

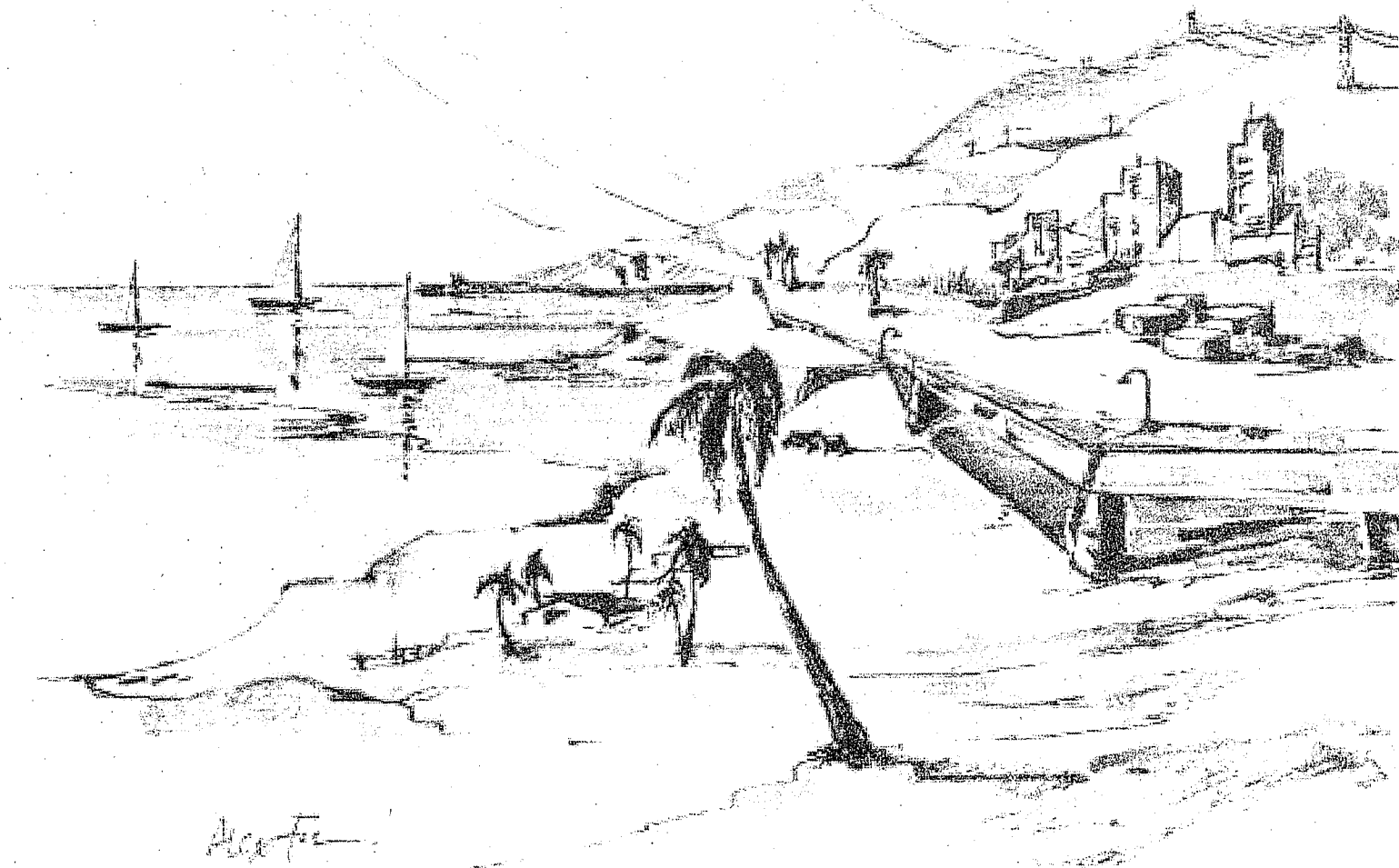
WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN Los Angeles Region

Basin Plan

for the

Coastal Watersheds of

Los Angeles and Ventura Counties



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Los Angeles Region (4)

3. WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES

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Introduction

The Clean Water Act (§303) requires states to develop water quality standards for all waters and to submit to the USEPA for approval all new or revised water quality standards which are established for inland surface and ocean waters. Water quality standards consist of a combination of beneficial

uses (designated in Chapter 2) and water quality objectives (contained in this Chapter).

