

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

FACT SHEET / TECHNICAL REPORT

FOR

**TENTATIVE ORDER NO. R9-2007-0002
NPDES NO. CAS0108740**

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS

FOR

**DISCHARGES OF URBAN RUNOFF FROM
THE MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEMS (MS4S)
DRAINING THE WATERSHEDS OF THE
COUNTY OF ORANGE,
THE INCORPORATED CITIES OF ORANGE COUNTY,
AND THE ORANGE COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT
WITHIN THE SAN DIEGO REGION**

February 9, 2007

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADT - Average Daily Traffic
BAT - Best Available Technology
BIA - Building Industry Association of San Diego County
BMP - Best Management Practice
Basin Plan - Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin
CASQA - California Stormwater Quality Association
CCC - California Coastal Commission
CDFG - California Department of Fish and Game
CEQA - California Environmental Quality Act
CFR - Code of Federal Regulations
Copermittees - County of Orange, the 11 incorporated cities within the County of Orange in the San Diego Region, and the Orange County Flood Control District
CWA - Clean Water Act
CWC - California Water Code
CZARA - Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990
ESAs - Environmentally Sensitive Areas
FR - Federal Register
GIS - Geographic Information System
IC/ID - Illicit Connections and Illicit Discharges
JURMP - Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan
LARWQCB – California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region
MEP - Maximum Extent Practicable
MRP - Receiving Waters Monitoring and Reporting Program
MS4 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NOI - Notice of Intent
NPDES - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRDC - Natural Resources Defense Council
NURP - Nationwide Urban Runoff Program
Regional Board – California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region
RGOs - Retail Gasoline Outlets
ROWD - Orange County Copermittees' Report of Waste Discharge
RWLs - Receiving Water Limitations
SIC - Standard Industrial Classification Code
SUSMP - Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan
SWMP - Storm Water Management Plan
State Board - State Water Resources Control Board
SWPPP - Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TAC - State Water Resources Control Board Urban Runoff Technical Advisory Committee
TIE - Toxicity Identification Evaluation
TMDL - Total Maximum Daily Load
USEPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency
USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers
WDRs - Waste Discharge Requirements
WLA - Waste Load Allocation
WQC - Water Quality Criteria
WQBEL - Water Quality Based Effluent Limits
WQMP – Water Quality Management Plan
WSPA - Western States Petroleum Association
WURMP - Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plan

I. FACT SHEET FORMAT

This Fact Sheet briefly sets forth the principle facts and the significant factual, legal, methodological, and policy questions that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (Regional Board) considered in preparing Order No. R9-2007-0002. In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) title 40 parts 124.8 and 124.56, this Fact Sheet includes, but is not limited to, the following information:

- A. Contact information
- B. Public process and notification procedures
- C. Background information
- D. Permitting approach
- E. Economic issues
- F. Legal authority
- G. Findings
- H. Directives

The Regional Board's files applicable to the issuance of Order No. R9-2007-0002 are incorporated into the administrative record in support of the findings and requirements of Order No. R9-2007-0002.

II. CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Order and other related documents can be downloaded from the Regional Board website at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/oc_stormwater.html.

All documents referenced in this Fact Sheet and in Order No. R9-2007-0002 are available for public review at the Regional Board office, located at the address listed above. Public records are available for inspection during regular business hours, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. To schedule an appointment to inspect public records, contact Sylvia Wellnitz at 858-637-5593 or DiAnne Broussard at 858-492-1763.

Copermittees

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| County of Orange | City of Laguna Woods |
| Orange County Flood Control District | City of Lake Forest |
| City of Aliso Viejo | City of Mission Viejo |
| City of Dana Point | City of Rancho Santa Margarita |
| City of Laguna Beach | City of San Clemente |
| City of Laguna Hills | City of San Juan Capistrano |
| City of Laguna Niguel | |

III. PUBLIC PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

The Regional Board followed the schedule listed below for the preparation of Order No. R9-2007-0002:

- A. In April 2006 and July 2006, the Northern Watershed Unit of the Regional Board met with the Copermittees to discuss the Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) and potential changes to the permit based on the annual reports and the tentative permit for San Diego County.
- B. On August 18, 2006, the Regional Board received the ROWD for the permit renewal.
- C. On October 20, 2006 the Regional Board provided written comments on the ROWD to the Copermittees.
- D. On November 15, 2006, the Regional Board received the 2005-06 annual reports from the Copermittees for the existing permit.
- E. On January 11, 2007, the Regional Board notified all known interested parties that an electronic email listserv had been established to provide information and notices on the reissuance of the municipal storm water NPDES permit for southern Orange County.
- F. On February 9, 2007, the Regional Board released the tentative Order and notified interested parties of a planned workshop.
- G. A public workshop was held on (DATE).
- H. A public hearing of the tentative Order was conducted on (DATE).

IV. BACKGROUND

Tentative Order No. R9-2007-0002 is the third reissuance of the storm water permit for the municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) in the Orange County portion of the San Diego region. The first permit was adopted in 1990, and the permit was reissued in 1996 and 2002.

Municipal Storm Water Permits are required by the Federal Clean Water Act 1987 Amendments. The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) was amended in 1987 to address urban runoff. One requirement of the amendment was that many municipalities throughout the United States were obligated for the first time to obtain National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for discharges of urban runoff from their MS4s. In response to the CWA amendment (and the pending federal NPDES regulations which would implement the amendment), the Regional Board issued a municipal storm water permit, Order No. 90-38, in July 1990 to the Copermittees for their urban runoff discharges.¹

The First and Second Term Permits, Order Nos. 90-38 and 96-03, provided maximum flexibility. Order No. 90-38 contained the “essentials” of the 1990 regulations, but the requirements were written in very broad, generic terms. This was done in order to provide the maximum amount of flexibility to the Copermittees in implementing the new requirements (flexibility was, in fact, the stated reason for issuing the permit in advance of the final regulations). This lack of specificity was reflected in the Drainage Area Management Plan (DAMP) implemented under this First Term Permit in 1993 and renewed under the Second Term Permit in 1996. From staff’s perspective however, this same lack of specificity, combined with the lack of funding and political will, also provided the Copermittees with ample reasons to take few substantive steps towards permit compliance. The situation was exacerbated by the Regional Board’s own lack of storm water resources.

By 2000 the Regional Board and Copermittees recognized the importance of an improved storm water program. Although renewed in 1996 as Order No. 96-03, the 1993 DAMP implemented by the Copermittees was not significantly updated until 2000. The 2000 DAMP submitted to the Regional Board for the Third-Term Permit renewal was improved over the earlier DAMP. Regional Board staff concluded, however, that it reflected only the basic requirements of the 1990 Federal Regulations and in most cases did not represent significant improvement over the 1993 DAMP. Continued implementation of the DAMP without amendment would not have adequately addressed the impacts to receiving waters resulting from the discharge of urban runoff and would not have achieved the maximum extent practicable standard (MEP) as defined in the Order.

In order to provide the Copermittees with the minimum requirements to meet the MEP standard of the Regional Board, a more detailed Order was adopted (Order No. R9-2002-01) that emphasized the strong jurisdictional level programs developed by the Copermittees during the First and Second Term Permits as well as the watershed-level approach embodied in the proposed DAMP.

¹ The 1990 permit was issued to the County of Orange, the Orange County Flood Control District, and six incorporated cities. Additional municipalities have been added to the MS4 NPDES permit as they have incorporated.

The Third-Term Permit introduced specific requirements. The regulatory approach incorporated into Order No. R9-2002-01 was a significant departure from the regulatory approach of the First and Second-Term Permits. Where Order Nos. 90-38 and 96-03 included broad, nonspecific requirements in order to provide the Copermitees with the maximum amount of flexibility in implementing their programs, Order No. R9-2002-01 used detailed, specific requirements which outlined the minimum level of implementation required for the Copermitees' programs. The shift in permitting approaches resulted from the Regional Board's conclusion that the lack of specificity in earlier Orders resulted in frequently unenforceable permit requirements, which in turn allowed some Copermitees to only make limited progress in implementing their programs.

The Third-Term Permit followed the San Diego County permit template. The shift in regulatory approaches for MS4 permits was first manifested in the 2001 MS4 permit to the owners and operators of San Diego County MS4s (Order No. R9-2001-01). The Third-Term Orange County Permit included similar requirements as the 2001 San Diego County Permit. Both the San Diego and Orange County Permits were appealed to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board).² Minor modifications of each were made by the State Board, but the vast majority of the requirements were upheld. The San Diego County permit was also challenged in the Superior Court of the State of California and the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District. Further litigation on the Orange County permit was held pending the precedential decisions on the San Diego Permit. The San Diego Permit was largely upheld in the Superior and Appellate Courts. The State of California Supreme Court declined to hear a final appeal from the Building Industry Association in March 2005. Thus, the Third-Term Orange County permit requirements remained as slightly modified by the State Board.

The Third-Term Permit was adopted following substantial public participation. Public participation was extensive during the adoption process of the Third-Term Permit. The draft permit was released for public review and comment on July 2, 2001, and revised in response to comments and State Board Order WQ 2001-15 on the petition to review the San Diego Municipal Storm Water Permit. Because the proposed requirements for Orange County were similar to those that had recently been adopted and contested in San Diego County, much of the public participation dialogue echoed the discussions held during the San Diego renewal. Approximately 684 comments were received and responded to during two public workshops and a written comment period on the Tentative Order for the Third-Term Orange County permit. Following the extensive public participation process, the Regional Board adopted Order No. R9-2002-01 on February 13, 2002.

² Seven petitions were filed with the State Board over the Third-Term Orange County Permit. Six were placed in abeyance. Three of the petitioners sought stays. One stay request was dismissed and one was withdrawn. The active petition and stays were addressed by the State Board in Order No. WQO 2002-0014. That Order stayed provision F.5.f regarding sewage spills and modified Finding No. 26 regarding chronic toxicity.

Storm water programs have improved under the Third-Term Permit. Since adoption of Order No. R9-2002-01, the Copermittees' storm water programs have expanded dramatically. Audits of the Copermittees' programs and reviews of annual reports exhibit that the Copermittees' jurisdictional programs are largely in compliance with the Order. Some of the efforts currently being conducted on a regular basis by the Copermittees that were not conducted on a widespread basis prior to adoption of Order No. R9-2002-01, include: construction site storm water inspections, industrial and commercial facility storm water inspections, municipal facility storm water inspections, management of storm water quality from new development, development of BMP requirements for existing development, interdepartmental coordination, comprehensive water quality monitoring, and assessment of storm water program effectiveness.

Significant urban runoff challenges remain. When viewed relative to the magnitude of the urban runoff problem, enormous challenges remain, particularly regarding the management of urban runoff on a watershed scale. Today, urban runoff continues to be the leading cause of water quality impairment in the San Diego Region.³ The Copermittees' monitoring data exhibits persistent exceedances of water quality objectives in most watersheds.⁴ Many watersheds also have urban runoff conditions that are frequently toxic to aquatic life. Bioassessment data from the watersheds further reflects these conditions, finding that macroinvertebrate communities in creeks have widespread Poor to Very Poor Index of Biotic Integrity ratings. Finally, the now too familiar "health advisory" or "beach closure" signs, which often result from high levels of bacteria in urban runoff, exhibit the continued threat to public health by urban runoff.

³ The potential sources of impairments are identified on the CWA section 303(d) list of impaired water bodies for the San Diego Region.

⁴ Data is provided in annual reports to the Regional Board. A summary of data collected during the third-term permit is provided in the Copermittees' application for permit reissuance. That summary is available on-line at: http://www.ocwatersheds.com/StormWater/documents_ROWd.asp

V. PERMITTING APPROACH (PROGRAM INTEGRATION, FLEXIBILITY, AND DETAIL)

The Order contains an increased emphasis on urban runoff management on a watershed basis. This shift towards increased watershed urban runoff management is consistent with planning efforts conducted by the Regional Board regarding reissuance of the San Diego Permit (Order No. R9-2007-0001), and it is also consistent with the Copermittees' most recent Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD).⁵ This shift reflects recognition of the maturity of the urban runoff programs since they began implementing the Third-Term Permit. Addressing urban runoff management on a watershed basis is only possible if effective jurisdictional programs have been established, and maintaining effective jurisdictional programs is crucial to the success of watershed-focused management.

There are several reasons for this shift in emphasis. First, the Copermittees are generally doing an effective job at implementing their jurisdictional programs; while on the other hand, an emphasis on watersheds is necessary to shift the focus of the Copermittees from program development and implementation to water quality results. After over 15 years of Copermittee program implementation, it is critical that the Copermittees link their efforts with positive impacts on water quality. Addressing urban runoff management on a watershed scale focuses on water quality results by emphasizing the receiving waters within the watershed. The conditions of the receiving waters drive management actions, which in turn focus on the water quality problems in each watershed.

Focusing on watershed implementation does not mean that the Copermittees must expend funds outside of their jurisdictions. Rather, the Copermittees within each watershed are expected to collaborate to develop a watershed strategy to address the high priority water quality problems within each watershed. They then have the option of implementing the strategy in the manner they find to be most effective. Each Copermittee can implement the strategy individually within its jurisdiction, or the Copermittees can group together to implement the strategy throughout the watershed as a group.

While the Order includes a new emphasis on addressing urban runoff on a watershed basis, the Order includes recognition of the importance of continued program implementation on jurisdictional and countywide levels. The Order also acknowledges that jurisdictional, watershed, and countywide efforts are not always mutually exclusive. For this reason, an attempt has been made to allow for the Copermittees' jurisdictional, watershed, and countywide programs to integrate.

⁵ The Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) was submitted to the Regional Board on August 18, 2006 by the Principal Permittee (County of Orange) on behalf of all Copermittees.

In the Order, the watershed requirements serve as the mechanism for this program integration. Since jurisdictional and countywide activities can also serve watershed purposes, such activities can be integrated into the Copermittees' watershed programs, provided the activities meet certain criteria. In this manner, the Copermittees' activities do not always need to distinguish between jurisdictional, watershed, and countywide levels of implementation. Instead, they can be integrated on multiple levels.

Such opportunities for program integration inherently provide flexibility to the Copermittees in implementing their programs. Program integration can be expanded or minimized as the Copermittees see fit. For example, there is flexibility provided in determining the activities to be integrated and implemented in the watershed programs – watershed-based efforts, countywide efforts, enhanced jurisdictional efforts, or a mixture of the three. Significant flexibility is also provided throughout other portions of the Order.

Copermittees can choose the best management practices (BMPs) to be implemented, or required to be implemented, for development, construction, and existing development areas. Flexibility to determine which industrial or commercial sites are to be inspected is also provided to the Copermittees. Educational approaches are also to be determined by the Copermittees under the Order. Implementation of certain efforts on a countywide basis is largely optional for the Copermittees as well. Significant leeway is also provided to the Copermittees in using methods to assess the effectiveness of their various urban runoff management programs. This flexibility is further extended to the monitoring program requirements, which allow the Copermittees to develop monitoring approaches to several aspects of the monitoring program.

The challenge in drafting the Order is to provide the flexibility described above while ensuring that the Order is still enforceable. To achieve this, the Order frequently prescribes minimum measurable outcomes, while providing the Copermittees with flexibility in the approaches they use to meet those outcomes. Enforceability has been found to be a critical aspect of the Order. For example, the watershed requirements of Order No. R9-2002-01 were some of the Order's most flexible requirements. This lack of specificity in the watershed requirements resulted in inefficient watershed compliance efforts. This situation reflects a common outcome of flexible permit language. Such language can be unclear and unenforceable, and it can lead to implementation of inadequate programs.

To avoid these types of situations, a balance between flexibility and enforceability has been crafted into the Order. Minimum measurable outcomes are utilized to ensure the Order is enforceable, while the Copermittees are provided flexibility in deciding how they will implement their programs to meet the minimum measurable outcomes.

VI. ECONOMIC ISSUES

Economic discussions of urban runoff management programs tend to focus on the significant costs incurred by municipalities in developing and implementing the programs. However, when considering the cost of implementing the urban runoff programs, it is also important to consider the alternative costs incurred by not fully implementing the programs, as well as the benefits which result from program implementation. For instance, unhealthful coastal water quality conditions negatively affect residents, tourists, and related portions of the Orange County economy.⁶

It is very difficult to ascertain the true cost of implementation of the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs because of inconsistencies in reporting by the Copermittees. Reported costs of compliance for the same program element can vary widely from city to city, often by a very wide margin that is not easily explained.⁷ Despite these problems, efforts have been made to identify urban runoff management program costs, which can be helpful in understanding the costs of program implementation. The Orange County Municipalities plan to prepare a common fiscal reporting strategy to better define the expenditure and budget line items included in annual reports.⁸

Estimates of Phase I Storm Water Program Costs.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the California Regional Water Quality Control Boards, and the State Board have attempted to evaluate the costs of implementing municipal storm water programs. The assessments demonstrate that true costs are difficult to ascertain and reported costs vary widely. Nonetheless, they provide a useful context for considering the costs of requirements within Tentative Order No. R9-2007-0002. In addition, reported fiscal analyses tend to neglect the costs incurred to municipalities when urban runoff is not effectively managed. Such costs result from pollution, contamination, nuisance, and damage to ecosystems, property, and human health.

In 1999 USEPA reported on multiple studies it conducted to determine the cost of urban runoff management programs. A study of Phase II municipalities determined that the annual cost of the Phase II program was expected to be \$9.16 per household. USEPA also studied 35 Phase I municipalities, finding costs to be \$9.08 per household annually, similar to those anticipated for Phase II municipalities.⁹ The USEPA cost estimate for Phase I municipalities is valuable because it considers municipalities in Orange County.

⁶ Orange County 2006 Community Indicators Project. 2006. Sponsored by the County of Orange, the Orange County Business Council, and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. Available on-line at www.oc.ca.gov/ceocommunity.asp

⁷ LARWQCB, 2003. Review and Analysis of Budget Data Submitted by the Permittees for Fiscal Years 2000-2003. P. 2.

⁸ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region)

⁹ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68791-68792.

A study on program cost was also conducted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (LARWQCB), where program costs reported in the municipalities' annual reports were assessed. The LARWQCB estimated that average per household cost to implement the MS4 program in Los Angeles County was \$12.50.¹⁰ Since the Los Angeles County permit is very similar to Order No. R9-2002-01, this estimate is also useful in assessing general program costs in Orange County.

The State Board also recently commissioned a study by the California State University, Sacramento to assess costs of the Phase I MS4 program. This study includes an assessment of costs incurred by Phase I MS4s throughout the State to implement their programs. Annual cost per household in the study ranged from \$18-46, with the City of Encinitas in San Diego County representing the upper end of the range.¹¹ Although no Orange County municipalities were assessed, the cost of the City of Encinitas' program may be somewhat representative of the upper range of Orange County MS4 programs. Encinitas shares similarities with southern Orange County, including the similarity of the San Diego MS4 permit to the Orange County MS4 permit, the city's coastal location, and its reliance on tourism. However, the City's program cost can be considered as the high end of the spectrum for urban runoff management program costs because the City has a consent decree with environmental groups regarding its program, and City of Encinitas has received recognition for implementing a superior program.

It is important to note that reported program costs are not all attributable to compliance with MS4 permits. Many program components, and their associated costs, existed before any MS4 permits were ever issued. For example, street sweeping and trash collection costs cannot be solely or even principally attributable to MS4 permit compliance, since these practices have long been implemented by municipalities. Therefore, true program cost resulting from MS4 permit requirements is some fraction of reported costs. The California State University, Sacramento study found that only 38 percent of program costs are new costs fully attributable to MS4 permits. The remainder of the program costs were either pre-existing or resulted from enhancement of pre-existing programs.¹² In 2000, the County of Orange found that even lesser amounts of program costs are solely attributable to MS4 permit compliance, reporting that the amount attributable to implement the Drainage Area Management Plan (DAMP), was less than 20 percent of the total budget. The remaining 80 percent was attributable to pre-existing programs.¹³

Estimating Costs of Reissued Storm Water Permits

¹⁰ LARWQCB, 2003. Review and Analysis of Budget Data Submitted by the Permittees for Fiscal Years 2000-2003. P. 2.

¹¹ State Board, 2005. NPDES Stormwater Cost Survey. P. ii.

¹² Ibid. P. 58.

¹³ County of Orange, 2000. A NPDES Annual Progress Report. P. 60. More current data from the County of Orange is not used in this discussion because the County of Orange no longer reports such information.

The vast majority of costs that will be incurred as a result of implementing Order No. R9-2007-0002 are not new. Urban runoff management programs have been in place in Orange County for over 15 years. Any increase in cost to the Copermittees will be incremental in nature. Moreover, since Order No. R9-2007-0002 “fine tunes” the requirements of Order No. R9-2002-01, these cost increases are expected to be modest.

The anticipated costs of program changes are difficult to estimate because of the flexibility inherent within the Permit and the recognition that program modifications will vary among the municipalities in response to the specific needs of the local and watershed programs. In other words, the Permit is intended to allow each Permittee to de-emphasize some program components and strengthen others based on the experience of the jurisdictional programs.

The changes in Order No. R9-2007-0002 reflect the iterative process of BMP implementation and the necessarily adaptive nature of storm water management that is expected by the U.S. EPA. In 1996, U.S. EPA recognized that changes to MS4 programs would occur during the reapplication period based on new information on the relative magnitude of a problem, new data on water quality impacts of the storm water discharges, and experience gained under the prior permit.¹⁴ Some program changes have been proposed by the Copermittees in the permit reapplication package, and others have been included because the Regional Board considers those measures necessary and feasible to protect water quality from the effects of MS4 discharges.

Other Economic Considerations.

Economic considerations of urban runoff management programs cannot be limited only to program costs. Evaluation of programs requires information on the implementation costs and information on the benefits derived from environmental protection and improvement.¹⁵ Attention is often focused on program costs, but the programs must also be viewed in terms of their value to the public.

¹⁴ Federal Register / Vol. 61, No. 155 / Friday, August 9, 1996 / Rules and Regulations. Interpretive policy memorandum on reapplication requirements for MS4s.

¹⁵ Ribaud M.O. and D. Heelerstein. 1992, *Estimating Water Quality Benefits: Theoretical and Methodological Issues*. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Technical Bulletin No. 1808.

For example, household willingness to pay for improvements in fresh water quality for fishing and boating has been estimated by USEPA to be \$158-210.¹⁶ This estimate can be considered conservative, since it does not include important considerations such as marine waters benefits, wildlife benefits, or flood control benefits. The California State University, Sacramento study corroborates USEPA's estimates, reporting annual household willingness to pay for statewide clean water to be \$180.¹⁷ When viewed in comparison to household costs of existing urban runoff management programs, household willingness to pay estimates exhibit that per household costs incurred by Copermitees to implement their urban runoff management programs remain reasonable.

The effect of urban runoff on receiving waters can also influence the value of real estate in southern Orange County. For instance, recent marketing of new developments in the region prominently features access or proximity to the ocean.¹⁸ This demonstrates the added value of healthy aquatic environments to property values. The real estate industry recognizes that home buyers are willing to pay for access to clean water environments. The ability to market water-based recreational activities is dependent on healthy water quality conditions.

Municipalities and business groups in Orange County recognize the value of programs to prevent and treat urban runoff pollution in Orange County. For instance, both coastal and inland Orange County cities positively promote their access to the Pacific Ocean as a valuable quality of life feature.¹⁹ In addition, the South Orange County Regional Chamber of Commerce's legislative policy for infrastructure includes the support of programs and solutions for non-point source urban water runoff. This demonstrates that the business community realizes the negative economic effects that result from polluted urban runoff.

¹⁶ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68793.

¹⁷ State Board, 2005. NPDES Stormwater Cost Survey. P. iv.

¹⁸ Examples include the "Marblehead Coastal" project in San Clemente (<http://www.marbleheadonthecoast.com>), the "Pacifica San Juan" project in San Juan Capistrano (<http://pacificasanjuan.com>), and "The Strand at Headlands" in Dana Point (<http://strandoc.com>).

¹⁹ For a coastal city, see Laguna Beach Overview at <http://www.lagunabeachcity.net/about/overview>. For an inland city, see the Lake Forest 2005 Economic Profile at <http://www.thearbor.info/pdf/2005%20Economic%20Profile.pdf>.

Another important way to consider urban runoff management program costs is to consider the implementation cost in terms of costs incurred by not improving the programs. Urban runoff in southern California has been found to cause illness in people bathing near storm drains.²⁰ A study of south Huntington Beach and north Newport Beach (both located in northern Orange County) found that an illness rate of about 0.8% among bathers at those beaches resulted in about \$3 million annually in health-related expenses.²¹ Extrapolation of such numbers to the wide range of beaches of Orange County could result in huge public expenses.

Urban runoff and its impact on receiving waters also affect tourism. In past years, Orange County was featured in the national press for its water quality problems. Such news is likely to have a negative impact on tourism, since polluted beaches are generally not attractive to tourists. According to the Orange County Community Indicators Project, the County's visitors spent an average of \$107.70 per day in 2004.²² The experience of Huntington Beach provides an example of the potential economic impact of poor water quality. Approximately eight miles of Huntington Beach were closed for two months in the middle of summer of 1999, severely impacting beach visitation. When considered with the number of visitors and their average expenditure, the negative effects to the local economy are obvious.

Coastal tourism is an important industry in Orange County and is dependent upon effective management of urban runoff pollution. The following examples reflect that relationship.

DANA POINT: In response to a Grand Jury finding (1999-2000 Rainy Season's First Flush Hits the Harbors of Orange County), the city of Dana Point notes the interrelationship between the clean coastal water and the economic health of the city. Dana Point reports receiving \$5.2 million in transit occupancy tax funds in FY 1999-2000 "due in large part because of proximity to the beach. Without clean beaches, Dana Point risks losing its major revenue source."²³ More recently, the City budget report estimates that transit occupancy taxes comprise 35% of general fund revenues for the 2006 fiscal year.

²⁰ Haile, R.W., et al, 1996. An Epidemiological Study of Possible Adverse Health Effects of Swimming in Santa Monica Bay. Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project.

²¹ Dwight, R.H., et al., 2005. Estimating the Economic Burden From Illnesses Associated With Recreational Coastal Water Pollution – A Case Study in Orange County, California. *Journal of Enviro. Management* Vol.76. No.2 p.95-103. Also reported in: Los Angeles Times, May 2, 2005. Here's What Ocean Germs Cost You: A UC Irvine Study Tallies the Cost of Treatment and Lost Wages for Beachgoers Who Get Sick.

²² Orange County 2006 Community Indicators Project. 2006. Sponsored by the County of Orange, the Orange County Business Council, and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. Available on-line at www.oc.ca.gov/ceocommunity.asp

²³ Orange County Grand Jury. 1999-2000 Rainy Season's First Flush Hits the Harbors of Orange County.

LAGUNA BEACH: Tourism is one of the primary components of the Laguna Beach economy, and the beach is one of the main tourist attractions in the city. In 1999, hotel/motel bed tax revenue was approximately \$3 million, representing 13% of the City's general fund revenue.²⁴ In 2006, the City expects transit occupancy taxes to represent about 11% of general fund revenue.²⁵ The proportional decrease is due to an increase in property taxes, which is also affected in part by the quality of coastal waters. The City Council recognizes the value of the beaches to tourists and the local population and has funded several low-flow diversion systems in an attempt to decrease beach pollution and beach closures.

DOHENY STATE BEACH: In 1997, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) prepared an economic analysis as part of the San Juan Creek and Aliso Creek Watershed Study. Recreational value for Doheny State Beach, based on annual visitation of 670,545 people in 1995, was calculated at \$2,850,000. Furthermore, the USACE notes that lifeguards reported that beach attendance falls dramatically when there are unhealthy conditions in the ocean. In 1999, the USACE prepared an updated economic study as part of the Feasibility Phase of the San Juan Creek Watershed Management Study. The 1999 study reports that average beach attendance from 1996 to 1998 increased to 918,735. The USACE places a recreation value per visitor at \$5.76, which implies the annual recreational value of Doheny State Beach for 1996 to 1998 was \$5,291,914.

ALISO BEACH: In 1997, the USACE prepared an economic analysis as part of the San Juan Creek and Aliso Creek Watershed Study. Recreational value for Aliso Beach, based on annual visitation of 3,477,369 people in 1995, was calculated at \$14,779,000. In the 1999 Draft Feasibility Report for the Aliso Creek Watershed Management Study, the USACE noted that the average beach attendance from 1996 to 1998 decreased to 1,148,374. The recreation value per visitor was calculated at \$4.50 and the average annual impact from water quality-related beach closures at Aliso Beach Park was estimated to be \$468,392. This number is comparable to an economic analysis conducted as part of the Aliso Creek Watershed 205(j) study that estimated the annual average recreational value impact of beach closures at Aliso Beach Park to be \$468,400.

²⁴ Laguna Beach at a Glance. May 2000. Prepared by Moore Iacofano Goltzman, Inc.

²⁵ City of Laguna Beach, adopted budget 2006-2007. Available on-line at:
<http://www.lagunabeachcity.net/government/reference/budget07>

Finally, it is important to consider the benefits of urban runoff management programs in conjunction with their costs. A recent study conducted by USC/UCLA assessed the costs and benefits of implementing various approaches for achieving compliance with the MS4 permits in the Los Angeles Region. The study found that non-structural systems would cost \$2.8 billion but provide \$5.6 billion in benefit. If structural systems were determined to be needed, the study found that total costs would be \$5.7 to \$7.4 billion, while benefits could reach \$18 billion.²⁶ Costs are anticipated to be borne over many years – probably ten years at least. As can be seen, the benefits of the programs are expected to considerably exceed their costs. Such findings are corroborated by USEPA, which found that the benefits of implementation of its Phase II storm water rule would also outweigh the costs.²⁷

Additional discussion of economic issues can be found at section 3 of the Fact Sheet/Technical Report for Regional Board Order No. R9-2002-01, available at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/oc_stormwater.html.

VII. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The following statutes, regulations, and Water Quality Control Plans provide the basis for the requirements of Order No. R9-2006-0011: Clean Water Act (CWA), California Water Code (CWC), 40 CFR Parts 122, 123, 124 (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Application Regulations for Storm Water Discharges, Final Rule), Part II of 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124 (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System – Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges; Final Rule), Water Quality Control Plan – Ocean Waters of California (California Ocean Plan), Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan), 40 CFR 131 Water Quality Standards; Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants for the State of California; Rule (California Toxics Rule), and the California Toxics Rule Implementation Plan.

The legal authority citations below generally apply to directives in Order No. R9-2007-0002, and provide the Regional Board with ample underlying authority to require each of the directives of Order No. R9-2007-0002. Legal authority citations are also provided with each permit section discussion in section IX of this Fact Sheet/Technical Report.

CWA 402(p)(3)(B)(ii) – The CWA requires in section 402(p)(3)(B)(ii) that permits for discharges from municipal storm sewers “shall include a requirement to effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges into the storm sewers.”

²⁶ LARWQCB, 2004. Alternative Approaches to Stormwater Control.

²⁷ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68791.

CWA 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) – The CWA requires in section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) that permits for discharges from municipal storm sewers “shall require controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including management practices, control techniques and system, design and engineering methods, and such other provisions as the Administrator or the State determines appropriate for the control of such pollutants.”

40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B,C,E, and F) – Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B,C,E, and F) provide that each Copermittee’s permit application “shall consist of: (i) Adequate legal authority. A demonstration that the applicant can operate pursuant to legal authority established by statute, ordinance or series of contracts which authorizes or enables the applicant at a minimum to: [...] (B) Prohibit through ordinance, order or similar means, illicit discharges to the municipal separate storm sewer; (C) Control through ordinance, order or similar means the discharge to a municipal separate storm sewer of spills, dumping or disposal of materials other than storm water; [...] (E) Require compliance with condition in ordinances, permits, contracts or orders; and (F) Carry out all inspection, surveillance and monitoring procedures necessary to determine compliance and noncompliance with permit conditions including the prohibition on illicit discharges to the municipal separate storm sewer.”

40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv) – Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv) provides that the Copermittee shall develop and implement a proposed management program which “shall include a comprehensive planning process which involves public participation and where necessary intergovernmental coordination, to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable using management practices, control techniques and system, design and engineering methods, and such other provisions which are appropriate. The program shall also include a description of staff and equipment available to implement the program. [...] Proposed programs may impose controls on a system wide basis, a watershed basis, a jurisdiction basis, or on individual outfalls. [...] Proposed management programs shall describe priorities for implementing controls.”

40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A - D) – Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A - D) require municipalities to implement controls to reduce pollutants in urban runoff from new development and significant redevelopment, construction, and commercial, residential, industrial, and municipal land uses or activities. Control of illicit discharges is also required.

CWC 13377 – CWC section 13377 provides that “Notwithstanding any other provision of this division, the State Board or the regional boards shall, as required or authorized by the CWA, as amended, issue waste discharge requirements and dredged or fill material permits which apply and ensure compliance with all applicable provisions of the act and acts amendatory thereof or supplementary, thereto, together with anymore stringent effluent standards or limitation necessary to implement water quality control plans, or for the protection of beneficial uses, or to prevent nuisance.”

