



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

6 March 2020

Honorable

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, AB 52 (Gatto, 2014). Formal Notification of Decision to Undertake a Project, and Notification of Consultation Opportunity, pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21080.3.1 (hereafter PRC).

Dear Honorable Dear Sir or Madam,

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has decided to undertake the following project:

CONSIDERATION OF A BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT TO REMOVE MUNICIPAL AND DOMESTIC SUPPLY (MUN) AND AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY (AGR) BENEFICIAL USES FROM GROUNDWATER IN A PORTION OF THE LOWER TULARE AND ETCHIGOIN FORMATIONS IN THE SOUTH LOST HILLS OILFIELD

Below please find a description of the proposed project, a map showing the project location, and the name of our project point of contact, pursuant to PRC § 21080.3.1 (d).

Project Description:

Seneca Resources operates four underground injection wells in the southern portion of the Lost Hills Oilfield in Kern County. The wells receive produced water from adjacent production wells completed in the Reef Ridge and Monterey Formations and inject that produced water into the lower Tulare and Etchegoin Formations under permit from the California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). The receiving water has total dissolved solids exceeding 10,000 mg/L and is not considered an underground source of drinking water (USDW).

Although the subject groundwater is not considered a USDW by definition, the water, as with all waters in the Basin, is designated to have beneficial use as municipal and domestic supply (MUN) and Agricultural Supply (AGR), unless specifically de-designated by a Basin Plan Amendment (BPA). Seneca Resources has requested to have MUN and AGR beneficial use removed from the groundwater in the southern portion of the Lost Hills Oilfield.

De-designation of the groundwater is possible under the State Water Resources Control Board's Sources of Drinking Water Policy if certain criteria are met. However, de-designation under the specified criteria is not self-implementing, and requires a BPA, should de-designation of these beneficial uses be found appropriate.

KARL E. LONGLEY ScD, P.E., CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, ESQ., EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Central Valley Water Board's review will consider available information to determine whether the removal of the MUN and AGR beneficial uses from the subject ground water is appropriate. If the Central Valley Water Board finds that the proposed removal of the beneficial uses of groundwater are appropriate, an amendment to the Basin Plan will be developed for consideration by the Regional Water Board.

Project Location:

The area proposed for de-designation is in western Kern County in the southern portion of the Lost Hills Oilfield. The area is identified as Sections 14, 15, 22, 23, 26, and 27 of Township 27S/Range 21 E, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian. (See attached map)

Lead Agency Point of Contact:

Robert L'Heureux
Robert.LHeureux@waterboards.ca.gov
(916) 464-4736

Request for Consultation

Pursuant to PRC § 21080.3.1 (b), you have 30 days from the receipt of this letter to request consultation, in writing, with the Central Valley Water Board. If you have any questions regarding this letter or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Glenn Meeks at (916) 464-4701 or glenn.meeks@waterboards.ca.gov.

Very Respectfully,

Original signed by Adam Laputz

Adam Laputz
Assistant Executive Officer
Central Valley Water Board

Attachments: Figure 1 – Map of Project Area

cc: Robert L'Heureux, Tribal Coordinator, Central Valley Water Board
Jessica Jahr, Attorney III, Office of Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board
Moises Moreno- Rivera, Assistant Tribal Liaison, State Water Resources Control Board
Glenn Meeks, Senior Engineering Geologist, Central Valley Water Board

Figure 1
Map of Project Area

