



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

June 2012

A message from Matt St. John, Executive Officer



I want to take this opportunity, my first Executive Officer's Report, to introduce myself. I am honored and grateful to have the opportunity to serve as Executive Officer of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The North Coast is a truly wonderful place – the people, the water, the aquatic life. I take the responsibility of leading the protection of its waters and aquatic habitat very seriously, and I thank the Board members for their confidence in me.

I grew up in the East Bay (San Francisco Bay). I was a city kid, but I

was fortunate to spend many summer months tromping through the woods in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts and in the coast of Maine, visiting both my maternal and paternal grandparents. From these early childhood and adolescent experiences, I developed a reverence of wild places, and a deep sense of connection to the land. To this day, when I visit my grandparent's property in Massachusetts, I never miss the opportunity to walk to the spring that bubbles out of the ground down the hill from the huge old beech tree, to kneel on the ground and sip from that cold, clear water; it rejuvenates me every time.

Based on these formative experiences growing up, my professional calling to study, manage and protect water resources was clear. Ultimately, I earned a MS degree in environmental engineering and science from the University of Washington. Though there were lots of job opportunities in my field in the state of Washington, I longed to return to northern California. Again, it was the land that shaped my destiny. It was the image in my mind of the grasslands and coastal redwoods at a ranch near Bodega Bay, where, as I kid I helped tend our family friends' sheep, that drew me back. I've lived in Sonoma

County since 1997 and can't imagine leaving.

I joined the Regional Water Board in 2001, after working as a research assistant at UC Berkeley on biological wastewater treatment and in the private sector as a consultant for seven years. As a consultant I worked on a broad range of projects, including groundwater investigations, environmental impact reports, stormwater management and compliance, on-site wastewater treatment design, and creek restoration. Prior to my appointment by the Board as Executive Officer, I supervised the Timber Harvest and Non-Point Source Division for nearly two years and supervised the Total Maximum Daily Load Unit for four years before that. I am proud of the work I have done to this point in my career and look forward to all of the work ahead of me as Executive Officer.

I am excited to serve the Regional Water Board in this new capacity. I am proud to work with such exceptionally talented staff who, each and every day, work hard to carry out the mission of our organization. I have great respect for our Board members, who give their time, energy, insights, and expertise to guide us forward. I take the helm of this fine organization at a time when the staff and Board are poised to get a lot done, together. I am indebted to Cat Kuhlman, under whose leadership we made so many gains over the past nine years.

It is also true, however, that I take on this job at a time of change. Given the State's on-going budget challenges, our organization is surely going to continue to get smaller. At the same time, the surface and groundwaters in our region

are faced with persistent sources of pollution. Therefore, we simply need to figure out how to address these issues comprehensively, but with fewer staff. However, we are up for the challenge. We will be creative. We will be strategic. We will adapt. We will rely on our public and private partners and build new partnerships.

Over the coming months, I look forward to getting to know those of you who I have not yet met and reconnecting with those of you I already know. If you have something you'd like to talk about, give me a call or send me an email. There is a lot going on, and I have many things to learn about being the Executive Officer, but I am committed to serving you well.

Thank you.

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Assembly Bill 1961(Huffman), the Coho Salmon Habitat Enhancement Leading to Preservation Act (Coho HELP Act)

Jonathan Warmerdam

On Tuesday, April 10, 2012, the California Legislature's Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife, voted unanimously to approve Assembly Bill 1961 (Huffman), the Coho Salmon Habitat Enhancement Leading to Preservation Act (Coho HELP Act). The Coho HELP Act - authored by Jared Huffman and sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, and CalTrout - is designed to allow for the Director of the CDFG to expedite certain types of restoration actions to improve salmon habitat, including: large woody

material augmentation, barrier removal, and streambank stabilization.



Inman Creek, Garcia River Watershed.
Photo Credit: The Nature Conservancy.

The Coho HELP Act was developed in response to recommendations generated during the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture Coho Salmon Information Hearing that was held in August 2011. During the hearing, Catherine Kuhlman and others recommended various strategies to the legislature to prevent local extinction of the species.