Order No. R9-2007-0002 is an essential mechanism for achieving the water quality objectives that have been established for protecting the beneficial uses of the water resources in the San Diego Region portion of Orange County. Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1) requires MS4 permits to include any requirements necessary to “achieve water quality standards established under CWA section 303, including State narrative criteria for water quality.” The term “water quality standards” in this context refers to a water body’s beneficial uses and the water quality objectives necessary to protect those beneficial uses as established in the Basin Plan and antidegradation policies.

VIII. FINDINGS

The findings of the Order have been modified to reduce repetition in their discussions and address new requirements. Each finding of the Order is provided and discussed below. Additional discussion relative to the findings can be found in section IX of the Fact Sheet, which provides discussions of the Order’s directives.

A. Basis For the Order

Finding A.1. This Order is based on the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Division 7 of the Water Code, commencing with Section 13000), applicable state and federal regulations, all applicable provisions of statewide Water Quality Control Plans and Policies adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board), the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin adopted by the Regional Board, the California Toxics Rule, and the California Toxics Rule Implementation Plan.

Discussion of Finding A.1. In 1987, Congress established CWA Amendments to create requirements for storm water discharges under the NPDES program, which provides for permit systems to regulate the discharge of pollutants. Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the State Board and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards have primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality, including the authority to implement the CWA. Porter-Cologne (section 13240) directs the Regional Water Quality Control Boards to set water quality objectives via adoption of Basin Plans that conform to all State policies for water quality control.

As a means for achieving those water quality objectives, Porter-Cologne (section 13243) further authorizes the Regional Water Quality Control Boards to establish waste discharge requirements (WDRs) to prohibit waste discharges in certain conditions or areas. Since 1990, the San Diego Regional Board has issued area-wide MS4 NPDES permits. The Order will renew Order No. R9-2002-01 to comply with the CWA and attain water quality objectives in the Basin Plan by limiting the contributions of pollutants conveyed by urban runoff. Further discussions of the legal authority associated with the prohibitions and directives of the Order are provided in section VII this document.

Finding A.2. This Order renews National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CAS0108740, which was first issued on July 16, 1990 (Order No. 90-38), and then renewed on August 8, 1996 (Order No. 96-03) and February 13, 2002 (Order No. R9-2002-01). On August 21, 2006, in accordance with Order No. R9-2002-01, the County of Orange, as the Principal Permittee, submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) for renewal of the MS4 Permit.

Discussion of Finding A.2. This Order renews National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CAS0108740, which was first issued on July 16, 1990 (Order No. 90-38), and then renewed on August 8, 1996 (Order No. 96-03) and February 13, 2002 (Order No. R9-2002-01). On August 21, 2006, in accordance with Order No. R9-2002-01, the County of Orange, as the Principal Permittee, submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) for renewal of the MS4 Permit. Supporting information discussing the topic of this finding can be found in section V of this document.

Finding A.3. This Order is consistent with the following precedential Orders adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) addressing municipal storm water NPDES Permits: Order 99-05, Order WQ-2000-11, Order WQ 2001-15, and Order WQO 2002-0014.

Discussion of Finding A.3. In recent years the State Board has considered several appeals of MS4 permits issued by the Regional Boards. In Order 99-05, the State Board established language for Receiving Water Limitation Language for MS4 permits. In Order No. WQ-2000-11, the State Board addressed design standards for Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements. Order WQ 2001-15 addressed Petitions of the San Diego County MS4 Permit issued by the Regional Board in 2001 (Order No. R9-2001-01). Order WQO 2002-0014 addresses Petitions of the Orange County MS4 Permit issued by the Regional Board in 2002 (Order No. R9-2002-01).

B. Regulated Parties

Finding B.1. Each of the persons in Table 1 of the Order, hereinafter called Copermittees or dischargers, owns or operates a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), through which it discharges urban runoff into waters of the United States within the San Diego Region. These MS4s fall into one or more of the following categories: (1) a medium or large MS4 that services a population of greater than 100,000 or 250,000 respectively; or (2) a small MS4 that is “interrelated” to a medium or large MS4; or (3) an MS4 which contributes to a violation of a water quality standard; or (4) an MS4 which is a significant contributor of pollutants to waters of the United States.

Discussion of Finding B.1. Section 402 of the CWA prohibits the discharge of any pollutant to waters of the United States from a point source, unless that discharge is authorized by a NPDES permit. Though urban runoff comes from a diffuse source, it is discharged through MS4s, which are point sources under the CWA. Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(a) (iii) and (iv) provide that discharges from MS4s, which service medium or large populations greater than 100,000 or 250,000 respectively, shall be required to obtain a NPDES permit. Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(a)(v) also provides that a NPDES permit is required for “A [storm water] discharge which the Director, or in states with approved NPDES programs, either the Director or the USEPA Regional Administrator, determines to contribute to a violation of a water quality standard or is a significant contributor of pollutants to waters of the United States.” Such sources are then designated into the program.

Other small MS4s, such as those serving universities and military installations, also exist within the watersheds of Orange County in the San Diego Region. While these MS4s are not subject to this Order, they are subject to the Phase II NPDES storm water regulations. Over time, these MS4s will be designated for coverage under the State Board’s statewide general storm water permit for small MS4s.

C. Discharge Characteristics

Finding C.1. Urban runoff contains waste, as defined in the California Water Code (CWC), and pollutants that adversely affect the quality of the waters of the State. The discharge of urban runoff from an MS4 is a “discharge of pollutants from a point source” into waters of the U.S. as defined in the CWA.

Discussion of Finding C.1. Section 13050(d) of the CWC defines “waste” as “sewage and any and all other waste substances, liquid, solid, gaseous, or radioactive, associated with human habitation, or of human or animal origin, or from any producing, manufacturing, or processing operation, including waste placed within containers of whatever nature prior to, and for purposes of, disposal.” 40 CFR 122.2 defines “point source” as “any discernable, confined, and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to, any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation, landfill leachate collection system, vessel or other floating craft from which pollutants are or may be discharged. This term does not include return flows from irrigated agriculture or agricultural storm water runoff.” 40 CFR 122.2 defines “discharge of a pollutant” as “Any addition of any pollutant or combination of pollutants to waters of the U.S. from any point source.” Also, the justification for control of pollution into waters of the state can be found at CWC section 13260(a)(1). State Board Order WQ 2001-15 verifies that urban runoff contains waste²⁸.

Finding C.2. The most common categories of pollutants in urban runoff include total suspended solids, sediment (due to anthropogenic activities); pathogens (e.g., bacteria, viruses, protozoa); heavy metals (e.g., copper, lead, zinc and cadmium); petroleum products and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons; synthetic organics (e.g., pesticides, herbicides, and PCBs); nutrients (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers), oxygen-demanding substances (decaying vegetation, animal waste), detergents, and trash.

Discussion of Finding C.2. The National Urban Runoff Program (NURP) study showed that heavy metals, organics, coliform bacteria, nutrients, oxygen demanding substances (e.g., decaying vegetation), and total suspended solids are found at relatively high levels in urban runoff.²⁹ It also found that MS4 discharges draining residential, commercial, and light industrial areas contain significant loadings of total suspended solids and other pollutants. The Basin Plan goes on to identify urban runoff pollutants to include lawn and garden chemicals, household and automotive care products dumped or drained on streets, and sediment that erodes from construction sites.³⁰ In addition, the State Board Urban Runoff Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) finds that urban runoff pollutants include sediments, nutrients, oxygen-demanding substances, heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, pathogenic bacteria, viruses, and pesticides.³¹ Runoff that flows over streets, parking lots, construction sites, and industrial, commercial, residential, and municipal areas carries these untreated pollutants through storm drain networks directly to the receiving waters of the San Diego Region.

²⁸ State Board, 2001. Order WQ 2001-15. In the Matter of Petitions of Building Industry Association of San Diego County and Western States Petroleum Association: For Review of Waster Discharge Requirements Order No. 2001-01 for Urban Runoff from San Diego County [NPDES No. CAS0108758] Issued by the Regional Board.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Regional Board, 1994. Water Quality Control Plan, San Diego Basin, Region 9. San Diego.

³¹ State Board, 1994. Urban Runoff Technical Advisory Committee Report and Recommendations. Nonpoint Source Management Program.

Finding C.3. The discharge of pollutants and/or increased flows from MS4s may cause or threaten to cause the concentration of pollutants to exceed applicable receiving water quality objectives and impair or threaten to impair designated beneficial uses resulting in a condition of pollution (i.e., unreasonable impairment of water quality for designated beneficial uses), contamination, or nuisance.

Discussion of Finding C.3. The 1992, 1994, and 1996 National Water Quality Inventory Reports to Congress prepared by USEPA showed a trend of impairment in the nation's waters from contaminated storm water and urban runoff.³² The 1998 National Water Quality Inventory Report showed that urban runoff discharges affect 11% of rivers, 12% of lakes, and 28% of estuaries. The report states that ocean shoreline impairment due to urban runoff increased from 55% in 1996 to 63% in 1998. The report notes that urban runoff discharges are the leading source of pollution and the main factor in the degradation of surface water quality in California's coastal waters, rivers, and streams. Furthermore, the NURP study found that pollutant levels from illicit discharges were high enough to significantly degrade receiving water quality, and threaten aquatic life, wildlife, and human health.³³

In addition, the Region's CWA section 303(d) list, which identifies water bodies with impaired beneficial uses within the region, also indicates that the impacts of urban runoff on receiving waters are significant. Many of the impaired water bodies on the 303(d) list are impaired by constituents that have been found at high levels within urban runoff by the County of Orange storm water monitoring program.³⁴ Examples of constituents frequently responsible for beneficial use impairment include indicator fecal bacteria, heavy metals, and sediment; these constituents have been found at high levels in urban runoff both regionally and nationwide.^{35,36} In addition, impairments may be caused by synergistic effects of multiple contaminants or by pollutants not currently monitored by storm water programs³⁷.

Finding C.4. Pollutants in urban runoff can threaten and adversely affect human health. Human illnesses have been clearly linked to recreating near storm drains flowing to coastal waters. Also, urban runoff pollutants in receiving waters can bioaccumulate in the tissues of invertebrates and fish, which may be eventually consumed by humans.

³² USEPA, 2000. Quality of Our Nation's Waters: Summary of the National Water Quality Inventory 1998 Report to Congress – USEPA 841-S-00-001; Water Quality Conditions in the United States: Profile from the 1998 National Water Quality Inventory Report to Congress – USEPA 841-F-00-006.

³³ USEPA, 1993. Results of the Nationwide Urban Runoff Program, Volume 1 – Final Report.

³⁴ County of Orange, 2006. Orange County Municipal Copermittees 2005-2006 Annual Storm Water Program Report, Section 11.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ USEPA, 1983. Results of the Nationwide Urban Runoff Program, Volume 1 – Final Report.

³⁷ County of Orange, 2006. Orange County Municipal Copermittees 2005-2006 Annual Storm Water Program Report, Section 11.

Discussion of Finding C.4. A landmark study, conducted by the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project, found that there was an increased occurrence of illness in people that swam in proximity to a flowing storm drain.³⁸ A study of south Huntington Beach and north Newport Beach (both located in northern Orange County) found that an illness rate of about 0.8% among bathers at those beaches resulted in about \$3 million annually in health-related expenses.³⁹ Furthermore, urban runoff pollutants in receiving waters can bioaccumulate in the tissues of invertebrates and fish, which may eventually be consumed by humans. Pollutants such as heavy metals and pesticides, which are commonly found in urban runoff, have been found to bioaccumulate and biomagnify in long-lived organisms at the higher trophic levels.⁴⁰ Since many aquatic species are utilized for human consumption, toxic substances accumulated in species' tissues can pose a significant threat to public health. USEPA supports this finding when it states, "As runoff flows over areas altered by development, it picks up harmful sediment and chemicals such as oil and grease, pesticides, heavy metals, and nutrients (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus). These pollutants often become suspended in runoff and are carried to receiving waters, such as lakes, ponds, and streams. Once deposited, these pollutants can enter the food chain through small aquatic life, eventually entering the tissues of fish and humans."⁴¹

Finding C.5. Urban runoff discharges from MS4s often contain pollutants that cause toxicity to aquatic organisms (i.e., adverse responses of organisms to chemicals or physical agents ranging from mortality to physiological responses such as impaired reproduction or growth anomalies). Toxic pollutants impact the overall quality of aquatic systems and beneficial uses of receiving waters.

³⁸ Haile, R.W., et al., 1996. An Epidemiological Study of Possible Adverse Health Effects of Swimming in Santa Monica Bay. Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project.

³⁹ Dwight, R.H., et al., 2005. Estimating the Economic Burden From Illnesses Associated With Recreational Coastal Water Pollution – A Case Study in Orange County, California. *Journal of Enviro. Management* Vol.76. No.2 p.95-103. Also reported in: Los Angeles Times, May 2, 2005. Here's What Ocean Germs Cost You: A UC Irvine Study Tallies the Cost of Treatment and Lost Wages for Beachgoers Who Get Sick.

⁴⁰ Abel, P.D, 1996. *Water Pollution Biology*.

⁴¹ USEPA, 2000. *Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide*. Washington D.C. EPA 833-R-00-002.

Discussion of Finding C.5. The Copermittees' monitoring data exhibits frequent toxic conditions in urban runoff during storm events and dry weather. Toxicity is observed in both fresh and marine receiving waters, but varies significantly within and among sites and over time. However, according to the County of Orange, toxicity in both dry and wet weather appears concentrated along the coast. This supports the conclusion that toxicity is associated with urban activities and is caused by pollutants that flow downstream and become concentrated near the bottom of urbanized watersheds. Physical channel modification and hydromodification are also greatest near the coast and likely contribute to findings of toxicity. The cause of toxicity may vary between locations, dates, and indicator organisms. The actual cause may be influenced by various factors such as urbanization, urban runoff management, habitat modification, hydromodification, and native aquatic environment. Toxicity identification evaluations (TIEs) have failed to confirm initial findings of toxicity. Follow-up studies by the County of Orange implicate both pollutants and physical stream habitat degradation (e.g. channel modification and hydromodification) as factors related to toxicity findings.⁴²

Finding C.6. The Copermittees discharge urban runoff into lakes, drinking water reservoirs, rivers, streams, creeks, bays, estuaries, coastal lagoons, the Pacific Ocean, and tributaries thereto within one of the eleven hydrologic units (San Juan Hydrologic Unit) comprising the San Diego Region as shown in Tables 2a and 2b. Some of the receiving water bodies have been designated as impaired by the Regional Board and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in 2006 pursuant to CWA section 303(d). Also shown in the Tables are the watershed management areas (WMAs) as defined in the Regional Board report, Watershed Management Approach, January 2002.

Discussion of Finding C.6. This finding identifies the Copermittees responsible for MS4 discharges in each watershed management area. The list is identical to Order No. R9-2002-01. The CWA Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters, 2006 Update has been approved by the Regional Board, State Board, and USEPA.⁴³ This 303(d) list identifies waters that do not meet water quality standards after applying certain required technology-based effluent limits ("impaired" water bodies). As part of this listing process, states are required to prioritize waters/watersheds for future development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). The listed 303(d) pollutant(s) of concern do not necessarily reflect impairment of the entire corresponding WMA or all corresponding major surface water bodies. The specific impaired portions of each WMA are listed in the State Board's 2006 Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments.

⁴² County of Orange, 2006. Orange County Municipal Copermittees 2005-2006 Annual Storm Water Program Report, Section 11.

⁴³ The approved 2006 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments is on-line at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/tmdl/303d_lists2006.html

Finding C.7. The Copermittees' water quality monitoring data submitted to date documents persistent violations of Basin Plan water quality objectives for various urban runoff-related pollutants (fecal coliform bacteria, total suspended solids, turbidity, metals, etc.) at various watershed monitoring stations. Persistent toxicity has also been observed at some watershed monitoring stations. In addition, bioassessment data indicates that the majority of urbanized receiving waters have Poor to Very Poor Index of Biotic Integrity ratings. In sum, the above findings indicate that urban runoff discharges are causing or contributing to water quality impairments, and are a leading cause of such impairments in Orange County.

Discussion of Finding C.7. The Copermittees have produced data that demonstrates water quality objectives are frequently not met during dry and wet weather. The 2006 Report of Waste Discharge and the 2005-06 Annual Reports document that receiving water monitoring stations often fail to meet water quality objectives established in the Basin Plan. Similar conclusions are found in monitoring reported to the Regional Board pursuant to Investigative Orders issued between 2001 and 2006 for Aliso Creek, Salt Creek⁴⁴, Prima Deshecha⁴⁵, and North Creek at Doheny Beach⁴⁶. Monitoring reported to the State Board pursuant to funding grant agreements also demonstrates that discharges from MS4s routinely exceed water quality objectives.^{47,48, 49, 50, 51}

⁴⁴ An Investigative Order was issued on March 6, 2003 to the City of Dana Point for water quality conditions of Salt Creek near Monarch Beach.

⁴⁵ An Investigative Order was issued on July 3, 2002 to the City of San Clemente and the County of Orange for water quality conditions of Prima Deshecha Canada (including Poche Beach).

⁴⁶ Investigative Order No. R9-2006-0039 was issued on April 4, 2006 to the City of Dana Point and Quantum Ozone, Inc. for an assessment of water quality conditions at North Creek, Doheny Beach.

⁴⁷ City of Dana Point. 2005. *Final Report for the Del Obispo Storm Drain Project*. Prepared for the State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 02-216-550-0.

⁴⁸ City of Dana Point. 2004. *Final Report For The Alipaz Storm Drain Treatment And Low Flow Diversion Project* by the City of Dana Point. Prepared for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement Number: 01-068-550-0.

⁴⁹ James Volz. 2005. *Final Report for Poche Beach Urban Runoff Ultraviolet Light Bacteria Disinfection Project*. Prepared by the County of Orange for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-236-550-1.

⁵⁰ Max Anderson. 2005. *Final Report: Aliso Beach Clean Beach Initiatives, J01P28 Interim Water Quality Improvement Package Plant Best Management Practices*. Prepared by the County of Orange for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-227-550-0.

⁵¹ City of Laguna Niguel and CH2MHILL. 2004. *Final Report: Wetland Capture and Treatment (WetCAT) Network*. Prepared for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-122-259-0.

Water quality in receiving waters downstream of MS4 discharges fail to meet Ocean Plan standards⁵², California Toxics Rule standards⁵³, and Basin Plan objectives. Data submitted in the MS4 Annual Reports indicate that at various times chemical, bacteria, pesticide, and metal concentrations may exceed water quality objectives in marine and fresh water receiving waters in both wet and dry weather conditions. Although wet weather MS4 effluent data is not generally reported, dry-weather MS4 effluent data demonstrates that the effluent contains concentrations of pollutants that would exceed receiving water quality objectives.

In most of these watersheds, there are no other significant NPDES permits discharging to the creeks. For instance, there are no live-stream discharges of treated waste water in south Orange County. The few NPDES permits in the watersheds are mainly for recycled water which only discharges occasionally during the rainy season. Because the water quality monitoring indicates exceedances of water quality standards and urban runoff is the main source of pollutants in the watersheds, it can be inferred that the urban runoff discharges are causing or contributing to water quality impairments, and are a leading cause of such impairments in Orange County.

Finding C.8. When natural vegetated pervious ground cover is converted to impervious surfaces such as paved highways, streets, rooftops, and parking lots, the natural absorption and infiltration abilities of the land are lost. Therefore, runoff leaving a developed urban area is significantly greater in runoff volume, velocity, and peak flow rate than pre-development runoff from the same area. Runoff durations can also increase as a result of flood control and other efforts to control peak flow rates. Increased volume, velocity, rate, and duration of runoff greatly accelerate the erosion of downstream natural channels. Significant declines in the biological integrity and physical habitat of streams and other receiving waters have been found to occur with as little as a 3-5% conversion from natural to impervious surfaces. The increased runoff characteristics from new development must be controlled to protect against increased erosion of channel beds and banks, sediment pollutant generation, or other impacts to beneficial uses and stream habitat due to increased erosive force.

Finding C.9. Urban development creates new pollution sources as human population density increases and brings with it proportionately higher levels of car emissions, car maintenance wastes, municipal sewage, pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, trash, etc. which can either be washed or directly dumped into the MS4. As a result, the runoff leaving the developed urban area is significantly greater in pollutant load than the pre-development runoff from the same area. These increased pollutant loads must be controlled to protect downstream receiving water quality.

⁵² The Basin Plan incorporates terms and conditions of the State Board's *Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California* (Ocean Plan) as a water quality objective for Ocean Waters in the San Diego Region.

⁵³ The California Toxics Rule criteria promulgated by the U.S. EPA are directly applicable water quality standards for certain priority toxic pollutants in inland surface waters and enclosed bays and estuaries in California.

Discussion of Findings C.8 and C.9.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) 1999 Report, "*Stormwater Strategies, Community Responses to Runoff Pollution*" identifies two main causes of the storm water pollution problem in urban areas. Both causes are directly related to development in urban and urbanizing areas:

1. Increased volume and velocity of surface runoff. There are three types of human-made impervious covers that increase the volume and velocity of runoff: (i) rooftop, (ii) transportation imperviousness, and (iii) non-porous (impervious) surfaces. As these impervious surfaces increase, infiltration will decrease, forcing more water to run off the surface, picking up speed and pollutants.
2. The concentration of pollutants in the runoff. Certain industrial, commercial, residential and construction activities are large contributors of pollutant concentrations in urban runoff. As human population density increases, it brings with it proportionately higher levels of car emissions, car maintenance wastes, municipal sewage, pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, trash, etc.

As a result of these two causes, runoff leaving developed urban areas is significantly greater in volume, velocity, and pollutant load than pre-development runoff from the same area.

By accommodating the traditional approach to storm water management, urbanization has also altered the flow regime (rate, magnitude, frequency, timing, and flashiness of runoff) that supports aquatic and riparian habitats. These hydrologic changes are driven by the loss of water storage capacity in the watersheds,⁵⁴ and exacerbated by physical alterations of the stream channel network.⁵⁵ This relationship between urbanization and stream channel integrity has been documented nationally and in southern California.

⁵⁴ Konrad, Christopher P. and Derek K. Booth, 2005. *Hydrologic Changes in Urban Streams and Their Ecological Significance*. American Fisheries Society Symposium Vol.47 pp.157-177.

⁵⁵ Poff, N.L. et al. 1997. The Natural Flow Regime: A paradigm for river conservation and restoration. *Bioscience* Vol. 47, No. 11, pp.769-784.

Hydrologic changes from urban development also directly and indirectly adversely affect wetlands. Natural wetlands support many beneficial uses and provide important water-quality related ecological services, including pollutant removal, flood attenuation, and groundwater recharge.⁵⁶ The Center for Watershed Protection recently provided USEPA with a synthesis of more than 100 scientific studies on the direct and indirect impacts of urbanization on wetlands and the role wetlands play in watershed quality. The report found that the three changes from land development with the most potential to impact wetlands include: Increased storm water runoff; decreased groundwater recharge; and flow constriction.⁵⁷ Each of these changes can often be avoided or minimized by implementing site design and hydromodification BMPs.

When Order No. R9-2002-01 was adopted, studies had shown that the level of imperviousness in an area strongly correlates with the quality of nearby receiving waters.⁵⁸ One comprehensive study, which looked at numerous areas, variables, and methods, revealed that stream degradation occurs at levels of imperviousness as low as 10 – 20%.⁵⁹ Stream degradation is a decline in the biological integrity and physical habitat conditions that are necessary to support natural biological diversity. For instance, few urban streams can support diverse benthic communities with imperviousness greater than or equal to 25%.⁶⁰ To provide some perspective, a medium density, single-family home area can be from 25% to 60% impervious (variation due to street and parking design).⁶¹

More recently, a report on the effects of impervious in southern California streams found that local ephemeral and intermittent streams are more sensitive to such effects than streams in other parts of the country. This study, by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Program, estimated a threshold of response at a two to three percent change in percent of impervious cover in a watershed.⁶² This threshold is lower than the previously reported estimates by the USEPA that were cited in the Fact Sheet for Order No. R9-2002-01.

⁵⁶ Wright, Tiffany, et al. 2006. "Direct and Indirect Impacts of Urbanization on Wetland Quality." Prepared by the Center for Watershed Protection. Available at: <http://www.cwp.org>. 81p.

⁵⁷ Ibid p.26

⁵⁸ USEPA, 1999. Part II. 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System – Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges; Final Rule. Federal Register.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

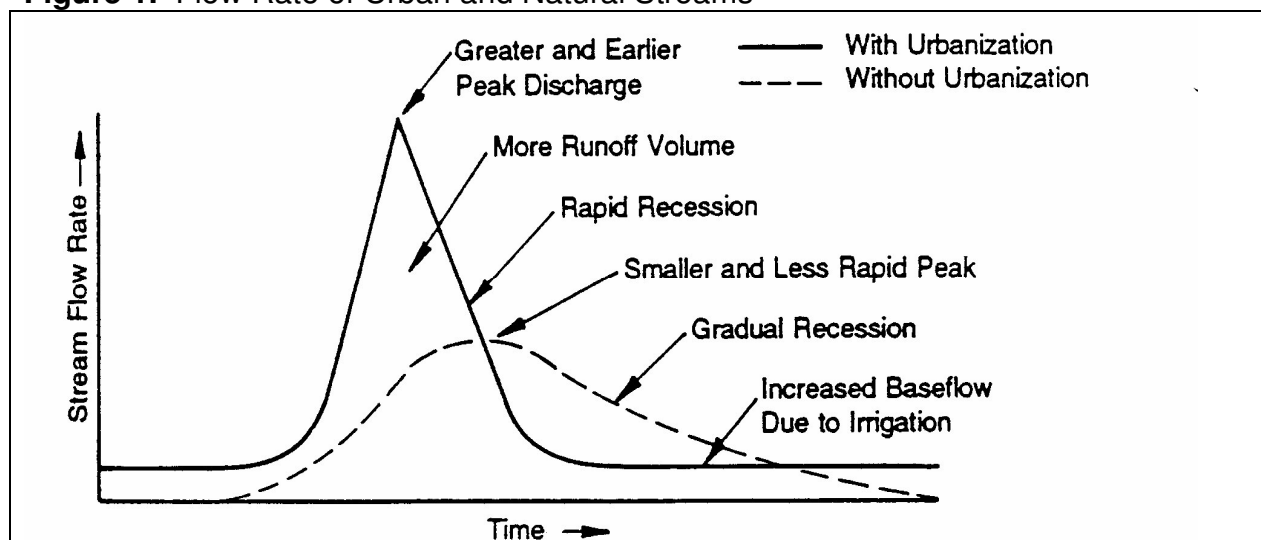
⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Schueler, T.R., 1994. The Importance of Imperviousness. Watershed Protection Techniques. As cited in 64 Fed. Reg. 68725.

⁶² Coleman, Derrick, et al. 2005. *Effect of Increases in Peak Flows and Imperviousness on the Morphology of Southern California Streams*. Technical Report No. 450 of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

To demonstrate the principle of increased volume and velocity of runoff from urbanization, Figure 1 shows the flow rate of an urban vs. a natural stream. What the figure demonstrates is that urban stream flows have greater peaks and volumes, as well as shorter retention times than natural stream flows. The greater peak flows and volumes result in stream degradation through increased erosion of stream banks and damage to aquatic habitat. The shorter retention times result in less time for sediments and other pollutants to settle before being carried out to the ocean. This sediment, and the associated pollutants it carries, can be a significant cause of water quality degradation.

Figure 1. Flow Rate of Urban and Natural Streams⁶³



Increased volume and velocity of runoff adversely impacts receiving waters and their beneficial uses in many ways. According to the Urban Runoff TAC report,⁶⁴ increases in population density and imperviousness result in changes to stream hydrology including:

1. Increased peak discharges compared to pre-development levels;
2. Increased volume of storm water runoff with each storm compared to pre-development levels;
3. Decreased travel time to reach receiving water; increased frequency and severity of floods;
4. Reduced stream flow during prolonged periods of dry weather due to reduced levels of infiltration;
5. Increased runoff velocity during storms due to a combination of effects of higher discharge peaks, rapid time of concentration, and smoother hydraulic surfaces from channelization; and
6. Decreased infiltration and diminished ground water recharge.

⁶³ Adapted from Schueler, T.R., 1987. Controlling Urban Runoff: A Practical Manual for Planning and Designing Urban BMPs. Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

⁶⁴ State Board, 1994. Urban Runoff Technical Advisory Committee Report and Recommendations. Nonpoint Source Management Program.

Even though the rainfall depths in arid watersheds are lower, watershed development can greatly increase peak discharge rates during rare flood events.⁶⁵ A study conducted in arid watersheds around Riverside, CA showed that, over two decades, impervious cover increased from 9% to 22%, which resulted in an increase of more than 100% in the peak flow rate for the two-year storm event. The study also showed that the average annual storm water runoff volume had increased by 115% to 130% over the same time span.⁶⁶

Regarding the impact of urban development on urban runoff pollutant loads, the Regional Board's Basin Plan states:

Nonpoint source pollution is primarily the result of man's uses of land such as urbanization, roads and highways, vehicles, agriculture, construction, industry, mineral extraction, physical habitat alteration (dredging/filling), hydromodification (diversion, impoundment, channelization), silviculture (logging), and other activities which disturb land.⁶⁷ As a result, when rain falls on and drains through urban freeways, industries, construction sites, and neighborhoods it picks up a multitude of pollutants. The pollutants can be dissolved in the runoff and quickly transported by gravity flow through a vast network of concrete channels and underground pipes referred to as storm water conveyance systems. Such systems ultimately discharge the polluted runoff, without treatment, into the nation's creeks, rivers, estuaries, bays, and oceans.⁶⁸

According to the Center for Watershed Protection, urbanization strongly shapes the quality of both surface and ground water in arid and semi-arid regions of the southwest. Since rain events are so rare, pollutants have more time to build up on impervious surfaces compared to humid regions. Therefore, the pollutant concentrations of storm water runoff from arid watersheds tends to be higher than that of humid watersheds.⁶⁹ The effect of antecedent rainfall events is demonstrated in a recent report from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that found the concept of a seasonal first flush is applicable to the southern California climate.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Schueler and Holland, 2000. Storm Water Strategies for Arid and Semi-Arid Watersheds (Article 66). The Practice of Watershed Protection. P. 695-706.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Regional Board, 1994. Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin. P. 4-66.

⁶⁸ Ibid. P. 4-69 - 4-70.

⁶⁹ Schueler and Holland, 2000. Storm Water Strategies for Arid and Semi-Arid Watersheds (Article 66). The Practice of Watershed Protection. P. 695-706.

⁷⁰ Stenstrom, Michael and Masoud Kayhanian, 2005. *First Flush Phenomenon Characterization*. Prepared for Caltrans. Report No. CTSW-RT-05-73-02.6 Study jointly performed by UCLA and UCD. Most of the data presented was collected from three highly urbanized highway sites in west Los Angeles. Much effort went into developing a quantitative way of defining the mass first flush. Other aspects include: variability of water quality during storm events, litter characteristics, correlation among constituents, first flush of organics and particle size distribution, new methods for measuring oil and grease, and grab and composite sampling strategies. The report is available on-line at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/special/newsetup/>

Finding C.10. Development and urbanization especially threaten environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), such as water bodies designated as supporting a RARE beneficial use (supporting rare, threatened or endangered species) and CWA 303(d)-impaired water bodies. Such areas have a much lower capacity to withstand pollutant shocks than might be acceptable in other areas. In essence, development that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may become significant in a particularly sensitive environment. Therefore, additional control to reduce pollutants from new and existing development may be necessary for areas adjacent to or discharging directly to an ESA.

Discussion of Finding C.10. ESAs are defined in the Order as “Areas that include but are not limited to all CWA Section 303(d) impaired water bodies; areas designated as Areas of Special Biological Significance by the Basin Plan ; water bodies designated with the RARE beneficial use by the Basin Plan; areas designated as preserves or their equivalent under the Natural Communities Conservation Program within the Cities and County of Orange; and any other equivalent environmentally sensitive areas which have been identified by the Copermittees.”

Areas that meet this definition are inherently sensitive habitats containing unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species, or are not achieving their designated beneficial uses. As discussed above, urban runoff is known to contain a wide range of pollutants and have demonstrated toxicity to plants and animals. Therefore, it is necessary to apply additional controls for developments within, adjacent to, or directly discharging to ESAs. This need for additional controls is addressed within each component of the Order. USEPA supports the requirement for additional controls, stating “For construction sites that discharge to receiving waters that do not support their designated use or other waters of special concern, additional construction site controls are probably warranted and should be strongly considered.”⁷¹ Further support for requiring additional controls to reduce pollutants in discharges to ESAs can be found in *Mitigation of Storm Water Impacts From New Developments in Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, a technical report written by the LARWQCB.⁷²

ESAs within the area subject to this Order are expected to be substantially similar to the previous Order. Additions may be necessary once the South County Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) is formally adopted. Other modifications may reflect updated descriptions or findings of threatened or endangered aquatic species.

⁷¹ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. Washington D.C. EPA/833-B-92-002.

⁷² LARWQCB, 2001. *Mitigation of Storm Water Impacts From New Developments In Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.

