

State Water Resources Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2001

SWRCB 01-003

Contact: Myrlys L. Stockdale

Robert Miller

916-341-5250

WATER QUALITY OFFICIALS TO TEST FOLSOM POND IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE CAUSE OF BEAVER DEATHS

FOLSOM – In response to dozens of letters from Folsom fifth graders, state and local water quality officials will be sampling and testing water at the Parkways Wetland Pond Thursday, February 15, 2001 at 10:15 a.m. The sampling will determine if the pond's environment contributed to the death of eight beavers found in the area since early January.

The pond is part of an environmental habitat designed to create a wetlands area, built by the contractor for the local housing development. It is adjacent to Oak Chan Elementary School in Folsom.

State Water Resources Control Board staff first became aware of this situation during an educational outreach visit to Janet Herrin's fifth grade class late last month. Herrin's class has been studying beaver habitats and water pollution since last October, when a dead fish in the pond raised questions about the health of the water. Their studies and proximity to the pond prompted the class to write letters to the SWRCB asking them to test the quality of the pond water.

Julia C., of Herrin's class, said in her letter, *"I really hope no more beavers die soon. I am ten years old and I want the beavers and all the other animals to live. If you can come test the water quality to see if that is killing the beavers, I would really appreciate it."* Sarah J., also in Herrin's class, voiced in her letter, *"We have a problem. Eight beavers have died. We've been doing projects and observing the beaver so we are very sad."* Beth J. vowed that her class, *"won't give up easily."*

State fish and game officials determined that seven of the eight carcasses were too decomposed for a necropsy; however, those beavers appeared to have black-colored congested lungs, which is unusual.

Engineers from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board will do the water testing and report back to Herrin's class with results.

-30-

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>

www.swrcb.ca.gov • email: info@exec.swrcb.ca.gov • 916.341.5250