CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

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November 9, 2009

Ms. Tracy Egoscue, Executive Officer
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
320 W. Fourth Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Attention: Ivar Ridgeway

Dear Ms. Egoscue:

COMMMENTS: PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM PERMIT

The City of Los Angeles (City) continues to demonstrate its commitment to water quality improvement and environmental stewardship by pledging to become the *"cleanest and greenest big City."* The City developed a strategy for compliance with the Trash TMDL in 2004 and is now implementing it with great success, which has led to significant trash reductions in both the Los Angeles River (60%) and Ballona Creek (65%). This trash reduction surpasses the Trash TMDL current compliance milestone (50%) and positions the City to achieve full TMDL compliance much earlier than prescribed in the TMDL.

The City's compliance strategy is based on using a two-pronged approach utilizing both structural and institutional measures. The structural measures include the installation of trash control devices (full capture and partial capture) in the storm drain system throughout the City, targeting first the high trash generating areas, followed by the medium and low generating areas. The institutional measures include public outreach, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning, enforcement, etc., with a special focus on the high trash generating areas.

As part of the City's pioneering efforts to determine the most cost effective strategy for compliance, the City tested and implemented several in-line and off-line trash capture devices such as, hydrodynamic systems, netting systems, catch basin (CB) screens and catch basin inserts over the course of several years. The City concluded that implementing a combination of either CB inserts (full capture systems) and/or CB opening screen covers (partial capture) in catch

basins within the City areas is the most feasible, practical and cost effective strategy for compliance with the Trash TMDL in the City.

With respect to the City's compliance program described above, the City would like your consideration for the following comments/changes to the posted documents.

1. Within the *Findings* document, Finding No. 57 it states *". . . In the latter case, compliance shall be determined based on direct measurement of trash discharges or site specific performance data."* The City has piloted the performance of a variety of different products such as inserts, screen covers, netting systems, etc. over the course of several years. The City wants to ensure that "site specific performance" does not literally mean testing the performance of each device at every catch basin in the City, but that the intent is to demonstrate the performance of the device(s) within the specific jurisdiction or region. In addition, the City is concerned that the only proposed method for determining the effectiveness of institutional measures is through direct measurement of trash. As you know, the City has a huge storm drain system with approximately 50,000 catch basins dispersed over 450 square miles, so the task of direct measurement is neither practical nor feasible. The City's institutional measures, such as catch basin cleaning and street sweeping, are perpetual services to City residents that are closely scrutinized by our 4 million residents, and these services will likely increase overtime and not diminish. As such, the City is proposing that a finite pilot study (2-3 year duration) be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the institutional measures in a representative area of the City. The results of the study could be used for reporting the effectiveness of the institutional measures deployed by large municipalities such as the City of Los Angeles.

   Therefore, our recommended change is as follows: *". . . In the latter case, compliance shall be determined based on direct measurement of trash discharges or jurisdiction/region specific performance data. For a large municipality/jurisdiction with 10,000 or more catch basins, the performance of the institutional measures may be determined through a pilot study performed within a representative area of such municipality/jurisdiction. The results of the study may then be used to report the effectiveness of the institutional measures deployed."*

2. *Please also apply the above change in Part 7.1.C (1) (b) (1).*

3. Within the *Findings* document, Finding No. 53 it states *". . .Violations of the effluent limitations, therefore, are limited to the days of a storm event greater than 0.25 inches."* The reference to a storm event greater than 0.25 inches to assess violations is inaccurate and appears to be in conflict with the Full Capture System's definition. As you know, the TMDL defines a full capture system as a device or series of devices that traps all particles retained by a 5 mm mesh screen and has a design treatment capacity of not less than the peak flow rate resulting from a one-year, one-hour storm. Therefore, violations may be linked to the one-year, one-hour storm but not to a 0.25 inches storms or larger.

   We recommend deleting the sentence and replacing it with one that references the definition of a full capture device in the TMDL.

It is important to note that the City has been reporting its annual trash reductions based on the number of installation of full capture and partial capture devices within the City, the performance of the devices, and the drainage areas serviced by the devices. The current reported reductions do not account for the benefits achieved by the ongoing institutional measures. The City intends on claiming credit for its institutional measures following completion of its installation of all structural devices in the City.

In closing, the City will invest approximately $80 million to comply with the Trash TMDLs citywide. We have spent to-date approximately $50 million towards retrofitting catch basins with structural devices to prevent trash from reaching the receiving waters and the City's strategy has been successful and used by other municipalities not only in the LA region but also in the San Francisco Bay area and Washington DC. The City's current investment involved the installation of in-line full capture systems (6 hydrodynamic devices and 14 netting systems), and off-line systems full and partial capture systems (8,000 catch basin inserts and 24,000 screen covers).

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the City's comments, please contact Shahram Kharaghani, Stormwater Program Manager, at (213) 485-0587, or Donna Toy Chen at (213) 485-3928.

Sincerely,

ENRIQUE C. ZALDIVAR, Director
Bureau of Sanitation

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WPDCR 8685

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