



Enforcement News

Settlement reached with Sunol company for ruptured pipeline, discharge violation

Fine sediment discharged into creek threatened aquatic life

July 7, 2022

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OAKLAND – The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board has reached a \$368,940 settlement with Mission Valley Rock Co. for the illegal discharge of 41,000 gallons of untreated wastewater into Alameda Creek from its Sunol facility.

The agreement settles a fine stemming from March of last year, when a ruptured pipeline that had not been properly decommissioned deposited several inches of fine sediment within the creek bed and along the creek bank, a violation of the company's discharge permit. The sediment threatened the survival of aquatic life when it clouded creek water and may have carried with it toxic pollutants, such as metals, oils and grease.

The company took out the damaged pipe, removed the sediment deposited along the creek bank outside the active creek channel and trained its crews to avoid similar incidents in the future. However, the company was unable to remove the sediment deposited inside the active creek channel.

[The settlement](#) requires Mission Valley Rock to pay \$184,470 to the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account and another \$184,470 for a supplemental environmental project to map and survey water quality parameters related to nutrient management decisions. The company also must develop methods for monitoring microscopic marine algae growth in San Francisco Bay.

“This fine serves as a reminder to everyone to pay attention to old infrastructure and protect our creeks. It is close to the statutory maximum we can impose because this problem could have been avoided had Mission Valley Rock Co. properly decommissioned the pipeline prior to the discharge,” said Thomas Mumley, interim executive officer for the Regional Water Board.

The mission of the San Francisco Bay Water Board is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.

