

State Water Resources Control Board

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STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD TO SPEND \$2.6 MILLION TO MONITOR THE IMPACT OF AQUATIC PESTICIDES

SACRAMENTO-The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will spend nearly \$2.6 million to begin an aquatic pesticide-monitoring program and explore less toxic alternatives to the use of aquatic pesticides.

The new programs augment the SWRCB's General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for discharges of aquatic pesticides to surface waters.

The State Board has agreed to spend at least \$975,000 from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account in each of the next two years on an aquatic pesticide-monitoring program (including, but not limited to, planning, reporting, and monitoring). Also, the SWRCB will spend at least \$300,000 from the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account in each of the next two years on a pilot program to explore less toxic alternatives to the use of aquatic pesticides.

"California is the only state in the nation to issue permits to monitor aquatic pesticides applications," said SWRCB Chairman Arthur G. Baggett, Jr. "California is committed to a plan that monitors and gives us an alternative to aquatic pesticides," Baggett said. The permit is the first in the country to comply with a ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals requiring permits for aquatic pesticides.

WaterKeepers challenged the permit claiming it was inadequate to protect water quality, but dismissed the suit as part of a settlement with the SWRCB. Under the settlement, the SWRCB will develop an aquatic pesticide-monitoring plan no later than July 1, 2002. Representatives of interested groups (including dischargers, non-profit environmental organizations and public interest organizations) will be able to participate in the development of the monitoring which will be developed or peer-reviewed by the San Francisco Estuary Institute, a qualified third-party academic institution, or another qualified non-profit scientific organization.

"We are pleased that the State Board was willing to put resources on the table to generate the information it needs to regulate pesticides in the future," said Jonathan Kaplan, Program Director of WaterKeepers of Northern California.

-30-

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