



Enforcement News

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley>

Regional Water Board and Caltrans Agree to Settle Water Code Violations in Tuolumne County

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The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) have agreed to a \$2.7 million dollar settlement regarding alleged violations of two stormwater permits governing the State Route 108 East Sonora Bypass Project in Tuolumne County.

The settlement resolves the allegations that work on a Caltrans project resulted in the discharge of approximately 800,000 gallons of sediment-laden stormwater to waters of the United States during a series of storms between October 22 and December 27, 2012. Caltrans has informed the Central Valley Water Board it has filed a dispute with its contractor and intends to seek appropriate reimbursement from the contractor for the penalties.

As a condition of the agreement, \$148,719 of the total settlement amount is being credited towards the recent completion of additional water quality protection measures within the project area. Another \$443,000 will be permanently suspended when Caltrans completes the Mariposa Supplemental Environmental Project. This project will be implemented on top of required environmental work and will provide real-time monitoring of the Merced River to detect excess turbidity and pH levels during Caltrans' Ferguson landslide rehabilitation project on State Route 140. Data will be collected both before and during removal of the rock debris at the base of the slide. When completed, Caltrans will have extensively monitored the river upstream and downstream of the rock slide and provided a way to mitigate discharges through a remote and early detection system designed to improve response time on problems near sensitive water bodies or watersheds.

In a joint effort to ensure water quality is not impacted by state construction projects, Caltrans and the Central Valley Water Board have held several meetings to discuss measures to best

meet water quality requirements. This ongoing dialogue between Caltrans and the Central Valley Water Board is aimed at preventing a recurrence of the types of discharges seen at the East Sonora Bypass Project and ensuring Caltrans' continued compliance with water quality regulations.

“We believe that Caltrans has made positive efforts to improve the water quality associated with its construction projects since the Sonora Bypass discharges,” said Pamela Creedon, Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board, “We look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with Caltrans on construction-related water quality concerns.”

The settlement agreement can be found here, http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/
Please look under Tuolumne County.

The Central Valley Water Board is a California state agency responsible for the preservation and enhancement of water quality. For more information on the Central Valley Water Board, please visit the home page at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>