Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

5 March 2025

Bryce Howard
Tulare County Compost Facility
5955 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277

NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY

WATER QUALITY ORDER 2020-0012-DWQ
GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPOSTING OPERATIONS
TULARE COUNTY COMPOST FACILITY
TULARE COUNTY
GLOBAL ID T10000020658

On 3 November 2022, the Tulare County (Discharger) submitted a *Notice of Intent* (NOI), technical report, and filing fee for the County of Tulare to obtain coverage under *Water Quality Order 2020-0012-DWQ General Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Composting Operations* (General Order) for composting operations at the Tulare County Compost Facility (Facility) located at the Visalia Disposal Site. The technical report is dated October 2022 and is titled *Technical Report for General Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Composting Operations* and prepared by EBA Engineering.

This *Notice of Applicability* (NOA) was developed after the review of the NOI and submitted reports as described in the attached Staff Memorandum, which is a part of this NOA. Based on the staff's review, the Facility meets the conditions of the General Order and is hereby covered under General as a **Tier II** composting operation. The Discharger must comply with all Tier II requirements of the General Order. The enrollee identification number is Order **2020-0012-DWQ-R5F014**. The Discharger must comply with all Tier II requirements of the General Order.

The filing fee for the Facility is based on the Threat to Water Quality and Complexity rating of 3B. The submitted initial $7,486 filing fee covers the first year permitted by this NOA. The Discharger shall submit the required annual fee (as specified in the annual billing issued by the State Water Resources Control Board) until the NOA is officially terminated. To fully comply with this NOA, please familiarize yourself with the contents of the enclosed Staff Memorandum and all the requirements of the General Order.

Noncompliance with this General Order violates the Water Code and is subject to enforcement action, and/or termination of enrollment under this General Order. Conditions pertaining to the Facility include but are not limited to:

1. The Discharger must submit a *Construction Quality Assurance Plan* for approval prior to commencing construction activities.

2. The Discharger must submit a post-construction report to the Central Valley Water Board within 60 days of completing all construction activities associated with all applicable containment and monitoring structures, as required for compliance with this General Order and the MRP. **Composting operations may not commence until the post-construction report is approved.**

3. Working surfaces must be constructed to allow year-round equipment access to feedstocks, additives, amendments, and compost (active, curing, or final product) without damage to the working surfaces and containment structures

4. Working surfaces must be capable of resisting damage from the movement of equipment and weight of piles and have a hydraulic conductivity of 1.0×10^{-5} centimeters per second (cm/s) or less. Working surfaces must consist of one of the following:

    a. Compacted soils, with a minimum thickness of one foot;
    b. Asphaltic concrete or Portland cement concrete; or
    c. An equivalent engineered alternative specified in an NOI and/or a technical report and approved by the Regional Water Board.

5. The Discharger shall install a lined detention pond and pan lysimeter meeting the requirements of the General Order. Detention ponds must be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to meet a hydraulic conductivity of 1.0×10^{-6} cm/s or less. These ponds must include one of the following:

    a. A liner system consisting of a 40 thousandths of an inch (mil) synthetic geomembrane (60-mil if high-density polyethylene), underlain by either one foot of compacted clay or a geosynthetic clay liner installed over a prepared base;
    b. A liner system that includes Portland cement concrete – designed to minimize cracking and infiltration – underlain by a 40-mil synthetic geomembrane (60-mil if high-density polyethylene); or
    c. An equivalent engineered alternative specified in an NOI and/or a technical report and approved by the Regional Water Board.

6. Detention ponds must be designed and constructed with a pan lysimeter monitoring device under the lowest point of the pond, or an equivalent engineered alternative specified in an NOI and/or a technical report and approved by the Central Valley Water Board. The engineered alternative must

provide equivalent assurance of the earliest possible detection or prevention of a release from the pond.

7. Prior to any facility expansion, a technical report with design information will need to be submitted for approval by the Central Valley Water Board at least 90 days prior to the new construction of working surfaces, stormwater (detention) ponds, berms, ditches, or any other water quality protection containment structure. The design information must include water balance calculations for detention basins and wastewater conveyance features.

8. Any expansion of facility operation must meet the requirements of the General Order and be approved by the Central Valley Water Board prior to commencement of composting operations in any new area.

Attachment B of the General Order includes specific monitoring and reporting requirements that you must comply with, including routine monitoring and reporting to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The first *year Annual Monitoring and Maintenance Report* as identified in the General Order must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board no later than **1 April** after approval to operate is granted, and then annually by 1 April each year.