Finding C.11. Although dependent on several factors, the risks typically associated with properly managed infiltration of runoff (especially from residential land use areas) are not significant. The risks associated with infiltration can be managed by many techniques, including (1) designing landscape drainage features that promote infiltration of runoff, but do not “inject” runoff (injection bypasses the natural processes of filtering and transformation that occur in the soil); (2) taking reasonable steps to prevent the illegal disposal of wastes; (3) protecting footings and foundations; and (4) ensuring that each drainage feature is adequately maintained in perpetuity.

Discussion of Finding C.11. Infiltration is an effective means for managing urban runoff. However, measures must be taken to protect groundwater quality when infiltration of urban runoff is implemented. USEPA supports urban runoff infiltration and provides guidance for protection of groundwater: “With a reasonable degree of site-specific design considerations to compensate for soil characteristics, infiltration may be very effective in controlling both urban runoff quality and quantity problems. This strategy encourages infiltration of urban runoff to replace the natural infiltration capacity lost through urbanization and to use the natural filtering and sorption capacity of soils to remove pollutants; however, the potential for some types of urban runoff to contaminate groundwater through infiltration requires some restrictions.”⁷³ The restrictions placed on urban runoff infiltration in this Order are based on recommendations provided by the USEPA Risk Reduction Engineering Laboratory. The State Board found in Order WQ 2000-11 on the appeal of the LARWQCB’s Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements that the guidance provided in the above referenced document by the USEPA Risk Reduction Engineering Laboratory is sufficient for the protection of groundwater quality from urban runoff infiltration. To further protect groundwater quality, the Order also includes guidance from the LARWQCB,⁷⁴ the State of Washington,⁷⁵ and the State of Maryland.⁷⁶ Subsequently, the California Storm Water Quality Association (CASQA) has produced technical guidance for post-construction treatment BMPs to protect ground water quality⁷⁷.

⁷³ USEPA, 1994. Potential Groundwater Contamination from Intentional and Nonintentional Stormwater Infiltration. EPA 600 SR-94 051.

⁷⁴ LARWQCB, 2000. Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan for Los Angeles County and Cities in Los Angeles County.

⁷⁵ Washington State Department of Ecology, 1999. Draft Stormwater Management in Washington State. Volume V – Runoff Treatment BMPs. Pub. No. 99-15.

⁷⁶ Maryland Department of the Environment, 1999. 2000 Maryland Stormwater Design Manual. Volume I.

⁷⁷ CASQA. The New Development and Redevelopment Handbook, 2003. Available on-line at <http://www.cabmphandbooks.org/Development.asp>

D. Urban Runoff Management Programs

Finding D.1.a. This Order specifies requirements necessary for the Copermittees to reduce the discharge of pollutants in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). However, since MEP is a dynamic performance standard which evolves over time as urban runoff management knowledge increases, the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs must continually be assessed and modified to incorporate improved programs, control measures, best management practices (BMPs), etc. in order to achieve the evolving MEP standard. Absent evidence to the contrary, this continual assessment, revision, and improvement of urban runoff management program implementation is expected to ultimately achieve compliance with water quality standards.

Discussion of Finding D.1.a. Under CWA section 402(p), municipalities are required to reduce the discharge of pollutants from their MS4s to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MEP is the critical technology-based performance standard that municipalities must attain. The MEP standard is an ever-evolving, flexible, and advancing concept, which considers technical and economic feasibility. As knowledge about controlling urban runoff continues to evolve, so does that which constitutes MEP. Reducing the discharge of storm water pollutants to the MEP requires Copermittees to assess each program component and revise activities, control measures, best management practices (BMPs), and measurable goals, as necessary to meet MEP.

To achieve the MEP standard, municipalities must employ whatever BMPs are technically feasible (i.e., are likely to be effective) and are not cost prohibitive. The major emphasis is on technical feasibility. Reducing pollutants to the MEP means choosing effective BMPs, and rejecting applicable BMPs only where other effective BMPs will serve the same purpose, or the BMPs would not be technically feasible, or the cost would be prohibitive. In selecting BMPs to achieve the MEP standard, the following factors may be useful to consider:

1. Effectiveness: Will the BMPs address a pollutant (or pollutant source) of concern?
2. Regulatory Compliance: Is the BMP in compliance with storm water regulations as well as other environmental regulations?
3. Public Acceptance: Does the BMP have public support?
4. Cost: Will the cost of implementing the BMP have a reasonable relationship to the pollution control benefits to be achieved?
5. Technical Feasibility: Is the BMP technically feasible considering soils, geography, water resources, etc?

If a municipality reviews a lengthy menu of BMPs and chooses to select only a few of the least expensive BMPs, it is likely that MEP has not been met. On the other hand, if a municipal discharger employs all applicable BMPs except those where it can show that they are not technically feasible in the locality, or whose cost is prohibitive, it would have met the standard. Where a choice may be made between two BMPs that should provide generally comparable effectiveness, the discharger may choose the least expensive alternative and exclude the more expensive BMP. However, it would not be acceptable either to reject all BMPs that would address a pollutant source, or to pick a BMP based solely on cost, which would be clearly less effective. In selecting BMPs the municipality must make a serious attempt to comply and practical solutions may not be easily dismissed. In any case, the burden is on the municipal discharger to show compliance with its permit. After selecting BMPs, it is the responsibility of the discharger to ensure that all BMPs are implemented.⁷⁸

A definition of MEP is not provided in either the federal statute or in the federal regulations. The final determination regarding whether a municipality has reduced pollutants to the MEP can only be made by the Regional Board or the State Board, and not by the municipal discharger. While the Regional Board or the State Board ultimately define MEP, it is the responsibility of the Copermittees to initially propose actions that implement BMPs to reduce pollution to the MEP. In other words, the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs to be developed under the Order are the Copermittees' proposals of MEP. Their total collective and individual activities conducted pursuant to their urban runoff management programs become their proposal for MEP as it applies both to their overall effort, as well as to specific activities. The Order provides a minimum framework to guide the Copermittees in meeting the MEP standard.

It is the Regional Board's responsibility to evaluate the proposed programs and specific BMPs to determine what constitutes MEP, using the above guidance and the court's 1994 decision in NRDC v. California Department of Transportation, Federal District Court, Central District of California. The federal court stated that a Copermittee must evaluate and implement BMPs except where (1) other effective BMPs will achieve greater or substantially similar pollution control benefits; (2) the BMP is not technically feasible; or (3) the cost of BMP implementation greatly outweighs the pollution control benefits. In the absence of a proposal acceptable to the Regional Board, the Regional Board will define MEP by requiring implementation of additional measures by the Copermittees.

⁷⁸ State Water Resources Control Board, 1993. Memo Entitled Definition of Maximum Extent Practicable.

The Copermittees' continual evolution in meeting the MEP standard is expected to achieve compliance with water quality standards. USEPA has consistently supported this expectation. In its Interim Permitting Approach for Water Quality-Based Effluent Limitations (WQBELs) in Storm Water Permits, USEPA states "the interim permitting approach uses best management practices (BMPs) in first-round storm water permits, and expanded or better-tailored BMPs in subsequent permits, where necessary, to provide for attainment of water quality standards."⁷⁹ USEPA reiterated its position in 1999, when it stated regarding the Phase II municipal storm water regulations that "successive iterations of the mix of BMPs and measurable goals will be driven by the objective of assuring maintenance of water quality standards" and "EPA anticipates that a permit for a regulated small MS4 operator implementing BMPs to satisfy the six minimum control measures will be sufficiently stringent to protect water quality, including water quality standards [...]."⁸⁰

The requirements of the Order are expected to achieve compliance with receiving water quality standards. The approach to be used is the continual assessment, revision, and improvement of Copermittee best management practice implementation. This approach is consistent with the Clean Water Act and State Board guidance. In *Defenders of Wildlife v. Browner* (1999, 197 F. 3d 1035), the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit states: "Under 33 U.S.C. section 1342 (p)(3)(B)(iii), the EPA's choice to include either management practices or numeric limitations in the permits was within its discretion." In addition, the approach is consistent with State Board Order WQ 99-05, which outlines an iterative approach for achieving compliance with water quality standards.

Finding D.1.b. The Copermittees have generally been implementing the jurisdictional urban runoff management programs required pursuant to Order No. R9-2002-01 since February 13, 2003. However, urban runoff discharges continue to cause or contribute to violations of water quality standards.⁸¹

Discussion of Finding D.1.b. In response to Order No. R9-2002-01, the Copermittees have improved their urban runoff management programs. For instance, comprehensive urban runoff management plans have been developed. In order to implement the plans, the Copermittees have, among other things, developed BMP requirements, improved inter- and intra-governmental coordination, improved training programs, improved illicit discharge detection procedures, and improved their monitoring efforts. Although the programmatic improvements have led to better implementation of BMPs, the Copermittees' monitoring data demonstrate that additional or revised BMPs are necessary to prevent discharges from MS4s from causing and contributing to violations of water quality standards. A discussion of data collected by the Copermittees is included in the discussion for Finding C.7.

⁷⁹ Federal Register / Vol. 61, No. 166 / August 26, 1996 / P. 43761.

⁸⁰ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68753-68754.

⁸¹ Orange County Storm Water Program, 2006. Unified Annual Progress Report, Program Effectiveness Assessment (San Diego Region).

Finding D.1.c. This Order contains new or modified requirements that are necessary to improve Copermittees' efforts to reduce the discharge of pollutants in urban runoff to the MEP and achieve water quality standards. Some of the new or modified requirements, such as the expanded Watershed Urban Runoff Management Program section, are designed to specifically address these high priority water quality problems. Other new or modified requirements address program deficiencies that have been noted during audits, report reviews, and other Regional Board compliance assessment activities.

Discussion of Finding D.1.c. The Copermittees are required to update and expand their urban runoff management programs on jurisdictional and watershed levels in order to improve their efforts to reduce the contribution of pollutants in urban runoff to the MEP and meet water quality standards. Changes to Order No. R9-2002-01's requirements have been made to help ensure these two standards are achieved by the Copermittees.

The jurisdictional requirements of the Order have been changed based on findings by the Regional Board during typical compliance assurance activities. The Regional Board performed full jurisdictional program audits of 8 of the 13 Copermittees during the Order No. R9-2002-01 permit term. Where the audits found common implementation problems, requirements have been altered to better ensure compliance. In addition, the Regional Board conducted detailed reviews of every jurisdictional annual report submitted by the Copermittees, including provision of specific comments to the Copermittees where improvements were found to be needed. Again, where common reporting issues were found, the Order's requirements have been changed to rectify the issues. Other changes to jurisdictional requirements were based on Regional Board inspection findings or receipt of complaints.⁸²

Finally, many of the required updates to the Copermittees' programs are based on recommendations found in the Copermittees' ROWD.⁸³ In many instances, the Copermittees and the Regional Board have identified similar issues that merit program modifications.

To better focus on attainment of water quality standards, the Order's watershed requirements have been improved. Addressing urban runoff management on a watershed scale focuses on water quality results by emphasizing the receiving waters within the watershed. The conditions of the receiving waters drive management actions, which in turn focus on the water quality problems of the receiving waters each watershed. Improvements to watershed requirements were also made to facilitate better understanding of the requirements between the Regional Board and Copermittees.

⁸² Audit reports, report reviews, and inspection reports are available for review at the Regional Board office.

⁸³ All significant changes made to the Order's requirements are described and explained in detail in Fact Sheet section X.

Finding D.1.d. Updated Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plans (JURMPs) and Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plans (WURMPs), which describe the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs in their entirety, are needed to guide the Copermittees' urban runoff management efforts and aid the Copermittees in tracking urban runoff management program implementation. It is practicable for the Copermittees to update the JURMPs and WURMPs within one year, since significant efforts to develop these programs have already occurred.

Discussion of Finding D.1.d. Development of urban runoff management plans is a crucial urban runoff management measure and should be considered a BMP. The plans help organize and focus the Copermittees' programs and guide their implementation. In its statewide assessment report to USEPA Region IX and the State Board, Tetra Tech, Inc. concluded that the lack of a master storm water planning document must be considered a serious program deficiency⁸⁴. When submitted to the Regional Board, the plans provide useful correspondence between the Copermittees and the Regional Board. The Plans also become available for review by the public, and thus facilitate public participation in urban runoff management decisions. Finally, while development and submittal of urban runoff management plans are not necessary to ensure compliance of the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs with the Order, the Regional Board is provided with a means to track Copermittee implementation.

The focus of the Order is on development and implementation of programs which meet MEP, rather than creation of Copermittee plans which exhibit MEP. While the Order does not rely upon the plans to ensure MEP and other standards are achieved, the plans still serve a useful purpose. As stated above, the plans serve to organize the Copermittees' efforts to address urban runoff. As a practical matter, any program of the size required by the Order should be documented in writing. This serves to guide implementation of the program by the numerous individuals responsible for program implementation.

Urban runoff management plans are not necessary for ensuring compliance with the Order because the Order itself contains sufficient detailed requirements to ensure that compliance with discharge prohibitions, receiving water limits, and the narrative standard of MEP are achieved. Implementation by the Copermittees of programs in compliance with the Order's requirements, prohibitions, and receiving water limits is the pertinent compliance standard to be used under the Order, as opposed to assessing compliance by reviewing the Copermittees' implementation of their plans alone. The Regional Board ensures compliance with the Order by reviewing annual reports, conducting inspections, performing audits, and through other general program oversight.

⁸⁴ Tetra Tech, Inc. 2006. *Assessment Report on Tetra Tech's Support of California's MS4 Stormwater Program*. Produced for U.S. EPA Region IX and the California State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

Urban runoff management plans are particularly important and useful for municipalities when program implementation is spread across several departments and/or when municipalities experience staff turnover.⁸⁵ Each Copermittee relies on multiple employees or contractors for program implementation, but the spread of responsibility varies among Copermittees.⁸⁶ Written jurisdictional plans ensure appropriate coordination within each municipality.

Copermittees' urban runoff management plans are simply descriptions of their urban runoff management programs required under the Order. These plans serve as procedural correspondence which guides program implementation and aids the Copermittees and Regional Board in tracking implementation of the programs. In this manner, the plans are not functional equivalents of the Order. For these reasons, the Copermittees' urban runoff management plans need not be an enforceable part of the Order.

The Copermittees' plans and programs can be updated within one year because much of their plans and programs are already in existence. In fact, many parts of their plans and programs have been in place for 15 years. Moreover, the adoption of Order No. R9-2002-01 required a larger scale reorganization of the Copermittees' programs than Tentative Order No. R9-2007-0002, but also allowed one year for program updates. The Copermittees were generally able to meet the time schedule required under Order No. R9-2002-01.

Finding D.1.e. Pollutants can be effectively reduced in urban runoff by the application of a combination of pollution prevention, source control, and treatment control BMPs. Pollution prevention is the reduction or elimination of pollutant generation at its source and is the best "first line of defense". Source control BMPs (both structural and non-structural) minimize the contact between pollutants and flows (e.g., rerouting run-on around pollutant sources or keeping pollutants on-site and out of receiving waters). Treatment control BMPs remove pollutants from urban runoff.

Discussion of Finding D.1.e. The State Board finds in its Order No. WQ 98-01 that BMPs are effective in reducing pollutants in urban runoff, stating that "implementation of BMPs [is] generally the most appropriate form of effluent limitations when designed to satisfy technology requirements, including reduction of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable." A State Board TAC further supports this finding by recommending "that nonpoint source pollution control can be accomplished most effectively by giving priority to [BMPs] in the following order:

1. Pollution Prevention – implementation of practices that use or promote pollution free alternatives;

⁸⁵ Tetra Tech, Inc. 2005. Program Evaluation Report. Orange County Storm Water Program: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

⁸⁶ Responsible departments and employees are described in the 2005-06 Annual Reports for the MS4 programs.

2. Source Control – implementation of control measures that focus on preventing or minimizing urban runoff from contacting pollution sources;
3. Treatment Control – implementation of practices that require treatment of polluted runoff either onsite or offsite.⁸⁷

Pollution prevention, the reduction or elimination of pollutant generation at its source, is an essential aspect of BMP implementation. Fewer pollutants are available to be washed from urban areas when the generation of pollutants by urban activities is limited. Thus, pollutant loads in storm water discharges are reduced from these areas. In addition, there is no need to control or treat pollutants that are never generated.⁸⁸ Furthermore, pollution prevention BMPs are generally more cost effective than removal of pollutants by treatment facilities or cleanup of contaminated media.^{89,90}

In the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990, Congress established a national policy that emphasizes pollution prevention over control and treatment. CWC section 13263.3(a) also supports pollution prevention, stating “The Legislature finds and declares that pollution prevention should be the first step in a hierarchy for reducing pollution and managing wastes, and to achieve environmental stewardship for society. The Legislature also finds and declares that pollution prevention is necessary to support the federal goal of zero discharge of pollutants into navigable waters.” Finally, the Basin Plan also supports this finding by stating “To eliminate pollutants in storm water, one can either clean it up by removing pollutants or prevent it from becoming polluted in the first place. Because of the overwhelming volume of storm water and the enormous costs associated with pollutant removal, pollution prevention is the only approach that makes sense.”⁹¹

⁸⁷ State Board, 1994. Urban Runoff Technical Advisory Committee Report and Recommendations. Nonpoint Source Management Program.

⁸⁸ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region).

⁸⁹ Deviny, J.S. et al. 2004. *Alternative Approaches to Stormwater Quality Control*. Prepared for the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. Found as Appendix H to *NPDES Stormwater Cost Survey*. Prepared for the California State Water Resources Control Board by the Office of Water Programs California State University, Sacramento. Available on-line at:
<http://www.owp.csus.edu/research/npdes/>

⁹⁰ Schueler, T.R., 2000. Center for Watershed Protection. Assessing the Potential for Urban Watershed Restoration, Article 142.

⁹¹ Regional Board, 1994. Water Quality Control Plan, San Diego Basin, Region 9.

USEPA also supports the utilization of a combination of BMPs to address pollutants in urban runoff. For example, USEPA has found there has been success in addressing illicit discharge related problems through BMP initiatives like storm drain stenciling and recycling programs, including household hazardous waste special collection days.⁹² Structural BMP performance data has also been compiled and summarized by USEPA.⁹³ This data indicates that structural BMPs can be effective in reducing pollutants in urban runoff discharges.

The summary provides the performance ranges of various types of structural BMPs for removing suspended solids, nutrients, pathogens, and metals from storm water flows. These pollutants are generally a concern in storm water in the San Diego Region and Orange County.⁹⁴ For suspended solids, the least effective structural BMP type was found to remove 30-65% of the pollutant load, while the most effective was found to remove 65-100% of the pollutant load. For nutrients, the least effective structural BMP type was found to remove 15-45% of the pollutant load, while the most effective was found to remove 65-100% of the pollutant load. For pathogens, the least effective structural BMP type was found to remove <30% of the pollutant load, while the most effective was found to remove 65-100% of the pollutant load. For metals, the least effective structural BMP type was found to remove 15-45% of the pollutant load, while the most effective was found to remove 65-100% of the pollutant load.

Several studies conducted in the last few years have measured the effectiveness of urban runoff treatment BMPs in southern Orange County. Studies have been conducted on both dry weather and wet weather flows. Each demonstrates that treatment control BMPs can, to varying degrees, remove pollutants from urban runoff, but that pollution prevention and source control BMPs are necessary to reduce pollutant discharges to the point of supporting water quality objectives in the receiving waters. A partial list of such studies includes:

- “Assessment of Best Management Practice (BMP) Effectiveness” by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP).⁹⁵ This project assesses the effectiveness of BMPs in southern California for improving water quality related to toxicity.

⁹² USEPA, 1999. 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System-Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges. 64 FR 68728.

⁹³ USEPA, 1999. Preliminary Data Summary of Urban Storm Water Best Management Practices. EPA 821-R-99-012.

⁹⁴ Orange County Stormwater Program, Appendix E1 BMP Effectiveness and Applicability for Orange County (updated June 2005).

⁹⁵ Jeffrey S. Brown and Steven M. Bay 2005. *Assessment of Best Management Practice (BMP) Effectiveness*. SCCWRP Technical Report 461.

- “Final Report for the Del Obispo Storm Drain Project” by the City of Dana Point.⁹⁶ This report assesses the implementation of a solids removal unit and low-flow diversion project.
- “Final Report for the Alipaz Storm Drain Treatment and Low Flow Diversion Project” by the City of Dana Point.⁹⁷ This report assesses the implementation of a solids removal unit and low-flow diversion project.
- “Final Report for Poche Beach Urban Runoff Ultraviolet Light Bacteria Disinfection Project” by the County of Orange.⁹⁸ This report assesses the implementation of an ultraviolet system within a box culvert.
- Final Report for J01P28 Interim Water Quality Improvement Package Plant Best Management Practices.⁹⁹ This report assesses the implementation of an ultraviolet treatment system at an inland waters storm drain outfall.
- “Final Report for Wetland Capture and Treatment (WetCAT) Network” by the City of Laguna Niguel.¹⁰⁰ This report assesses the implementation of constructed wetlands.

Results of these recent studies demonstrate that treatment at the MS4 outfalls for pollutants that have already been discharged *into* the MS4 is generally unlikely to reduce pollutant concentrations to levels that would support water quality objectives.

It is important to note that the Clean Water Act and NPDES federal regulations clearly require control of discharges into the MS4. Section 402(p)(3)(B)(ii) of the Clean Water Act states that MS4 permits must "prohibit non-storm water discharges into the storm sewers." 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B) requires Copermittees to "detect and remove [...] illicit discharges and improper disposal into the storm sewer." 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D) requires the Copermittees to "reduce pollutants in storm water runoff from construction sites to the municipal storm sewer system."

⁹⁶ City of Dana Point. 2005. *Final Report for the Del Obispo Storm Drain Project*. Prepared for the State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 02-216-550-0.

⁹⁷ City of Dana Point. 2004. *Final Report For The Alipaz Storm Drain Treatment And Low Flow Diversion Project* by the City of Dana Point. Prepared for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement Number: 01-068-550-0.

⁹⁸ Volz, James. 2005. *Final Report for Poche Beach Urban Runoff Ultraviolet Light Bacteria Disinfection Project*. Prepared by the County of Orange for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-236-550-1.

⁹⁹ Anderson, Max. 2005. *Final Report: Aliso Beach Clean Beach Initiatives, J01P28 Interim Water Quality Improvement Package Plant Best Management Practices*. Prepared by the County of Orange for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-227-550-0.

¹⁰⁰ City of Laguna Niguel and CH2MHILL. 2004. *Final Report: Wetland Capture and Treatment (WetCAT) Network*. Prepared for State Water Resources Control Board Agreement No. 01-122-259-0.

The Order's approach to regulating discharges into and from the MS4 is in accordance with State Board Order WQ 2001-15. In that order, the State Board reviewed the San Diego County permit (Order No. 2001-01) requirements and made one change to one prohibition.¹⁰¹ The Order upheld all other requirements of the current permit. Order No. R9-2007-0002 incorporates the one change made by the State Board, and continues the approach of Order No. 2001-01 (the basis for the current permit), as it was upheld by the State Board in Order WQ 2001-15. State Board Order WQ 2001-15 supports such requirements, stating: "It is important to emphasize that dischargers into MS4s continue to be required to implement a full range of BMPs, including source control."

The Court of Appeals, Fourth Appellate District, found that the current permit's approach to regulation of discharges into the MS4 was appropriate. Since the Tentative Order utilizes the same approach, the court decision supports the Tentative Order's requirements.

Finding D.1.f. Urban runoff needs to be addressed during the three major phases of urban development (planning, construction, and use) in order to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the MEP and protect receiving waters. Urban development which is not guided by water quality planning policies and principles can unnecessarily result in increased pollutant load discharges, flow rates, and flow durations which can impact receiving water beneficial uses. Construction sites without adequate BMP implementation result in sediment runoff rates which greatly exceed natural erosion rates of undisturbed lands, causing siltation and impairment of receiving waters. Existing urban development generates substantial pollutant loads which are discharged in urban runoff to receiving waters.

Discussion of Finding D.1.f. MS4 permits are issued to municipalities because of their land use authority. The ultimate responsibility for the pollutant discharges, increased runoff, and inevitable long-term water quality degradation that results from urbanization lies with local governments. This responsibility is based on the fact that it is the local governments that have authorized the urbanization (i.e., conversion of natural pervious ground cover to impervious urban surfaces) and the land uses that generate the pollutants and runoff. Furthermore, the MS4 through which the pollutants and increased flows are conveyed, and ultimately discharged into natural receiving waters, are owned and operated by the same local governments. In summary, the Copermittees under the Order are responsible for discharges into and out of their MS4s because (1) they own and operate the MS4; and (2) they have the legal authority that authorizes the very development and land uses with generate the pollutants and increased flows in the first place.

¹⁰¹ The State Board removed the prohibition of discharges *into* the MS4 that cause or contribute to exceedances of water quality objectives. The revision allows for treatment of storm water flows once the pollutants have entered the MS4. It does not affect the effective prohibition on certain dry-weather flows into the MS4 that is required by the Clean Water Act.

For example, since grading cannot commence prior to the issuance of a local grading permit, the Copermittees have a built-in mechanism to ensure that all grading activities are protective of receiving water quality. The Copermittee has the authority to withhold issuance of the grading permit until the project proponent has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Copermittee that the project will not violate their ordinances or cause the Copermittee to be in violation of its MS4 permit. Since the Copermittee will ultimately be held responsible for any discharges from the grading project by the Regional Board, the Copermittee will want to use its own permitting authority to ensure that whatever measures the Copermittee deems necessary to protect discharges into its MS4 are in fact taken by the project proponent.

The Order holds the local government accountable for this direct link between its land use decisions and water quality degradation. The Order recognizes that each of the three major stages in the urbanization process (development planning, construction, and the use or operational stage) are controlled by and must be authorized by the local government. Accordingly, this permit requires the local government to implement, or require others to implement, appropriate best management practices to reduce pollutant discharges and increased flow during each of the three stages of urbanization.

Including plans for BMP implementation during the design phase of new development and redevelopment offers the most cost effective strategy to reduce urban runoff pollutant loads to surface waters.¹⁰² The Phase II regulations for small municipalities reflect the necessity of addressing urban runoff during the early planning phase. Due to the greater water quality concerns generally experienced by larger municipalities, Phase II requirements for small municipalities are also applicable to larger municipalities such as the Copermittees. The Phase II regulations direct municipalities to develop, implement, and enforce a program to address storm water runoff from new development and redevelopment projects that disturb greater than or equal to one acre, including projects less than one acre that are part of a larger common plan of development or sale. The program must ensure that controls are in place that would prevent or minimize water quality impacts. This includes developing and implementing strategies which include a combination of structural and/or non-structural BMPs appropriate to the locality. The program must also ensure the adequate long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs.¹⁰³ USEPA expands on the Phase II regulations for urban development when it recommends that Copermittees:

¹⁰² USEPA, 2000. Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide. EPA 833-R-00-002.

¹⁰³ USEPA, 1999. 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System-Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges; Final Rule. 64 FR 68845.

“Adopt a planning process that identifies the municipality’s program goals (e.g., minimize water quality impacts resulting from post-construction runoff from new development and redevelopment), implementation strategies (e.g., adopt a combination of structural and/or non-structural BMPs), operation and maintenance policies and procedures, and enforcement procedures. In developing your program, you should consider assessing existing ordinances, policies, programs and studies that address storm water runoff quality.”

Management of urban runoff during the construction phase is also essential. USEPA explains in the preamble to the Phase II regulations that storm water discharges generated during construction activities can cause an array of physical, chemical, and biological water quality impacts. Specifically, the biological, chemical and physical integrity of the waters may become severely compromised due to runoff from construction sites. Fine sediment from construction sites can adversely affect aquatic ecosystems by reducing light penetration, impeding sight-feeding, smothering benthic organisms, abrading gills and other sensitive structures, reducing habitat by clogging interstitial spaces within the streambed, and reducing intergravel dissolved oxygen by reducing the permeability of the bed material. Water quality impairment also results, in part, because a number of pollutants are preferentially absorbed onto mineral or organic particles found in fine sediment. The interconnected process of erosion (detachment of the soil particles), sediment transport, and delivery is the primary pathway for introducing key pollutants, such as nutrients, metals, and organic compounds into aquatic systems.¹⁰⁴

Finally, urban runoff from existing development must be addressed. The Copermitees’ monitoring data exhibits that significant water quality problems exist in receiving waters which receive urban runoff from areas with extensive existing development, such as Aliso Creek. Source identification, BMP requirements, inspections, and enforcement are all important measures which can be implemented to address urban runoff from existing development. USEPA supports inspections and enforcement by municipalities when it states “Effective inspection and enforcement requires [...] penalties to deter infractions and intervention by the municipal authority to correct violations. Enforcement mechanisms [...] also must be described.”¹⁰⁵

Finding D.1.g. Annual reporting requirements included in this Order are necessary to meet federal requirements and to evaluate the effectiveness and compliance of the Copermitees’ programs.

Discussion of Finding D.1.g. The annual reporting requirements are consistent with federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.41, which states:

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 64 FR 68728.

¹⁰⁵ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

“The operator of a large or medium municipal separate storm sewer system of a municipal separate storm sewer system that has been designated by the Director under section 122.26(a)(1)(v) of this part must submit an annual report by the anniversary of the date of the issuance of the permit for such a system. The report shall include: (1) The status of implementing the components of the storm water management program that are established as permit conditions; (2) Proposed changes to the storm water management program that are established as permit condition, Such proposed changes shall be consistent with § 122.26(d)(2)iii) of this part; (3) Revisions, if necessary, to the assessment of controls and the fiscal analysis reported in the permit application under § 122.26(d)(2)iv) and (d)(2)v) of this part; (4) A summary of data, including monitoring data, that is accumulated throughout the reporting year; (5) Annual expenditures and budget for year following each annual report; (6) A summary describing the number and nature of enforcement actions, inspections, and public education programs; and (7) Identification of water quality improvements or degradation.”

CWC section 13267 provides that “the regional board may require that any person who has discharged [...] shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring reports which the regional board requires.”

The Regional Board must assess the reports to ensure that the Copermittees’ programs are adequate to assess and address water quality. The reporting requirements can also be useful tools for the Copermittees to review, update, or revise their programs. Areas or issues which have received insufficient efforts can also be identified and improved.

Finding D.2.a. The Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) requirements contained in this Order are consistent with Order WQ-2000-11 adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) on October 5, 2000. In the precedential order, the State Board found that the design standards, which essentially require that urban runoff generated by 85 percent of storm events from specific development categories be infiltrated or treated, reflect the MEP standard. The order also found that the SUSMP requirements are appropriately applied to the majority of the Priority Development Project categories contained in Section D.1 of this Order. The State Board also gave Regional Water Quality Control Boards the needed discretion to include additional categories and locations, such as retail gasoline outlets (RGOs), in SUSMPs.

Discussion of Finding D.2.a. The post-construction requirements and design standards contained in the SUSMP section of Order No. R9-2007-0002 constitute MEP consistent with State Board guidance, court decisions, and Regional Board requirements. The State Board and Regional Boards have made several recent decisions in regards to inclusion of SUSMP requirements in MS4 permits. In a precedential decision, State Board WQ Order No. 2000-11, the State Board found that the SUSMP provisions constitute MEP for addressing pollutant discharges resulting from Priority Development Projects. The provisions of the SUSMP section of the Order are also consistent with those previously issued by the Regional Board for Orange County (Order No. R9-2002-0001) and San Diego County (Order Nos. R9-2001-01 and R9-2007-0001), as well as requirements in the Los Angeles County MS4 permit (Order No. R4-2001-182). In State Board Order WQ 2001-15, the State Board reaffirmed that SUSMP requirements constitute MEP. Moreover, the SUSMP requirements of the San Diego County MS4 permit (Order No. R9-2001-01) were upheld when the California State Supreme Court declined to hear the matter on appeal.

Finding D.2.b. Controlling urban runoff pollution by using a combination of onsite source control and Low Impact Development (LID) site design BMPs augmented with treatment control BMPs before the runoff enters the MS4 is important for the following reasons: (1) Many end-of-pipe BMPs (such as diversion to the sanitary sewer) are typically ineffective during significant storm events. Whereas, onsite source control BMPs can be applied during all runoff conditions; (2) End-of-pipe BMPs are often incapable of capturing and treating the wide range of pollutants which can be generated on a sub-watershed scale; (3) End-of-pipe BMPs are more effective when used as polishing BMPs, rather than the sole BMP to be implemented; (4) End-of-pipe BMPs do not protect the quality or beneficial uses of receiving waters between the source and the BMP; and (5) Offsite end-of-pipe BMPs do not aid in the effort to educate the public regarding sources of pollution and their prevention.

