

State Water Resources Control Board**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****November 15, 2001**

SWRCB 01-029

Contact: Myrllys L. Stockdale

Robert Miller

916-341-5254

State Water Board Grants \$810,000 to Help Reduce Bacteria Contamination at Dockweiler State Beach

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) today approved an \$810,000 Clean Beaches Initiative grant for the City of Los Angeles to divert dry weather runoff from the Imperial Highway storm drain into the sanitary sewer system.

The beach, south of Marina Del Rey, stretches for three miles and attracts about 3 million visitors each year. In 2001, high bacteria levels in the ocean water forced local officials to post or close the beach for about 30 days.

Currently, the contaminated runoff flows into Dockweiler State Beach. The storm drain discharges near the midpoint of the beach and the runoff is partially responsible for the postings and closures.

The diversion system will redirect the runoff into the sanitary sewer system where it will be treated at the Hyperion Treatment plant. The diversion will also remove trash debris, sediment, oil and grease that would normally enter Santa Monica Bay. The diversion system will also be able to accommodate the volume of water that enters the storm system during the typical first storm of the season, when the level of contamination is particularly high.

“Capturing and treating contaminated runoff is critical if we are to protect California’s coastal water resources,” said Arthur G. Baggett, SWRCB chairman. “Using Clean Beaches Initiative funding to protect such an key part of California life is important.”

In 1996, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project released the findings of a study that found connections between adverse health effects and closeness to storm drains, and also between adverse health effects and the presence of viruses and bacteria.

In July 2001, Governor Gray Davis signed the 2001 Budget Act, which appropriated more than \$32 million for clean beaches projects. The Budget Act’s Coastal Nonpoint Source Control subaccount provides funding for projects that protect and restore the state’s coastal waters. The account uses funds from the Costa-Machado Act of 2000.

-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>