All reports and other correspondence must be converted to searchable Portable Document Format (PDF) and submitted electronically to our Geotracker website. Confirmation of Geotracker upload is to be emailed to: centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov. To ensure that your email is routed to the appropriate staff person, the following information should be included in the body of the email or any documentation submitted to the mailing address for this office:

Attention:	Title 27 Unit
Discharger Name:	Tulare County
Facility Name:	Tulare County Compost Facility
County:	Tulare County
Global ID:	T10000020658

If you have any questions, please contact Daniel Benas at 559-445-5500 or daniel.benas@waterboards.ca.gov.

Original signed by Scott Hatton
For Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

Enclosure: Staff Memorandum

cc: CalRecycle WPCMDivision@CalRecycle.ca.gov; Jessica Gocke JGocke@tularecounty.ca.gov; Jonah Trevino jtrevino@tularecounty.ca.gov

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

TO: Scott J. Hatton
Supervising Water Resources Control Engineer

FROM: Kristen S. Gomes
Senior Water Resources Control Engineer

Daniel B. Benas
Water Resources Control Engineer

DATE: 5 March 2025

APPLICABILITY OF COVERAGE UNDER STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD WATER QUALITY ORDER 2020-0012-DWQ, TULARE COUNTY COMPOST FACILITY, TULARE COUNTY, GLOBAL ID T10000020658

REPORT OF WASTE DISCHARGE

On 3 November 2022, Tulare County (Discharger) submitted a Notice *of Intent* (NOI), technical report, and filing fee for the Tulare County Compost Facility (Facility) to obtain coverage as a Tier II facility under the *Water Quality Order 2020-0012-DWQ General Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Composting Operations* (General Order). The October 2022 technical report titled *Technical Report for General Waste Discharge Requirements for Commercial Composting Operations* was prepared by EBA Engineering and was signed and stamped by Max Kruzic, Certified Hydrogeologist (C.Hg 1062) and Mike Delmanowski, Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG 1847). A 17 December 2024, Notice of Determination certified that the Tulare County Board of Supervisors approved the *Visalia Disposal Site and Compost Facility Final Focused Environmental Impact Report SCH # 2021020054*, dated September 2022. The Facility was assigned the following enrollee number: **2020-0012-DWQ-R50014.**

SITE CONDITIONS

The proposed Facility will be owned and operated by Tulare County. The proposed Facility is located on 50.8 acres at the current Visalia Disposal Site at 8614 Avenue 8328, Visalia, CA 93291. Initially composting operations are planned on approximately 24 acres of the 50.8 acre facility. Feedstock will be sourced from the local Tulare County cities, unincorporated areas, and waste hauling companies in other regional jurisdictions. The Facility will compost the following materials:

- Vegetative agricultural materials

- Green materials
- Paper materials
- Residentially co-collected or self-hauled food and green materials
- Anaerobic digestate
- Food material (non-vegetative)
- Manure

According to the NOI, additives used include woodchips for bulking porosity. Amendments used include an estimated 10,000 tons per year (TPY) – Gypsum; 1,000 TPY – Lime; and 1,000 TPY – Agricultural Minerals.

Data from the Western Regional Climate Center indicates that the average annual precipitation is 10.13 inches. The average monthly rainfall ranges from a minimum of 0.01 inches to a maximum of 1.97 inches. The average mean evaporation for the Kettleman City 1 SSW station is 99.03 inches per year. The 25-year 24-hour design storm event is estimated to produce 2.87 inches of rainfall based on the data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Facility is not located within a 100-year flood plain. Intensive agricultural land surrounds the Facility. Two wells are located on the property to be used for the water supply.

Per the Technical Report, the Facility is located to the north of the Tule Groundwater Basin and to the south of the Kings Groundwater Subbasin. The older alluvium overlies continental deposits, is moderately permeable forms the primary aquifer in the western portion of the Subbasin, the flood-subbasin deposits (poorly permeable silt, clay and find sand) and lacustrine deposits (silty clay and fine sand further underlying the flood-subbasin deposits) form aquitards creating confined and semi-confined groundwater conditions.

Land uses surrounding the site are characterized by intensive agricultural operations. Tree crops are to the north of the Landfill property, while row crops are immediately to the east and south. A dairy is located to the west. Further to the west (approximately one mile) is a gun range (Visalia Sportsman’s Association Gun Range). The nearest school, Ridgeview Middle School, is located approximately 1.8 miles southeast of the Facility.

COMPOSTING OPERATIONS

The Facility will be comprised of six primary operational areas. These areas are identified as: Tipping and Processing Building; Outdoor Tipping, Processing, and Storage Area; Covered Aerated Static Pile (CASP) Composting Area; Windrow Curing Area; Compost Screening, Curing, and Storage Area; and Compost Screening, Blending, and Storage Area.