Discussion of Finding D.2.b. Many end-of-pipe BMPs are designed for low flow conditions because their end-of-pipe location prevents them from being designed for large storm events. This results in the end-of-pipe BMPs being overwhelmed, bypassed, or ineffective during larger storm events more frequently than onsite BMPs designed for larger storms. BMPs are also frequently most effective for a particular type of pollutant (such as sediment). Such BMPs may be appropriate for small sites with a limited suite of pollutants generated; however, end-of-pipe BMPs must typically be able to address a wide range of pollutants generated by a sub-watershed, limiting their effectiveness and/or increasing costs. Moreover, the location of some end-of-pipe BMPs allow for untreated pollutants to be discharged to and degrade receiving waters prior to their reaching the BMPs. This fails to protect receiving waters, which is the purpose of BMP implementation. In addition, opportunities to educate the public regarding urban runoff pollution can be lost when end-of-pipe BMPs are located away from pollutant sources and out of sight. Onsite BMPs can lead to a better public understanding of urban runoff issues since their presence can provide a visible and/or tangible lesson in pollution prevention.

Finding D.2.c. Use of Low-Impact Development (LID) site design BMPs at new development projects can be an effective means for minimizing the impact of urban runoff discharges from the development projects on receiving waters. LID is a site design strategy with a goal of maintaining or replicating the pre-development hydrologic regime through the use of design techniques. LID site design BMPs help preserve and restore the natural hydrologic cycle of the site, allowing for filtration and infiltration which can greatly reduce the volume, peak flow rate, velocity, and pollutant loads of urban runoff.

Discussion of Finding D.2.c. The use of LID site design BMPs helps reduce the amount of impervious area associated with urbanization and allows storm water to infiltrate into the soil. Natural vegetation and soil filters urban runoff and reduces the volume and pollutant loads of storm water. Studies have revealed that the level of imperviousness resulting from urbanization is strongly correlated with the water quality impairment of nearby receiving waters.¹⁰⁶ In many cases, the impacts on receiving waters due to changes in hydrology can be more significant than those attributable to the contaminants found in storm water discharges.¹⁰⁷ These impacts include stream bank erosion (increased sediment load and subsequent deposition), benthic habitat degradation, and decreased diversity of macroinvertebrates. Although conventional BMPs do reduce pollutant loads, they may not effectively control adverse effects from changes in the discharge hydrologic conditions.¹⁰⁸

The Order includes requirements for developments to include site design BMPs that mimic or replicate the natural hydrologic cycle. Open space designs which maximize pervious surfaces and retention of “natural” drainages have been found to reduce both the costs of development and pollutant export.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, USEPA finds including plans for a “natural” site design and BMP implementation during the design phase of new development and redevelopment offers the most cost effective strategy to reduce pollutant loads to surface waters.¹¹⁰ In addition, a recent U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development guidance document on low-impact development notes that the use of LID-based storm water management design allows land to be developed, but in a cost-effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ USEPA, 1999. 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System – Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges; Final Rule.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ USEPA, 2000. Low-Impact Development: A literature review. EPA-841-B-00-005. 35p.

¹⁰⁹ Center for Watershed Protection, 2000. “The Benefits of Better Site Design in Residential Subdivisions.” Watershed Protection Techniques. Vol. 3. No. 2.

¹¹⁰ USEPA, 1999. 40 CFR Parts 9, 122, 123, and 124 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System – Regulations for Revision of the Water Pollution Control Program Addressing Storm Water Discharges; Final Rule.

¹¹¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2003. “The Practice of Low Impact Development.” Prepared by: NAHB Research Center, Inc. Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Contract No. H-21314CA. 131p.

Finding D.2.d. Retail Gasoline Outlets (RGOs) are significant sources of pollutants in urban runoff. RGOs are points of convergence for motor vehicles for automotive related services such as repair, refueling, tire inflation, and radiator fill-up and consequently produce significantly higher loadings of hydrocarbons and trace metals (including copper and zinc) than other urban areas.

Discussion of Finding D.2.d. RGOs are included in the Order as a Priority Development Project category because RGOs produce significantly greater loadings of hydrocarbons and trace metals (including copper and zinc) than other urban areas. To meet MEP, source control and structural treatment BMPs are needed at RGOs that meet the following criteria: (a) 5,000 square feet or more or (b) an ADT of 100 or more vehicles per day. These are appropriate thresholds since vehicular development size and volume of traffic are good indicators of potential impacts of urban runoff from RGOs on receiving waters.

This finding has been added to satisfy State Board WQ Order No. 2000-11's requirements for including RGOs as a Priority Development Category. Order No. 2000-11 acknowledged that a threshold (size, average daily traffic, etc.) appropriate to trigger SUSMP requirements should be developed for RGOs and that specific findings regarding RGOs should be included in MS4 permits to justify the requirement.¹¹² Additional detail to support the inclusion of RGOs can be found in Fact Sheet Section X.D.1.

Finding D.2.e. Heavy industrial sites are significant sources of pollutants in urban runoff. Pollutant concentrations and loads in runoff from industrial sites are similar or exceed pollutant concentrations and loads in runoff from other land uses, such as commercial or residential land uses. As with other land uses, LID site design, source control, and treatment control BMPs are needed at heavy industrial sites in order to meet the MEP standard. These BMPs are necessary where the heavy industrial site is larger than one acre. The one acre threshold is appropriate, since it is consistent with requirements in the Phase II NPDES storm water regulations that apply to small municipalities.

¹¹² State Board, 2000. Order WQ 2000-11.

Discussion of Finding D.2.e. Heavy industrial sites can be a significant source of pollutants in urban runoff. In an extensive review of storm water literature, the LARWQCB found widespread support for the finding that "industrial and commercial activities can also be considered hot spots as sources of pollutants." It also found that "industrial and commercial areas were likely to be the most significant pollutant source areas" of heavy metals.¹¹³ Likewise, runoff from heavy industry in the Santa Clara Valley has been found to be extremely toxic.¹¹⁴ These findings are corroborated by USEPA, which states in the preamble to the 1990 Phase I NPDES storm water regulations that "Because storm water from industrial facilities may be a major contributor of pollutants to municipal separate storm sewer systems, municipalities are obligated to develop controls for storm water discharges associated with industrial activity through their system in their storm water management program." Since heavy industrial sites can be a significant source of pollutants in urban runoff in a manner similar to other SUSMP project categories such as commercial development or automotive repair shops, it is appropriate to include heavy industrial sites as a SUSMP category in the Order.

The Phase I NPDES storm water regulations require the Copermittees to "control through ordinance, permit, contract, order, or similar means, the contribution of pollutants to the municipal storm sewer by storm water discharges associated with industrial activity and the quality of storm water discharged from sites of industrial activity" (40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)). In addition, it has been established that the MEP standard for the control of urban runoff from new development projects includes incorporation of the SUSMP requirements. Since the Copermittees must both control pollutants from industrial sites and meet the MEP standard for new development, it is appropriate to apply the SUSMP requirements to heavy industrial sites.

The State Board's Order WQ 2000-11 indicates that it is appropriate to apply SUSMP requirements to categories of development where evidence shows the category of development can be a significant source of pollutants. As evidenced above, heavy industrial sites can be a significant source of pollutants. Therefore, the Order includes heavy industrial sites as a SUSMP Priority Development Project category.

Finding D.2.f. If not properly designed or maintained, certain BMPs implemented or required by municipalities for urban runoff management may create a habitat for vectors (e.g. mosquitoes and rodents). However, proper BMP design to avoid standing water can prevent the creation of vector habitat. Nuisances and public health impacts resulting from vector breeding can be prevented with close collaboration and cooperative effort between municipalities and local vector control agencies and the State Department of Health Services during the development and implementation of urban runoff management programs.

¹¹³ Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. 2001.

¹¹⁴ Schueler and Holland, 2000. Storm Water Strategies for Arid and Semi-Arid Watersheds (Article 66). The Practice of Watershed Protection.

Discussion of Finding D.2.f. The implementation of certain structural BMPs or other urban runoff treatment systems can result in significant vector problems in the form of increased breeding or harborage habitat for mosquitoes, rodents or other potentially disease transmitting organisms. The implementation of BMPs that retain water may provide breeding habitat for a variety of mosquito species, some of which have the potential to transmit diseases such as Western Equine Encephalitis, St. Louis Encephalomyelitis, and malaria. Recent BMP implementation studies by Caltrans¹¹⁵ in District 7 and District 11 have demonstrated mosquito breeding associated with some types of BMPs. The Caltrans BMP Retrofit Pilot study cited lack of maintenance and improper design as factors contributing to mosquito production. However, a Watershed Protection Techniques article describes management techniques for selecting, designing, and maintaining structural treatment BMPs to minimize mosquito production.¹¹⁶ State and local urban runoff management programs that include structural BMPs with the potential to retain water have been implemented in Florida and the Chesapeake Bay region without resulting in significant public health threats from mosquitoes or other vectors.¹¹⁷

Finding D.3.a. In accordance with federal NPDES regulations and to ensure the most effective oversight of industrial and construction site discharges, discharges of runoff from industrial and construction sites are subject to dual (state and local) storm water regulation. Under this dual system, each Copermitttee is responsible for enforcing its local permits, plans, and ordinances, and the Regional Board is responsible for enforcing the General Construction Activities Storm Water Permit, State Board Order 99-08 DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002 (General Construction Permit) and the General Industrial Activities Storm Water Permit, State Board Order 97-03 DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000001 (General Industrial Permit). NPDES municipal regulations require that municipalities develop and implement measures to address runoff from industrial and construction activities. Those measures may require the implementation of additional BMPs than are required under the statewide general permits for activities subject to both state and local regulation.

¹¹⁵ Caltrans, 2000. BMP Retrofit Pilot Studies: A Preliminary Assessment of Vector Production.

¹¹⁶ Watershed Protection Techniques, 1995. Mosquitoes in Constructed Wetlands: A Management Bugaboo? 1(4):203-207.

¹¹⁷ Shaver, E. and R. Baldwin , 1995. Sand Filter Design for Water Quality Treatment in Herricks, E., Ed. Stormwater Runoff and Receiving Systems: Impact, Monitoring, and Assessment, CRC Lewis Publishers, New York, NY.

Discussion of Finding D.3.a. USEPA finds the control of pollutant discharges from industry and construction so important to receiving water quality that it has established a double system of regulation over industrial and construction sites. This double system of regulation consists of two parallel regulatory systems with the same common objective: to keep pollutants from industrial and construction sites out of the MS4. In this double system of regulation for runoff from industrial and construction sites, local governments must enforce their legal authorities (i.e., local ordinances and permits) while the Regional Board must enforce its legal authority (i.e., statewide general industrial and construction storm water permits). These two regulatory systems are designed to complement and support each other. Municipalities are not required to enforce Regional Board and State Board permits; however, they are required to enforce their ordinances and permits. The Federal regulations are clear that municipalities have responsibility to address runoff from industrial and construction sites which enters their MS4s.

Municipalities have this responsibility because they have the authority to issue land use and development permits. Since municipalities are the lead permitting authority for industrial land use and construction activities, they are also the lead for enforcement regarding runoff discharges from these sites. For sites where the municipality is the lead permitting authority, the Regional Board will work with the municipality and provide support where needed. The Regional Board will assist municipalities in enforcement against non-compliant sites after the municipality has exhibited a good faith effort to bring the site into compliance.

According to USEPA, the storm water regulations envision that NPDES permitting authorities and municipal operators will cooperate to develop programs to monitor and control pollutants in storm water discharges from industrial facilities.¹¹⁸ USEPA discusses the “dual regulation” of construction sites in its Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide, which states “Even though all construction sites that disturb more than one acre are covered nationally by an NPDES storm water permit, the construction site runoff control minimum measure [...] is needed to induce more localized site regulation and enforcement efforts, and to enable operators [...] to more effectively control construction site discharges into their MS4s.”¹¹⁹ While the Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide applies to small municipalities, it is applicable to the Copermittees, because they are similar in size and have the potential to discharge similar pollutant types as Phase II municipalities.

¹¹⁸ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

¹¹⁹ USEPA, 2000. Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide. EPA 833-R-00-002.

Finding D.3.b. Identification of sources of pollutants in urban runoff (such as municipal areas and activities, industrial and commercial sites/sources, construction sites, and residential areas), development and implementation of BMPs to address those sources, and updating ordinances and approval processes are necessary for the Copermittees to ensure that discharges of pollutants into and from its MS4 are reduced to the MEP. Inspections and other compliance verification methods are needed to ensure minimum BMPs are implemented. Inspections are especially important at high risk areas for pollutant discharges.

Discussion of Finding D.3.b. Source identification is necessary to characterize the nature and extent of pollutants in discharges and to develop appropriate BMPs. It is the first step in a targeted approach to urban runoff management. Source identification helps identify the location of potential sources of pollutants in urban runoff. Pollutants found to be present in receiving waters can then be traced to the sites which frequently generate such pollutants. In this manner source inventories can help to target inspections, monitoring, and potential enforcement. This allows for limited inspection, monitoring, and enforcement time to be most effective. USEPA supports source identification as a concept when it recommends construction, municipal, and industrial source identification in guidance and the federal regulations.^{120,121}

The development of BMPs for identified sources will help ensure that appropriate, consistent controls are implemented at all types of urban development and areas. Copermittees must reduce the discharge of pollutants in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable. To achieve this level of pollutant reduction, BMPs must be implemented. Designation of minimum BMPs helps ensure that appropriate BMPs are implemented for various sources. These minimum BMPs also serve as guidance as to the level of water quality protection required. USEPA requires development and implementation of BMPs for construction, municipal, commercial, industrial, and residential sources at 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A-D).

Updating ordinances and approval processes is necessary in order for the Copermittees to control discharges to their MS4s. USEPA supports updating ordinances and approval processes when it states "A crucial requirement of the NPDES storm water regulation is that a municipality must demonstrate that it has adequate legal authority to control the contribution of pollutants in storm water discharged to its MS4. [...] In order to have an effective municipal storm water management program, a municipality must have adequate legal authority to control the contribution of pollutants to the MS4. [...] 'Control,' in this context, means not only to require disclosure of information, but also to limit, discourage, or terminate a storm water discharge to the MS4."¹²²

¹²⁰ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

¹²¹ 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(ii)

¹²² USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

Inspections provide a necessary means for the Copermittees to evaluate compliance of pollutant sources with their municipal ordinances and minimum BMP requirements. USEPA supports inspections when it recommends inspections of construction, municipal, and industrial sources.¹²³ Inspection of high risk sources are especially important because of the ability of frequent inspections to help ensure compliance, thereby reducing the risk associated with such sources. USEPA suggests that inspections can improve compliance when it states “Effective inspection and enforcement requires [...] penalties to deter infractions and intervention by the municipal authority to correct violations.”¹²⁴

Finding D.3.c. Historic and current development makes use of natural drainage patterns and features as conveyances for urban runoff. Urban streams used in this manner are part of the municipalities MS4 regardless of whether they are natural, man-made, or partially modified features. In these cases, the urban stream is both an MS4 and a receiving water.

Discussion of Finding D.3.c. An MS4 is defined in the federal regulations as a conveyance or system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains), owned or operated by a Copermittee, and designed or used for collecting or conveying urban runoff.¹²⁵ Natural drainage patterns and urban streams are frequently used by municipalities to collect and convey urban runoff away from development within their jurisdiction. Therefore, the Regional Board considers natural drainages that are used for conveyances of urban runoff, regardless of whether or not they’ve been altered by the municipality, as both part of the MS4s and as receiving waters. To clarify, an unaltered natural drainage, which receives runoff from a point source (channeled by a Copermittee to drain an area within their jurisdiction), which then conveys the runoff to an altered natural drainage or a man-made MS4, is both an MS4 and a receiving water.¹²⁶

Finding D.3.d. As operators of the MS4s, the Copermittees cannot passively receive and discharge pollutants from third parties. By providing free and open access to an MS4 that conveys discharges to waters of the U.S., the operator essentially accepts responsibility for discharges into the MS4 that it does not prohibit or control. These discharges may cause or contribute to a condition of contamination or a violation of water quality standards.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

¹²⁵ USEPA, 2000. EPA Administered Permit Programs: The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. Code of Federal Regulations, Vol. 40, Part 122.

¹²⁶ Regional Board, 2001. Response in Opposition to Petitions for Review of California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Diego Region Order No. 2001-01 – NPDES Permit No. CAS0108758 (San Diego Municipal Storm Water Permit).

Discussion of Finding D.3.d. CWA section 402(p) requires operators of MS4s to prohibit non-storm water discharges into their MS4s. This is necessary because pollutants which enter the MS4 generally are conveyed through the MS4 to be eventually discharged into receiving waters. If a municipality does not prohibit non-storm water discharges, it is providing the pathway (its MS4) which enables pollutants to reach receiving waters. Since the municipality's storm water management service can result in pollutant discharges to receiving waters, the municipality must accept responsibility for the water quality consequences resulting from this service. Furthermore, third party discharges can cause a municipality to be out of compliance with its permit. Since pollutants from third parties which enter the MS4 will eventually be discharged from the MS4 to receiving waters, the third party discharges can result in a situation of municipality non-compliance if the discharges lead to an exceedance of water quality standards. For these reasons, each Copermittee must prohibit and/or control discharges from third parties to its MS4. USEPA supports this concept when it states "the operators of regulated small MS4s cannot passively receive and discharge pollutants from third parties" and "the operator of a small MS4 that does not prohibit and/or control discharges into its system essentially accepts 'title' for those discharges. At a minimum, by providing free and open access to the MS4s that convey discharges to the waters of the United States, the municipal storm sewer system enables water quality impairment by third parties."¹²⁷

Finding D.3.e. Waste and pollutants which are deposited and accumulate in MS4 drainage structures will be discharged from these structures to waters of the U.S. unless they are removed. These discharges may cause or contribute to, or threaten to cause or contribute to, a condition of pollution in receiving waters. For this reason, pollutant discharges into MS4s must be reduced to the MEP.

Discussion of Finding D.3.e. When rain falls and drains urban freeways, industries, construction sites, and neighborhoods, it picks up a multitude of pollutants. Gravity flow transports the pollutants to the MS4. Illicit discharges and connections also contribute a significant amount of pollutants to MS4s. MS4s are commonly designed to convey their contents as quickly as possible. Due to the resulting typically high flow rates within the concrete conveyance systems of MS4s, pollutants which enter or are deposited in the MS4 and not removed are generally flushed unimpeded through the MS4 to waters of the United States. Since treatment generally does not occur within the MS4, in such cases reduction of pollutants to the MEP must occur prior to discharges entering the MS4.

¹²⁷ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68765-68766.

The importance of this concept is supported by the tons of wastes/pollutants that have been removed from the Copermittees' MS4s as reported in their ROWD.¹²⁸ Moreover, these pollutants will be discharged into receiving waters unless an effective MS4 and structural treatment BMP maintenance program is implemented by the Copermittees. The requirement for Copermittees to conduct a MS4 maintenance program is specifically directed in both the Phase I and Phase II storm water regulations. Regarding MS4 cleaning, USEPA states "The removal of sediment, decaying debris, and highly polluted water from catch basins has aesthetic and water quality benefits, including reducing foul odors, reducing suspended solids, and reducing the load of oxygen-demanding substances that reach receiving waters."¹²⁹ It goes on to say, "Catch basin cleaning is an efficient and cost-effective method for preventing the transport of sediment and pollutants to receiving water bodies." USEPA also finds that "Lack of maintenance often limits the effectiveness of storm water structural controls such as detention/retention basins and infiltration devices. [...] The proposed program should provide for maintenance logs and identify specific maintenance activities for each class of control, such as removing sediment from retention ponds every five years, cleaning catch basins annually, and removing litter from channels twice a year."¹³⁰

Finding D.3.f. Enforcement of local urban runoff related ordinances, permits, and plans is an essential component of every urban runoff management program and is specifically required in the federal storm water regulations and this Order. Each Copermittee is individually responsible for adoption and enforcement of ordinances and/or policies, implementation of identified control measures/BMPs needed to prevent or reduce pollutants in storm water runoff, and for the allocation of funds for the capital, operation and maintenance, administrative, and enforcement expenditures necessary to implement and enforce such control measures/BMPs under its jurisdiction.

¹²⁸ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region).

¹²⁹ USEPA, 1999. Storm Water O&M Fact Sheet, Catch Basin Cleaning. EPA 832-F-99-011.

¹³⁰ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

Discussion of Finding D.3.f. The Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A – D) are clear in placing responsibility on municipalities for control of urban runoff from third party activities and land uses to their MS4.¹³¹ In order for municipalities to assume this responsibility, they must implement ordinances, permits, and plans addressing urban runoff from third parties. Assessments for compliance with their ordinances, permits, and plans are essential for a municipality to ensure that third parties are not causing the municipality to be in violation of its municipal storm water permit. When conditions of non-compliance are determined, enforcement is necessary to ensure that violations of municipality ordinances and permits are corrected. When the Copermittees determine a violation of its storm water ordinance, it must pursue correction of the violation. Without enforcement, third parties do not have incentive to correct violations. USEPA supports enforcement by municipalities when it states “Effective inspection and enforcement requires [...] penalties to deter infractions and intervention by the municipal authority to correct violations. Enforcement mechanisms [...] also must be described.”¹³²

Finding D.3.g. Education is an important aspect of every effective urban runoff management program and the basis for changes in behavior at a societal level. Education of municipal planning, inspection, and maintenance department staffs is especially critical to ensure that in-house staffs understand how their activities impact water quality, how to accomplish their jobs while protecting water quality, and their specific roles and responsibilities for compliance with this Order. Public education, designed to target various urban land users and other audiences, is also essential to inform the public of how individual actions affect receiving water quality and how adverse effects can be minimized.

Discussion of Finding D.3.g. Education is a critical BMP and an important aspect of the urban runoff management programs. USEPA finds that “An informed and knowledgeable community is critical to the success of a storm water management program since it helps ensure the following: Greater support for the program as the public gains a greater understanding of the reasons why it is necessary and important, [and] greater compliance with the program as the public becomes aware of the personal responsibilities expected of them and others in the community, including the individual actions they can take to protect or improve the quality of area waters.”¹³³

Regarding target audiences, USEPA also states “The public education program should use a mix of appropriate local strategies to address the viewpoints and concerns of a variety of audiences and communities, including minority and disadvantaged communities, as well as children.”

¹³¹ USEPA, 2000. EPA Administered Permit Programs: The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. Code of Federal Regulations, Vol. 40, Part 122.

¹³² USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA/833-B-92-002.

¹³³ USEPA, 2000. Storm Water Phase II Compliance Assistance Guide. EPA 833-R-00-002.

Finding D.3.h. Public participation during the development of urban runoff management programs is necessary to ensure that all stakeholder interests and a variety of creative solutions are considered.

Discussion of Finding D.3.h.

This finding is supported by the Phase II Storm Water Regulations, which state “early and frequent public involvement can shorten implementation schedules and broaden public support for a program.” USEPA goes on to explain, “Public participation is likely to ensure a more successful storm water program by providing valuable expertise and a conduit to other programs and governments.”¹³⁴

Finding D.4.a. Since urban runoff does not recognize political boundaries, watershed-based urban runoff management can greatly enhance the protection of receiving waters within a watershed. Such management provides a means to focus on the most important water quality problems in each watershed. By focusing on the most important water quality problems, watershed efforts can maximize protection of beneficial use in an efficient manner. Effective watershed-based urban runoff management actively reduces pollutant discharges and abates pollutant sources causing or contributing to watershed water quality problems. Watershed-based urban runoff management that does not actively reduce pollutant discharges and abate pollutant sources causing or contributing to watershed water quality problems can necessitate implementation of the iterative process outlined in section A.3 of the Tentative Order. Watershed management of urban runoff does not require Copermittees to expend resources outside of their jurisdictions. Watershed management requires the Copermittees within a watershed to develop a watershed-based management strategy, which can then be implemented on a jurisdictional basis.

Discussion of Finding D.4.a. In recent years, addressing water quality issues from a watershed perspective has increasingly gained attention. Regarding watershed-based permitting, the USEPA *Watershed-Based NPDES Permitting Policy Statement* issued on Jan. 7, 2004 states the following:

USEPA continues to support a holistic watershed approach to water quality management. The process for developing and issuing NPDES permits on a watershed basis is an important tool in water quality management. USEPA believes that developing and issuing NPDES permits on a watershed basis can benefit all watershed stakeholders, from the NPDES permitting authority to local community members. A watershed-based approach to point source permitting under the NPDES program may serve as one innovative tool for achieving new efficiencies and environmental results. USEPA believes that watershed-based permitting can:

- Lead to more environmentally effective results;
- Emphasize measuring the effectiveness of targeted actions on improvements in water quality;
- Provide greater opportunities for trading and other market based approaches;

¹³⁴ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68755.

- Reduce the cost of improving the quality of the nation's waters;
- Foster more effective implementation of watershed plans, including total maximum daily loads (TMDLs); and
- Realize other ancillary benefits beyond those that have been achieved under the CWA (e.g., facilitate program integration including integration of clean water act and safe drinking water act programs).

Watershed-based permitting is a process that ultimately produces NPDES permits that are issued to point sources on a geographic or watershed basis. In establishing point source controls in a watershed-based permit, the permitting authority may focus on watershed goals, and consider multiple pollutant sources and stressors, including the level of nonpoint source control that is practicable. In general, there are numerous permitting mechanisms that may be used to develop and issue permits within a watershed approach.

This USEPA guidance is in line with State Board and Regional Board watershed management goals. For example, the State Board's TAC recommends watershed-based water quality protection, stating "Municipal permits should have watershed specific components." The TAC further recommends that "All NPDES permits and Waste Discharge Requirements should be considered for reissuance on a watershed basis."

In addition, the Basin Plan states that "public agencies and private organizations concerned with water resources have come to recognize that a comprehensive evaluation of pollutant contributions on a watershed scale is the only way to realistically assess cumulative impacts and formulate workable strategies to truly protect our water resources. Both water pollution and habitat degradation problems can best be solved by following a basin-wide approach."

In light of USEPA's policy statement and the State Board's and Regional Board's watershed management goals, the Regional Board seeks to expand watershed management in the regulation of urban runoff. Watershed-based MS4 permits can provide for more effective receiving water quality protection by focusing on specific water quality problems. The entire watershed for the receiving water can be assessed, allowing for critical areas and practices to be targeted for corrective actions. Known sources of pollutants of concern can be investigated for potential water quality impacts. Problem areas can then be addressed, leading to eventual improvements in receiving water quality. Management of urban runoff on a watershed basis allows for specific water quality problems to be targeted so that efforts result in maximized water quality improvements.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Regional Board, 2004. San Diego County Municipal Storm Water Permit Reissuance Analysis Summary. P. 1.

Finding D.4.b. Some urban runoff issues, such as general education and training, can be effectively addressed on a regional basis. Regional approaches to urban runoff management can improve program consistency and promote sharing of resources, which can result in implementation of more efficient programs.

Discussion of Finding D.4.b. Copermittees in Orange County participate in several urban runoff-related activities whose scope extends beyond the area subject to this Order. These include countywide activities (e.g., portions of Orange County fall under the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Board), southern California, and statewide activities. Copermittees' participation in these regional activities is generally directed at improving management capability, taking advantage of economies of scale. For instance, Copermittees seek to develop consistency between watershed and/or jurisdictional programs (e.g., through standards development), and to collaborate on certain program activities such as education, training, and monitoring. The Copermittees report agreeing that jurisdictional, watershed, and regional programs cannot be effectively developed and implemented in isolation. In addition, the Copermittees, through WURMP implementation efforts, have learned that many watershed activities can be more effectively implemented (e.g., achieve more water quality benefits) at the regional level due to economies of scale and agree watershed protection should be increasingly emphasized as a focal point of Copermittee efforts under the re-issued Permit.¹³⁶

Finding D.4.c. It is important for the Copermittees to coordinate their water quality protection and land use planning activities to achieve the greatest protection of receiving water bodies. Copermittee coordination with other watershed stakeholders, especially Caltrans, the Department of Defense, and water and sewer districts, is also important.

Discussion of Finding D.4.c. Conventional planning and zoning can be limited in their ability to protect the environmental quality of creeks, rivers, and other waterbodies. Watershed-based planning is often ignored, despite the fact that receiving waters unite land by collecting runoff from throughout the watershed. Since watersheds unite land, they can be used as an effective basis for planning. Watershed-based planning enables local and regional areas to realize economic, social, and other benefits associated with growth, while conserving the resources needed to sustain such growth, including water quality.

¹³⁶ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region).

This type of planning can involve four steps: (1) Identify the watersheds shared by the participating jurisdictions; (2) Identify, assess, and prioritize the natural, social, and other resources in the watersheds; (3) Prioritize areas for growth, protection, and conservation, based on prioritized resources; and (4) Develop plans and regulations to guide growth and protect resources. Local governments have started with simple, yet effective, steps toward watershed planning, such as adopting a watershed-based planning approach, articulating the basic strategy in their General Plans, and beginning to pursue the basic strategy in collaboration with neighboring local governments who share the watersheds. Examples of new mechanisms created to facilitate watershed-based planning and zoning include the San Francisquito Creek Watershed Coordinated Resource Management Process and the Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative.¹³⁷

E. Statute and Regulatory Considerations

Finding E.1. The Receiving Water Limitations (RWL) language specified in this Order is consistent with language recommended by the USEPA and established in State Board Water Quality Order 99-05, *Own Motion Review of the Petition of Environmental Health Coalition to Review Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 96-03, NPDES Permit No. CAS0108740*, adopted by the State Board on June 17, 1999.¹³⁸ The RWL in this Order require compliance with water quality standards, which is to be achieved through an iterative approach requiring the implementation of improved and better-tailored BMPs over time. Compliance with receiving water limits based on applicable water quality standards is necessary to ensure that MS4 discharges will not cause or contribute to violations of water quality standards and the creation of conditions of pollution.

¹³⁷ Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association., 1999. Start at the Source. Forbes Custom Publishing. Available on-line at: http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/basmaa_satsm.htm

¹³⁸ State Water Resources Control Board Order: WQ 99 - 05 Own Motion Review of the Petition of Environmental Health Coalition to Review Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 96-03, NPDES Permit No. CAS0108740 for Storm Water and Urban Runoff from the Orange County Flood Control District and the Incorporated Cities of Orange County Within the San Diego Region, Issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region. SWRCB/OCC File A-1041. In response to objections from USEPA, Order WQ 99-05 revised Receiving Water Limitations language that had been established in State Board Order 98-01.

Discussion of Finding E.1. The RWLs in the Order require compliance with water quality standards through an iterative approach for implementing improved and better-tailored BMPs over time. The iterative BMP process requires the implementation of increasingly stringent BMPs until receiving water standards are achieved. This is necessary because implementation of BMPs alone cannot ensure attainment of receiving water quality standards. For example, a BMP that is effective in one situation may not be applicable in another. An iterative process of BMP development, implementation, and assessment is needed to promote consistent compliance with receiving water quality objectives. If assessment of a given BMP confirms that the BMP is ineffective, the iterative process should be restarted, with redevelopment of a new BMP that is anticipated to result in compliance with receiving water quality objectives.

The issue of whether storm water discharges from MS4s must meet water quality standards has been intensely debated in past years. The argument arises because CWA section 402(p) fails to clearly state that municipal dischargers of storm water must meet water quality standards. On the issue of industrial discharges of storm water, the statute clearly indicates that industrial dischargers must meet both (1) the technology-based standard of “best available technology economically achievable (BAT)” and (2) applicable water quality standards. On the issue of municipal discharges however, the statute states that municipal dischargers must meet (1) the technology-based standard of MEP” and (2) “such other provisions that the Administrator or the State determines appropriate for the control of such pollutants.” The statute fails, however, to specifically state that municipal dischargers must meet water quality standards.

As a result, the municipal storm water dischargers have argued that they do not have to meet water quality standards; and that they only are required to meet MEP. Environmental interest groups maintain that not only do MS4 discharges have to meet water quality standards, but that MS4 permits must also comply with numeric effluent limitations for the purpose of meeting water quality standards. On the issue of water quality standards, USEPA, the State Board, and the Regional Board have consistently maintained that MS4s must indeed comply with water quality standards. On the issue of whether water quality standards must be met by numeric effluent limits, USEPA, the State Board (in Orders WQ 91-03 and WQ 91-04), and the Regional Board have maintained that MS4 permits can contain narrative requirements for the implementation of BMPs in place of numeric effluent limits.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ For the most recent assessment, see Storm Water Panel Recommendations to the California State Water Resources Control Board, 2006. *The Feasibility of Numeric Effluent Limits Applicable to Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Municipal, Industrial, and Construction Activities.*

In addition to relying on USEPA's legal opinion concluding that MS4s must meet MEP and water quality standards, the State Board also relied on the CWA's explicit authority for States to require "such other provisions that the Administrator or the State determines appropriate for the control of such pollutants" in addition to the technology-based standard of MEP. To further support its conclusions that MS4 permit dischargers must meet water quality standards, the State Board relied on provisions of the CWC that specify that all waste discharge requirements must implement applicable Basin Plans and take into consideration the appropriate water quality objectives for the protection of beneficial uses.

The State Board first formally concluded that permits for MS4s must contain effluent limitations based on water quality standards in its Order WQ 91-03. In that Order, the State Board also concluded that it was appropriate for Regional Boards to achieve this result by requiring best management practices, rather than by inserting numeric effluent limitations into MS4 permits. Later, in Order WQ 98-01, the State Board prescribed specific precedent setting Receiving Water Limitations language to be included in all future MS4 permits. This language specifically requires that MS4 dischargers meet water quality standards and allows for the use of narrative BMPs (increasing in stringency and implemented in an iterative process) as the mechanism by which water quality standards can be met.

