

**Regional Water Quality Control Board  
North Coast Region  
Executive Officer's Summary Report  
October 7, 2022**

**ITEM: 3**

**SUBJECT:** Public Hearing to consider adoption of Cease and Desist Order (CDO) No. R1-2022-0018, requiring the City of Healdsburg (Permittee) to cease and desist from discharging or threatening to discharge effluent in violation of Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Recycling Requirements Order No. R1-2022-0017 for the City of Healdsburg Wastewater Treatment, Recycling and Disposal Facility, WDID No. 1B82046OSON, (Matthew Herman)

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board will consider adoption of CDO No. R1-2022-0018 (Proposed CDO) to replace CDO No. R1-2016-0016, which the Permittee is currently required to comply with. The Proposed CDO provides a time schedule for the Permittee to achieve compliance with the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan) seasonal discharge prohibition.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Healdsburg (Permittee) owns and operates the City of Healdsburg Wastewater Treatment, Recycling and Disposal Facility (Facility) and associated wastewater collection facility that serves a population of approximately 11,800 residents, with approximately 4,890 residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal service connections. The Facility is located at 340 Foreman Lane, Healdsburg, Sonoma County, California.

The Facility produces disinfected tertiary recycled water and has an average dry weather design treatment capacity of 1.4 million gallons per day (mgd) and a peak daily wet weather treatment capacity of 4.0 mgd. The Facility has two recycled water storage ponds, 25 million gallon and 15 million gallon capacity to provide storage for the disinfected tertiary treated recycled water. Recycled water is delivered by an effluent pump station from the recycled water storage pond to the recycled water system or is gravity fed to the Basalt Pond, depending upon seasonal requirements.

Basalt Pond is one of several gravel pits excavated adjacent to the Russian River and is the receiving water for the City of Healdsburg's discharge. Previously, the discharge to Basalt Pond was regulated by WDR, but it was determined that Basalt Pond was a water of the United States and part of the Russian River in a citizen lawsuit in 2004. Basalt Pond currently has a direct surface water connection to the Russian River after a levee breach that occurred in February 2019.

Concurrent with the adoption of this Proposed CDO, the Regional Water Board will consider adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Recycling Requirements Order No. R1-2022-0017 (Proposed Permit), which will serve as an NPDES permit for waste discharges to surface water. The Proposed Permit includes discharge prohibitions, effluent limitations, and receiving water limitations (surface water

and groundwater). Specifically, the Proposed Permit includes a discharge prohibition that limits the Permittee's discharge to Basalt Pond to October 1 through May 14 (Discharge Prohibition 3.10). The Permittee has been under requirements of a CDO to comply with the seasonal discharge prohibition since 2004 and it remains uncertain if the Permittee can comply with this requirement.

**DISCUSSION:** Disinfected tertiary effluent has historically been discharged to Basalt Pond at Discharge Point 001 year-round. Basalt Pond has been determined to be a water of the United States that is hydrologically connected to the Russian River. The Basin Plan and the Proposed Permit prohibit discharges to surface waters during the period May 15 through September 30 (seasonal discharge prohibition).

In 2004, the Permittee proposed to design and construct a recycled water storage and distribution system to provide a means for the Permittee to reuse disinfected tertiary effluent and eliminate the need to discharge to Basalt Pond during the seasonal discharge prohibition period. In 2008, the Permittee completed construction of its Facility upgrade project, increasing the level of treatment from disinfected secondary to disinfected tertiary with biological nutrient removal, and established a 25 million gallon (MG) recycled water storage pond. In 2019, the Permittee further establish an additional 15 MG capacity recycled water storage pond. To date, the Permittee has designed and constructed over 41,000 feet of recycled water distribution pipeline and two recycled water fill stations and implemented recycled water trucking programs for residential and commercial landscape, dust control and construction, vineyard, non-dairy livestock drinking water, and aggregate processing uses. The Permittee continues to work to expand the recycled water system and is looking to construct a pipeline for distribution of recycled water for municipal reuse within the upcoming permit term. The Permittee recycled approximately 51 MG of disinfected tertiary effluent in 2020 and 92 MG in 2021.

The Proposed CDO updates CDO No. R1-2016-0016 to reflect the Permittee's plans to expand its recycled water pipeline to include additional recycled water users and extends the final compliance date for the Permittee to achieve compliance with the seasonal discharge prohibition to September 30, 2024. Additionally, the Proposed CDO requires the Permittee to complete construction of their recycled water transmission pipeline to serve additional acreage as needed to increase the Permittee's recycled water use, and to submit semiannual written progress reports describing its compliance efforts to the Executive Officer.

A copy of the Draft CDO was posted on the Regional Water Board website and was available for public comment from June 15 through July 16, 2022. A timely comment letter was received from the Permittee. No other comments were received. The Permittee's comment resulted in a permit modification to the Proposed CDO's language. The attached Response to Comments document includes a full explanation of the Permittee's comment and Staff's response to this comment.

Staff notified the Permittee of the proposed changes to the Proposed CDO. The Permittee's September 19, 2022 email reply to Staff indicated that Staff's response to the Permittee's comments and changes to the Proposed CDO are acceptable to the Permittee. Staff anticipates that the Proposed CDO will be uncontested.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt CDO No. R1-2022-0018 as proposed.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

1. Proposed CDO No. R1-2022-0018
2. Notice of Public Hearing
3. Response to Comments
4. A copy of the City of Healdsburg Comment letter (dated July 14, 2022) is available upon request by emailing [Matthew.Herman@Waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Matthew.Herman@Waterboards.ca.gov)