

STAFF REPORT  
ORDER NO. xxxx  
GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
MAINTENANCE DREDGING OPERATIONS  
SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA

**Background**

The removal, transport and placement of dredge sediments are the primary components of the dredging process. Discharges from dredging operations may contain suspended solids, turbidity, oxygen-depleting compounds, metals and other constituents of concern at the dredging site. Upland placement of dredged material may impact groundwater, or erode into surface waters. Although dredged sediments may contain constituents or contamination (defined as waste in this Order) that can render it unsuitable for some or all reuse applications, the material itself represents a potentially valuable and necessary resource required for the maintenance of Delta levees.

Maintenance dredging is necessary to ensure the safe navigation of Delta waterways; to maintain channel capacity for flood flows; and to provide material for the maintenance of the Delta levees. Over 1,100 miles of levees are in place to protect the Delta islands from flooding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local reclamation districts maintain Delta levees, however access to suitable levee material is problematic due to the high cost of transport and re-handling of the large quantities of earth and sediment that are required.

In addition to dredging operations required to maintain channel capacity, the Delta supports more than 100 marinas and 30 launching ramps, which also require regular maintenance dredging to remain operational.

This General Order addresses the need for regular maintenance dredging to provide channel capacity and marina operation, as well as the need for dredged sediment to be directly reused, where appropriate, as a resource to provide material for levee maintenance and other beneficial uses, in a manner which provides protection of water quality consistent with the mandate of the Central Valley Water Board.

**Major Issues**

No major issues were identified by interested parties during the public comment period. Written comments were received from three parties: the Californian Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Bay Area Planning Commission; and Ross Island Sand and Gravel Co. These comments were addressed either in the General Order or in a response to comment letter.