In Order WQ 99-05, the State Board modified its receiving water limitations language in Order WQ 98-01 to meet specific objections by USEPA (the modifications resulted in stricter compliance with water quality standards). State Board Order WQ 99-05 states:

"In Order WQ 98-01, the State Board ordered that certain receiving water limitation language be included in future municipal storm water permits. Following inclusion of that language in permits issued by the San Francisco Bay and San Diego Regional Boards for Vallejo and Riverside respectively, the USEPA objected to the permits. The USEPA objection was based on the receiving water limitation language. The USEPA has now issued those permits itself and has included receiving water limitation language it deems appropriate.

In light of USEPA's objection to the receiving water limitation language in Order WQ 98-01 and its adoption of alternative language, the State Board is revising its instructions regarding receiving water limitation language for municipal storm water permits. It is hereby ordered that Order WQ 98-01 will be amended to remove the receiving water limitation language contained therein and to substitute the USEPA language. Based on the reasons stated here, and as a precedent decision, the following receiving water limitation language shall be included in future municipal storm water permits."

In the 1999 case involving MS4 permits issued by USEPA to several Arizona cities (*Defenders of Wildlife v. Browner*, 1999, 197 F. 3d 1035), the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld USEPA's requirement for MS4 dischargers to meet water quality standards, but it did so on the basis of USEPA's discretion rather than on the basis of strict compliance with the Clean Water Act. In other words, while holding that the Clean Water Act does not require all MS4 discharges to comply strictly with state water quality standards, the Court also held that USEPA has the authority to determine that ensuring strict compliance with state water quality standards is necessary to control pollutants. On the question of whether MS4 permits must contain numeric effluent limitations, the court upheld USEPA's use of iterative BMPs in place of numeric effluent limits.

On October 14, 1999, the State Board issued a legal opinion on the federal appellate decision and provided advice to the Regional Boards on how to proceed in the future. In the memorandum, the State Board concludes that the recent Ninth Circuit opinion upholds the discretion of USEPA and the State to (continue to) issue permits to MS4s that require compliance with water quality standards through iterative BMPs. Moreover, the memorandum states that "[...] because most MS4 discharges enter impaired water bodies, there is a real need for permits to include stringent requirements to protect those water bodies. As TMDLs are developed, it is likely that MS4s will have to participate in pollutant load reductions, and the MS4 permits are the most effective vehicles for those reductions." In summary, the State Board found that the Regional Boards should continue to include the RWL established in State Board Order WQ 99-05 in all future permits.

The issue of the RWLs language was also central to BIA's (and others') appeal of Order No. 2001-01 (San Diego MS4 permit), which was used as a template for Order No. R9-2002-01. BIA contended that the MEP standard was a ceiling on what could be required of the Copermitees in implementing their urban runoff management programs, and that Order No. 2001-01's receiving water limitations requirements exceeded that ceiling. In other words, BIA argued that the Copermitees could not be required to comply with receiving water limitations if they necessitated efforts which went beyond the MEP standard. Again, the courts upheld the Regional Board's discretion to require compliance with water quality standards in municipal storm water permits, without limitation. The Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District found that the Regional Board has "the authority to include a permit provision requiring compliance with water quality standards."¹⁴⁰ On further appeal by BIA, the California State Supreme Court declined to hear the matter.

¹⁴⁰ Building Industry Association et al., v. State Water Resources Control Board, et al. 2004.

While implementation of the iterative BMP process is a means to achieve compliance with water quality objectives, it does not shield the discharger from enforcement actions for continued non-compliance with water quality standards. Consistent with USEPA guidance,¹⁴¹ regardless of whether or not an iterative process is being implemented, discharges that cause or contribute to a violation of water quality standards are in violation of Order No. R9-2007-0002.

Finding E.2. The Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan), identifies the following beneficial uses for surface waters in Orange County: Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN), Agricultural Supply (AGR), Industrial Process Supply (PROC), Industrial Service Supply (IND), Ground Water Recharge (GWR), Contact Water Recreation (REC1) Non-contact Water Recreation (REC2), Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM), Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD), Wildlife Habitat (WILD), Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species (RARE), Freshwater Replenishment (FRSH), Hydropower Generation (POW), and Preservation of Biological Habitats of Special Significance (BIOL). The following additional beneficial uses are identified for coastal waters of Orange County: Navigation (NAV), Commercial and Sport Fishing (COMM), Estuarine Habitat (EST), Marine Habitat (MAR), Aquaculture (AQUA), Migration of Aquatic Organisms (MIGR), Spawning, Reproduction, and/or Early Development (SPWN), and Shellfish Harvesting (SHELL).

Discussion of Finding E.2. The southern portion of Orange County is within the San Diego Region. The Orange County portion of the San Diego Region falls within and comprises the majority of the San Juan Hydrologic Unit. Major streams within the Orange County watersheds include San Juan Creek, Trabuco Creek, and San Mateo Creek. Other surface water bodies include Aliso Creek, Prima Deshecha Canada, Segunda Deshecha Canada, Oso Creek, Salt Creek, Laguna Canyon Channel, Canada Gobernadora, and Bell Canyon. Several small canyon streams drain directly to the Ocean. Major inland waterbodies include Oso Reservoir, El Toro Reservoir, and Sulphur Creek Reservoir.

The Orange County watersheds include unincorporated portions of Orange County, the Cities of Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, and San Juan Capistrano. The uppermost portions of the San Mateo, San Juan, Trabuco, and Aliso Creek watersheds are within the Cleveland National Forests.

¹⁴¹ USEPA, 1998. Jan. 21, 1998 correspondence, "State Board/OCC File A-1041 for Orange County," from Alexis Strauss to Walt Petit, and March 17, 1998 correspondence from Alexis Strauss to Walt Petit.

Approximately 500,000 people reside within the permitted area. This estimate is based on the 2000 census, which does not represent exact numbers because three municipalities (County of Orange and the Cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest) lie within both the San Diego Region and the Santa Region. In addition, new developments have increased the housing stock of the area since the 2000 census. This includes the master planned developments of Ladera Ranch in the San Juan Creek watershed and Talega in the San Clemente Coastal and San Mateo Creek watersheds.

Finding E.3. This Order is in conformance with State Board Resolution No. 68-16, *Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California*, and the federal Antidegradation Policy described in 40 CFR 131.12.

Discussion of Finding E.3. Urban runoff management programs are required to be designed to reduce pollutants in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable and achieve compliance with water quality standards. Therefore, implementation of urban runoff management programs, which satisfy the requirements of Order No. R9-2007-0002, will prevent violations of receiving water quality standards. The Basin Plan states that "Water quality objectives must [...] conform to US EPA regulations covering antidegradation (40 CFR 131.12) and State Board Resolution 68-16, *Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality of Waters in California*." As a result, when water quality standards are met through the implementation of urban runoff management programs, USEPA and State Board antidegradation policy requirements are also met.

Finding E.4. Section 6217(g) of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 (CZARA) requires coastal states with approved coastal zone management programs to address non-point pollution impacting or threatening coastal water quality. CZARA addresses five sources of non-point pollution: agriculture, silviculture, urban, marinas, and hydromodification. This NPDES permit addresses the management measures required for the urban category, with the exception of septic systems. The adoption and implementation of this NPDES permit relieves the Permittee from developing a non-point source plan, for the urban category, under CZARA. The Regional Board addresses septic systems through the administration of other programs.

Discussion of Finding E.4. Coastal states are required to develop programs to protect coastal waters from nonpoint source pollution, as mandated by the federal CZARA. CZARA Section 6217 identifies polluted runoff as a significant factor in coastal water degradation, and requires implementation of management measures and enforceable policies to restore and protect coastal waters. In lieu of developing a separate NPS program for the coastal zone, California's NPS Pollution Control Program was updated in 2000 to address the requirements of both the CWA section 319 and the CZARA section 6217 on a statewide basis. The California Coastal Commission (CCC), the State Board, and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards are the lead State agencies for upgrading the program, although 20 other State agencies also participate. Pursuant to the CZARA (6217(g) Guidance Document the development of urban runoff management programs pursuant to this NPDES permit fulfills the need for coastal cities to develop an urban runoff non-point source plan identified in the State's Non-point Source Program Strategy and Implementation Plan.¹⁴²

Finding E.5. Section 303(d)(1)(A) of the CWA requires that "Each state shall identify those waters within its boundaries for which the effluent limitations...are not stringent enough to implement any water quality standard (WQS) applicable to such waters." The CWA also requires states to establish a priority ranking of impaired waterbodies known as Water Quality Limited Segments and to establish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for such waters. This priority list of impaired waterbodies is called the Section 303(d) List. The current Section 303(d) List was approved by the State Board on February 4, 2003 and on July 25, 2003 by USEPA. The List was recently updated by the State Board on October 25, 2006. Before the 2006 List goes into effect, it must be approved by the USEPA.

Discussion of Finding E.5. Section 303(d) of the federal CWA (CWA, 33 USC 1250, et seq., at 1313(d)), requires States to identify waters that do not meet water quality standards after applying certain required technology-based effluent limits ("impaired" water bodies). States are required to compile this information in a list and submit the list to USEPA for review and approval. This list is known as the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters. As part of this listing process, States are required to prioritize waters/watersheds for future development of TMDLs. The State Board and Regional Boards have ongoing efforts to monitor and assess water quality, to prepare the Section 303(d) list, and to subsequently develop TMDLs. The 2006 California 303(d) List identifies impaired receiving water bodies and their watersheds within the State of California. Urban runoff that is discharged from the Copermittee's MS4s is a leading cause of receiving water quality impairment in the San Diego Region.¹⁴³

¹⁴² State Board/CCC, 2000. Nonpoint Source Program Strategy and Implementation Plan, 1998-2013 (PROSIP).

¹⁴³ The approved 2006 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments is online at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/tmdl/303d_lists2006.html.

Finding E.6. Requirements in this Order that are more explicit than the federal storm water regulations in 40 CFR 122.26 are prescribed in accordance with the CWA section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) and are necessary to meet the MEP standard.

Discussion of Finding E.6. The CWA explicitly preserves independent state authority to enact and implement its own standards and requirements, provided that such standards and requirements are at least as stringent as those that would be mandated by the CWA and the federal regulations. For example, as one general overriding principle, CWA section 510 states “nothing in this chapter shall (1) preclude or deny the right of any State or political subdivision thereof or interstate agency to adopt or enforce (A) any standard or limitation respecting discharges of pollutants, or (B) any requirement respecting control or abatement of pollution [...]” When relating specifically to storm water, CWA section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) clearly provides states with wide-ranging discretion, stating that municipal storm water permits “[s]hall require controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including management practices, control techniques and system, design and engineering methods, and such other provisions as the Administrator or the State determines appropriate for the control of such pollutants”

Therefore, where the Order contains requirements more specific than those included in the federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d), it is seeking to meet the above CWA requirements, as well as other particular federal NPDES regulations such as 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i). This federal NPDES regulation requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have the reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.” Given the continued impact of urban runoff on receiving waters within the San Diego Region, increased specificity in municipal storm water permits is necessary to meet the above CWA and federal regulation requirements.

In a 1992 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (NRDC v. USEPA, 966 F.2d 1292) interpreted the language in Clean Water Act section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) as providing the State with substantial discretion and authority: “[t]he language in (iii), above, requires the Administrator or the State to design controls. Congress did not mandate a minimum standards approach or specify that USEPA develop minimal performance requirements [...] we must defer to USEPA on matters such as this, where USEPA has supplied a reasoned explanation of its choices.” The decision in essence holds that USEPA and the States are authorized to require implementation of storm water control programs that, upon “reasoned explanation,” accomplish the goals of CWA section 402(p). The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals further reinforced the State’s authority in this area more recently in 1999. In Defenders of Wildlife v. Browner (1999) Case No. 98-71080, the Court cited the language of CWA section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) and stated “[t]hat provision gives the USEPA discretion to determine what pollution controls are appropriate. As this court stated in NRDC v. USEPA, ‘Congress gave the administrator discretion to determine what controls are necessary [...].’”

Furthermore, the increased specificity included in the Order is in line with USEPA guidance included in its Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part 2 of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems¹⁴⁴ and its Interim Permitting Approach for Water Quality-Based Effluent Limitations in Storm Water Permits.¹⁴⁵ Where the tentative permit is more specific than the federal regulations, it is frequently based on the recommendations of the Guidance Manual. The Interim Permitting Approach also supports increased specificity in storm water permits, recommending that municipal storm water permits use BMPs in first-round storm water permits, and expanded or better-tailored BMPs in subsequent permits, where necessary, to provide for the attainment of water quality standards. In cases where adequate information exists to develop more specific conditions or limitations to meet water quality standards, these conditions or limitations are to be incorporated into storm water permits, as necessary and appropriate.” It is important to note that the State Board cited USEPA’s Interim Permitting Approach as support for its decision which upheld the increased specificity of numeric sizing criteria requirements for post-construction BMPs as appropriate requirements in municipal storm water permits.

¹⁴⁴ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

¹⁴⁵ USEPA, 1996. Interim Permitting Approach for Water Quality-Based Effluent Limitations in Storm Water Permits. 61 FR 43761.

Finding E.7. Urban runoff treatment and/or mitigation must occur prior to the discharge of urban runoff into a receiving water. Federal regulations at 40 CFR 131.10(a) state that in no case shall a state adopt waste transport or waste assimilation as a designated use for any waters of the U.S. Authorizing the construction of an urban runoff treatment facility within a water of the U.S., or using the water body itself as a treatment system or for conveyance to a treatment system, would be tantamount to accepting waste assimilation as an appropriate use for that water body. Furthermore, the construction, operation, and maintenance of a pollution control facility in a water body can negatively impact the physical, chemical, and biological integrity, as well as the beneficial uses, of the water body. This is consistent with USEPA guidance to avoid locating structural controls in natural wetlands.

Discussion of Finding E.7. Urban runoff treatment and/or mitigation in accordance with any of the requirements in the Order must occur prior to the discharge of storm water or urban runoff into receiving waters. Allowing polluted runoff to enter receiving waters prior to treatment to the MEP will result in degradation of the water body and potential exceedances of water quality standards, from the discharge point to the point of dissipation, infiltration, or treatment. Furthermore, the construction, operation, and maintenance of a pollution control facility in a water body can negatively impact the physical, chemical, and biological integrity, as well as the beneficial uses, of the water body. This requirement is supported by federal regulation 40 CFR 131.10(a) and USEPA guidance. According to USEPA,¹⁴⁶ "To the extent possible, municipalities should avoid locating structural controls in natural wetlands. Before considering siting of controls in a natural wetland, the municipality should demonstrate that it is not possible or practicable to construct them in sites that do not contain natural wetlands... Practices should be used that settle solids, regulate flow, and remove contaminants prior to discharging storm water into a wetland."

Finding E.8. The issuance of waste discharge requirements and an NPDES permit for the discharge of urban runoff from MS4s to waters of the U.S. is exempt from the requirement for preparation of environmental documents under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Division 13, Chapter 3, section 21000 et seq.) in accordance with the CWC section 13389.

Discussion of Finding E.8. CWC Section 13389 exempts the adoption of waste discharge requirements (such as NPDES permits) from CEQA requirements: "Neither the State Board nor the regional boards shall be required to comply with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with section 21100) of Division 13 of the Public Resources Code prior to the adoption of any waste discharge requirement, except requirements for new sources as defined in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or acts amendatory thereof or supplementary thereto."

¹⁴⁶ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

This CEQA exemption was challenged during BIA's (and others') appeal of Order No. 2001-01. BIA contended that the CEQA exemption did not apply to permit requirements where the Regional Board utilized its discretion to craft permit requirements which were more prescriptive than required by federal law. The Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District disagreed with this argument, stating "we also reject Building Industry's argument to the extent it contends the statutory CEQA exemption in Water Code section 13389 is inapplicable to a particular NPDES permit provision that is discretionary, rather than mandatory, under the CWA."¹⁴⁷ On further appeal by BIA, the California State Supreme Court declined to hear the matter.

In a recent decision, the Court of Appeal of the State of California, Second Appellate District, upheld the CEQA exemption for municipal storm water NPDES permits (County of Los Angeles, et al. v. California State Water Resources Control Board, et al.).¹⁴⁸

F. Public Process

Finding F.1. The Regional Board has notified the Copermittees, all known interested parties, and the public of its intent to consider adoption of an Order prescribing waste discharge requirements that would serve to renew an NPDES permit for the existing discharge of urban runoff.

Discussion of Finding F.1. Public notification of development of a draft permit is required under Federal regulation 40 CFR 124.10(a)(1)(ii). This regulation states "(a) Scope. (1) The Director shall give public notice that the following actions have occurred: (ii) A draft permit has been prepared under Sec. 124.6(d)." Public notifications "shall allow at least 30 days for public comment," as required under Federal regulation 40 CFR 124.10(b)(1).

Finding F.2. The Regional Board has, at public meetings on (DATE), held public hearings and heard and considered all comments pertaining to the terms and conditions of this Order.

Discussion of Finding F.2. Public hearings are required under CWC Section 13378, which states "Waste discharge requirements and dredged or fill material permits shall be adopted only after notice and any necessary hearing." Federal regulation 40 CFR 124.12(a)(1) also requires public hearings for draft permits, stating "The Director shall hold a public hearing whenever he or she finds, on the basis or requests, a significant degree of public interest in a draft permit(s)." Regarding public notice of a public hearing, Federal regulation 40 CFR 124.10(b)(2) states that "Public notice of a public hearing shall be given at least 30 days before the hearing."

¹⁴⁷ Building Industry Association et al., v. State Water Resources Control Board, et al. 2004.

¹⁴⁸ Los Angeles County Super. Ct. No. BS080792. Partial publication dated November 6, 2006.

IX. DIRECTIVES

This section discusses significant changes which have been made to the requirements of the Order from the requirements which were previously included in Order No. R9-2002-01. For each section of the Order that has been changed there is a discussion which describes the change that was made and provides the rationale for the change. In addition, comments on the Copermittees' ROWD recommendations, as they pertain to each changed requirement of the Order, are provided.

Requirements of the Order that are not discussed in this section have not been significantly changed from those requirements previously included in Order No. 2002-01. For such requirements, discussions and rationale for the requirements can be found in section VII of the Fact Sheet/Technical Report for Regional Board Order No. R9-2002-01, dated February 13, 2002. Section VII also provides additional background information for those requirements that have undergone significant change which are described in detail in this report. The Fact Sheet/Technical Report is available for download at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/oc_stormwater.html

Legal authority citations are provided for each major section of the Tentative Order. These citations apply to all applicable requirements within the section for which they are provided.

A. Prohibitions and Receiving Water Limitations

The following legal authority applies to section A:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: The Regional Board Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan) contains the following waste discharge prohibition: "The discharge of waste to waters of the state in a manner causing, or threatening to cause a condition of pollution, contamination, or nuisance as defined in California Water Code Section 13050, is prohibited."

California Water Code section 13050(l) states “(1) ‘Pollution’ means an alteration of the quality of waters of the state by waste to a degree which unreasonably affects either of the following: (A) The water for beneficial uses. (B) Facilities which serve beneficial uses. (2) ‘Pollution’ may include “contamination.”

California Water Code section 13050(k) states “‘Contamination’ means an impairment of the quality of waters of the state by waste to a degree which creates a hazard to public health through poisoning or through the spread of disease. ‘Contamination’ includes any equivalent effect resulting from the disposal of waste, whether or not waters of the state are affected.”

California Water Code section 13050(m) states “‘Nuisance’ means anything which meets all of the following requirements: (1) Is injurious to health, or is indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property. (2) Affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal. (3) Occurs during, or as a result of, the treatment or disposal of wastes.”

California Water Code section 13241 requires each regional board to “establish such water quality objectives in water quality control plans as in its judgment will ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses and the prevention of nuisance [...]”

California Water Code Section 13243 provides that “A regional board, in a water quality control plan or in waste discharge requirements, may specify certain conditions or areas where the discharge of waste, or certain types of waste, will not be permitted.”

California Water Code Section 13263(a) provides that waste discharge requirements prescribed by the Regional Board implement the Basin Plan.

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A - D) require municipalities to implement controls to reduce pollutants in urban runoff from commercial, residential, industrial, and construction land uses or activities.

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(A - D) require municipalities to have legal authority to control various discharges to their MS4.

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1) requires municipal storm water permits to include any requirements necessary to “[a]chieve water quality standards established under section 303 of the CWA, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i) requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Section A of the Order combines two previously distinct requirement sections – Prohibitions and RWLs. These sections have been combined into one section for organization purposes and to reduce redundancy, since both sections address the same issue. These changes have no net effect on the implementation and enforcement of the Order.

Section A.3 describes the “iterative process.” The Copermittees must reduce the discharge of pollutants to the MEP and ensure that their MS4 discharges do not cause or contribute to violations of water quality standards. If the Copermittees have reduced pollutant discharges to the MEP, but their discharges are still causing or contributing to violations of water quality standards, the Order provides a clear and detailed process for the Copermittees to follow. This process is often referred to as the “iterative process” and can be found at section A.3. The language of section A.3 is prescribed by the State Board and is included in MS4 permits statewide. Section A.3 essentially requires additional BMPs to be implemented until MS4 discharges no longer cause or contribute to a violation of water quality standards.

B. Non-Storm Water Discharges

The following legal authority applies to section B:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B) requires MS4 operators “to detect and remove (or require the discharger to the municipal separate storm sewer to obtain a separate NPDES permit for) illicit discharges and improper disposal into the storm sewer.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(1) provides that the Copermittees shall prevent all types of illicit discharges into the MS4 except for certain non-storm water discharges.

Section B of the Order has been reworded to simplify and clarify the requirements for addressing non-storm water discharges that are not prohibited. This rewording has no net effect on the implementation and enforcement of the Order.

C. Legal Authority

The following legal authority applies to section C:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(A) provides that the Copermittees shall develop and implement legal authority to “Control through ordinance, order or similar means, the contribution of pollutants to the municipal storm sewer by storm water discharges associated with industrial activity and the quality of storm water discharged from sites of industrial activity.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(D) provides that the Copermittees shall develop and implement legal authority to “Control through interagency agreements among coapplicants the contribution of pollutants from one portion of the municipal system to another portion of the municipal system.”

Illicit discharge is defined under Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(b)(2) as “any discharge to a municipal separate storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of storm water except discharges pursuant to a NPDES permit (other than the NPDES permit for discharges from the municipal separate storm sewer) and discharges resulting from fire fighting activities.”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A - D) require municipalities to implement controls to reduce pollutants in urban runoff from commercial, residential, industrial, and construction land uses or activities.

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(1)(ii) requires from the Copermittee “A description of existing legal authority to control discharges to the municipal separate storm sewer system.”

Section C.1.j has been added to the Order to ensure that BMPs implemented by third parties are effective. Since the Copermittees cannot passively receive and discharge pollutants from third parties, the Copermittees must ensure discharges of pollutants to the MS4 are reduced to the MEP. In order to achieve this, the Copermittees must be able to ensure that effective BMPs are being implemented by requiring the third parties to document BMP effectiveness. Regarding the Copermittees' ability to require documentation and reporting from third parties, USEPA states "municipalities should provide documentation of their authority to enter, sample, inspect, review, and copy records, etc., as well as demonstrate their authority to require regular reports."¹⁴⁹

D. Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program

D.1. Development Planning

The following legal authority applies to section D.1:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWA section 402(a), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F), 40 CFR 131.12, and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(2) provides that Copermittees develop and implement a management program which is to include "A description of planning procedures including a comprehensive master plan to develop, implement and enforce controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants from municipal separate storm sewers which receive discharges from areas of new development and significant redevelopment. Such plans shall address controls to reduce pollutants in discharges from municipal separate storm sewers after construction is completed."

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1) requires municipal storm water permits to include any requirements necessary to "[a]chieve water quality standards established under section 303 of the CWA, including State narrative criteria for water quality."

Sections D.1.a and D.1.b (General Plan and Environmental Review Process) require the Copermittees to update and revise their General Plan (or equivalent plan) and environmental review processes to ensure water quality and watershed protection principles are included. The Copermittees are required to detail any changes to the General Plan or environmental review process in their Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program Annual Reports.

¹⁴⁹ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part 2 of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. EPA 833-B-92-002.

The change made to these sections requires updating the General Plan and Environmental Review Process on an as-needed basis, is supported by information provided in the Copermittees' Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) and Annual Reports. Each Copermittee has either updated, is in the process of updating, or has assessed its General Plan to ensure the General Plans include the required principles and are in compliance with Order No. R9-2002-01. The ROWD also states that although all the Copermittees have reviewed their environmental review processes, a number of Copermittees want the overall planning approval process to more effectively ensure that water quality protection is considered in the earliest phases of project consideration.

Section D.1.c (Approval Process Criteria and Requirements) requires that all development projects (regardless of size) implement BMPs to reduce pollutant discharges to the MEP. Source control and site design BMP requirements were not clearly described in this section of Order No. R9-2002-01. Additional detail has been added to this section to better describe the source control and site design BMPs needed for implementation. This additional detail is consistent with the requirements of the SUSMP, known in Orange County as the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). However, only source control and site design BMPs that apply to all types of development projects are required (i.e., properly designed trash storage areas).

The requirements are consistent with Order No. R9-2002-01, section F.1.b.1. However, some elements are not contained in the current or proposed DAMP¹⁵⁰ (e.g., buffer zones). One exception is that Order No. R9-2002-01's requirement that applicants must provide evidence of coverage under the General Industrial Permit has been removed, since industrial tenants for a development project are usually not known during the planning stage.

Sections D.1.d and D.1.d.(1) (Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plans) require the Copermittees to review and update their local SUSMPs (also known in Orange County as Water Quality Management Plans – WQMPs) for compliance with the Order. The sections also require all Priority Development Projects falling under certain categories to meet SUSMP requirements. The update is necessary to ensure that the Copermittees' local SUSMPs are consistent with the changes that have been made to the Order's SUSMP requirements. The requirement for the development/adoption of a Model SUSMP has been removed since a model was completed and adopted in 2003.

The SUSMP section of the Order has been reformatted for clarity. There are also some significant changes. Changes have been made in response to experience gained by the Orange County Storm Water program, USEPA program evaluations, recent BMP development and effectiveness studies, recent reports on the magnitude of problems caused by hydromodification, and reviews of annual reports and the ROWD submitted by the Copermittees.

¹⁵⁰ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. *Drainage Area Management Plan (DAMP) 2007*. July 21, 2006. The 2007 DAMP was submitted to the Regional Board with the Report of Waste Discharge as part of the application for NPDES Permit reissuance.

In addition, the Order requires that a one-acre threshold be phased in over three years for the priority development category. This threshold was selected to be consistent with the Phase II NPDES regulations for small municipalities. The one-acre determination applies to the amount of ground area disturbed, not the total size of the parcel or project. Each Copermitee may also lower this threshold if desired.

Section D.1.d.(2) (Priority Development Project Categories) includes several changes to improve, simplify, and clarify the Priority Development Project categories.

The most significant change is that where a new Development Project feature, such as a parking lot, falls into a Priority Development Project Category, the entire project footprint is subject to SUSMP requirements. This criterion was not included in Order No. R9-2002-01. It is included, however, in the Model San Diego SUSMP that was approved by the Regional Board in 2002. It is included in this Order because existing development inspections by Orange County municipalities show that facilities included in the Priority Development Project Categories routinely pose threats to water quality. This permit requirement will improve water quality and program efficiency by preventing future problems associated with partly treated runoff from redevelopment sites. This approach to improving urban runoff from existing developments is practicable because municipalities have a better ability to regulate new developments than existing developments.

Industrial sites and retail gasoline outlets have been added to the priority development categories. This heavy industrial category was not included in Order No. R9-2002-01 because industrial NPDES requirements already establish storm water criteria. This category is included in the Order to be consistent with Phase II rules and to close loopholes. A discussion of retail gasoline outlets is below.

The criterion for commercial developments has been lowered to one acre from 100,000 square feet (2.3 acres). It is modified in order to be consistent with USEPA Phase II guidance, and to reflect the findings from Permittees that smaller commercial developments pose high threats to storm water discharges.

Housing and restaurant criteria have been clarified. The two housing development categories are now combined into one category that includes 10 or more housing units. In addition, requirements which specifically apply to restaurants have been combined in this section. The section has been modified to clarify that restaurants with less than 5,000 square feet of development are subject to SUSMP requirements, except for the treatment control BMP and hydromodification control requirements. This is consistent with Order No. R9-2002-01's approach for applying SUSMP requirements to restaurants.

Section D.1.d.(2)(j) includes Retail Gasoline Outlets (RGOs) as a Priority Development Project category because RGOs are points of confluence for motor vehicles for automotive related services such as repair, refueling, tire inflation, and radiator fill-up. RGOs consequently produce significantly greater pollutant loadings of hydrocarbons and trace metals (including copper and zinc) than other urban areas. To meet MEP, source control and structural treatment BMPs are needed at RGOs that meet the following criteria: (a) 5,000 square feet or more of developed area, or (b) a projected average daily traffic of 100 or more vehicles per day. These are appropriate thresholds since development size and volume of traffic are good indicators of potential impacts of urban runoff from RGOs on receiving waters. RGOs were proposed, but not included in Order No. R9-2002-01 pending guidance from the State Board in its review of the San Diego MS4 Permit, Order No. 2001-01.

In State Board WQ Order No. 2000-11, the State Board removed RGOs as a SUSMP category because the State Board found that RGOs were already heavily regulated and limited in their ability to construct infiltration devices or perform treatment. Order No. 2000-11 also acknowledged that a threshold (size, average daily traffic, etc.) appropriate to trigger SUSMP requirements should be developed, and that specific findings regarding RGOs should be included in MS4 permits to justify the requirement.¹⁵¹ The State Board also removed the RGO category from the San Diego County MS4 permit (Order No. 2001-01) because the Regional Board did not specifically address the issues raised in WQ Order No. 2000-11.

As discussed further below, the LARWQCB and the Regional Board have adequately addressed these issues. RGOs have been included as a SUSMP category in the Los Angeles County MS4 permit (Order No. R4-01-182), the statewide general Phase II MS4 permit (WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ), and the Regional Board Southern Riverside County MS4 permit (Order No. R9-2004-001). The State Board also addressed the inclusion of RGOs through the appeals of MS4 permits issued by the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area Regional Boards. The State Board held a workshop addressing RGOs and identified RGOs as significant sources of pollutants. The State Board then dismissed the petitions for removal of RGOs from the SUSMP requirements in the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area MS4 permits.

Inexpensive and effective structural treatment BMPs which reduce pollutants and control peak flow rates and velocities are available for use at RGOs. Studies have shown that some catch basin inserts can remove hydrocarbons and heavy metals, which are typical pollutants of concern at RGOs. Sand or media filters have also been found to be effective and available for use at RGOs. Site design measures to control flow include cisterns, small weirs, baffles, and redirecting roof runoff to pervious areas.

No evidence has been provided to indicate that use of these structural BMPs at RGOs will pose a safety risk. In fact, filter BMPs have been installed at RGOs in some municipalities without apparent adverse safety effects. In addition, similar BMPs such as oil/water separators have been used for years by RGOs without safety problems.

¹⁵¹ State Board, 2000. Order WQ 2000-11.

Threshold - Studies indicate that runoff from RGOs contains similar pollutants to runoff from commercial parking lots. In precedential WQ Order 2000-11, the State Board determined that parking lots with a size threshold of 5,000 square feet or more is an appropriate SUSMP category. Based in part on the similarity of pollutants, the 5,000 square feet size threshold was also included for RGOs in the Order. In addition, other municipalities currently use similar size thresholds for RGOs when requiring design standards to mitigate storm water runoff. To provide additional flexibility for the Copermittees, another threshold of 100 or more motor vehicles ADT has been added to the Order. This threshold is based on requirements used in Washington and Oregon for what are considered "high use" sites. This is an appropriate threshold since vehicular traffic is a good indicator of the amount of pollutants generated at a site.

The Regional Board followed the State Board's direction regarding RGOs by including the above discussion in this Fact Sheet, as well as a specific finding that justifies the regulation of urban runoff from RGOs that meet certain criteria. Considering all of the supporting documentation discussed above, it is appropriate to include RGOs as a Priority Development Project category.

Additional detailed supporting information can be found in the 2001 technical report titled *Retail Gasoline Outlets: New Development Design Standards for Mitigation of Storm Water Impacts* by the LARWQCB and the Regional Board.

Section D.1.d.(3) (Pollutants of Concern) requires Copermittees to update their procedures for identifying pollutants of concern for each Priority Development Project. This is important to do periodically because of changing water quality conditions and designations of impairments or areas of concern. Furthermore Copermittees continually learn more about pollutant-generating activities as they conduct inspections and investigations, and that information must be incorporated into the SUSMP process.

