE:

Central Valley Water Board staff concur that additional clarification is needed describing the effluent compliance point. Page 10, IV.A.1.a. has been modified as follows:

The Discharger shall maintain compliance with the following effluent limitations at Discharge Point No. EFF-001, with compliance measured at the outfall diffuser, or sample port where a representative sample can be obtained of treated wastewater prior to discharge to Big Grizzly Creek.

DISCHARGER – COMMENT #2:

Mandatory Minimum Penalties

“The permit needs to clarify which discharges are subject to Mandatory Minimum Penalties, or MMPs...”

RESPONSE:

Mandatory Minimum Penalties can only be applied to NPDES discharges, which are defined in Section 13385(d) of the Clean Water Act as, “any discharge to navigable waters of the United States, any introduction of pollutants into a publicly owned treatment works, or any use or disposal of sewage sludge.” Therefore MMPs may only be applied to effluent limits violations at discharge point EFF-001 in addition to late report violations as specified in Section 13385 of the Clean Water Act.

DISCHARGER – COMMENT #3:

Recycled Water Permit Conflicts

“Order R5-2007-0001 was adopted in January 2007. The Order covers the application of tertiary treated effluent to the golf course during the summer months. This draft permit also includes a number of conditions associated with the discharge of treated water to the golf course. Is R5-2007-0001 to be rescinded? A number of conflicts exist between the two permits; one includes the setback requires...”

RESPONSE:

Central Valley Water Board staff concur that inconsistencies exist between Order No. R5-2007-0001 and the draft NPDES permit. Order No. R5-2007-0001 will not be rescinded at this time; however, the following changes to Page 13, Section C. of the draft NPDES permit will be incorporated so that the requirements will remain consistent with Order No. R5-2007-0001.

C.1 The conditions of this Order do not apply to treated wastewater discharged to the Grizzly Ranch Golf Course for reclamation which is regulated under separate waste discharge requirements (Order No. R5-2007-0001). Conditions of this Order do apply to any other reclamation.

C.13. A 150-foot buffer zone shall be maintained between any spring, domestic well or irrigation well and the wetted area produced during irrigation used for effluent disposal.

C.14. A 25-foot buffer zone shall be maintained between effluent disposal areas and all property boundaries.

C.15 **Effective immediately**, the Discharger shall maintain compliance with the following limitations at Discharge Point No. REC- 001, with compliance measured at a sample point prior to where treated wastewater may be applied to land for irrigation, or other reclamation discharge location approved by the Executive Officer.

DISCHARGER – COMMENT #4:

Groundwater

“Groundwater is not regulated by the NPDES system. Groundwater requirements for application of waste to land should be included in Order R5-2007-0001. No provisions for monitoring of groundwater are included in Order R5-2007-0001, and the limitations in Table 8 appear to be arbitrary. Groundwater quality is covered by the anti-degradation requirements in II.N. Pg.8. Groundwater requirements should be removed from the NPDES permit and included in WDR R5-2007-0001.”

RESPONSE:

The Groundwater Limitations Section will be revised to only include the narrative requirements in the existing Order, which are:

1. Release of waste constituents from any storage, treatment, or disposal component associated with the Facility shall not, in combination with other sources of waste constituents, cause the following in groundwater:
 - a. Beneficial uses to be adversely impacted or water quality objectives to be exceeded.
 - b. Any increase in total coliform organisms over background shall not exceed 2.2 MPN/100mL.

DISCHARGER – COMMENT #5

Required Reports

“Many of the required reports require sampling of the plant effluent and receiving water. Since the plant is not yet operating, we propose the reports be required ‘x’ days following ‘start of operations’ rather than following ‘adoption of the order’, with the exception of those reports that do not require sampling.”

RESPONSE:

Many of the reports required in the draft order are scheduled for submittal within 6 months to 2 years after start of discharging. However, reports including the TRE Work Plan, Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan, and Analytical Methods Report, include information necessary prior to discharge. In addition, Central Valley Water Board staff has revised the submittal requirements for an Aluminum Site-Specific Study to read:

- c. **Aluminum Site-Specific Study.** In the event that effluent concentrations are detected at or above 87 µg/L, the Discharger shall prepare and submit a report on the results of a site-specific investigation to determine appropriate aluminum concentrations necessary to protect downstream aquatic life beneficial uses. The study shall evaluate how pH, hardness, flow conditions, aquatic life species and other factors affect aluminum aquatic life toxicity. Based on these factors, the study shall recommend site-specific numeric values for aluminum that fully protect the aquatic life beneficial use designation of **Big Grizzly Creek**. The Regional Water Board will evaluate the recommendations, select appropriate values, reevaluate reasonable potential for aluminum, and reopen the permit, as necessary, to revise the effluent limitations for aluminum.

DISCHARGER COMMENT #6

Monitoring and Reporting Program

“E-3, Table 1. Delete REC-001, add to R5-2007-0001 (again, confusion regarding the compliance location for REC-001).”

“...the upstream and downstream compliance sampling should evaluate the impact of water quality at RSW-002, so the constituents of concern should be the same.”

RESPONSE:

The discharge location REC-001 is redefined as the ‘Point at which treated wastewater may be applied to land for irrigation.’ Discharges to the Grizzly Ranch Golf Course will be regulated separately under Order No. R5-2007-0001.

Secondly, NPDES permit compliance is measured at two locations, EFF-001 and RSW-002. Receiving water background conditions are measured upstream at RSW-001 and not all constituents are comparable downstream at RSW-002 to determine compliance. Therefore, it is not necessary to measure the sample constituents at RSW-001 and RSW-002.

CVCWA COMMENTS

CVCWA COMMENT #1:

“First as CVCWA understands the Tentative Permit, it includes requirements for the District’s application of reclaimed water to the Grizzly Creek Golf Course. However, the Tentative Permit also acknowledges that reclaimed water applied to the Grizzly Creek Golf Course is subject to requirements under separate waste discharge requirements contained in Order No. R5-2007-0001. The inclusion of reclamation requirements here for the application of reclaimed water to Grizzly Creek Golf Course is duplicative and may subject the discharger to multiple permit violations for one potential infraction.”

RESPONSE:

Central Valley Water Board concurs that the reclamation discharge to the Grizzly Creek Golf Course should be regulated separately under Order No. R5-2007-0001. The tentative permit has redefined the reclamation discharge location REC-001 as, the Point at which treated wastewater may be applied to land for irrigation.”

CVCWA COMMENT #2

“CVCWA comments that the receiving water limitations for salinity must be revised to be consistent with the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan states that the water quality objective for the Middle Fork of the Feather River is 150 μ mhos/cm based (90th percentile) in well-mixed waters of the Feather River.”

RESPONSE:

Central Valley Water Board staff concurs and the Tentative Permit will be revised to read under **V. Receiving Water Limitations:**

13. Salinity. Electrical conductivity to exceed 150 μ mhos/cm (90th percentile) in well-mixed waters, a limitation applicable to the Middle Fork of the Feather River.