All active composting will occur in the CASP Composting Area located in the northwest portion of the Facility. Upon final build-out the CASP Composting Area will be approximately 3.5 acres in size and be surfaced with concrete.

The Windrow Curing Area will be located east of the Outdoor Tipping, Processing, and Storage Area, within the southeastern portion of the Facility. Curing may also take place within the Compost Screening, Curing, and Storage Area located due north of the Windrow Curing and Outdoor Tipping, Processing, and Storage Areas. These two areas combined will be approximately 6.6 acres in size upon final build-out and will be surfaced with asphaltic concrete.

WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The technical report indicates that stormwater will flow across the Facility from north to south-southwest, and eventually to the west to the lined storm water storage pond located in the southwest corner of the Facility. All storm water will be maintained and collected within the Facility boundary. The total facility area providing run-off to the lined storm water storage pond will be approximately 30 acres upon final build-out.

Drainage associated with the concrete pad for the CASP Composting Area will be managed separately from the above storm water run-off. This concrete pad will be equipped with interior swales and perimeter concrete walls and curbs to collect all leachate and storm water run-off generated within the pad and convey the collected water to a series of sumps for eventual pumping into above ground storage tank(s) (AST[s]) to be located in the southwest corner of the CASP Composting Area.

The Facility will include a lined storm water storage pond for the collection of storm water run-off generated from the entire facility, except for the CASP Composting Area, which will be serviced by an aboveground storage tank(s) (AST[s]). Storm water run-off from selected earthen side slopes adjoining the Facility will also be diverted to the lined storm water storage pond. Storm water retained in this pond will be available for use in the composting operations.

The technical report includes water balance calculations for the composting facility, excluding the CASP composting area which, as stated above will collect runoff in ASTs. The water balance was used to determine the required size of the proposed storm water pond with two feet of freeboard during a 25-year, 24-hour peak storm event. Based on the results, the proposed pond will have a surface area of approximately 1.46 acres, a storage capacity of 16.06 AC-FT (13.02 AC-FT with two feet of freeboard), and be constructed to a maximum depth of 14 feet (12 feet with two feet of freeboard). This includes a factor of safety to account for lower storm water usage prior to reaching the 100,000 TPY operating capacity.

FACILITY DESIGN

Working Surface

The General Order states that working surfaces must be capable of resisting damage from the movement of equipment and weight of piles and have a hydraulic conductivity of 1.0×10^{-5} centimeters per second (cm/s) or less. Working surfaces must consist of one of the following:

a. Compacted soils, with a minimum thickness of one foot;
b. Asphaltic concrete or Portland cement concrete; or
c. An equivalent engineered alternative specified in an NOI and/or a technical report and approved by the Regional Water Board.

The Technical Report proposes to construct both concrete and asphaltic concrete working pads, both of which meet the General Order working surface requirements.

Detention Ponds

The General Order states, Detention ponds must be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to meet a hydraulic conductivity of 1.0×10^{-6} cm/s or less. These ponds must include one of the following:

a. A liner system consisting of a 40 thousandths of an inch (mil) synthetic geomembrane (60-mil if high-density polyethylene), underlain by either one foot of compacted clay or a geosynthetic clay liner installed over a prepared base.
b. A liner system that includes Portland cement concrete – designed to minimize cracking and infiltration – underlain by a 40-mil synthetic geomembrane (60-mil if high-density polyethylene); or
c. An equivalent engineered alternative specified in an NOI and/or a technical report and approved by the Regional Water Board.

The Technical Report proposes to construct a lined stormwater pond consisting of a 60-mil high-density polyethylene (HDPE) geomembrane, underlain by a geosynthetic clay liner (GCL) installed over a prepared subgrade. The pond will be equipped with a pan lysimeter monitoring device completed under the lowest point of the pond. The proposed pond liner system and pan lysimeter meet the detention pond construction requirements of the General Order. As discussed in the Water and Wastewater Management section, the proposed stormwater pond capacity (16.06 AC-FT) meets the General Order capacity requirements.

