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## Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

### Status of Actions July 2022 PG&E Hinkley Chromium Contamination

#### Chromium Plume Boundary

In general, the First Quarter 2022 groundwater data indicate that plume migration is not occurring but do reflect natural fluctuations of groundwater concentrations as remediation progresses. The First Quarter 2022 chromium plume maps can be viewed on GeoTracker at [First Quarter 2022 Groundwater Monitoring Report and Domestic Well Sampling Results](https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?url=4pcgu) (<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?url=4pcgu>) and are Figures 5-1 through 5-6 of this report.

Chromium plume maps representing previous quarters are posted on the Water Board's Hinkley website at [Water Board's Hinkley website](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/projects/pge/index.shtml) ([http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water\\_issues/projects/pge/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/projects/pge/index.shtml)), at the bottom of the page under the section titled "Other Documents and Information." The Second Quarter 2022 plume map is due on August 10, 2022, consistent with the reporting due dates contained in Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) No. R6V-2015-0068.

#### Regularly Scheduled Lahontan Water Board Meeting June 8-9, 2022

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) held a board meeting on June 8 and 9, 2022, in person and via Zoom at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Barstow. On the evening of June 8<sup>th</sup>, Water Board staff presented the annual *Status Report on Cleanup Activities Concerning Chromium Contamination from Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E's) Hinkley Compressor Station*. Reports were given by Water Board staff, PG&E representatives, and the Independent Review Panel Manager on actions taken during the past year and planned for this year concerning chromium contamination from PG&E's Hinkley Compressor Station, such as cleanup and remediation efforts, the chromium background study, and community outreach efforts.

#### Summary of Lower Aquifer Extraction Pilot Test Results and Request to Modify Plan for Enhancement of Lower Aquifer Remedy

On April 1, 2022, PG&E submitted the *Summary of Lower Aquifer Extraction Pilot Test Results and Request to Modify Plan for Enhancement of Lower Aquifer Remedy* (2014 Action Plan) report. PG&E performed the pilot test at the transition zone, where the blue clay thins out allowing for communication between the upper and lower aquifer. PG&E evaluated turning off extraction wells EX-29, EX-30, and EX-37 to attempt to enhance chromium concentration reductions at wells MW-92C and MW-100C by changing flow paths where chromium concentrations were not improving in response to

remedial actions. Based on the results of the pilot test, PG&E is recommending continuing operation of well EX-37 in the near term to remove mass from the transitional area while upper aquifer chromium concentrations are reduced. The report included a request to modify the 2014 Action Plan to enhance chromium reductions in the lower aquifer. Water Board staff are still reviewing the report and the request to modify the 2014 Action Plan.

### **Submittal of the WTR-MM-4 Assessment Report**

On March 25, 2022, PG&E submitted the *WTR-MM-4 Assessment of Potential Impacts to the Hinkley Aquifer Due to Agricultural Treatment Units* referred to as the 10-year Assessment Report. Using Farm Swap and Low Energy Precision Application (LEPA), PG&E intends to reduce overall basin farming and water use, reduce the required pumping for plume containment, and focus agriculture where water quality is lower, thus maximizing the beneficial use of Hinkley Valley groundwater.

Water Board staff reviewed the 10-year Assessment Report and determined that more information is needed to evaluate whether the 10-year Assessment Report meets the requirements of the Final Environmental Impact Report mitigation measure WTR-MM-4. A comment letter requesting additional information was issued to PGE on May 17, 2022. The comment letter requested PG&E include in the report the pre-remedial reference values for byproducts, to provide visual context of Farm Swap and LEPA that includes a map showing which fields are available to fallow or retrofit with LEPA and include estimated calculations of credits based on remaining fields, and assessment of all Agricultural Treatment Unit byproducts (total dissolved solids, nitrate, uranium, other radionuclides, and groundwater drawdown). Staff also requested PG&E change some of the language in the assessment report to accurately reflect mitigation measure WTR-MM-4 as written. Water Board staff will meet with PG&E to discuss and address the comments.

### **Water Board PG&E Hinkley Chromium Cleanup Webpage**

Water Board staff have updated our [PG&E Hinkley Chromium Cleanup Project webpage](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahtontan/water_issues/projects/pge/) ([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahtontan/water\\_issues/projects/pge/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahtontan/water_issues/projects/pge/)). The project webpage hosts certain documents and announcements related to PG&E's corrective actions, as well as copies of past and current plume maps to access or download and print from the webpage. Please contact Water Board staff with any questions or for assistance.

### **Routine Monitoring Reports**

PG&E submitted the following reports in accordance with the respective monitoring and reporting requirements.

- 1st Quarter 2022 Hydraulic Capture Report
- 1st Quarter 2022 Groundwater Monitoring Report and Domestic Well Sampling Results

- 1st Quarter 2022 Agricultural Treatment Units (ATUs) Monitoring Report

Water Board staff are reviewing these routine monitoring reports.

### **Chromium Background Study**

The final draft of the Hinkley Chromium Background Study Report continues to move through the United States Geological Survey (USGS) internal review process.

Dr. John Izbicki, the study's lead scientist, reports that progress is going smoothly and that each step within the review process adds to the quality of the final report. The final report is prioritized within the USGS review process and they anticipate publishing the report by September 2022.

### **Your Water Board Staff Contacts**

Water Board oversight of the PG&E Hinkley Chromium Cleanup project is provided by staff in the Water Board's Victorville office located at 15095 Amargosa Road, Building 2, Suite 210, Victorville, CA 92394. Your Water Board staff contacts are listed below. Please feel free to contact any of the those listed should you need assistance.

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\*Please note, the majority of Lahontan Water Board staff are teleworking. However, we are available via email and voicemail. We are responding to emails throughout the workday. Responses to voicemail may take more than one business day.