

State Water Resources Control Board

MAY 23 2013

Mr. Scott McGowen, P.E.
Chief Environmental Engineer
Division of Environmental Analysis
Department of Transportation
1120 N Street, Room 4333
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. McGowen:

COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL EXCEPTION TO THE CALIFORNIA OCEAN PLAN FOR SELECTED DISCHARGES INTO AREAS OF SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

On March 20, 2012, the Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) General Exception was adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). The General Exception provides the option for compliance with the ASBS monitoring requirements through a regional monitoring program. This option involves a more coordinated, cost-effective, and comprehensive understanding of the water quality of each region. Currently, the State Water Board is funding reference site monitoring, through Proposition 50, for those parties committed to regional monitoring.

The General Exception states that regional monitoring *"shall commence during the first full storm season following the adoption of these special conditions."* The 2012-13 storm season is the first since the adoption of the General Exception. All regional monitoring plans were approved in December 2012. Regional Integrated Monitoring for the North and Central Coasts originally required two storm seasons of monitoring (three storms per season), 2012-13 and 2013-14. However, the 2012-13 season has been relatively dry over much of the coast. Consequently, the State Water Board is allowing the first year's regional monitoring for the North and Central Coasts to extend into 2013-14. In other words, for dischargers unable to conduct sampling for all three storms in 2012-2013, the State Water Board is allowing the sampling for the balance of the requisite three storms to occur in the 2013-2014 storm season. If no sampling was conducted by or for a discharger during 2012-2013, then the first year's sampling is allowed for the 2013-2014 storm season and the second year's sampling is allowed for the 2014-2015 storm season. In any case six storms total must be sampled by the end of the 2014-2015 storm season.

With regard to the Southern California Bight ASBS monitoring, which is the second year for most of the participants, the State Water Board is allowing the planned 2012-13 sampling to extend into the 2013-2014 storm season.

The primary purpose of the monitoring program in the General Exception is to determine if structural storm water controls are necessary to protect ASBS water quality. If the monitoring results indicate that natural water quality is not being met, then structural controls would be required to be operational within six years of the effective date of the General Exception.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (916) 341-5858 or mcarpio-obeso@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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