

# CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION

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[Colorado River Basin Region Webpage](#)

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

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California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Colorado River Basin



September2020

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The Executive Officer (EO) of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region hereby provides the following report on recent staff activities in the region:

**LAND DISPOSAL – WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS PROGRAM**

In addition to the standard workload of writing Board Orders, performing Facility Inspections, and reviewing Discharge Monitoring Reports, Land Disposal Unit staffs have the following items to report:

On September 22, 2020, Land Disposal Unit staff responded to a Sanitary Sewer Overflow of untreated domestic/municipal wastewater from Coachella Valley Water District’s sewer collection system. The spill occurred on Cook Street in Palm Desert near the Wastewater Reclamation Plant 10 and drained into the Coachella Valley Storm Water Channel. During the spill inspection, staff documented the spill and spoke with a representative of Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), the owner and operator of the collection system. CVWD crews were on site conducting a cleanup of the spill. The spill was originally estimated at 30,000 gallons in the California Office of Emergency Services spill report. In a follow up communication, CVWD certified that the quantity of the spill was 251,679 gallons. [Reggie Tan, WRCE]

Notices of Violation were issued to these Dischargers for violation of their Waste Discharge Requirements:

- United States Marine Corps (USMC) Twenty-nine Palms Mainside Wastewater Treatment Facility subject to Order R7-2016-0032 issued on September 11, 2020.
- Warren Vista Onsite Wastewater Treatment System, subject to Order 97-500(170) issued on September 21, 2020. [Adriana Godinez, WRCE]

**UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK (UST) AND SITE CLEANUP PROGRAM (SCP)**

**Department of Defense Program:** Regional Water Board staff continues to work with staff from the department of defense (DOD) to expedite ongoing activities at cleanup sites located at military facilities within the Colorado River Basin region. Following is a list of correspondence issued in September pertaining to DOD facilities.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Staff</b>
September 3, 2020	Draft Record of Decision, Installation Restoration Program Site 18	Tiffany Road Debris Area, Naval Air Facility El Centro, El Centro, CA	Jessica Bagby, Engineering Geologist
September 8, 2020	Draft Fall 2018 Semi-Annual Groundwater	Naval Air Facility El Centro, El Centro, CA	Jessica Bagby, Engineering

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Staff</b>
	Monitoring Report, Installation Restoration Sites 1 and 2		Geologist
September 9, 2020	Final Semi-Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report, Underground Storage Tank Site 10	Marine Corp Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Twentynine Palms, CA	Jessica Bagby Engineering Geologist
September 11, 2020	Draft Record of Decision, Munitions Response Program Site 1	Former Skeet and Trap Range, Naval Air Facility, El Centro, El Centro, CA	Jessica Bagby, Engineering Geologist
September 15, 2020	Draft Spring 2019 Semi-Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report, Installation Restoration Program Sites 1 and 2	Naval Air Facility, El Centro, El Centro, California	Jessica Bagby, Engineering Geologist
September 17, 2020	Draft Record of Decision, Installation Restoration Program Site 18 (Tiffany Road Debris Area)	Tiffany Road Debris Area, Naval Air Facility El Centro, El Centro, California	Jessica Bagby, Engineering Geologist
September 28, 2020	Draft Fall 2018 Semi-Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report, Installation Restoration Sites 1 and 2	Naval Air Facility El Centro, El Centro, California	Jessica Bagby, Engineering Geologist

The UST and SCP staff issued correspondence reviewing technical reports, requesting site access, providing direction for site assessment, and approving remedial action plans for sites currently in the assessment and cleanup process. The following table shows the correspondence regarding site cleanup projects issued in September.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Staff</b>
September 01, 2020	Response to Work Plan for Sampling Soil and Soil Vapor Former UST T-2	BNSF Railway Company, Needles Rail Yard Site, San Bernardino County	Theresa Kimsey, Environmental Scientist
September 9, 2020	Request for Site Access and Emergency, Abandoned and Recalcitrant (EAR) Program Member, EAR Account Number R19-205	USA Self-Serve/Douglas Station at 1147 West Hobsonway, Blythe, CA, Riverside County	Phan Le, Water Resource Control Engineer
September 22, 2020	Site Cleanup Program – Request for Abandonment of All Wells and Waste Materials	Palo Verde Irrigation District Yard, Former Aboveground Storage Tank Release, 180 West 14 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Blythe, Riverside County	Phan Le, Water Resource Control Engineer
September 23, 2020	Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy- Abandonment of All Wells and Waste Materials	Former Chevron Station No. 9-4671, 173 West Main Street, Brawley, CA, Imperial County	Theresa Illare, Environmental Scientist
September 25, 2020	Response to Workplan for Soil Vapor Extraction/Air Sparge (SVE/AS) Pilot Test	Former USA Gasoline Service Station No. 292, 1497 Adams Avenue, El Centro, CA	Kola Olatunbosun, Water Resource Control Engineer

### **COVID-19 COMPLIANCE RELIEF REQUESTS**

It is the position of the State of California that protection of the public health and the environment are essential functions during the COVID-19 emergency. By extension,

compliance with Regional Water Board requirements is also an essential function. The State and Regional Water Boards recognize the challenges faced by the regulated community during this crisis and the need to adjust in response.

During the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic several permittees and/or responsible parties requested compliance relief. However, during the last two months we have not received any requests for compliance relief as a result of COVID-19. In situations when the requested term of relief has lapsed, the dischargers have resumed the monitoring, compliance and cleanup activities included in their respective site-specific orders.