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Development of a Water Quality Compliance Program for Discharges from Agricultural Lands

Ben Zabinsky

North Coast Regional Water Board staff are in the process of developing a *Water Quality Compliance Program for Discharges from Agricultural Lands in the North Coast Region (Program)*. The scope of the Program will include crop types such as vineyards, orchards, row crops, forage crops, field crops, irrigated pasture, and medicinal marijuana farms. The Program proposes to exclude dryland.

As part of Program development, Regional Water Board staff, with facilitation support from the Center for Collaborative Policy, have formed a Stakeholder Advisory Group made up of representatives of agriculture and water quality interests in the North Coast Region. The Advisory Group has been meeting since December, 2011 and will continue to meet in two formats: as a full group with all members and also as four separate subgroups that will focus on regional issues. The sub-regional groups will provide recommendations to the full Advisory Group, which will then make recommendations to Regional Water Board staff. Regional Water Board staff will then summarize these recommendations in presentations to the Regional Water Board.

Since the last EO Report to the Board, staff have held an informational webinar and another round of subgroup meetings. The webinar was held on April 18th and featured a presentation by Johnny Gonzales, the lead staff at the State Water Resources Control Board who works on coordinating agricultural regulatory programs around the state. In response to requests from Advisory Group members, Mr. Gonzales presented information on other existing Regional Water Board agricultural programs and the recently adopted statewide fee schedule for agricultural lands.

In May, Regional Water Board staff held local meetings of the four sub-regional groups in Santa Rosa, Eureka, Yreka, and Tulelake. This was the second round of subgroup meetings and will be followed by a meeting of the full Advisory Group on June 26th in Redding. In preparation for the May meetings, Regional Water Board staff developed a draft scope and framework for the Program. Staff presented the draft at

each of the four subgroup meetings and took comments and suggestions from the Advisory Group members and members, as well as from the public. Staff are now revising the draft scope and framework in preparation of a new draft to be presented at the June 26th meeting of the full Advisory Group.

meetings can be found on the Program web page. Also on the web page, stakeholders can subscribe to the mailing list and stay informed on the latest program developments:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/irrigated_lands/

Meeting summaries, powerpoint presentations, and agendas from all



Enforcement Report

Diana Henriouille

Enforcement Orders may be viewed by following the Enforcement link on the Regional Water Board’s web home page:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/enforcement/

Enforcement Report for June 2012 Executive Officer’s Report

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of May 15, 2012
4/5/12	The Barlow Project	NOV	Construction Storm Water Permit	In compliance

Comments: On April 5, 2012, the Regional Water Board Watershed Protection Chief issued a NOV to The Barlow Project for failure to implement adequate BMPs, resulting in discharges of turbid runoff to surface waters. The NOV requires the Discharger to install adequate BMPs to minimize potential discharges of pollutants from the site, update the SWPPP, and submit a report.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of May 15, 2012
4/6/12	Lewiston Park Mutual Water Company	NOV	Failure to submit monthly monitoring reports	Ongoing

Comments: On April 6, 2012, the Regional Water Board Watershed Protection Chief issued a NOV to Lewiston Park Mutual Water Company for failure to submit monthly monitoring reports. The NOV requires the Discharger to submit these reports by May 20, 2012.

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of May 15, 2012
4/13/12	City of Ukiah, WWTF	ACLC	NPDES permit violations for the period June 1, 2010 through January 31, 2012	Discharger has waived the right to hearing within 90 days, and proposed to pay a portion of the penalty and to submit a project proposal

Comments: On April 13, 2012, the Regional Water Board Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) issued Administrative Civil Liability Complaint (ACLC) No. R1-2012-0058 to the City of Ukiah WWTP proposing a penalty of \$84,000 for WDR violations subject to Mandatory Minimum Penalties (MMPs).

Date Issued	Discharger	Action Type	Violation Type	Status as of May 15, 2012
4/19/12	Leo L. Bleier, Jr. and Roxanne Bleier	CAO & 13267 Order	Failure to comply with staff directives to perform ground water investigation	Nothing to report at this time

Comments: On April 12, 2012, the Regional Water Board Executive Officer issued CAO and 13267 Order No. R1-2012-49 to Leo L. Bleier Jr. and Roxanne Bleier for failure to comply with staff directives to perform ground water investigation. Also, the discharger is required to proceed with remediation work. The first compliance deadline is July 18, 2012.

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