

Executive Officer's Summary Report
8:30 a.m., September 29, 2011
Regional Water Quality Control Board
David C. Joseph Hearing Room
5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A
Santa Rosa, California

Item: 2

Subject: Public Hearing on Order No. R1-2011-0054, to consider adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Rio Dell Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF), NPDES No. CA0022748, W DID No. 1B83134OHUM, Humboldt County

DISCUSSION

The City of Rio Dell (hereinafter Discharger) is currently discharging pursuant to Order No. R1-2006-0021 and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CA0022748. The Discharger submitted a Report of Waste Discharge, dated December 9, 2010, and applied for an NPDES permit renewal.

The Discharger owns and operates a municipal wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) and associated wastewater collection and disposal facilities that serve a population of 3,100 within the City of Rio Dell. The existing treatment system includes an automatic screen and grit removal system, primary clarifiers, rotating biological contactors (RBCs), secondary clarifiers, and chlorine disinfection and dechlorination facilities. The WWTF is designed to treat an average annual flow of 0.9 mgd. Solids are stabilized through aerobic digestion and then dewatered with a belt filter press. Dried sludge is applied under separate waste discharge requirements to agricultural land.

Upgrades to the WWTF system since adoption of Order No. R1-2006-0021 include the new headworks pumping system, a hypochlorite generation system for disinfection, and a belt press for solids dewatering which have already been installed. During the term of proposed Order No. R1-2011-0054, the Discharger plans to construct additional upgrades to the existing WWTF. A secondary treatment and solids stabilization system (Aero-Mod) will ultimately replace the existing primary clarifiers, RBCs, secondary clarifiers, and aerobic digesters. Upgrades will also include additional changes to the chlorination and effluent pumping systems; and new laboratory and office facilities.

From October 1 through May 14, treated wastewater from the Facility may be discharged at Discharge Point 001 to the Lower Eel River. The Lower Eel River is a water of the United States within the Eel River Watershed. From May 15 through September 30, point source discharges to the Eel River are prohibited, therefore treated

wastewater is currently discharged to a percolation pond identified as Discharge Point 002 adjacent to the Lower Eel River.

As part of WWTF upgrades, a pipeline will be constructed to transport treated effluent to a new disposal site at Discharge Point 003. Land application at Discharge Point 003 will occur during the summertime discharge prohibition period and at other times between October 1 and May 14 which will not result in production of runoff. The new irrigation disposal site is located northwest of the City of Rio Dell and west of the southbound Highway 101 Bridge on an agricultural parcel. The usable area of the site is approximately 25 acres. Once Discharge Point 003 is online, Discharge Point 002 will be permanently abandoned.

The Discharger submitted an Antidegradation Analysis in July 2010. The primary purpose of the Antidegradation Analysis was to evaluate proposed discharges to the new irrigation disposal site for consistency with State Water Board Resolution 68-16, *Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California*, which requires demonstration that high quality water be maintained and that any change to those waters will not unreasonably affect present and anticipated beneficial uses of that water. The Antidegradation Analysis evaluated the potential for exceedance of water quality objectives which apply to the existing and potential beneficial uses of groundwater at the new irrigation disposal site. Results of the evaluation indicate that groundwater beneath the proposed irrigation site will continue to support beneficial uses given the proposed irrigation of treated effluent. Order No. R1-2011-0054 requires ongoing receiving water monitoring of groundwater to confirm the findings of the Antidegradation Analysis. In addition, Order No. R1-2011-0054 applies new effluent limitations for nitrate, nitrogen, and ammonia at Discharge Point 001 when treated effluent is discharged to the Lower Eel River.

A copy of the draft permit and/or information to access the draft on the Regional Water Board website was mailed to the Discharger, interested agencies, and persons. This item was opened for public comment from May 16, 2011 to June 15, 2011. No comments were received.

PRELIMINARY STAFF
RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Order R1-2011-0054 as proposed.