

**NOTICE OF  
RELEASE OF DOCUMENTS  
AND OPENING OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD  
Concerning the**

**Draft *Basin Plan Amendment to  
Establish Exception Criteria to the Point Source Waste Discharge Prohibitions by  
Revising the Action Plan for Storm Water Discharges and  
Adding a New Action Plan for Low Threat Discharges***

**NOTICE IS HEARBY GIVEN** that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) is proposing to update the *Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region* (Basin Plan). On November 20, 2008 Regional Water Board staff are releasing the draft "*Basin Plan Amendment to Establish Exception Criteria to the Point Source Waste Discharge Prohibitions by Revising the Action Plan for Storm Water Discharges and Adding a New Action Plan for Low Threat Discharges*" (proposed Amendment) for review by the Regional Water Board, interested public and Federal, State and local agencies. The 45-day public comment period will begin on November 20, 2008 and end on January 15, 2009.

On January 8, 2009 Regional Water Board staff will hold a public workshop to present the proposed Amendment to interested stakeholders and to receive verbal and written comment on the proposal. The Regional Water Board will then formally consider the proposed Amendment at a public hearing on March 12, 2009. Noticing of both the workshop and the hearing will occur prior to these respective events.

**BACKGROUND**

At the direction of the Regional Water Board, staff has developed a proposed amendment to the Basin Plan that would provide exception criteria to the point source waste discharge prohibitions contained in the Basin Plan (hereinafter referred to as the 'point source prohibitions'). The proposed amendment entitled, "*Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan For The North Coast Region to Establish Exception Criteria to the Point Source Waste Discharge Prohibitions by Revising the Action Plan for Storm Water Discharges and Adding a New Action Plan for Low Threat Discharges*" (hereinafter referred to as "proposed Amendment"), would apply only to permitted discharges from specific types of activities where there is a minimal potential (or low threat) for adverse impacts to water quality to occur from the discharge. The proposed Amendment also sets specific criteria for permitting low threat discharges.

The purpose of this proposed Amendment is to address the existing conflict between conditions in regional and statewide point source discharge permits (which allow low threat discharges) and the existing prohibitions in the Basin Plan which do not. Some regional and statewide permits allow year-round point source discharges while the Basin Plan limits point source surface water discharges to the period of October 1 through May 14 in some waterbodies in the North Coast Region and prohibits all point source surface water discharges in others. Where the discharge period is limited to October 1 through May 14, the discharge during this period is limited to less than one percent of the receiving stream's flow (one- percent prohibition). The proposed

Amendment would also allow for exceptions to the one percent prohibition for low threat discharges if a discharge meets the Basin Plan criteria for exceptions to the one-percent prohibition (Item 5 on page 4-1.00 to 4-2.00 of the Basin Plan).

To address this conflict, staff will recommend that the Regional Water Board consider the proposed Amendment which would provide criteria under which exceptions to the point source prohibitions contained in the Basin Plan would be provided (hereinafter referred to as "exception criteria"). The proposed Amendment consists of:

- A new "Action Plan for Low Threat Discharges" (hereinafter referred to as Low Threat Action Plan).
- Modifications to the existing Action Plan for Storm Water Discharges (hereinafter referred to as Storm Water Action Plan).

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The proposed draft Amendment and Staff Report will be available to download from the Regional Water Board's website beginning on November 20, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. The North Coast Regional Water Board website can be accessed at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water\\_issues/programs/basin\\_plan/low\\_threat\\_discharges.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/low_threat_discharges.shtml)

Copies of these documents can also be obtained by contacting or visiting the Regional Water Board's office at 5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A, Santa Rosa, California 95403 weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m or calling 707-576-2220. Anyone having questions on the proposed Basin Plan Amendment should contact Ms. Lauren Clyde at 707-576-2674 or via email at [LClyde@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:LClyde@waterboards.ca.gov).

### **Comments should be submitted to:**

North Coast Region Water Quality Control Board  
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
ATTN: Lauren Clyde

Interested parties who would like to receive email notifications for various North Coast Regional Water Board issues including the Low Threat Discharge Basin Plan Amendment can sign up on the Email List Subscription Form located at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/reg1\\_subscribe.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg1_subscribe.shtml)

Catherine Kuhlman  
Executive Officer

November 17, 2008