

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: Gaurav Mittal
MEETING DATE: February 10, 2021

ITEM: 6A

Exploratorium, Heating/Cooling and Desalination System, San Francisco, San Francisco County – Reissuance of NPDES Permit

DISCUSSION:

This Tentative Order (Appendix A) would reissue the NPDES permit for discharges from the Exploratorium. The Exploratorium heating/cooling and desalination systems uses approximately 0.5 million gallons per day of filtered Bay water to heat and cool and to provide freshwater for a fog exhibit. Non-contact heating and cooling water, desalination concentrate, and filter backwash are discharged back to the Bay at Piers 15 and 17. The Tentative Order does not substantially change the requirements of the previous order.

Although it does not directly impact the discharge permitted by the Tentative Order, the Port of San Francisco is developing a Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment plan for bayside facilities, including the Exploratorium, to understand paths forward to adapt to sea-level rise. Under this plan, the Port will complete projects that mitigate both seismic and flood risk whenever possible through the Embarcadero Seawall Program, an effort to create a more sustainable and resilient waterfront along three miles of shoreline that includes the Exploratorium.

We did not receive any comments and expect this item to be uncontested.

APPENDICES:

A. Tentative Order

Appendix A
Tentative Order