

Minutes of Meeting

9:00 A.M., Thursday, April 15, 2021
Regional Water Quality Control Board
Video Conference

Thursday, April 15, 2021

Video recordings of Board meetings (since 2/2019) are available at:

[Prior Board Meeting Video recordings.](#)

Audio recordings of Board meetings (11/2018 and before) are available at:

[Prior Board Meeting Audio recordings](#)

- i. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Chairman Giusti led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- ii. **Roll Call and Introductions:**

Board Members present: Hector Bedolla, Kelli Gant, Gregory Giusti, Shaunna McCovey, and Valerie Quinto.

Regional Water Board staff present: Patti Corsie, Josh Curtis, Matt Herman, Nathan Jacobsen, Cathy Goodwin, Justin McSmith, Heaven Moore, Jeremiah Puget, Charles Reed, Matt St. John, Claudia Villacorta, and Chris Watt.
- iii. **Board Member Reports and Ex Parte Communication Disclosure.** No Board Member Reports or Ex Parte Communication Disclosures given.
- iv. **State Board Liaison's and Executive Officer's Reports:** State Board Liaison Dorene D'Adamo gave a comprehensive update on recent as well as upcoming State Water Board actions with a focus on drought-related actions in the North Coast, as well as outlining the key components of the State Water Board's 2021 Strategic Work Plan. Matt St. John, Executive Officer, spoke about the written E.O. Report article on *Drought Planning & Response* and explained how Regional Board staff are engaged on drought planning throughout the region, including close coordination with the State Board Division of Water Rights regarding low-flow conditions in the key areas of the North Coast. Mr. St. John identified the four areas of drought planning work by the Regional Board: 1) Public Education and Awareness; 2) Funding for Conservation and Efficiency, along with Flow Augmentation, 3) Technical Assistance to the State Board's Division of Water, and 4) Monitoring water quality conditions for aquatic life, and impacts to recreational uses.

v. **Regional Board Chair's Report:** Chairman Giusti reported that he and the Executive Officer have agreed to increase the time allotted to public testimony/oral comment on agenda items, including Public Forum, from 3 minutes to 5 minutes; and to limit the time allotted to staff presentations for Informational Items to no more than 1 hour. Chair Giusti disclosed conversations he had with the public, local and state representatives since being appointed Chair in January 2021.

vi. **Public Forum:**

Comments were taken from:

- Kimberly Burr, Green Valley Creek
- Larry Hanson, Forest Unlimited
- Karen Jamgochian, Public

1. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** April 15, 2021

Motion: Board member Bedolla moved to adopt April 15, 2021 Meeting minutes, Board member Quinto seconded the motion; Chairman Giusti initiated a roll-call vote:

Gant aye
Quinto aye
McCovey aye
Bedolla aye
Giusti aye

Motion passed unanimously

2. **Public Hearing on Order No. R1-2021-0005 to consider adoption of proposed Waste Discharge Requirements for Mendocino County Water Works District No. 2, Anchor Bay Wastewater Treatment Facility, WDID No. 1B83118OMEN, NPDES No. CA0024040.** (*Cathleen Goodwin*)

Motion: Board member Quinto moved to adopt Order R1-2021-0005, Board member Gant seconded the motion; Chairman Giusti initiated a roll-call vote:

Gant aye
Quinto aye
McCovey aye
Bedolla aye
Giusti aye

Motion passed unanimously

3. Public Hearing on Resolution No. R1-2021-0006 to consider adoption of proposed Resolution Approving Groundwater Basin Evaluation and Prioritization Results Supporting Salt and Nutrient Management Planning as Required by State Water Resources Control Board Recycled Water Policy.

Chris Watt, Groundwater Specialist, Point Source Control & Groundwater Protection Division, provided an overview of the groundwater conditions in the North Coast; a description of the technical processes used to evaluate groundwater basins; the basin prioritization results; and potential implementation pathways. Mr. Watt stated that the purpose of the Resolution is for the Board to accept the staff identified 17 of 62 priority category 1 and 2 groundwater basins in the North Coast for which salt and nutrient management planning may be necessary, and directs staff to develop a Policy Statement for Groundwater Protection which outlines a range of strategies to protect high groundwater quality and improve degraded groundwater quality within the region and to present the Policy Statement for Board consideration within the shortest time practicable.

Board member Quinto stated that the City of Santa Rosa has prepared a Salt & Nutrient Management Plan(SNMP), and asked for clarification as to whether the Resolution automatically triggers new requirements for a discharger/responsible party in a high priority basin to develop a SNMP? Mr. Watt responded to Board member Quinto's questions by confirming that the resolution does not automatically require SNMP development for priority 1 or 2 basins. Chair Giusti requested that the Board be updated and have an opportunity to provide feedback during the development of the Policy Statement for Groundwater Protection.