Section D.1.d.(4) (Site Design BMP Requirements) requires Copermittees to require or implement site design BMPs at Priority Development Projects in order to reduce the amount of polluted runoff from those sites. The primary approach in site design BMPs is to limit the permanent loss of existing infiltration capacity because loss of infiltration is a major contributor to both wet and dry weather pollution discharges. General means to accomplish that goal include retaining natural infiltration areas of a site and limiting the amount of impervious surfaces. The Order does not require a specific or relative amount of pervious surfaces be added to a project. The Order seeks to reduce the effective impervious surface of a project, which is the impervious surface that is directly connected to the storm water drainage system.

The site design BMP options listed in these sections are consistent with the site design BMPs currently required by the Copermitees in the Model WQMP. In the ROWD, the Copermitees propose to improve the process of selecting site design BMPs. Specifically, they propose to develop recommendations for incorporating low-impact design (LID) techniques and site design BMPs. However, the Model WQMP employs an open-ended approach to requirements for site design BMPs, requiring implementation of site design BMPs “where applicable and feasible” and “where appropriate.” Unfortunately, this approach has proven to be ineffective in integrating site design BMPs in project designs. Audits conducted in 2005 of four Copermitees found that municipalities need to work with project applicants to improve the quality of site design BMPs.¹⁵² As a result, the Order establishes two sets of site design BMP criteria.

First, section D.1.d.(4)(b) of the Order directs the Copermitees to require, rather than consider, new development projects to employ certain classes of site design BMPs. The required site design BMPs take advantage of features that are incorporated into the Priority Development Project, such as landscaping or walkways. It also requires that projects seek to maintain natural water drainage features rather than instinctively convey water in buried pipes and engineered ditches that eliminate natural water quality treatment functions. These types of site design BMPs are both effective and achievable. These requirements are consistent with the guidelines of Order No. R9-2002-01 and both the 2003 and 2007 DAMPs.¹⁵³

Next, section D.1.d.(4)(c) of the Order identifies classes of site design BMPs that must be used when applicable and feasible. This approach is similar to Order No. R9-2002-01 and the DAMPs. This list includes requirements from Order No. R9-2002-01, items identified in the DAMPs, and recommended measures from CASQA guidance. These site design BMPs are commonly cited in project proponents’ WQMP reports as the site design BMPs that have been incorporated into Priority Development Projects.

¹⁵² Tetra Tech, Inc. 2005. Program Evaluation Report. Orange County Storm Water Program: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

¹⁵³ The 2003 and 2007 DAMPs include preserving natural drainage features as a recommended site design BMP requirement that was to be reviewed and used where applicable and feasible. The DAMPs note this as a way to mimic a site’s natural hydrologic regime.

The retention of natural drainage features, such as ephemeral streams, wetlands, and depressions, can be particularly important because small tributaries are essential to the maintenance of the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of larger waterbodies.¹⁵⁴ The loss and modification of such natural water resources to accommodate post-development storm water management leads to direct and indirect adverse effects on water quality that are felt both on the project site and off the site within the watershed.^{155,156,157} Effects to aquatic beneficial uses from altered drainage features can occur downstream and upstream. The length of upstream or downstream effect of channel modifications is dependant on the specific structure type and channel slope.¹⁵⁸ For instance, road culverts can act as partial barriers to upstream distribution of native aquatic macroinvertebrates in urban streams, while bridges can provide adequate passage.¹⁵⁹ As a result of the adverse effects to water quality and beneficial uses, the State of California nonpoint source pollution program management measures for urban areas includes limiting the destruction of natural drainage features and natural conveyance areas.¹⁶⁰

Through its process of conditioning development projects under the CWA section 401 Water Quality Certification program, the Regional Board finds that the level of site design BMP implementation in the Order is feasible for all projects. This site design BMP requirement will help ensure that site design BMPs are implemented for new development projects. Site design BMPs are a critical component of urban runoff management at new development projects, since the BMPs provide multiple benefits including preservation of hydrologic conditions, reduction of pollutant discharges, cost effectiveness, and green space.

¹⁵⁴ Aquatic scientists comment letter (April 10, 2003) on the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) on the Clean Water Act Regulatory Definition of "Waters of the United States." (Docket ID No. OW-2002-0050). This letter is a synthesis of scientific information regarding ephemeral, intermittent, and headwater streams. It was written to USEPA by 85 leading aquatic scientists.

¹⁵⁵ Wright, Tiffany, et al. 2006. *Direct and Indirect Impacts of Urbanization on Wetland Quality*. Prepared by the Center for Watershed Protection for the USEPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds. 81p. Available on-line at <http://www.cwp.org>

¹⁵⁶ Konrad, Christopher P. and Derek K. Booth, 2005. *Hydrologic Changes in Urban Streams and Their Ecological Significance*. American Fisheries Society Symposium. Vol. 45 pp.157-177.

¹⁵⁷ Coleman, Derrick, et al. 2005. *Effect of Increases in Peak Flows and Imperviousness on the Morphology of Southern California Streams*. Technical Report No. 450 of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

¹⁵⁸ Fischenich, J.C. 2001. "*Impacts of stabilization measures*," EMRRP Technical Notes Collection (ERDC TNEMRRP- SR-32), U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Vicksburg, MS. <http://www.wes.army.mil/el/emrrp>

¹⁵⁹ Blakely, Tanya J., et al. 2006. *Barriers To The Recovery Of Aquatic Insect Communities In Urban Streams* Freshwater Biology Vol. 51(9), 1634–1645.

¹⁶⁰ California Nonpoint Source Encyclopedia, Management Measure 3.1.b. Runoff from Developing Areas, Site Development and Management Measure 3.3.a. Runoff from Existing Development, Existing Development.

The site design BMP options listed do not need to be costly.¹⁶¹ Some design options, such as concave vegetated surfaces or routing rooftop or walkway runoff to landscaped areas, are cost neutral.¹⁶² Other site design BMPs, such as minimizing parking stall widths or use of efficient irrigation devices, are oftentimes already required. In addition, use of site design BMPs reduces runoff quantity, allowing for treatment control BMPs and other storm water infrastructure on site to be smaller, therefore savings costs for both developers and municipalities.^{163,164}

Because of the potential economic and environmental benefits of using low-impact development site design, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, developed "*The Practice of Low Impact Development (LID)*" to assist the housing industry during the land development process.¹⁶⁵ This document focuses specifically on technologies that affect both the cost impacts and environmental issues associated with land development. Much of the report focuses on storm water management because low-impact development storm water management systems can save capital costs for developers and maintenance costs for municipalities.¹⁶⁶ The executive summary of the HUD report notes:

This approach to land development, called Low Impact Development (LID), uses various land planning and design practices and technologies to simultaneously conserve and protect natural resource systems and reduce infrastructure costs. LID still allows land to be developed, but in a cost-effective manner that helps mitigate potential environmental impacts. LID is best suited for new, suburban development.

Developers can use site and structure designs that reduce building footprints, decrease the amount of paved infrastructure, and provide for dispersed drainage and infiltration of runoff from impervious surfaces to reduce the effective impervious surface.¹⁶⁷ The concept of effective impervious surface is important, because when runoff from these surfaces is directed to pervious areas rather to an impervious drainage system (i.e., curbs, gutters, street surfaces, storm drain pipes), it can infiltrate, evaporate, or be taken up by vegetation, thereby reducing the total volume of runoff leaving a site.

¹⁶¹ USEPA, 2000. Low-Impact Development: A literature review. EPA-841-B-00-005. 35p.

¹⁶² Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association., 1999. Start at the Source. Forbes Custom Publishing. Available on-line at: http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/basmaa_satism.htm. pp. 149.

¹⁶³ National Association of Home Builders Research Center. *Builders Guide to Low Impact Development*. Available on-line at <http://www.toolbase.org>

¹⁶⁴ National Association of Home Builders Research Center. *Municipal Guide to Low Impact Development*. Available on-line at <http://www.toolbase.org>

¹⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2003. *The Practice of Low Impact Development*. Prepared by: NAHB Research Center, Inc. Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Contract No. H-21314CA.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. Executive Summary, p.x.

¹⁶⁷ Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association. 2003. *Using Site Design Techniques to Meet Development Standards for Stormwater Quality*. Available on-line at: <http://www.basmaa.org/>

The Order continues to provide the Copermitttees with flexibility in implementing site design BMP requirements by providing lists from which site design BMP approaches can be chosen. Moreover, flexibility is inherently included in the site design options listed - each option provides the opportunity for numerous implementation approaches that can be used to achieve compliance.

Section D.1.d.(5) (Source Control BMP Requirements) requires that Priority Development Projects implement minimum source control BMPs. This section has been added to provide more detail and clarify the Order's requirements for source control BMPs. The minimum source control BMPs listed in the section are consistent with the Model WQMP.

Section D.1.d.(6) (Treatment Control BMP Requirements) is consistent with Order No. R9-2002-01, with two exceptions. First, the Order limits the selections of methods used to determine the appropriate volume of runoff to be treated. The modification ensures that priority development project proponents utilize the most accurate information to determine the volume or flow of runoff which must be treated. Using detailed local rainfall data, the County of Orange has developed the 85th Percentile Precipitation Isopluvial Map, which exhibits the size of the 85th percentile storm event throughout Orange County.¹⁶⁸ Since this map uses detailed local rainfall data, it is more accurate for calculating the 85th percentile storm event than other methods which were included in Order No. R9-2002-01. The other methods found in Order No. R9-2002-01 were included as options to be used in the event that detailed accurate rainfall data did not exist for various locations within Orange County. The development of the 85th Percentile Precipitation Isopluvial Map makes these other less accurate methods superfluous. Therefore, these other methods for calculating the 85th percentile storm event have been removed from the current Order.

¹⁶⁸ The isopluvial map can be found as Exhibit 7.II in the Model WQMP.

Second, the Order requires that treatment control BMPs selected for implementation at Priority Development Projects have a removal efficiency rating that is higher than the “low removal efficiency,” as presented in the Model SUSMP/WQMP. The requirement allows exceptions for those projects that, with a feasibility analysis, can justify the use of a treatment control BMP with a low removal efficiency for a Priority Development Project. This requirement is needed because to date, the Copermittees have generally approved low removal efficiency treatment control BMPs without justification or evidence that use of higher efficiency treatment BMPs was considered and found to be infeasible. Specifically, it has been found during audits of the Copermittees’ SUSMP programs that many SUSMP reports do not adequately describe the selection of treatment control BMPs.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, USEPA’s contractor Tetra Tech, Inc. recommends that “project proponents should begin with the treatment control that is most effective at removing the pollutants of concern [...] and provide justification if that treatment control BMP is not selected.”¹⁷⁰

In the ROWD, the Copermittees acknowledge the need for further attention to the selection and implementation of effective treatment BMPs. They propose to revise the model WQMP table of BMP effectiveness. The requirement is needed to provide clarification that selection of low efficiency treatment control BMPs over high efficiency BMPs without justification does not meet permit requirements and is not in compliance with the MEP standard.

Section D.1.d.(7) (Treatment BMP Waiver Provision) allows Copermittees to waive treatment BMPs when all available BMPs have been considered and rejected as infeasible. This requirement was included in Order No. R9-2002-01. The requirement also allows the Copermittees to develop a program to require projects that receive waivers, to transfer the cost savings to a fund. The intent of the requirements is to allow Copermittees the necessary flexibility to waive treatment BMPs when it can be established that the implementation of treatment BMPs that meet numeric sizing criteria is not feasible at a given site. This provision also allows Copermittees discretion to transfer the cost savings from such a waiver to a fund for water quality projects within the watershed.

¹⁶⁹ Tetra Tech, Inc. 2005. Program Evaluation Report. Orange County Storm Water Program: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

¹⁷⁰ Tetra Tech, Inc., 2005. Program Evaluation Report –San Diego Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) Evaluation. P. 5.

Section D.1.d.(8). (Low-Impact Design BMP Substitution Program) allows Copermittees to develop a site design BMP credit program, under which projects that implement a high level of site design BMPs could receive credit towards compliance with treatment control BMP requirements. The program would provide the opportunity for development projects to avoid partial or full treatment control BMP implementation in exchange for implementation of a high level of site design BMPs. This type of program is proposed in the Model WQMP. The Regional Board agrees that such a program could be beneficial. The program could achieve equal or greater water quality benefits while also (1) providing greater assurance of adequate operation and maintenance; (2) improved review processes of site design BMP proposals; (3) increased acceptance of site design BMPs; and (4) greater usage of site design BMPs. For this reason, the Regional Board has added to the Order an option for the Copermittees to develop such a program.

The Model WQMP does not provide details for a site design credit program, instead leaving that up to the individual municipality. The Order includes specific minimum requirements so that the program will be consistent with the treatment BMP provisions. In precedent setting Order No. 2000-11, the State Board determined that implementation of treatment control BMPs is appropriate for development projects falling under the priority development project categories. Therefore, any program which allows development projects to forgo treatment control BMP implementation must include provisions which will achieve similar water quality benefits. To ensure that this is the case for the site design BMP credit program, minimum provisions for the program have been added to the Order. Due to the addition of the minimum provisions in the Order, the program will not need to undergo a lengthy Regional Board approval process at a later date.

Section D.1.d.(9). (BMP Design Standards) addresses a need for the Copermittees to develop and apply consistent criteria for the design and maintenance of structural treatment BMPs. Correct BMP design is critical to ensure that BMPs are effective and perform as intended. Without design criteria, there is no assurance that this will occur, since there is no standard for design or review. As an example, Ventura County has developed a BMP manual that includes standard design procedure forms for BMPs. Ventura County's *Technical Guidance Manual for Storm Water Quality Control Measures* is available at <http://www.vcstormwater.org/publications.htm>.¹⁷¹ California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) also confirms the necessity of design criteria when it includes such criteria in its New Development and Redevelopment BMP Handbook.¹⁷² This issue is noted in the ROWD, and the Copermittees propose to develop standard design checklist/plans/details for selected source control and treatment BMPs.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² California Stormwater Quality Association, 2003. Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook – New Development and Redevelopment.

Section D.1.d.(12) (Annual Review of Treatment BMPs) requires Copermittees to keep their SUSMPs up to date with BMP effectiveness studies for low-impact design and treatment control BMPs. The ROWD includes commitments to develop a library of BMP performance reports and to revise the model WQMP table for the latest information on BMPs. This requirement will ensure that two important types of information be included in those efforts: Site design BMPs and treatment BMPs that are assessed as part of contracts with the State Board and Regional Board. The later types of projects include those funded with Clean Beach Initiative grants and other grants. Projects funded with such state grants must include effectiveness assessments using a quality assurance plan. As a result, such studies generally provide reliable sources of local data and should be included in local SUSMPs.

Sections D.1.E and D.1.F. (BMP Verification and Treatment BMP Maintenance Tracking) are included in the Order to improve the effectiveness of the BMP requirements. They are included in response to findings from the Audits¹⁷³ and recommendations from USEPA.¹⁷⁴ The Copermittees recognize a need to improve the verification of post-construction BMPs. The 2007 DAMP proposes to verify 90% of WQMPs (including structural and non-structural BMPs) by inspection, self-certifications, surveys or other means. The Regional Board finds that 90% is a reasonable annual target, but considers inspections to be essential to achieve optimal results. Therefore, the Order requires high priority sites to be inspected annually, and allows other measures to be used for lower priority treatment control BMPs.

Section D.1.H. (Hydromodification) expands and clarifies current requirements for control of MS4 discharges to limit hydromodification effects caused by changes in runoff resulting from development and urbanization. The requirements are based on findings and recommendations of the Orange County Storm Water Program, the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC),^{175,176} and the Storm Water Panel on Numeric Effluent Limits (Numeric Effluent Panel).¹⁷⁷ Added specificity is needed due to the current lack of a clear standard for controlling hydromodification resulting from development. More specific requirements are also warranted because hydromodification is increasingly recognized as a major factor affecting water quality and beneficial uses, and the Copermittees have proposed only vague and voluntary modifications to the Model WQMP. The Order is intended to ensure the intent of the proposed modifications is incorporated into each Copermittees' SUSMP.

¹⁷³ The 2005 audits performed by Tetra Tech, Inc. found that cities are not tracking post-construction BMPs. The final audit report recommended (Section 2.1.2) that each city should develop a system to verify implementation and track post-construction BMPs to ensure that they are adequately maintained.

¹⁷⁴ Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68845. USEPA recommends such practices in the Phase II storm water regulations, promoting "inspections during construction to verify BMPs are built as designed."

¹⁷⁵ Coleman, Derrick, et al. 2005. *Effect of Increases in Peak Flows and Imperviousness on the Morphology of Southern California Streams*. Technical Report No. 450 of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

¹⁷⁶ Stein, Eric and Susan Zaleski. 2005. *Managing Runoff to Protect Natural Streams: The Latest Developments on Investigation and Management of Hydromodification in California*. Proceedings of a special technical workshop co-sponsored by California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA),

Hydromodification is the change in a watershed's runoff characteristics resulting from development, together with associated morphological changes to channels receiving the runoff. As the total area of impervious surfaces increases, infiltration of rainfall decreases, causing more water to run off the surface and at a higher velocity. Runoff from developed areas can produce erosive flows in channels under rainfall conditions which were not previously problematic. Moreover, runoff from developed areas increases the duration of time that channels are exposed to erosive flows. The increase in the volume of runoff and the length of time that erosive flows occur ultimately intensify sediment transport, causing changes in sediment transport characteristics and the hydraulic geometry (width, depth, slope) of channels.¹⁷⁸

These types of changes have been documented in southern California. It has been reported that researchers studying flood frequencies in Riverside County have found that increases in watershed imperviousness of only 9-22% can result in increases in peak flow rates for the two-year storm event of up to 100%.¹⁷⁹ Such changes in runoff have significant impacts on channel morphology. It has recently been found that ephemeral/intermittent channels in southern California appear to be more sensitive to changes in imperviousness than channels in other areas. Morphology of small channels in southern California was found to change with only 2-3% watershed imperviousness, as opposed to 7-10% watershed imperviousness in other parts of the nation.¹⁸⁰

Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC), and University of Southern California Sea Grant (USC Sea Grant). Technical Report No. 475 of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

¹⁷⁷ Storm Water Panel Recommendations to the California State Water Resources Control Board. 2006. The Feasibility of Numeric Effluent Limits Applicable to Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Municipal, Industrial, and Construction Activities.

¹⁷⁸ Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, 2005. Hydromodification Management Plan.

P. 1-1.

¹⁷⁹ Schueler and Holland, 2000. Storm Water Strategies for Arid and Semi-Arid Watersheds (Article 66). The Practice of Watershed Protection.

¹⁸⁰ Coleman, et. al., 2005. Effect of Increases in Peak Flows and Imperviousness on the Morphology of Southern California Streams. P. iv.

Effects of hydromodification are evident in southern Orange County and recognized by the Copermitees. Analyses of bioassessment data, for example, indicate that physical changes to stream channels caused by hydromodification are likely responsible, in part, for the low bioassessment scores in urbanized settings.¹⁸¹ It is important to recognize that the physical changes are a direct result of MS4 discharges, but that two separate mechanisms are involved. First, is a change in the flow regime caused by the increase in impervious surfaces and loss of natural conveyance systems. Discharges to receiving waters from the MS4 outfalls do not mimic the natural discharges from former tributaries to that receiving water, and the change results in erosion. Second, the physical stream habitat in many places has been severely modified in order to efficiently convey those increased storm water discharges to the ocean. Where streams are hardened and/or buried to convey storm water, they cannot provide adequate water quality and other necessary conditions to support beneficial uses. Both of these issues are addressed in the Order.

The Copermitees' recognize the need to improve management of hydromodification. The ROWD proposes to revise the Model WQMP to incorporate additional information from ongoing hydromodification studies conducted by the SMC. It is unclear when findings would be incorporated. The Order allows the Copermitees to adopt criteria consistent with future SMC findings. Because new development activity in most municipalities is not expected to be substantial, the Regional Board considers the preliminary conclusions from existing SMC reports to be sufficiently descriptive for the Copermitees to make appropriate modifications. However, the Order provides a two-year schedule for adoption of specific SMC recommendations.

Until numeric criteria are recommended by the SMC, the Order specifies factors that must be considered by the Copermitees for Priority Development Projects. These factors (downstream erosion and discharge hydrology) are generally consistent with the Model WQMP. The specificity of factors to consider in the Order is more prescriptive in order to be consistent with recent recommendations from the SMC and Numeric Effluent Panel and scientific literature.¹⁸² For instance, the Copermitees have generally been neglecting to address the changes to flow durations caused by MS4 discharges. The 2006 Model WQMP directs priority projects to submit drainage studies if the Permittee determines a potential for downstream erosion or habitat alteration. The drainage study required by the Permittees must address peak flows and volumes, but not the duration of those flows and volumes. As a result it is inadequate to assess the potential for downstream erosion. The requirement for assessing duration of runoff is not a new requirement. It was included in the 3rd term permit as a factor to evaluate when identifying conditions of concern in SUSMP projects.

¹⁸¹ See Chapter 11 of the ROWD and the 2005-06 Unified Annual Report for the analyses.

¹⁸² Poff, N.L. et al. 1997. The Natural Flow Regime: A paradigm for river conservation and restoration. *Bioscience* Vol. 47, No. 11, pp.769-784.

Section D.1.h.3.c. (Hydromodification Control Waivers) allows the Copermittees to waive on-site hydromodification controls in certain situations when downstream water quality and beneficial uses are not likely to be negatively affected by changes in the flow regime caused by MS4 discharges. The Order specifies determinations that must be made by the Copermittee before a waiver may be granted. The waiver provision is intended to provide Copermittees with the ability to require that a development restore degraded downstream stream channel conditions if that would produce better results than on-site hydromodification controls.

D.2. Construction

The following legal authority applies to section D.2:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of a program to implement and maintain structural and non-structural best management practices to reduce pollutants in storm water runoff from construction sites to the municipal storm sewer system.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D)(1) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of procedures for site planning which incorporate consideration of potential water quality impacts.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D)(2) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of requirements for nonstructural and structural best management practices.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D)(3) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of procedures for identifying priorities for inspecting sites and enforcing control measures which consider the nature of the construction activity, topography, and the characteristics of soils and receiving water quality.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(D)(4) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of appropriate educational and training measures for construction site operators.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(A) provides that each Copermittee must demonstrate that it can control “through ordinance, permit, contract, order or similar means, the contribution of pollutants to the municipal storm sewer by storm water discharges associated with industrial activity and the quality of storm water discharged from site of industrial activity.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(b)(14) provides that “The following categories of facilities are considered to be engaging in ‘industrial activity’ for the purposes of this subsection: [...] (x) Construction activity including cleaning, grading and excavation activities [...].”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i) requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Section D.2.a. (Ordinance Update) requires each Copermittee to review and update its grading and storm water ordinances as necessary to comply with the MS4 permit. By updating the grading and storm water ordinances, the Copermittees will have the necessary legal authority to require construction sites to implement effective BMPs that will reduce pollutant discharges to the maximum extent practicable. The Order allows the Copermittees 365 days to review and update their ordinances. The 365 days should be adequate to allow for the relatively minor changes that might be needed since their ordinances were last updated under Order No. R9-2002-01.

Section D.2.b. (Source Identification) requires the Copermittees to develop and update a watershed based inventory of all construction sites regardless of size or ownership. This section has been modified to require the inventory be updated regularly, rather than annually. More frequent updates will ensure the Copermittees have a more accurate inventory of construction sites within their jurisdiction. A regularly updated inventory of active construction sites will assist the Copermittees in ensuring that all sites are inspected per Order requirements. The Order does not specify the frequency of updates, and instead relies on each Copermittee to develop updates appropriate to local construction activity. The 2007 DAMP proposes that the inventory be updated “at a minimum” prior to the start of the rainy season. Such a minimum standard may not be appropriate for each Copermittee. Failure to maintain a useful inventory would be a violation of the Order.

Section D.2.c. (Site Planning and Project Approval Process) requires Copermittees to incorporate consideration of potential water quality impacts prior to approval and issuance of construction and grading permits. The Copermittees¹⁸³ and our program evaluations in 2005¹⁸⁴ recommend that storm water requirements need to be better incorporated into the pre-construction process.

This section now requires the Copermittees to review project proponents' storm water management plans for compliance with local regulations, policies, and procedures. USEPA recommends that it is often easier and more effective to incorporate storm water quality controls during the site plan review process or earlier.¹⁸⁵ In the Phase I storm water regulations, USEPA states that a primary control technique is good site planning.¹⁸⁶ USEPA goes on to say that the most efficient controls result when a comprehensive storm water management system is in place.¹⁸⁷ To determine if a construction site is in compliance with construction and grading ordinances and permits, USEPA states that the "MS4 operator should review the site plans submitted by the construction site operator before ground is broken."¹⁸⁸ Site plan review aids in compliance and enforcement efforts since it alerts the "MS4 operator early in the process to the planned use or non-use of proper BMPs and provides a way to track new construction activities."¹⁸⁹ During audits of Orange County Copermittee storm water programs, it was found that site plan and SWPPP review were inadequate and inconsistent.¹⁹⁰

Section D.2.d. (BMP Implementation) includes modifications to the requirements for each Copermittee to designate and ensure implementation of a set of minimum BMPs at construction sites. These modifications are based on Regional Board findings and experience during implementation of Order No. R9-2002-01.

Unlike Order No. R9-2002-01, this Order does not require the Copermittee to designate a set of minimum BMPs for high, medium, and low threat to water quality construction sites. This change was made in recognition of most Copermittees' application of one consistent set of BMPs throughout their jurisdictions. The Copermittees also desire to move toward a risk-based approach to BMP requirements.¹⁹¹ As a result, the Order requires a minimum set of BMPs to be designated for all sites and that enhanced BMPs be designated for sites upstream of 303(d) impairments and ESAs.

¹⁸³ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region), Section 7, New Development.

¹⁸⁴ Tetra Tech, Inc. 2005. Program Evaluation Report. Orange County Storm Water Program: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

¹⁸⁵ USEPA, 1992. Guidance 833-8-92-002. Section 6.3.2.1.

¹⁸⁶ Federal Register / Vol. 55, No. 222 / Friday, November 16, 1990 / Rules and Regulations. P. 48034.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ USEPA, 2000. Guidance 833-R-00-002. Section 4.6.2.4, P. 4-30.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., P. 4-31.

¹⁹⁰ Tetra Tech, Inc. 2005. Program Evaluation Report. Orange County Storm Water Program: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

¹⁹¹ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region), Section 8, Construction

The Order's requirements for seasonal restrictions on grading have also been changed. Seasonal restrictions on grading for storm water are difficult to implement due to the conflict between seasonal grading restrictions and endangered birds' breeding seasons; therefore the seasonal grading restrictions have not been included with the other BMPs in the Order. Found in southern California, the Least Bell's Vireo and the Coastal California Gnatcatcher are listed as federally endangered and threatened, respectively.¹⁹² Permits issued by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) restrict grading during these birds' breeding seasons, which is from April 10 to August 31 for the Least Bell's Vireo¹⁹³ and from February 15 to August 31 for the Coastal California Gnatcatcher.¹⁹⁴ Ideally storm water restrictions on grading would be during the wet season from October 1 through April 30.¹⁹⁵ Combined, these restrictions would limit construction grading to be during the month of September, which is infeasible. Section D.2.d of the Order still requires project proponents to minimize grading during the wet season and coincide grading with seasonal dry weather periods to the extent feasible.

Section D.2.e. (Inspections) establishes criteria for inspections based on risk factors including size, season, and location of the construction site. Modifications have been made to requirements of Order No. R9-2002-01 based on the experience of the Copermitees and Regional Board construction programs.

The Order requires sites in active grading during the wet season that are over 30 acres be inspected every two weeks, rather than sites over 50 acres being inspected weekly. In south Orange County approximately 15% (34 sites) of construction sites over one acre are larger than 30 acres, whereas about 9% (21 sites) of sites are over 50 acres.¹⁹⁶ This may result in a net decrease of inspections of large sites, although more sites will be covered. The reduction in inspection frequency for sites greater than 50 acres is justified because the sites have generally improved their erosion and sediment control measures since adoption of Order No. R9-2002-01. Biweekly inspections of these sites in the future should be sufficient to ensure compliance with local regulations.

¹⁹² State of California, Department of Fish and Game, 2005. State and Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Animals of California.

¹⁹³ United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, 2001. Least Bell's Vireo Survey Guidelines.

¹⁹⁴ United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997. Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines.

¹⁹⁵ Regional Board, 2001. Order No. 2001-01, San Diego County MS4 Permit. Directive F.2.g.(2).

¹⁹⁶ Based on the State Board's database of sites covered by the Construction Storm Water General NPDES Permit, Order No. 99-08-DWQ. That general permit requires sites disturbing over one acre to file for coverage, so it provides a good basis for assessment.

The Order lowers the size of construction sites adjacent to or discharging directly to ESAs that receive scrutiny. Order No. R9-2002-01 requires such sites five acres and more to be inspected weekly during the wet season. This Order requires such sites one acre and above to be inspected every two weeks during the wet season and once during August or September. The lower size threshold is consistent with Phase II storm water permits.

The Order omits Order No. R9-2002-01's provision allowing a Copermittee to decrease the inspection frequency for high priority sites if the Copermittee certifies in writing to the Regional Board that they have recorded the site's Waste Discharge Identification Number, reviewed the site's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), assured the site's SWPPP is in compliance, and assured the SWPPP is properly implemented at the site. Under Order No. R9-2002-01, the Regional Board never received from any of the Copermittees a certification to decrease the inspection frequency at high priority sites. Since the certification process was never used, the language has been deleted from the Order.

This section also requires the Copermittees to track the number of inspections for each inventoried construction site. This requirement has been added to ensure that the Copermittees can demonstrate that construction sites are inspected at the minimum frequencies.

D.3 Existing Development

D.3.a. Municipal

The following legal authority applies to section D.3.a:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(1) provides that the proposed management program include "A description of maintenance activities and a maintenance schedule for structural controls to reduce pollutants (including floatables) in discharges from municipal separate storm sewers."

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(3) provides that the proposed management program include "A description for operating and maintaining public streets, roads and highways and procedures for reducing the impact on receiving waters of discharges from municipal storm sewer systems, including pollutants discharged as a result of de-icing activities."

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(4) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of procedures to assure that flood management projects assess the impacts on the water quality of receiving water bodies and that existing structural flood control devices have been evaluated to determine if retrofitting the device to provide additional pollutant removal from storm water is feasible.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(5) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of a program to monitor pollutants in runoff from operating or closed municipal landfills or other treatment, storage or disposal facilities for municipal waste, which shall identify priorities and procedures for inspections and establishing and implementing control measures for such discharges.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(6) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of a program to reduce to the maximum extent practicable, pollutants in discharges from municipal separate storm sewers associated with the application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer which will include, as appropriate, controls such as educational activities, permits, certifications, and other measures for commercial applicators and distributors, and controls for application in public right-of-ways and at municipal facilities.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i) requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Section D.3.a.2. (General BMP Implementation) requires the Copermittees to designate minimum BMPs for general municipal areas and activities, regardless of their threat to water quality. The requirement that different types of BMPs be designated for different threats to water quality categories of municipal areas and activities has been removed from the Order. This was done to help simplify and clarify the Order’s requirements. BMPs required to be implemented at a site can now be based on the sources or activities present at the site. This is closer to the approach taken by the Copermittees in their JURMPs. Threat to water quality is used to determine inspection frequencies in section D.3.a.(7).

Section D.3.a.3, D.3.a.4, and D.3.a.5. (Specific BMP Implementation Categories) establishes requirements for specific categories of activities and areas. These are selected based on the CWA and findings of the Permittees in annual reports and ROWD that identify these activities as warranting special attention.

Pesticides, Herbicides, and Fertilizers. 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(6) requires a description of a program for pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. In addition, water quality data demonstrates widespread presence of such pollutants in receiving waters and MS4 discharges. In response to similar requirements of Order No. R9-2002-01, the Copermittees have developed a specific model Integrated Pest Management, Pesticides, and Fertilizer guidelines.

Flood Control Structures. In order to more closely meet the intent of the federal regulations and guidance, the requirement has been modified. 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A)(4) requires "A description of procedures to assure that flood management projects assess the impacts on the water quality of receiving water bodies and that existing structural flood control devices have been evaluated to determine if retrofitting the device to provide additional pollutant removal from storm water is feasible." Retrofitting flood control devices can reduce pollutants and improve water quality. Copermittees have conducted many flood control retrofit projects, many of which have been partially funded with State grant awards.

USEPA expands on the federal provision with the following information: "Storm water management devices and structures that focus solely on water quantity are usually not designed to remove pollutants, and may sometimes harm aquatic habitat and aesthetic values" (1992). As flood control structures and other elements of the MS4 age and retrofitting becomes necessary, opportunities for water quality improvements arise.

Conveyance systems which take water quality consideration into account (such as grassed swales, vegetated detention ponds, etc.) can often cost less to construct than traditional concrete systems. Evaluation of the applicability of such systems during retrofitting must occur to ensure that pollutants in urban runoff are reduced to the maximum extent practicable. USEPA supports utilizing BMPs for pollution reduction in flood management projects, stating that "The proposed management program must demonstrate that flood management projects take into account the effects on the water quality of receiving water bodies. [...] Opportunities for pollutant reduction should be considered".¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. Washington D.C. EPA/833-B-92-002.

