

State Water Resources Control Board**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****November 15, 2001**

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**State Water Board OKs \$1 Million “Clean Beaches Initiative” Grant
To Reduce Contaminated Runoff At Huntington Beach**

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) today approved a \$1 million grant for Orange County to construct the Greenville-Banning Channel Urban Runoff Diversion project.

Urban runoff contributes to beach postings and closures due to high levels of bacteria. With more than 2 million visitors a year, the effects of closures on Huntington Beach are significant. In 2000, the beach was closed for a total of more than two months.

The diversion project will divert dry weather flows from the channel into the sanitary sewer system prior to it reaching the river. An inflatable dam will hold back the flows in the channel and pumps and pipelines will transport them to the sewer system. Telemetry will allow remote monitoring of the pumping as well as off-site control of the dam and pumps. In the absence of this project, contaminated runoff from the channel is discharged into the Santa Ana River, which eventually reaches Huntington State Beach.

Redirecting the urban runoff from the channel should decrease the number of postings and closures at Huntington Beach.

“Urban runoff is a significant contributor to ocean water contamination,” said Arthur G. Baggett, Chairman of the SWRCB. “In providing these funds to counties and local agencies, we are helping to ensure the environmental, aesthetic, and economic health of coastal communities.”

A study conducted by Dr. Stanley Grant from the University of California, Irvine, determined that urban runoff and the nearby Talbert Marsh were two contributors to the increased coliform bacteria levels at the beach.

The Costa-Machado Act of 2000 provides funds for the Coastal Nonpoint Source Control Program. The grant money approved today was part of more than \$32 million appropriated in the state’s 2001 budget.

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The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web-site at

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