Comments were taken from:

- David Noren, Public

Motion: Board member Bedolla moved to adopt Order R1-2021-0006, Board member Gant seconded the motion; Chairman Giusti initiated a roll-call vote:

Gant aye
Quinto aye
McCovey aye
Bedolla aye
Giusti aye

Motion passed unanimously

4. Public Hearing on Order No. R1-2021-0008 to consider adoption of proposed Waste Discharge Requirements for Bodega Farms Concentrated Aquatic Animal Production Facility, WDID No.1B82022OSON, NPDES No. CA0024481

Chairman Giusti gave an opening statement directed to the public and public commenters, that the Board is considering the proposed Order that is for aquaculture of red abalone only, and any future changes to the Facility and/or to the species grown at the Facility (i.e., purple sea urchin) would not be covered by the proposed Order and such changes to the Facility would need to be brought back to the Board for consideration. Matt Herman, Water Resources Control Engineer, NPDES Unit, gave a review of the Facility's location and described the Facility's operation; reviewed the new permit requirements being introduced to the Proposed Order; the comments received during the public comment period; staff's responses to those comments; and the resulting changes made to the proposed Order, and recommended adoption of the proposed Order.

Following Public comments Chair Giusti and Board members Gant, Bedolla, McCovey, and Quinto each asked clarifying questions about the scope and limitations associated with the proposed Order. Mr. Jacobsen, Counsel to the Board, reiterated that the proposed Order only authorizes the discharge of waste associated with the cultivation of red abalone and that should the Facility seek to cultivate any other species, a new Report of Waste Discharge would be required. Mr. Jacobsen and Mr. Herman also responded to other clarifying questions.

Comments were taken from:

- Cea Higgins, Coastwalk/CCTA
- Peter Prows, Briscoe, Ivester & Bazel, LLP
- Norma Jellison, Public

Motion: Board member Gant moved to adopt Order R1-2021-0008, Board member Quinto seconded the motion; Chairman Giusti initiated a roll-call vote:

Gant aye
 Quinto aye
 McCovey aye
 Bedolla aye
 Giusti aye

Motion passed unanimously

5. Update on Early Implementation Activities in the Lower Russian River Communities of Monte Rio and Villa Grande. Charles Reed, Supervising Water Resources Control Engineer (WRCE), Point Source Control & Groundwater Protection Unit, introduced Alisha O'Loughlin, Lower Russian River Ombudsperson, County of Sonoma, Dan Fein and Steve Trippe, Lower Russian River Wastewater Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) members. Mr. Reed gave the background and history

of the Russian River Pathogen Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL); the TMDL Action Plan, the Advanced Protection Management Program (APMP) objectives, requirements, compliance opportunities and challenges; funding opportunities, and interagency collaboration with County of Sonoma resulting in the creation of Sonoma County Ombudsperson position. Ms. O'Loughlin reviewed the early implementation efforts by Sonoma County with public funding with a local mini-loan program for Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) owners; the State's Technical Assistance Program, and the Planning Grant awarded to Monte Rio/Villa Grande Wastewater Project, and discussed public participation with the Lower Russian River Wastewater CAG meetings, a creation of a County of Sonoma webpage, and updates to the Sonoma County OWTS Manual. Mr. Reed reviewed the objectives and gave a description of the Monte Rio & Villa Grande Wastewater Project with the timeline completion of 2037 for individual OWTS or 2042 for community wastewater projects, and spoke about the monthly CAG meetings established in early 2018 through community volunteers. Mr. Fein and Mr. Trippy reviewed the objectives, accomplishments, and the next steps of the CAG working with Sonoma County and the Water Board on the Monte Rio & Villa Grande Wastewater Project.

Staff and the invited speakers responded to several clarifying questions by Board members regarding the Monte Rio & Villa Grande Wastewater Project and the intersection with TMDL implementation.

6. Update on State Water Resources Control Board General Waste Discharge Requirements for Winery Process Water Treatment Systems (Winery Order).

Jeremiah Puget, Senior ES, Groundwater Permitting Unit, introduced Laurel Warddrip, Senior Environmental Scientist, Division of Water Quality, State Water Board, who gave a presentation on the background of the January 20, 2021 State Board adoption of the General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Winery Process Water. The adopted General Order is designed to streamline statewide permitting of winery process water discharges to land, achieve statewide consistency, and allows regional water boards to focus their resources on managing backlogged individual Orders and General Order compliance. Ms. Warddrip reviewed the regulatory tiers, the timeline for the Fee schedule adoption, and Order enrollment deadlines for existing and new wineries. Ms. Warddrip closed her presentation with the next steps of developing the following: 1) Accessible documents, 2) Implementation Guidance, and 3) An Electronic Enrollment and Reporting tool.

Chair Giusti requested that Regional Board staff provide periodic updates on enrollments and transition from the Region's Wine Beverage and Food Processor WDR into the new general Order.

Comments were taken from:

John Nagle, Public

7. Executive Officer's Report. See Item iv.

8. Board Member Requests for Future Agenda Items and Other Items of Interest. Chair Giusti and Executive Officer St. John reviewed prior requests including 1) an update from the Board of Forestry and/or CalFire on the regulation of fire salvage operations in California; 2) an Informational item or an EO Report article on the chemical preservative in car tires that has been linked to Coho mortality. Chair Giusti requested regular updates throughout the summer and fall regarding drought conditions in the North Coast.

9. Closed Session: The Board met in closed session; no report given.

Arrangements for Next Meeting and Adjournment

9:00 a.m., Thursday June 17 and
Online – Zoom Meeting
Santa Rosa, CA

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Chairperson _____

Date _____