

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
RESOLUTION NO. 82-25

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDED WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR INDIO SUBAREA, WHITEWATER HYDROLOGIC UNIT, WEST COLORADO RIVER BASIN, ADOPTED BY THE CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD, COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION

WHEREAS:

1. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region, (Regional Board) adopted a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the West Colorado River Basin (7A) on April 10, 1975. The Basin Plan was approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) on April 17, 1975.
2. The Basin Plan contains numerical ground water quality objectives for sulfate, chloride, nitrate, fluoride, boron, and total dissolved solids (TDS).
3. Division 7 of the California Water Code states that Basin Plans shall be periodically reviewed and may be revised.
4. On May 21, 1980, the Regional Board directed the Executive Officer to review those portions of the Basin Plan pertaining to ground waters and propose amendments as may be needed.
5. On May 20, 1981, following a hearing on March 25, 1981, the Regional Board adopted the Proposed Water Quality Control Plan for Indio Subarea of the Whitewater Hydrologic Unit, West Colorado River Basin, which is the first phase in updating the Basin Plan for the West Colorado River Basin.
6. On May 28, 1981, the Regional Board submitted a request for State Board consideration of approval of the Proposed Water Quality Control Plan for the Indio Subarea.
7. The Regional Board developed a new format rather than incorporating updated information into the 1975 Basin Plan. The Proposed Water Quality Control Plan revises water quality objectives for ground waters in the Indio Subarea and supersedes all previous water quality objectives for ground water contained in the 1975 Basin Plan for this subarea.
8. The following significant changes are contained in the amendments to the Basin Plan:
 - a. Chapter 4, Water Quality Objectives--Elimination of numerical water quality objectives for sulfate, chloride, nitrate, fluoride, boron, and TDS.
 - b. Chapter 5, Implementation Plan--Addition of various actions to determine nitrate loading sources and to control and reduce nitrate loading in the Indio Subarea.

9. The supportive materials submitted by the Regional Board indicates that there is a lack of comprehensive ground water quality data; however, it appears that nitrate levels are increasing in ground waters of the Indio Subarea.
10. The Regional Board maintains that the existing numerical water quality objectives for sulfate, chloride, nitrate, fluoride, boron, and TDS for ground water of the Indio Subarea are unrealistic and unduly stringent. The Regional Board concludes that appropriate water quality objectives should be developed and integrated into the proposed Basin Plan based on comprehensive ground water studies.
11. The supportive material suggests that there may be sporadic locations where the existing ground water quality exceeds the objective value for nitrates (area-wide average annual value) as contained in the 1975 Basin Plan. However, evidence was not provided to show that average ground water quality objectives are being violated on an area-wide basis.
12. Information presented in Chapter 2, Basin Description, of the Proposed Water Quality Control Plan suggests that objectives may also be exceeded for sulfate, chloride, fluoride, boron, and TDS. The Regional Board has not submitted any additional information to support elimination of objectives for these constituents.
13. On July 8, 1982, the Regional Board adopted an amendment to Table 5-1, Municipal Sewage Treatment Plants, as contained in Chapter 5, Implementation Plan, of the Proposed Water Quality Control Plan. This amendment raises the design flow capacity for Valley Sanitary District's treatment plant from 5.0 mgd to 7.5 mgd provided conditions as stated in Table 5-1 exist. By memo dated October 13, 1981, the Regional Board was informed that the amendment to Table 5-1 would be considered for State Board approval in conjunction with the entire proposed Basin Plan.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the following chapters as contained in the proposed Basin Plan for the Indio Subarea be approved:
 - a. Chapter 1--Introduction
 - b. Chapter 2--The Basin
 - c. Chapter 3--Past, Present, and Potential Beneficial Uses of Water
 - d. Chapter 5--Implementation Plan (including Table 5-1)
 - e. Chapter 6--Plan Assessment
2. That Chapter 4, Water Quality Objectives, be returned to the Regional Board for the purpose of retaining the existing numerical water quality objectives as contained in the 1975 Basin Plan for ground waters of the Indio Subarea until sufficient data is available to justify elimination of existing objectives or adoption of new objectives.

3. That since it is not clear if the average ground water quality objectives are being violated on an area-wide basis, it is recommended that during the interim, Regional Board actions should be based on consideration of the following:
 - a. Existing ground water quality objectives.
 - b. Any actions that may threaten violation of these objectives will be consistent with the following principles:
 1. Will provide the maximum benefit to the people of the State,
 2. Will not unreasonably affect present and anticipated beneficial use of ground water, and
 3. Will not result in water quality less than that prescribed in State and Regional Board policies.
4. That if evidence is developed that shows that the present objectives are precluding reasonable projects from being implemented by mandating unduly stringent waste discharge requirements, the State Board will encourage modifications of the objectives at that time.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, Executive Officer of the State Water Resources Control Board, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on May 20, 1982.



Clint Whitney
Executive Officer