Existing Copermittee projects include two types of retrofits. The first type involves adding an engineered device to an existing structure in order to treat or divert urban runoff. Examples include catch basin inlet filters/screens, ultraviolet disinfection facilities, hydrodynamic separators, and diversions to the sanitary sewer. The second type involves re-installing pervious or natural treatment features to facilities. Examples include removing concrete portions of conveyances to create pervious conveyances; and creating treatment wetlands within flood detention facilities. The later type of retrofit is preferred by the Regional Board. They are likely more sustainable over the long-term because they may require less rigorous operation and maintenance than the former. They may also provide the additional benefit of providing significant or incidental opportunities for beneficial uses (e.g., recreation, wildlife, water supply).^{198,199}

Sweeping of Municipal Areas. Sweeping municipal areas would likely be done in the absence of the Order. However, in certain cases it is an important component of a jurisdictional urban runoff management program. The Order contains requirements to ensure that the use of street sweeping is optimized for urban runoff applications if it is to be used and reported as a BMP. The criteria in the Order are taken from industry guidance as reported by the Permittees in the Aliso Creek watershed²⁰⁰.

Section D.3.a.(6). (Operation and Maintenance of MS4 and Structural Controls) requires the Copermittees to inspect and remove waste from their MS4s prior to the rainy season.

Maintenance is critical to the successful implementation of every urban runoff management program. USEPA finds that "Lack of maintenance often limits the effectiveness of storm water structural controls such as detention/retention basins and infiltration devices. [...] The proposed program should provide for maintenance logs and identify specific maintenance activities for each class of control, such as removing sediment from retention ponds every five years, cleaning catch basins annually, and removing litter from channels twice a year.

¹⁹⁸ Burton, Carmen et al. 2005. Assessing Water Source and Channel Type as Factors Affecting Benthic Macroinvertebrate and Periphyton Assemblages in the Highly Urbanized Santa Ana River Basin, California. American Fisheries Society Symposium. Vol.47 pp.239-262.

¹⁹⁹ Stromberg, Juliet C. 2001. Restoration of Riparian Vegetation in the South-Western United States: the importance of flow regimes and fluvial dynamism. Journal of Arid Environments. Vol49, pp.17-34.

²⁰⁰ See 20th and 21st quarterly reports for the Aliso Creek watershed bacteria investigation, prepared by the Orange County Copermittees within the Aliso Creek watershed.

If maintenance activities are scheduled infrequently, inspections must be scheduled to ensure that the control is operating adequately. In cases where scheduled maintenance is not appropriate, maintenance should be based on inspections of the control structure or frequency of storm events. If maintenance depends on the results of inspections or if it occurs infrequently, the applicant must provide an inspection schedule. The applicant should also identify the municipal department(s) responsible for the maintenance program".²⁰¹ The MS4 maintenance requirements are based on the above USEPA recommendations. This maintenance will help ensure that structural controls are in adequate condition to be effective year round but especially at the beginning of and throughout the rainy season.

Two requirements have been added to the Order that were not within Order No. 2002-01. Subsection (3) allows a decreased inspection frequency for facilities that are routinely clean, and Subsection (4) requires trash to be removed from channels in a timely manner. Typically, Copermittees have reported annual or semi-annual creek cleanups as significant BMPs. The large volumes of trash reported to be removed during these events demonstrates the significant amount of trash that accumulates in the channels. In addition, urban runoff is a leading contributor to the accumulation of trash and debris along the beaches of Orange County.²⁰² In order to reduce the effect of the trash, the Order requires that trash be removed more frequently.

Section D.3.a.(7). (Limit Sewage Infiltration) requires the Copermittees to implement controls and measures to limit infiltration of seepage from municipal sanitary sewers to MS4s through thorough, routine preventive maintenance of the MS4. This requirement is in Order No. R9-2002-01 in the section on Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (section F.5.i).

Sections D.3.a.(8) and D.3.a.(9). (Inspections and Enforcement) establishes a minimum set of municipal areas and activities for oversight and inspection by the Copermittees and requires that Copermittees properly enforce urban runoff requirements at municipal areas and activities.

²⁰¹ USEPA, 1992. Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Part II of the NPDES Permit Applications for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. Washington D.C. EPA/833-B-92-002.

²⁰² Moore, S.L., D. Gregorio, M. Carreon, S B. Weisberg, and M. K. Leecaster. 2001. *Composition and distribution of beach debris in Orange County, California*. Marine Pollution Bulletin 42(3): 241-245..

D.3.b. Industrial and Commercial

The following legal authority applies to section D.3.b:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(C) provides that the proposed management program include “A description of a program to monitor and control pollutants in storm water discharges to municipal systems from municipal landfills, hazardous waste treatment, disposal and recovery facilities, industrial facilities that are subject to section 313 of title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), and industrial facilities that the municipal permit applicant determines are contributing a substantial pollutant loading to the municipal storm sewer system.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(C)(1) provides that the Copermittee must “identify priorities and procedures for inspections and establishing and implementing control measures for such discharges.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(C)(2) provides that the proposed management program shall “Describe a monitoring program for storm water discharges associated with the industrial facilities identified in paragraph (d)(2)(iv)(C) of this section, to be implemented during the term of the permit, including the submission of quantitative data on the following constituents: any pollutants limited in effluent guidelines subcategories, where applicable; any pollutant listed in an existing NPDES permit for a facility; oil and grease, COD, pH, BOD5 , TSS, total phosphorus, total Kjeldhal nitrogen, nitrate plus nitrite nitrogen, and any information on discharges required under 40 CFR 122.21(g)(7)(iii) and (iv).”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(ii) provides that the Copermittee “Provide an inventory, organized by watershed of the name and address, and a description (such as Standard Industrial Classification [SIC] codes) which best reflects the principal products or services provided by each facility which may discharge, to the municipal separate storm sewer, storm water associated with industrial activity.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i) requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(A) provides that each Copermitee must demonstrate that it can control “through ordinance, permit, contract, order or similar means, the contribution of pollutants to the municipal storm sewer by storm water discharges associated with industrial activity and the quality of storm water discharged from site of industrial activity.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A) provides that the Copermitee develop a proposed management program which includes “A description of structural and source control measures to reduce pollutants from runoff from commercial and residential areas that are discharged from the municipal storm sewer system that are to be implemented during the life of the permit, accompanied with an estimate of the expected reduction of pollutant loads and a proposed schedule for implementing such controls.”

Section D.3.b. (Industrial and Commercial) requires the Copermitees to implement an industrial and commercial program to reduce pollutants in runoff from all industrial and commercial sites/sources. The industrial and commercial sections of Order No. 2002-01 have been combined into one section in this Order. This change will streamline and simplify the Order, without negatively impacting water quality. This change is not unprecedented because industrial and commercial facilities are commonly addressed together. For example, the Southern Riverside County MS4 Permit²⁰³ combined industrial and commercial programs into one section. In addition, in their Annual Reports and ROWD,²⁰⁴ the Copermitees jointly address industrial and commercial components. USEPA contractor Tetra Tech also evaluated and reported on the industrial and commercial programs jointly during their program evaluations.²⁰⁵

Section D.3.b.(1)(a) (Source Identification) requires that building material retailers and storage, animal facilities, and power washing services be included in the Copermitees' inventory of commercial sites/sources. These activities have been identified annual MS4 program reports and quarterly Aliso Creek watershed reports as potentially significant sources of pollutants. This is not a significant change because Order No. R9-2002-01 requires that any commercial site or source determined by a Copermitee to contribute a significant pollutant load to the MS4 be added to its inventory of commercial sites. Furthermore, the commercial BMP fact sheets developed by the Copermitees generally address the types of activities occurring at these facilities and practices.

²⁰³ Regional Board, 2004. Order No. R9-2004-001; Riverside County MS4 Permit. Section H.2; P. 24.

²⁰⁴ Orange County Storm Water Copermitees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region). Section 9.

²⁰⁵ Tetra Tech, Inc., 2005. Program Evaluation Reports Orange County Storm Water Programs: Cities of Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Rancho Santa Margarita.

The Order has revised requirements for identifying industrial sites/sources. The revised requirements are identical to those found in the Southern Riverside County MS4 permit.²⁰⁶ USEPA requires the same identification: "Measures to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges to municipal separate storm sewers from municipal landfills, hazardous waste treatment, disposal and recovery facilities, industrial facilities that are subject to section 313 of title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA)."²⁰⁷ USEPA "also requires the municipal storm sewer permittee to describe a program to address industrial dischargers that are covered under the municipal storm sewer permit."²⁰⁸ In order to more closely follow USEPA's guidance, this Order also includes operating and closed landfills, and hazardous waste treatment, disposal, storage and recovery facilities.

Section D.3.b.3. (Mobile Businesses) requires each Copermittee to develop and implement a program to reduce the discharge of pollutants from mobile businesses to the MEP. Mobile businesses are service industries that travel to the customer to perform the service rather than the customer traveling to the business to receive the service. Examples of mobile businesses are power washing, mobile vehicle washers, carpet cleaners, port-a-potty servicing, pool and fountain cleaning, mobile pet groomers, and landscapers. These mobile services produce waste streams that could potentially impact water quality if appropriate BMPs are not implemented.

Order No. R9-2002-01 also requires BMP implementation for certain mobile businesses (e.g., mobile vehicle washing and mobile carpet cleaning). These requirements of Order No. R9-2007-0002 are not significantly different from the existing requirements. The Order specifies mobile businesses for special attention based on reports from the Copermittees that mobile businesses have been difficult to control with existing programs.

Mobile businesses present a unique difficulty in storm water regulation. Due to the transient nature of the business, the regular, effective practice of unannounced inspections is difficult to implement. Also, tracking these mobile businesses is difficult because they are often not permitted or licensed and their services cross Copermittee jurisdictions. Mobile businesses that operate within a municipality may be based in another municipality or even outside the Region. The Order takes into account the difficulties in regulating mobile businesses.

Because BMPs have been developed already, but communication with mobile businesses may be difficult, the Order provides broad flexibility to the Copermittees for developing a targeted program within the Commercial portion of each JURMP.

²⁰⁶ Regional Board, 2004. Order No. R9-2004-001; Riverside County MS4 Permit. Section H.2.b)(2); P. 25.

²⁰⁷ Federal Register / Vol. 55, No. 222 / Friday, November 16, 1990 / Rules and Regulations. P. 48056.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Section D.3.b.4. (Inspections) includes requirements for inspections of industrial and commercial sites/sources. The Order is similar to the Southern Riverside County MS4 permit²⁰⁹ in requiring that inspections check for coverage under the General Industrial Permit; assessment of compliance with Copermittee ordinances and permits related to urban runoff; assessment of BMP implementation, maintenance, and effectiveness; visual observations for non-storm water discharges, potential illicit connections, and potential discharge of pollutants in storm water runoff; and education and outreach on storm water pollution prevention. The Order also requires that inspections include review of BMP implementation plans if the site uses or is required to use such a plan, and the review of facility monitoring data if the site monitors its runoff. Order No. 2002-01 did not contain requirements for inspection procedures.

Changes in the Order's requirements for inspection procedures mimic USEPA's guidance: "Site inspections should include (1) an evaluation of the pollution prevention plan and any other pertinent documents, and (2) an onsite visual inspection of the facility to evaluate the potential for discharges of contaminated storm water from the site and to assess the effectiveness of the pollution prevention plan."²¹⁰ In 1999, USEPA "recognized visual inspection as a baseline BMP for over 10 years," and "visual inspections are an effective way to identify a variety of problems. Correcting these problems can improve the water quality of the receiving water."²¹¹ Most, if not all, of the Order's procedures are being conducted by the Copermittees that follow the Model Existing Development Program of the DAMP.

With the exception of restaurants, the Order allows Copermittees to establish inspection frequencies, as long as at least 20 percent of the sites are inspected annually. Restaurants are now required to be inspected annually. Inspection frequencies in the Order have been modified from Order No. R9-2002-01. Order No. R9-2002-01 specifies frequencies for inspecting industrial sites based on threat to water quality and requires high priority commercial sites to be inspected as needed. Copermittees have been inspecting industrial sites according to Order No. R9-2002-01. The Copermittees have been inspecting restaurants annually as part of the County Health Department inspections. For other commercial sites, the Copermittees have been focusing annual activities on certain commercial sectors, such as automobiles, with the goal of inspecting every high priority site at least once during the permit term. This change is not considered significant because it should allow the Copermittees to continue existing programs.

Reports from the Aliso Creek watershed Copermittees demonstrate that as-needed inspections for restaurants means at least annually. Restaurants have been found to present many threats to water quality and standard educational efforts are not effective because restaurants are subject to frequent management changes. For these reasons, the Order requires restaurants to be inspected annually.

²⁰⁹ Regional Board, 2004. Order No. R9-2004-001; Riverside County MS4 Permit. Section H.2.d)(3);

²¹⁰ USEPA, 1992. Guidance 833-8-92-002, section 6.3.3.4 "Inspection and Monitoring".

²¹¹ USEPA, 1999. 832-F-99-046, "Storm Water Management Fact Sheet – Visual Inspection".

Section D.3.b.(6). (Training and Education) requires training and education measures generally consistent with the existing storm water programs. One distinction is that the Order requires each Copermitee to notify the owner/operator of each inventoried industrial and commercial site/source of the BMP requirements applicable to the site/source. This requirement is necessary to ensure that the owners and operators of commercial sites stay informed of appropriate BMPs. This is especially important because sites may be inspected as little as once every five years.

Section D.3.c. (Residential Component)

The following legal authority applies to section D.3.c:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(A) provides that the Copermitee develop a proposed management program which includes “A description of structural and source control measures to reduce pollutants from runoff from commercial and residential areas that are discharged from the municipal storm sewer system that are to be implemented during the life of the permit, accompanied with an estimate of the expected reduction of pollutant loads and a proposed schedule for implementing such controls.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.44(d)(1)(i) requires NPDES permits to include limitations to “control all pollutants or pollutant parameters (either conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants) which the Director determines are or may be discharged at a level which will cause, have reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an excursion above any State water quality standard, including State narrative criteria for water quality.”

Section D.3.c (Residential Component) moves the common interest areas / homeowners’ association component and the requirement for proper management of used oil, toxic materials, and other household hazardous wastes to the residential section of the Order, since these requirements generally apply to residential areas. These changes improve the organization of the Order and have no net effect on its implementation and enforcement. Other requirements for prioritization, BMP implementation, and enforcement are consistent with Order No. R9-2002-01.

D.4. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

The following legal authority applies to section D.4:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B) provides that the proposed management program “shall be based on a description of a program, including a schedule, to detect and remove (or require the discharger to the municipal storm sewer to obtain a separate NPDES permit for) illicit discharges and improper disposal into the storm sewer.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(1) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a program, including inspections, to implement and enforce an ordinance, orders or similar means to prevent illicit discharges to the municipal storm sewer system.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(2) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a description of procedures to conduct on-going field screening activities during the life of the permit, including areas or locations that will be evaluated by such field screens.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(3) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “procedures to be followed to investigate portions of the separate storm sewer system that, based on the results of the field screen, or other appropriate information, indicate a reasonable potential of containing illicit discharges or other sources of non-storm water.”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(4) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a description of procedures to prevent, contain, and respond to spills that may discharge into the municipal separate storm sewer.”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(5) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a description of a program to promote, publicize, and facilitate public reporting of the presence of illicit discharges or water quality impacts associated with discharges from municipal separate storm sewers.”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(6) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a description of educational activities, public information activities, and other appropriate activities to facilitate the proper management and disposal of used oil and toxic materials.”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(7) provides that the Copermittee include in its proposed management program “a description of controls to limit infiltration of seepage from municipal sanitary sewers to municipal separate storm sewer systems where necessary.”

Section D.4.a. (Prevent and Detect Illicit Discharges) requires the Copermittees to implement a program to actively seek and eliminate illicit connections and discharges (IC/ID). Additional wording has been added to this section to clarify and ensure that all appropriate (i.e., field personnel) municipal personnel are utilized in the program to observe and report these illicit discharges and connections.

Section D.4.e (Investigations) requires the Copermittees to conduct follow up investigations and inspect portions of the MS4 for illicit discharges and connections, based on dry weather field screening and analytical monitoring results. The section also requires the Copermittees to establish criteria for triggering follow up investigations. Additional language has been added to this section to clarify the minimum level of effort and timeframes for follow up investigations when dry weather action levels are exceeded. Timely investigation and follow up when action levels are exceeded is necessary to identify sources of illicit discharges, especially since many of the discharges are transitory. The requirements for a 48-hour minimum response time when action levels are exceeded and for immediate response to obvious illicit discharges is necessary to ensure timely response by the Copermittees.

The Copermittees currently use action levels to facilitate the determination of when source investigation studies are warranted based on data from the dry-weather monitoring program. One set of criteria is based on regional averages of constituent concentrations that were developed based on randomly selected storm drains. Another set of criteria is based on trends at a particular station. These are reasonable criteria if decision-makers are properly trained. The ability of the local managers to interpret dry-weather monitoring data collected by the County has greatly improved in the last two years, and continued training is required in section D.4.i.

Section D.4.h. (Spill Response) requires each Copermittee to implement measures to prevent and respond to spills into its MS4. These requirements are similar to Order No. R9-2002-01 and based on federal regulations at 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv)(B)(4). Those federal NPDES regulations clearly require that owners and operators of MS4s have procedures to prevent, contain, and respond to spills that may discharge into the municipal separate storm sewer.

This same requirement was adopted by the Regional Board in Order No, 2002-01, but was subsequently stayed by the State Board in Order WQO 2002-0014. The City of Mission Viejo challenged the requirement to prevent and respond to sewage spills on the grounds that since the sanitary sewer systems in the City are operated by three water districts already regulated by a NPDES permit from the Regional Board, this requirement would cause delayed spill responses as the City and agencies try to determine jurisdiction and responsibilities. The State Board found that the costs of this requirement did not constitute harm, but agreed that harm could ensue from potential response delay and confusion. Although the entire permit requirement was stayed, neither the State Board, nor the Petitioner discussed spills other than sewage.

Subsequently, the Copermittees have developed and implemented procedures for spill response and sewage spill response.²¹² Only three Permittees (Laguna Beach, San Clemente, and San Juan Capistrano) own or operate their own sewage collection systems, yet all Copermittees implement the programs for spill response. For the Copermittees that do not own or operate sewage systems, the Regional Board expects that they will continue to respond appropriately to reported or identified spills to the MS4 system.

E. Watershed Urban Runoff Management Programs

The following legal authority applies to section E:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(a)(3)(ii) states: “The Director may [...] issue distinct permits for appropriate categories of discharges [...] including, but not limited to [...] all discharges within a system that discharge to the same watershed [...]”

Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(a)(3)(v) states: “Permits for all or a portion of all discharges from large or medium municipal separate storm sewer systems that are issued on a system-wide, jurisdiction-wide, watershed, or other basis may specify different conditions relating to different discharges covered by the permit, including different management programs for different drainage areas [watersheds] which contribute storm water to the system.”

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(a)(5) states: “The Director may issue permits for municipal separate storm sewers that are designated under paragraph (a)91)(v) of this section on a system-wide basis, a jurisdiction-wide basis, watershed basis, or other appropriate basis.”

²¹² Sections 10.2.4 and 10.2.5 in the 2007 DAMP.

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv) states: "Proposed programs may impose controls on a systemwide basis, a watershed basis, a jurisdiction basis, or on individual outfalls."

Section E. (Watershed Urban Runoff Management Programs) requires Copermittees to update and continue implementation of existing watershed management programs. The watershed management areas are the same as in Order No. R9-2002-01. The general approach to the watershed program is similar as in Order No. R9-2002-01, with some exceptions. First, the Order requires a minimum number of watershed program activities to occur in each year. Order No. R9-2002-01 allowed the Watershed Copermittees to develop implementation time schedules for activities conducted during the permit term. That approach was useful because the Copermittees needed to develop the background information to support the watershed programs. Now that assessments, prioritization efforts, and collaboration steps have been completed, it is reasonable for the Copermittees to implement activities each year of this permit term.

Section E.1.b. (Watershed Map) of the Order requires the Copermittees to develop watershed maps. The section has been slightly modified from Order No. R9-2002-01 in that it no longer requires mapping of inventoried construction sites. The reason for this change is the temporary nature of construction sites. The location of construction sites is constantly changing, making the mapping of construction sites not useful.

Section E.1.c. (Water Quality Assessment) of the Order requires assessment and analysis of water quality data to prioritize each watershed's water quality problems, together with identification of the sources of the high priority water quality problems. These requirements are essentially the same as the requirements of Order No. 2002-01; they have simply been reorganized to more clearly convey the process required. For instance, Order No. R9-2002-01 required an initial assessment and then annual reports that then identified water quality improvements or degradation and proposed program modifications. However, the annual determinations could only be accomplished with an annual assessment of conditions.

Section E.1.d. (Watershed Strategy) requires Copermittees within a watershed to develop a collective watershed strategy to abate the sources and reduce the discharges causing the high priority water quality problems of the WMA. An articulated strategy is necessary to guide Watershed Copermittee selection and implementation of Watershed URMP Activities. Order No. R9-2002-01 required watershed URMPs to identify recommended activities and a strategy for short and long-term effectiveness assessments. This Order clarifies the expectations of the Regional Board for municipalities to follow the process of assessing conditions, evaluating options, implementing measures, and then re-assessing conditions, etc.

Section E.1.e. (BMP Implementation and Assessment) requires the watershed Copermittees to implement the measures identified within their watershed URMP strategies. It also clarifies expectations of the Regional Board that activities to reduce pollutant loads will be implemented each year. This is necessary because most of the reported activities within the Watershed URMPs have been planning or assessment activities, rather than “on-the-ground” management measures. This requirement provides measurable outcomes for WURMP implementation. In crafting this section of the Order and the Watershed Water Quality Activity definition, the Regional Board sought to obtain a balance between the enforceability of the Order and Copermittee flexibility in implementing the Order.

This section of the Order also requires the Copermittees to evaluate the effectiveness of activities. This will help the Copermittees determine additional measures and also enable other Copermittees to choose the most effective activities for implementation. Implementation of effective activities is critical to ensure an effective Watershed Urban Runoff Management Program.

The intent of specifying requirements for Watershed “Water Quality Activities” is to make sure that management measures are implemented to reduce pollutant discharges causing high priority water quality problems within a watershed and exceed the baseline jurisdictional requirements. Beyond these bottom line requirements, the Copermittees have ample implementation flexibility. For example, both jurisdictional and regional activities in some circumstances can be considered Watershed Water Quality Activities. In addition, Copermittees can implement Watershed Water Quality Activities within their jurisdictions or outside of their jurisdictions; whichever they prefer. Moreover, Copermittees within a watershed can implement different Watershed Water Quality Activities, provided they are part of the watershed Copermittees’ larger watershed strategy.

Details regarding what constitutes a Watershed Water Quality Activity include:

- A Watershed Water Quality Activity must abate the sources and/or reduce the discharge of pollutants causing high priority water quality problems in the watershed. Activities that do not specifically abate sources and/or reduce pollutant discharges causing high priority water quality problems in a watershed are not Watershed Water Quality Activities.
- Watershed Water Quality Activities must implement an overall watershed strategy collaboratively developed by the Copermittees within a watershed.

- Jurisdictional activities which exceed the baseline jurisdictional requirements may constitute Watershed Water Quality Activities, if they are more protective of water quality than baseline jurisdictional activities. Such activities must specifically abate sources and/or reduce the discharge of pollutants causing high priority water quality problems within a watershed. The jurisdictional activities must be organized and implemented as part of a larger watershed strategy.
- Specific Watershed Water Quality Activities do not need to be implemented watershed-wide, but all Copermittees within a watershed must implement well-coordinated Watershed Water Quality Activities.
- Watershed Water Quality Activities must be new activities; activities that have been conducted for many years without regard for watershed concerns are not Watershed Water Quality Activities. Moreover, as high priority water quality problems within watersheds continue, efforts to implement new and more effective activities are needed.
- Education, public participation, and planning efforts are not Watershed Water Quality Activities.
- Activities that only consist of monitoring are not Watershed Water Quality Activities. There must also be an element of the monitoring program that directly results in the abatement of sources and/or reduction of pollutant discharges causing high priority water quality problems.

Section E.1.f. (Information Exchange) requires that the watershed Copermittees exchange information among themselves and with the public. The Copermittees have established mechanisms for doing both.²¹³ The Regional Board considers the quarterly Copermittee meetings held for the Aliso Creek watershed bacteria investigation to be very important in developing and implementing a coordinated timely approach to urban runoff management. For instance, the meetings have greatly facilitated the exchange of information regarding the potential use of and the effectiveness of BMPs. In addition, public participation will facilitate better communication among the interested parties in the watershed, which will ultimately help to expedite water quality improvements.

²¹³ Copermittees hold two types of watershed-based meetings; one for public agencies and one open to all other interested parties. In addition, the County of Orange makes its watershed reports available on-line at <http://www.ocwatersheds.com>

Section E.4. (Aliso Creek Watershed Provisions) transfers requirements of an Investigative Order issued on October 18, 2005 into the MS4 Permit. The requirements pertain to an Order first issued in 2001 for investigations into bacteria concentrations in the watershed caused by urban runoff. In October 2005 the requirements for monitoring and reporting were modified in response to a request from the Copermittees. The revised plan includes long-term monitoring and near term action plans based on prioritized storm drains within each watershed municipality. The action plan represents a more mature version of the watershed URMPs.²¹⁴ At the time, the Regional Board noted that the revised program would serve as an effective interim program until a planned TMDL was adopted.²¹⁵ Including the requirements within the Order is done for organizational purposes. It has no net effect on the requirements or the Watershed URMP.

F. Fiscal Analysis

The following legal authority applies to section F:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(vi) provides that “[The Copermittee must submit] for each fiscal year to be covered by the permit, a fiscal analysis of the necessary capital and operation and maintenance expenditures necessary to accomplish the activities of the programs under paragraphs (d)(2)(iii) and (iv) of this section. Such analysis shall include a description of the source of funds that are proposed to meet the necessary expenditures, including legal restrictions on the use of such funds.”

Section F has been expanded in order to develop more useful and meaningful fiscal reporting. The Copermittees have identified a need to assess the current fiscal reporting process and have proposed to prepare a fiscal reporting strategy to better define the expenditure and budget line items included in the fiscal reports.²¹⁶ The Regional Board agrees that the process should be improved. A revamped fiscal reporting strategy will provide the Regional Board and the Copermittees with better capability to manage performance of the programs.

²¹⁴ The 2005-06 annual Aliso Creek Watershed Action Plan (a.k.a. WURMP) is crafted in large part on the activities and monitoring conducted pursuant to the bacteria investigation orders issued by the Regional Board.

²¹⁵ Letter dated October 18, 2005 from the Regional Board Executive Officer, John Robertus, to the Copermittees in the watershed.

²¹⁶ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region), section 2.3.4.

The Copermittees' effort is expected to provide standardization of reporting so that figures between Copermittees are comparable, which is one of many types of information which can be used by the Regional Board to better understand Copermittee program implementation. Standardization and comparison of fiscal analysis reporting is supported by the State Board funded NPDES Stormwater Cost Survey, which finds that "standards for reporting costs and stormwater activities are needed to allow accurate cost comparisons to be made between stormwater activities."²¹⁷ This document also provides guidance regarding categorization of expenditures for tracking and reporting.

The Order establishes criterion for when Copermittees must add narrative evaluations to the tables. This will address some of the variability in reporting and will provide the public and Regional Board with improved understanding of how resources are shifted in response to annual assessments. This will also help ensure that projected annual costs adequately reflect planned program modifications described in the annual reports.

Another new requirement in the Order is for the Copermittees to include a qualitative or quantitative description of fiscal benefits realized from implementation of the storm water protection program. This is a recommendation from the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies.²¹⁸ For instance, the current fiscal assessment does not address city-wide fiscal benefits of protection (e.g., public health, tourism, property values, economic activity, beneficial uses, etc.), even though many costs currently reported to the Regional Board are for related activities. This type of assessment may help Copermittees improve the allocation of resources and it may help the Copermittees secure adequate funding for the program. Finally, it will provide a clearer picture of the urban runoff program to the public and Regional Board.

The Order also requires that each Copermittee develop a financial business plan. This is a new requirement intended to improve the long-term viability of the urban runoff management programs. The requirement is based on guidance from the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies.²¹⁹ The required elements of the business plan are also intended to provide guidance to the Copermittees as they develop a new model fiscal reporting strategy.

²¹⁷ Currier, et al., 2005. *NPDES Storm Water Cost Survey Final Report*. Prepared for California State Water Resources Control Board by Office of Water Programs, California State University, Sacramento. P. 63.

²¹⁸ National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies. 2006. *Guidance for Municipal Stormwater Funding*. Prepared under a grant provided by the U.S. EPA.

²¹⁹ Ibid

The development of a financial business plan for the urban runoff management programs is a management measure that will improve the long-term viability of the programs. Many of the program commitments required by federal regulations that are made by the Copermittees and also required by the MS4 Permit necessitate that funds be available beyond the next fiscal year. Without a clear plan for providing such funds, the Regional Board cannot be certain the management measures will provide the benefits expected from them.

Currently, each Orange County municipality's annual report includes a table based on a template developed by the principal Permittee. The template was meant to facilitate reporting consistency among the 13 Copermittees. The annual report table contains estimates of spending during the reported period and estimates of the next year's spending. The tables separate capital costs from operations and maintenance costs and are arranged by program element. In addition to the tables, each municipality reports on the sources of the funds, (e.g., general fund, special fee, grants, etc.) to demonstrate that resources have been secured. There is very heavy reliance on general funds.

Review of the fiscal analysis tables included in the annual reports has not been as straightforward as expected, and the value of the information is moderate. Generally, questions regarding the financial reporting process of individual Permittees have been adequately resolved during meetings to discuss the annual reports. Based on those meetings, the Regional Board staff has found that cities do not use consistent methods to fill in the tables because they use different accounting and budgeting processes, and certain stormwater program expenditures are not easily categorized into the table formats. Furthermore, stormwater permit-related activities involve several departments, which makes it difficult for the storm water manager to gather and decipher actual costs.

These issues also make it difficult for the Permittees to accurately compartmentalize expenditures within the format. The Permittees are aware of the reporting discrepancies and have planned to modify the reporting template and guidelines. As a result, the current financial reporting provides estimates at best and cannot be reliably used to compare program implementation among most municipalities.

The Federal requirements for a fiscal analysis provide flexibility to the municipality on how and what to report, but also provide wide latitude for the Regional Board to solicit the type of information it seeks to evaluate the relative costs and value of the permit's activities. The modifications to this requirement will improve the long-term protection of water quality.

G. Program Effectiveness Component

The following legal authority applies to section G:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(v) provides that the Copermitees must include “Estimated reductions in loadings of pollutants from discharges of municipal storm sewer constituents from municipal storm sewer systems expected as the result of the municipal storm water quality management program. The assessment shall also identify known impacts of storm water controls on ground water.” Under Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.42(c) applicants must provide annual reports on the progress of their storm water management programs.

Section G.1 of the Order requires the Copermitees to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of their jurisdictional programs and activities. The section requires that the effectiveness strategy of the programs be designed around three classes of objectives and that the results are used to direct program modifications. The section does not specify the assessments to be conducted, but does require that assessment measures conform to the guidance developed by the California Storm Water Quality Association (CASQA). The Orange County Storm Water Program is supportive of the CASQA effort, and use of CASQA assessment techniques is consistent with the methodology proposed in the ROWD.²²⁰

The section is also consistent with the plan of the Copermitees to improve the efficacy of the assessment process.²²¹ The Copermitees currently report a series of metrics for spatial and temporal assessments across the County. The Program Effectiveness requirements of the Order provide the Copermitees with the framework for improving their standard assessment metrics.

²²⁰ The structure of planned program effectiveness is proposed in section 1.2.2 of the 2007 ROWD. The ROWD then identifies current and potential assessment outcome levels within each major program chapter (e.g., new development, construction, etc.).

²²¹ Orange County Storm Water Copermitees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region), section 3.3.2.

The Order provides focus to the assessment methodology by requiring that impaired waterbodies and environmentally-sensitive areas are specifically addressed. In this way, the high priority water quality issues will receive a high level of attention, consistent with USEPA and CASQA guidance for prioritization. The Order provides flexibility to establish the actual metrics for each assessment outcome level. The Order also provides the Copermittees flexibility to develop objectives for the general program components based on the CASQA guidance, as is proposed in the ROWD and DAMP.