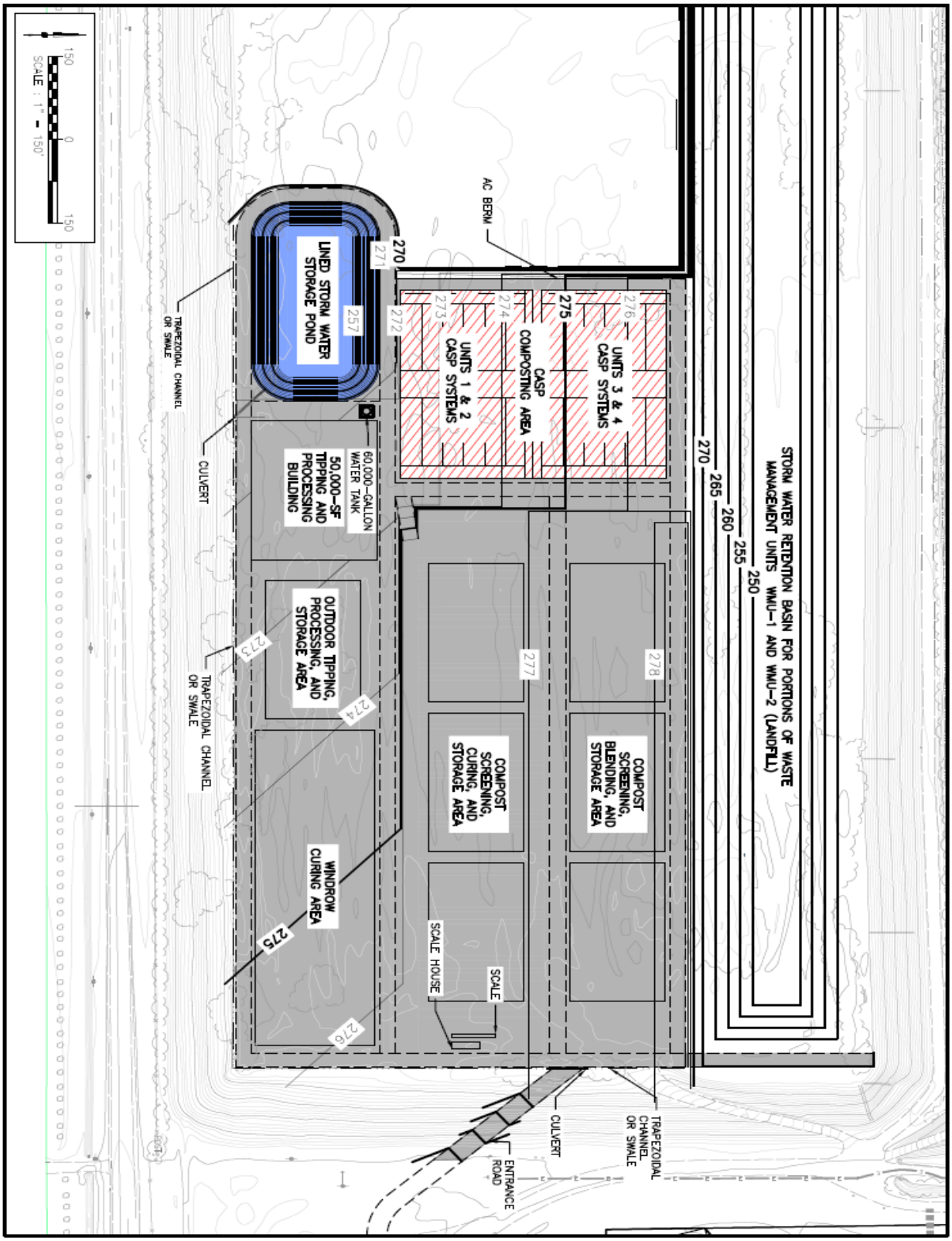
TIMELINE FOR COMPLIANCE

This is a proposed new facility, therefore, full compliance with the General Order is required prior to commencing composting operations.

MONITORING AND REPORTING
The Technical Report states that the Discharger will conduct a monitoring program as described in Attachment B of the General Order's Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP). The *Annual Monitoring and Maintenance Report* must be submitted to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) by April 1st of each year.

SITE CLOSURE
The Discharger will submit a written notice within 90 days of the site closure to the Central Valley Water Board. A 30-day of intent to perform site restoration will be provided to the Tulare County Local Enforcement Agency.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on staff review of the Technical Report and NOI, the proposed Facility will meet the General Order requirements if constructed and operated as described in the Technical Report. Issue the NOA with the stipulation that full compliance with the General Order design, construction, and operational requirements are met prior to commencing composting activities.



EBA ENGINEERING
825 SONOMA AVENUE
SUITE C
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
TEL (707) 544-0784

PRELIMINARY SITE LAYOUT

TULARE COUNTY COMPOST FACILITY
8614 AVE 328, VISALIA, CALIFORNIA

FIGURE
3
18-2573