In addition to the federal mandate, the California Water Code (§13241) specifies that each Regional Water Quality Control Board shall establish water quality objectives. The Water Code defines water quality objectives as "the allowable limits or levels of water quality constituents or characteristics which are established for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses of water or the prevention of nuisance within a specific area." Thus, water quality objectives are intended (i) to protect the public health and welfare and (ii) to maintain or enhance water quality in relation to the designated existing and potential beneficial uses of the water. Water quality objectives are achieved through Waste Discharge Requirements and other programs outlined in Chapter 4, Strategic Planning and Implementation. These objectives, when compared with future water quality data, also provide the basis for identifying trends toward degradation or enhancement of regional waters.

These water quality objectives supersede those contained in all previous Basin Plans and amendments adopted by the Los Angeles Regional Board. As new information becomes available, the Regional Board will review the objectives contained herein and develop new objectives as necessary. In addition, this Plan will be reviewed every three years (triennial review) to determine the need for modification.

Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality of Waters in California

A key element of California's water quality standards is the state's Antidegradation Policy. This policy, formally referred to as the *Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California* (State Board Resolution No. 68-16), restricts degradation of surface or ground waters. In particular, this policy protects waterbodies where existing quality is higher than is necessary for the protection of beneficial uses.

Table 3-9. The Maximum Contaminant Levels: Radioactivity (for MUN beneficial use) specified in Table 4 of Section 64443 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations as of 12-22-88.

MCL Radioactivity	Maximum Contaminant Level pCi/L
Combined Radium-226 and Radium-228	5
Gross Alpha particle activity (including Radium-226 but excluding Radon and Uranium)	15
Tritium	20,000
Strontium-90	8
Gross Beta particle activity	50
Uranium	20

(pCi/L = picocuries = curies $\times 10^{-12}$)

Solid, Suspended, or Settleable Materials

Surface waters carry various amounts of suspended and settleable materials from both natural and human sources. Suspended sediments limit the passage of sunlight into waters, which in turn inhibits the growth of aquatic plants. Excessive deposition of sediments can destroy spawning habitat, blanket benthic (bottom dwelling) organisms, and abrade the gills of larval fish.

Waters shall not contain suspended or settleable material in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.

Taste and Odor

Undesirable tastes and odors in water are an aesthetic nuisance, can impact recreational and other uses, and can indicate the presence of other pollutants.

Waters shall not contain taste or odor-producing substances in concentrations that impart undesirable tastes or odors to fish flesh or other edible aquatic resources, cause nuisance, or adversely affect beneficial uses.

Temperature

Discharges of wastewaters can cause unnatural and/or rapid changes in the temperature of receiving waters which can adversely affect aquatic life.

The natural receiving water temperature of all regional waters shall not be altered unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Regional Board that such alteration in temperature does not adversely affect beneficial uses. Alterations that are allowed must meet the requirements below.

For waters designated WARM, water temperature shall not be altered by more than 5 °F above the natural temperature. At no time shall these WARM-designated waters be raised above 80 °F as a result of waste discharges.

For waters designated COLD, water temperature shall not be altered by more than 5 °F above the natural temperature.

Temperature objectives for enclosed bays and estuaries are specified in the "Water Quality Control Plan for Control of Temperature in the Coastal and Interstate Waters and Enclosed Bays of California" (Thermal Plan), including any revisions thereto. See Chapter 5 for a description of the Thermal Plan.

Toxicity

Toxicity is the adverse response of organisms to chemical or physical agents. When the adverse response is mortality, the result is termed acute toxicity. When the adverse response is not mortality but instead reduced growth in larval organisms or reduced reproduction in adult organisms (or other appropriate measurements), a critical life stage effect (chronic toxicity) has occurred. The use of aquatic bioassays (toxicity tests) is widely accepted as a valid approach to evaluating toxicity of waste and receiving waters.

All waters shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations that are toxic to, or that produce detrimental physiological responses in, human, plant, animal, or aquatic life. Compliance with this objective will be determined by use of indicator organisms, analyses of species diversity, population density, growth anomalies, bioassays of appropriate duration or other appropriate methods as specified by the State or Regional Board.