### **SALT AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

On September 10, 2020, we received a letter from the Coachella Valley Salt Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) stakeholders regarding progress of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Monitoring Program Workplan and the Coachella Valley SNMP Development Workplan. The stakeholders have hired Wildermuth Environmental, Inc. (WEI), to prepare the Workplans and WEI has conducted meetings with the stakeholders, Regional Water Board staff, and the consultants managing the existing Alternative Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins. WEI notes that as they collect, review, and begin to catalogue groundwater data, significantly more data was available than anticipated. WEI has identified that the schedule to complete both Workplans by December 2020 is a challenge and have requested an extension to submit the SNMP development workplan in April 2021. The stakeholders plan to complete the Coachella Valley Groundwater Monitoring Program Workplan on time in December 2020. On September 15, 2020, the Regional Water Board issued a letter approving the request to delay submittal of a work plan to guide SNMP development for Coachella Valley until April 1, 2021.

### **CANNABIS ENFORCEMENT**

Region 7's Prosecution team has issued three Administrative Civil Liability Complaints (Complaints) which are currently posted on our website and available for public review. All three complaints are referencing violations of the Cannabis Cultivation General Order that address waste discharges associated with cannabis cultivation activities.

- Lean Green Industries, LLC, 68721 Summit Drive, Cathedral City, Riverside County  
APN 687-162-004-4, WDID No.7\_33cc403337
- NCA Management LLC, 3241 Needles Hwy, Needles San Bernardino County  
APN0660-091-09, WDID No. 7\_36cc403989
- Paradise Wellness Center, 1 Ice House Road, Needles San Bernardino County  
APN0650-391-23, WDID No. 7\_36cc401592

The Dischargers chose to waive the right to a Hearing before the Regional Board to engage the Regional Board's Prosecution Team in settlement discussions including the possibility of completing a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) and/or Compliance Projects. The

Prosecution Team is currently in settlement discussions with the Dischargers.

**NPDES PROGRAM**

**401 Water Quality Certification:** The following table shows the Certifications that the Colorado River Basin Water Board issued in September 2020. *[Kai Dunn, Senior WRCE]*

<b>Issuance Date</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>WDID#</b>
9/3/2020	Pardee Homes	Phase II Atwell [Butterfield] Specific Plan Development Project	7A333212001
9/11/2020	Banning Industrial, LP	Banning Distribution Center Project	7A333213001

**Table 1: Mandatory Minimum Penalty Status**

Number	Facility	Violation Description	Assessed Penalty	Settlement Offer Date	Waiver Received Date	Public Notice Issuance Date	Comment Due Date	Number of MMPs
1	Calexico WWT P	Bacteria Indicator & Oil/Grease violations	\$6,000 *\$45,000	2/13/19 *11/06/19	3/12/19 *12/05/19	3/13/19	3/20/20 In settlement discussion	1 3
2	Brawley WWT P	Copper & Grease, Bis (2- Ethylhexyl)	\$21,000 *\$33,000	2/21/19 *9/20/19	3/18/19 *10/04/19	3/26/19	3/20/20 In settlement discussion	1 1
3	Kent SeaTech Fish Farm	Bacteria Indicator & Oil/Grease violations	\$84,000	4/5/19 *6/14/19	4/30/19 *7/15/19		9/30/20 In settlement discussion	2 8
	TOTAL:		\$162,000					5 2

**Unaddressed Violations Subject to Mandatory Minimum Penalties (September 2020)**

No. of Facilities	No. of Violations
7	43

Notifications of violations were sent from the California Integrated Water Quality System (CIWQS) database.  
 [Maribel Pizano, SEA and Kai Dunn, Senior WRCE, Ph.D., P.E.]



## **WQSS/NPS UNIT**

### **Colorado River Salinity Forum Work Group Meeting, September 28-30, 2020**

The Salinity Forum Work Group meeting took place over 3 days from September 28-30. Group discussion began with review of Forum's 2020 Triennial Review comments and finalizing the document. The group is also developing fact sheets for the public to highlight information about the Colorado River, the salinity program, and the program benefits. The federal agencies in attendance provided updates on status of funding programs, in-progress projects, and changes to future funding applications. Model updates and demonstrations were provided to encourage use and justify dollars spent. A discussion of last month's salinity differential at the Yuma desalting plant occurred due to a discrepancy in verified readings but no issues have been raised. A new publication was announced by USGS on the salinity trends in the Colorado River, it is in peer review at Water Resources Research. Lastly, the Science Team put out a call for new studies to be conducted with the next round of funding. [Emma McCorkle, ES]

### **Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Enforcement Task Force, September 23, 2020**

Staff coordinated with Comite Civico del Valle to organize and co-chair the monthly Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Enforcement (EJ) Task Force meeting. The meeting was conducted online using Zoom. Meeting participants included local and state agencies, community organizations and community members. One member of the public called in needing Spanish interpretation for the meeting, but unfortunately the Task Force does not currently have the resources for an interpreter and the community co-chair, who is bilingual, committed to follow up with them after the meeting to provide a summary. Regional Water Board staff gave a brief status update regarding the 2020 Triennial Review. Coachella Valley Unified District reported that only private schools in the area are opening in person and that it has been challenging. City of Coachella shared that their turf rebate and water efficiency programs launched. SoCalGas reported that they increased rebates. A community member reported that National Border Control Council Local 2554 submitted a letter to Department of Pesticide Regulation and CalEPA regarding the need for pesticide monitoring at the Salton Sea. Riverside County Ag Commissioner's Office gave a presentation where they showed a video with a Pesticide Enforcement Inspection Demonstration and answered questions after the video. [Maria Davydova, ES]