Section G.2 (assessment review and modification) of the Order requires the Copermittees to improve jurisdictional activities or BMPs when they are found to be ineffective or when water quality impairments are continuing. This requirement fulfills the purpose of conducting effectiveness assessments – to improve and refine the Copermittees' programs. The requirement is consistent with USEPA's Phase II regulations, which state: "If the permittee determines that its original combination of BMPs are not adequate to achieve the objectives of the municipal program, the MS4 should revise its program to implement BMPs that are adequate [...]."²²²

H. Reporting

The following legal authority applies to section H:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.42(c) requires that "The operator of a large or medium municipal separate storm sewer system or a municipal separate storm sewer system that has been designated by the director under § 122.26(a)(1)(v) of this part must submit an annual report by the anniversary of the date of the issuance of the permit for such system. The report shall include: (1) The status of implementing the components of the storm water management program that are established as permit conditions; (2) Proposed changes to the storm water management program that are established as permit condition. Such proposed changes shall be consistent with § 122.26(d)(2)(iii) of this part; (3) Revisions, if necessary, to the assessment of controls and the fiscal analysis reported in the permit application under § 122.26(d)(2)(iv) and (d)(2)(v) of this part; (4) A summary of data, including monitoring data, that is accumulated throughout the reporting year; (5) Annual expenditures and budget for year following each annual report; (6) A summary describing the number and nature of enforcement actions, inspections, and public education programs; (7) Identification of water quality improvements or degradation."

²²² Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 235 / Wednesday, December 8, 1999 / Rules and Regulations. P. 68762.

California Water Code section 13267 provides that “the Regional Board may require than any person who has discharged [...] shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring reports which the regional board requires.”

Section H.1 (Jurisdictional and Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plans) outlines the process and due dates for submitting plans. It utilizes an approach similar to the approach used in Order No. R9-2002-01. The information to be included in the Jurisdictional and Watershed plans must be sufficient to demonstrate the capacity to implement the requirements of Section D and Section E, respectively, of the Order.

Two general modifications from Order No. R9-2002-01 result in reduced reporting effort by the Copermitees. First, in many cases, the requirements of the Order should not necessitate a complete rewrite of the plans, as was basically done in 2003. Only sections of the Order which are new or have been significantly changed should warrant rewriting of plans' sections. Second, the WURMP annual reports due in January 2009 can serve as the updated watershed plans, rather than rewriting each watershed plan. The Regional Board plans to work with the Copermitees and provide guidance regarding where JURMPs must be updated in accordance with the Order. This will help ensure that rewriting, reporting, and review efforts are minimized.

Section H.2 (Other Required Reports) include requirements for information to be included in the SUSMP update and the Report of Waste Discharge for the next permit reissuance. The Order requires submittal of a ROWD prior to the expiration of the Order. The section identifies the minimum information to be included in the ROWD, based on USEPA's May 17, 1996 guidance “Interpretive Policy Memorandum on Reapplication Requirements for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems.”

Section H.3 (Annual Reports) outlines the process and roles of the Copermitees for developing and submitting the JURMP and WURMP annual reports. Information to be included in the annual reports is found in the JURMP and WURMP sections of the Permit (Sections D and E, respectively). The due dates have been changed. The JURMP is due approximately six weeks earlier than under Order No. R9-2002-01. This change is necessary because the existing timelines prevented efficient response by the Copermitees to comments from the Regional Board and the Copermitees' own review. The WURMP annual report due date has been extended by approximately ten weeks. This will spread the JURMP and WURMP reporting and review times, which will enable more focused attention on each type of annual report.

I. Modification of Programs

The following legal authority applies to section I:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Section I of the Order provides a process for the Copermittees to modify their urban runoff management programs. This process will be useful so that the Copermittees can continue to refine and improve their programs based on the findings of their annual program effectiveness assessments. The process allows for minor modifications to the Copermittees' programs where the Copermittees can exhibit that the modifications meet or exceed existing legal requirements under the Order. Such a process avoids lengthy and time consuming formal approvals of proposed modifications before the Regional Board, while still ensuring compliance with applicable legal standards and the Order. The process included in the Order is based on a process utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board in their MS4 permit for Alameda County.²²³

J. Principal Permittee Responsibilities

The following legal authority applies to section J:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(a)(3)(iii)(C) provides that "A regional authority may be responsible for submitting a permit application."

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(D) provides that "[The Copermittee must demonstrate that it can control] through interagency agreements among coapplicants the contribution of pollutants from one portion of the municipal system to another portion of the municipal system."

No significant changes were made to this section.

K. Receiving Waters Monitoring and Reporting

The following legal authority applies to section K:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

²²³ San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board, 2003. Order No. R2-2003-0021. P. 45.

Specific Legal Authority: Copermittees must conduct a comprehensive monitoring program as required under Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iii).

See section Q of this Fact Sheet/Technical Report for a discussion of changes to the Receiving Waters Monitoring and Reporting Program.

L. Standard Provisions, Reporting Requirements, And Notifications

The following legal authority applies to section L:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Standard provisions, reporting requirements, and notifications are consistent to all NPDES permits and are generally found in Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.41.

Section L.2 of the Order has been changed to remove the statement that all plans and reports submitted in compliance with the Order are an enforceable part of the Order. This statement has been removed because it is unnecessary. The Order itself contains sufficient detailed requirements to ensure that compliance with discharge prohibitions, receiving water limits, and the narrative standard of MEP are achieved. Implementation by the Copermittees of programs in compliance with the Order's requirements, prohibitions, and receiving water limits is the pertinent compliance standard to be used under the Order, as opposed to assessing compliance by reviewing the Copermittees' implementation of their plans alone.

Rather than being substantive components of the Order itself, the Copermittees' urban runoff management plans are simply descriptions of their urban runoff management programs required under the Order. These plans serve as procedural correspondence which guides program implementation and aids the Copermittees and Regional Board in tracking implementation of the programs. In this manner, the plans are not functional equivalents of the Order. For these reasons, the Copermittees' urban runoff management plans need not be an enforceable part of the Order.

M. Attachment A – Basin Plan Prohibitions

The following legal authority applies to Attachment A:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: California Water Code Section 13243 provides that “A regional board, in a water quality control plan or in waste discharge requirements, may specify certain conditions or areas where the discharge of waste, or certain types of waste, will not be permitted.”

California Water Code Section 13263(a) provides that waste discharge requirements prescribed by the SDRWQCB implement the Basin Plan.

No significant changes were made to this attachment.

N. Attachment B – Standard Provisions

The following legal authority applies to Attachment B:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Standard provisions, reporting requirements, and notifications are consistent to all NPDES permits and are generally found in Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.41.

Attachment B includes Standard Provisions which have been developed by the State Board. These Standard Provisions ensure that NPDES permits are consistent and compatible with USEPA’s federal regulations. Some Standard Provisions sections specific to publicly owned sewage treatment works are not included in Attachment B.

O. Attachment C – Definitions

The following legal authority applies to Attachment C:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Attachment C contains definitions for terms found in the Order. In addition, definitions for terms previously defined in Order No. R9-2002-01 Attachment D, but which are not found in the current Order, have been deleted.

P. Attachment D – Summary of Submittals

The following legal authority applies to Attachment D:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.42(c) requires that “The operator of a large or medium municipal separate storm sewer system or a municipal separate storm sewer system that has been designated by the director under § 122.26(a)(1)(v) of this part must submit an annual report by the anniversary of the date of the issuance of the permit for such system. The report shall include: (1) The status of implementing the components of the storm water management program that are established as permit conditions; (2) Proposed changes to the storm water management program that are established as permit condition. Such proposed changes shall be consistent with § 122.26(d)(2)(iii) of this part; (3) Revisions, if necessary, to the assessment of controls and the fiscal analysis reported in the permit application under § 122.26(d)(2)(iv) and (d)(2)(v) of this part; (4) A summary of data, including monitoring data, that is accumulated throughout the reporting year; (5) Annual expenditures and budget for year following each annual report; (6) A summary describing the number and nature of enforcement actions, inspections, and public education programs; (7) Identification of water quality improvements or degradation.”

California Water Code section 13267 provides that “the regional board may require than any person who has discharged [...] shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring reports which the regional board requires.”

Attachment F to the Order provides a table summary of scheduled submittals required by the Order. Unscheduled submittals are no longer added to the table, since there is no proper due date for such submittals. A task summary has not been created for the Order, since the previous task summary was found to be redundant, repeating information found in the submittal summary and elsewhere in the Order.

Q. Attachment E - Receiving Waters and Urban Runoff Monitoring and Reporting Program

The following legal authority applies to the Receiving Waters and Urban Runoff Monitoring and Reporting Program:

Broad Legal Authority: CWA sections 402(p)(3)(B)(ii-iii), CWC section 13377, and Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(i)(B, C, E, and F) and 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iv).

Specific Legal Authority: Copermitttees must conduct a comprehensive monitoring program as required under Federal NPDES regulations 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iii).

Federal NPDES regulation 40 CFR 122.42(c) requires that “The operator of a large or medium municipal separate storm sewer system or a municipal separate storm sewer system that has been designated by the director under § 122.26(a)(1)(v) of this part must submit an annual report by the anniversary of the date of the issuance of the permit for such system. The report shall include: (1) The status of implementing the components of the storm water management program that are established as permit conditions; (2) Proposed changes to the storm water management program that are established as permit condition. Such proposed changes shall be consistent with § 122.26(d)(2)(iii) of this part; (3) Revisions, if necessary, to the assessment of controls and the fiscal analysis reported in the permit application under § 122.26(d)(2)(iv) and (d)(2)(v) of this part; (4) A summary of data, including monitoring data, that is accumulated throughout the reporting year; (5) Annual expenditures and budget for year following each annual report; (6) A summary describing the number and nature of enforcement actions, inspections, and public education programs; (7) Identification of water quality improvements or degradation.”

California Water Code section 13267 provides that “the regional board may require than any person who has discharged [...] shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring reports which the regional board requires.”

1. Purpose

According to USEPA, the benefits of sampling data include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing a means for evaluating the environmental risk of storm water discharges by identifying types and amounts of pollutants present;
2. Determining the relative potential for storm water discharges to contribute to water quality impacts or water quality standard violations;
3. Identifying potential sources of pollutants; and
4. Eliminating or controlling identified sources more specifically through permit conditions.²²⁴

²²⁴ USEPA, 1992. NPDES Storm Water Sampling Guidance Document. EPA/833-B-92-001.

Equally important, monitoring programs are an essential link in the improvement of urban runoff management efforts. Data collected from monitoring programs can be assessed to determine the effectiveness of management programs and practices, which is vital for the success of the iterative approach used to meet the MEP standard. Specifically, when data indicates that a particular BMP or program component is not effective, improved efforts can be selected and implemented. Also, when water quality data indicate that water quality standards or objectives are being exceeded, particular pollutants, sources, and drainage areas can be identified and targeted for specific urban runoff management efforts.

Considering the benefits described above, the Receiving Waters Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) has been designed to determine impacts to receiving water quality and beneficial uses from urban runoff and to use the results to refine the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs for the reduction of pollutant loadings to the MEP. The primary goals of the MRP include:

1. Assess compliance with Order No. R9-2007-0002;
2. Measure and improve the effectiveness of the Copermittees' urban runoff management programs;
3. Assess the chemical, physical, and biological impacts of receiving waters from urban runoff;
4. Characterize urban runoff discharges;
5. Identify sources of specific pollutants;
6. Prioritize drainage and sub-drainage areas that need management actions;
7. Detect and eliminate illicit discharges and illicit connections to the MS4; and
8. Assess the overall health of receiving waters.

Each of the components of the MRP is necessary to meet the objectives listed above. In addition, the MRP has been designed in accordance with the guidance provided by the Southern California Stormwater Monitoring Coalition's Model Monitoring Technical Committee in its August 2004 "Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California." This guidance document was developed in response to Senate Bill 72 (Kuehl), which addressed the standardization of sampling and analysis protocols in municipal stormwater monitoring programs. The technical committee which developed the guidance included representatives from Southern California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (including San Diego), municipal storm water Permittees (including the County of Orange), Heal the Bay, and the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

As its title suggests, the guidance essentially developed a model municipal storm water monitoring program for use in Southern California. The model program is structured around five fundamental management questions, outlined below. The MRP is designed as an iterative step towards ensuring that the Copermittees' monitoring program can fully answer each of the five management questions.

1. Are conditions in receiving waters protective, or likely to be protective, of beneficial uses?
2. What is the extent and magnitude of the current or potential receiving water problems?
3. What is the relative urban runoff contribution to the receiving water problem(s)?
4. What are the sources of urban runoff that contribute to receiving water problem(s)?
5. Are conditions in receiving waters getting better or worse?

The justifications for each component of the monitoring program are discussed below.

2. Monitoring Program

Mass Loading Station Monitoring

The intent of current mass loading monitoring as conducted by the Copermittees is to use water chemistry data from three storm events to calculate pollutant loads and to assess water quality with respect to applicable acute and chronic toxicity criteria from the California Toxics Rule (CTR).²²⁵

Section II.A.1 of the MRP requires mass loading and toxicity monitoring at monitoring stations located at the bottom of major watersheds within Orange County. The mass loading monitoring will provide data representing event mean concentrations of pollutants, total pollutant loadings, and toxicity conditions from specific drainage areas. Mass loading monitoring stations are recommended by the Model Monitoring Technical Committee in order to answer management questions 1, 2, and 5.²²⁶ The stations are also expected to contribute towards meeting MRP goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8. The locations of the mass loading monitoring stations are not changed from Order No. R9-2002-01. However, the frequency of monitoring has been changed, and some revisions to the constituents have been made.

The frequency of mass loading monitoring in Order No. 2007-0002 has been modified to include two wet and two dry weather events. Currently three wet events have been targeted (though usually two or less have been sampled). This modification is not expected to affect long-term trend analyses for storm events since the monitoring to date has been sporadic.²²⁷ Dry weather monitoring is necessary because dry-weather flows in these watersheds are now perennial and may be significant contributors to chronic pollution. The addition of dry weather monitoring provides a more comprehensive temporal view of the watershed, which will improve the Copermittees' ability to understand the dynamics of annual pollutant loading.

²²⁵ Orange County Storm Water Permittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge, section C-11.3.2.

²²⁶ Model Monitoring Technical Committee, 2004. Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California. Chapter 5.

²²⁷ Mass loading monitoring has been hampered by technical difficulties. For instance, only four of six stations were operational during the 2004-05 season, and only three stations were operational during 2002-04 season.

In addition, the required constituents include some revisions to Order No. R9-2002-01. The changes are made to be compatible with the federal NPDES regulations and in response to data collected during the current permit term. The changes include:

1. All events must now include Biological Oxygen Demand, 5-day Chemical Oxygen Demand, Total Organic Carbon, Dissolved Organic Carbon. These are specifically identified in 40 CFR 122.26(d)(2)(iii)(B), but were omitted from Order No. R9-2002-01.
2. Carbamate and Pyrethroid pesticides must initially be monitored in Prima Deshecha and Segunda Deshecha watersheds. If carbamate and/or pyrethroid pesticides are found to correlate with observed acute or chronic toxicity, then sampling and analysis for that pesticide must be added to all stations displaying toxicity. The Copermittees suggest adding these pesticides to Prima and Segunda Deshecha watersheds in an attempt to find a cause for observed persistent toxicity at those stations.²²⁸ If these pesticides are found in these watersheds, then they will likely be present in the other urban watersheds of the Region.
3. Impaired water body pollutants. Specific pollutants have been added in response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approval of California's 2004-2006 Section 303(d) Water Quality Limited Waters List. Monitoring for these pollutants is specific to the watershed in which the impairment is located.
4. Dimethoate monitoring has been eliminated because data collected to date has not observed any significant levels at the mass emissions stations.

Bioassessment

Section II.A.2 of the MRP requires the Copermittees to conduct bioassessment monitoring. Bioassessment monitoring is a cost-effective tool that measures the effects of water quality over time.²²⁹ It is an important indicator of stream health and impacts from urban runoff. It can detect impacts that chemical and toxicity monitoring cannot. USEPA encourages permitting authorities to consider requiring biological monitoring methods to fully characterize the nature and extent of impacts from urban runoff.²³⁰ Therefore, the Regional Board commonly requires bioassessment monitoring in MS4 and other types of discharge permits.

²²⁸ Orange County Storm Water Permittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge, section C-11.4.1.

²²⁹ California Department of Fish and Game, 2002. California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region 2002 Biological Assessment Report: Results of May 2001 Reference Site Study and Preliminary Index of Biotic Integrity.

²³⁰ USEPA, 1999. Rapid Bioassessment Protocols for Use in Wadeable Streams and Rivers. EPA 841-B-99-002. P. 2-5.

Bioassessment is the direct measurement of the biological condition, physical condition, and attainment of beneficial uses of receiving waters (typically using benthic macroinvertebrates, periphyton, and fish). Bioassessment monitoring integrates the effects of both water chemistry and physical habitat impacts (e.g., sedimentation or erosion) of various discharges on the biological community native to the receiving waters. Moreover, bioassessment is a direct measurement of the impact of cumulative, sub-lethal doses of pollutants that may be below reasonable water chemistry detection limits, but that still have biological affects.

Because bioassessment focuses on communities of living organisms as integrators of cumulative impacts resulting from water quality or habitat degradation, it defines the ecological risks resulting from urban runoff. Bioassessment not only identifies that an impact has occurred, but also measures the effect of the impact and tracks recovery when control or restoration measures have been taken. These features make bioassessment a powerful tool to assess compliance, evaluate the effectiveness of BMPs, and to track both short and long-term trends (MRP goals 1,2,3, and 8). Bioassessment can also help answer management questions 1, 2, and 5.

The Order also identifies the most current established protocol to be used in identifying bioassessment reference stations. The protocol referenced in the Order is specified because it provides a qualitative and repeatable method for identifying reference sites. Moreover, the protocol is well established, since it has been peer reviewed and published.

The Order includes two modifications to the bioassessment monitoring required under Order 2002-01. These changes include:

1. Bioassessment monitoring must utilize the targeted riffle composite approach, which is consistent with the State Board's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) Quality Assurance Management Plan (QAMP), as amended. Through SWAMP, various bioassessment methods were evaluated and it was found that the targeted riffle composite approach was a particularly efficient method, providing accurate data in a cost efficient manner.
2. Bioassessment monitoring to include assessment of periphyton (algae). Advantages of bioassessment using periphyton include: (1) they have rapid reproduction rates and very short life cycles, making them valuable indicators of short-term impacts; (2) as primary producers, they are most directly affected by physical and chemical factors; (3) sampling is easy and inexpensive; and (4) algal assemblages are sensitive to some pollutants which may not visibly affect other aquatic assemblages.²³¹

²³¹ USEPA, 1999. Rapid Bioassessment Protocols for Use in Wadeable Streams and Rivers. EPA 841-B-99-002. P. 3-3.

3. One of the two required annual monitoring events may be eliminated so that Copermittees can conduct special studies on the effect of physical habitat modifications. This modification is consistent with the adaptive monitoring approach outlined by the Storm Water Monitoring Coalition,²³² and is consistent with the bioassessment procedures for southern California.²³³ The Copermittees suggest this approach in response to analyses that indicate that the physical habitat conditions are better correlated than aquatic chemistry data with IBI scores.²³⁴ The Copermittees analyses indicate that although biological communities are different in the Fall and Spring, both seasonal communities indicate the same common relationships to spatial biological patterns and potential variables that explain the differences. For instance, downstream urbanized locations display lower IBI scores than reference sites regardless of the season, even if the biological community at a downstream site differs between the Fall and Spring. Because the Copermittees have not proposed exact studies or experiments in place of a sampling event, the Order contains a requirement that the Executive Officer must approve the alternative sampling plan.

Follow-up Analyses and Actions

Section II.A.3 of the MRP requires the Copermittees to use the results of the chemistry, toxicity, and bioassessment monitoring to determine if impacts from urban runoff are occurring and when follow-up actions are necessary. The triad approach allows a wide range of measurements to be combined to more efficiently identify pollutants, their sources, and appropriate follow-up actions. Results from the three types of monitoring shall be assessed to evaluate the extent and causes of pollution in receiving waters and to prioritize management actions to eliminate or reduce the sources. The framework provided is to be used to determine conclusions from the data and appropriate follow-up actions. The framework is proposed by the Copermittees and derived from the Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California.²³⁵ These follow-up actions are expected to primarily help answer management questions 2 and 4, as well as address MRP goals 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

²³² Stormwater Monitoring Coalition 2004. "Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California: A report from the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition's Model Monitoring Technical Committee." Southern California Coastal Water Research Program, Technical Report No. 419.

²³³ Ode, et al. 2005. "A Quantitative Tool for Assessing the Integrity of Southern Coastal California Streams." Environmental Management. Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 1-13.

²³⁴ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region), section 11 and 2005-06 Annual Report section 11.3

²³⁵ Model Monitoring Technical Committee, 2004. Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California. P. 5-61.

When, based on the framework in Table 2 of the M&R Program, data indicates the presence of toxic pollutants in runoff, the Copermittees are required to conduct a Toxicity Identification Evaluation (TIE). A TIE is a set of procedures used to identify the specific chemical(s) responsible for toxicity to aquatic organisms. When discharges are toxic to a test organism, a TIE must be conducted to confirm potential constituents of concern and rule out others, therefore allowing Copermittees to determine and prioritize appropriate management actions. If a sample is toxic to more than one species, it is necessary to determine the toxicant(s) affecting each species. If the type and source of pollutants can be identified based on the data alone and an analysis of potential sources in the drainage area, a TIE is not necessary.

When a TIE identifies a pollutant associated with urban runoff as a cause of toxicity, it is then necessary to conduct follow-up actions to identify the causative agents of toxicity, isolate the sources of toxicity, evaluate the effectiveness of toxicity control options, and then confirm the reduction in toxicity. Follow-up actions should analyze all potential source(s) causing toxicity, potential BMPs to eliminate or reduce the pollutants causing toxicity, and suggested monitoring to demonstrate that toxicity has been removed.

Ambient Coastal Receiving Waters Monitoring

The Copermittees have been implementing a phased Ambient Coastal Monitoring Program that initially involved monitoring chemistry and aquatic toxicity of dry and storm water discharges to ecologically sensitive areas along the coastline. Later, aerial photographs of storm water plumes were taken to estimate the spatial extent of the impact of urban runoff. The results were used to identify storm drains for source and toxicity identification studies, including sampling of storm water plumes.

Section II.A.4 of the MRP allows the Copermittees to continue the existing program, while requiring that the special studies be consistent with the MRP goals and that stations be located within Areas of Special Biological Significance.

Coastal Storm Drain Monitoring

Section II.A.5 of the MRP includes some modifications to the Copermittees' coastal storm drain monitoring program as it was conducted under Order No. R9-2002-01. Coastal storm drain monitoring is critical because one of the primary impacts to coastal receiving waters is the loss of recreational beneficial uses resulting from high levels of bacteria in urban runoff. The coastal storm drain monitoring program is expected to help answer management questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, as well as address MRP goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The changes to the coastal storm drain monitoring program have been made in response to proposals outlined in the Copermittees' ROWD²³⁶ and in response to the increasing trend of diverting some urban runoff flows to the sanitary sewer infrastructure. The Copermittees recommend reducing the monitoring effort at storm drains that rarely have elevated levels of bacteria and putting more effort toward intensive investigations of problematic storm drains²³⁷. An adaptive approach is consistent with the Model Monitoring Technical Committee's recommendations. The MRP allows the Copermittees to modify the coastal outfall program, with a few restrictions:

1. Special studies are required at certain outfalls. These drains were identified by the Copermittees as ones that warrant special investigations based on persistently high elevations of bacterial indicators and a relationship between bacteria levels in the outfalls and receiving waters. Notably, the stations identified by the Copermittees are generally where inland surface waters reach the ocean, rather than isolated buried coastal storm drains.
2. Baseline monitoring must be continued at select drains. Although the data supports eliminating some drains from the monitoring effort, these five drains are included by the Regional Board because data from the Copermittees suggest they commonly display elevated bacterial levels.²³⁸
3. Storm water monitoring must be conducted at some dry-weather diversion points. Sampling of storm water discharges from a subset of coastal storm drains whose flows are diverted to the sanitary sewer during dry weather will provide a clearer picture regarding the utility of dry-weather diversions. The Regional Board is concerned that the presence of a dry-weather diversion may reduce the incentive for storm water BMPs to be implemented and rigorously enforced by municipalities. This monitoring will provide an indication of the effectiveness of storm water BMPs in these watersheds and may provide additional insight regarding the need for special studies.

High Priority Inland Aquatic Habitats

Section II.A.6 of the MRP is a new requirement. It requires the development of a new monitoring program component, although storm drains and receiving waters currently monitored under other components of the MRP may also be used to satisfy this requirement.

²³⁶ Orange County Storm Water Program. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge, section 11.

²³⁷ Ibid

²³⁸ Orange County Storm Water Program. 2005-06 Annual Report, tables C-11a-d.

The purpose is to assess the contribution of MS4 discharges to factors affecting environmentally-sensitive inland surface waters. The existing monitoring program does not adequately address whether MS4 discharges are affecting environmentally-sensitive inland surface waters. This requirement is consistent with the guidance of the Model Monitoring Technical Committee because it focuses attention on specific beneficial uses that are considered a high priority.

Threatened and endangered species are particularly susceptible to negative effects of MS4 discharges because the habitat available to them is restricted. Therefore, short-term or chronic degradation of habitat caused by MS4 discharges results in a proportionally high level of negative impact.

Information regarding the extent of environmentally-sensitive habitats is available from sources familiar to the Copermittees. Examples include the Aliso Creek and San Juan Creek watershed assessments conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). In addition, the County participated in the development of master planning level efforts with the California Department of Fish and Game, the Corps, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the long-term protection of upland and aquatic species in the San Juan watershed.²³⁹ Together these documents represent the majority of the Copermittees' drainage areas. Therefore, a relatively small level of effort will be required to collect information for the relatively small area of the region not covered by these documents. In addition, the Copermittees already have updated inventories of inland MS4 outfall locations. As a result, a monitoring plan can be developed within 12 months to address the new requirement.

MS4 Outfall Monitoring

Section II.B of the MRP requires the Copermittees to develop and implement a program to monitor and characterize pollutant discharges from MS4 outfalls. Such monitoring is critical, since it provides for prioritization of areas for increased management efforts. It also provides the Copermittees the ability to better assess and improve their jurisdictional programs and BMPs. The MRP includes some changes to the existing outfall monitoring program conducted by the Copermittees.

Currently Copermittees have selected a combination of random and targeted storm drains to monitor during dry weather. Randomly selected sites are visited three times per summer in order to estimate general background concentrations of pollutants in the MS4. Statistical evaluations were conducted on these random sites to develop action levels for conducting management response actions at all dry-weather sites. Additional sites were intentionally selected based on professional judgment by the Copermittees that the drainage areas may be sources of pollution. Targeted sites are monitored five times each summer.

²³⁹ San Juan Creek and Western San Mateo Watershed Special Area Management Plan, November 2005. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District.

The Copermittees report that dry weather monitoring of outfalls has been used to identify storm drains that are discharging pollutants in concentrations that may pose a threat to receiving waters. Source investigations have been conducted as a response to the data. The Copermittees report that in many instances the parties responsible for illicit discharges have been detected quickly.²⁴⁰ The Copermittees have not proposed any changes for this program. With changes made to the data evaluation procedures in the last two years, this program is providing the Copermittees the ability to identify and respond to potential problems in dry-weather runoff.

The MRP does include some changes to the existing outfall monitoring program requirements. These changes include:

1. Wet-weather monitoring. Currently the Copermittees do not monitor the discharge of storm water from the MS4 outfalls. As a result, a substantial amount of information regarding the quality of MS4 effluent is unknown. To date the focus of the dry-weather monitoring program has been on dry-weather detection of illicit discharges. The collection of wet-weather data will enable the Copermittees to assess the effectiveness of existing storm water BMP measures. This data can be used to more effectively target storm water management program efforts.
2. Nickel is added as a dry-weather requirement. Order No. R9-2002-01 did not contain nickel as a required constituent in dry-weather outfall monitoring. The Copermittees have been assessing nickel in the outfall monitoring program. A few stations have exhibited elevations of nickel that exceed CTR criteria.
3. Phenol has been eliminated from the dry-weather monitoring requirements. Phenol has not been detected at significantly high levels.

The requirements for wet-weather monitoring is a significant change in protocol, but may not result in a significant change in monitoring effort. The MRP provides the Copermittees great flexibility in assigning stations for wet-weather monitoring. It is expected that stations exhibiting elevated levels of pollutants in dry weather would be likely candidates for the wet weather monitoring. Further, it is conceivable that the inclusion of wet weather monitoring would result in a decrease in the current effort of dry weather monitoring. The MRP provides the Copermittees ample time to conduct the evaluations necessary to modify the program.

²⁴⁰ Orange County Storm Water Program. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge, sections 10.3.1 and 11.2.2

Section II.B.2 requires the Copermittees to develop and implement a program to identify sources of discharges of pollutants causing the high priority water quality problems within each watershed. This requirement should be easily met because of the foundation already developed by the Copermittees in response to Order No. R9-2002-01. To some extent, the Copermittees do conduct follow-up monitoring in response to dry-weather outfall data. The ROWD and 2007 DAMP describe some guidance that is provided by the County to the Copermittees, but there does not seem to be any consistency to the followup monitoring programs. The ROWD does recommend that additional training be provided for the municipalities with respect to interpreting and using the data collected by the County. In addition, many of the Copermittees have developed procedures and experience in conducting follow-up investigations in response to the bacteria investigations in the Aliso Creek watershed.²⁴¹

Identification of sources causing high priority water quality problems is a central purpose of urban runoff management programs. Monitoring which enables the Copermittees to identify sources of water quality problems aids the Copermittees in focusing their management efforts and improving their programs. In turn, the Copermittees' programs can abate identified sources, which will improve the quality of urban runoff discharges and receiving waters. This monitoring is needed to address management question 4 (What are the sources to urban runoff that contribute to receiving water problems?). Source identification monitoring is a key component of the Model Monitoring Program, which states "once it has been determined [...] that urban runoff is, or is likely to be, a significant source of one or more receiving water problems, then more intensive source identification efforts are called for."²⁴² Moreover, in its review of the San Diego County Copermittees' monitoring proposal, Tetra Tech, Inc. finds that "after some years of assessment monitoring, it is time to look more systematically at determining the relative urban contributions and the sources of urban runoff that contribute to identified receiving water problems."²⁴³

Other Special Studies

Section II.C of the MRP describes additional studies to be conducted by the Copermittees.

²⁴¹ Copermittees in the Aliso Creek watershed include the County of Orange and the Cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, and Mission Viejo.

²⁴² Model Monitoring Technical Committee, 2004. Model Monitoring Program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems in Southern California. P. 4-17.

²⁴³ Tetra Tech Inc., 2006. Review of San Diego County MS4 Monitoring Program.

The MRP absorbs the bacteria monitoring and reporting program currently in place in the Aliso Creek watershed.²⁴⁴ This monitoring effort has been required by the Regional Board pursuant to authorities provided under California Water Code sections 13225 and 13267. The monitoring and reporting is focused solely on the MS4s in the Aliso Creek watershed and has effectively been integrated already into the Copermittees' programs. Inclusion of it into the MRP is done for organizational purposes and will have no other net effect.

The MRP allows the Copermittees to participate in Bight '08 and be relieved of certain monitoring program requirements for that year. This trade-off will provide the Copermittees and Regional Board with insight on the impact of urban runoff on a regional level in the Southern California Bight. Participation in Bight '08 was recommended by the Copermittees in their ROWD.²⁴⁵ Since participation in Bight '08 is optional for the Copermittees, this section outlines the monitoring which must be conducted if the Copermittees do not participate in the study.

Monitoring Provisions

Section II.D of the MRP includes monitoring provisions which are standard requirements for all municipal storm water permits.

2. Reporting Program

Section III of the MRP discusses submittal of the Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program Annual Reports and the Receiving Waters Monitoring Annual Reports. In effect, a description of the monitoring program will be submitted with the Jurisdictional URMPs, and the monitoring data and assessment will be submitted six months later. The MRP continues the reporting approach utilized under the requirements of Order No. R9-2002-01, where Lead Permittees for each watershed submit their annual reports to the Principal Permittee to be unified into one document.

²⁴⁴ On October 12, 2005, the Regional Board accepted the revised Aliso Creek watershed bacteria monitoring plan proposal from the MS4 Permittees. The Regional Board concluded that the scope of the current bacteria monitoring in the watershed was no longer warranted and that the proposed changes would constitute an effective interim program until adoption of a Total Maximum Daily Load, requiring a bacteria reduction and assessment program for the watershed. In addition, the Regional Board recognized that as a result of reduced monitoring costs, the municipalities expect to direct additional resources toward implementation of management practices to reduce indicator bacteria and pathogens.

²⁴⁵ Orange County Storm Water Copermittees. 2006. Report of Waste Discharge (San Diego Region).

The section moves forward the due date for these annual reports from mid-November to September 30. This requires jurisdictional annual reports to be submitted closer to the end of the reporting period they address, which will result in earlier review by the Regional Board and the Copermittees. Submittal will also be staggered with submittal of the watershed annual reports, spreading out Regional Board review of annual reports. Earlier review is useful because Regional Board comments and the Copermittees' own assessment be responded to by the Copermittees in a more timely fashion. In this manner, Copermittee programs can be modified and benefit from the jurisdictional annual report review, comment, response process at an earlier date, leading to more effective program over the long-term.

The reporting requirements for the Aliso Creek watershed are also specified in this section. These reporting requirements are identical to the current reporting required by the Regional Board for the bacteria investigation. They are specified in this section because the requirements are more specific than reporting required for other watershed URMPs.