



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

27 October 2025

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NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY

WATER QUALITY ORDER 2003-0003-DWQ-0266
STATEWIDE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCHARGES TO LAND
WITH A LOW THREAT TO WATER QUALITY
RANGER PIPELINES AND SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
SAN JOAQUIN PIPELINE – P4J SITE
STANISLAUS COUNTY

On 28 July 2025, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) received a Notice of Intent (NOI) from Ranger Pipelines (Ranger) on behalf of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SF PUC) to obtain coverage under *Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges to Land with a Low Threat to Water Quality* WQ Order 2003-0003-DWQ (General Order). The NOI was submitted for the proposed discharge of encountered “nuisance waters” (i.e., groundwater flowing through the granular bed of the pipeline, pipeline leak water, or perched groundwater) to land from temporary construction and dewatering during underground improvement/maintenance of the San Joaquin Pipeline (Pipeline). SF PUC and Ranger, as the owner of the pipeline and the entity conducting Pipeline maintenance, respectively, are hereafter referred to as Discharger. The submittal included a NOI form, Form 200, project maps, and a letter summarizing construction, dewatering, and discharge monitoring plans. The application fee was received on 28 July 2025.

The submittal contains all the information required to evaluate the applicability of the discharge under the General Order. Based on the information provided in the NOI and associated documents, the proposed discharge meets the conditions of the General Order. The discharge is hereby covered under the General Order and assigned enrollee number **2003-0003-DWQ-0266**. Please include this number on all correspondence

NICHOLAS AVDIS, CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1685 E Street, Fresno, CA 93706 | www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley

related to this discharge. A copy of the [Low Threat General Order](#) is enclosed and available on Central Valley Water Board's website at:

(https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Pipeline is part of the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System, which provides drinking water from the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir to residents of San Francisco. The Discharger is planning to conduct valve vault improvements at four major locations along the Pipeline that would involve excavations that may encounter groundwater that will be removed and discharged to land nearby. One such project location is identified as the P4J Site, which is located in a remote area east of Oakdale in Stanislaus County (37.7641°, -120.70881°).

According to the letter included with the NOI, the Discharger will be conducting valve and safe entry improvement installations to the Pipeline assets, which includes excavation depths of 14 feet below ground surface (bgs) or greater. A May 2024 geotechnical report prepared by AECOM indicates that no groundwater was encountered at the P4J Site; however, the Discharger has indicated that "nuisance water" may be encountered and pumped out of the work area. The Discharger proposes to conduct temporary construction dewatering onsite and discharge the encountered groundwater to the ground in the SF PUC right-of-way (ROW).

The Discharger plans to utilize a sump pump at the bottom of the vault excavation to convey encountered groundwater to a sedimentation tank(s) at ground level to allow solids/sediment to settle prior to discharge. The Discharger will size the settling tanks based on field conditions, and individual tanks may be up to 20,000 gallons. Following sufficient settling time, the stored groundwater will be discharged to onsite vegetated/open areas within the existing SF PUC ROW as shown in **Attachment A**. Settled sediment in the tanks will be removed and stockpiled to refill trenching areas once the project work at the site is complete. Dewatering is expected to be conducted intermittently between November and April of each year beginning in 2025 and lasting through 2028. Depending on site conditions, the Discharger expects to pump approximately 0.01 to 0.29 million gallons of encountered nuisance water per day.

According to the discharge monitoring plan submitted with the NOI, the discharge will be managed to avoid erosion or scour at the discharge point and monitored and adjusted based on the infiltration into the onsite soils. If necessary, discharge from the sedimentation tank will be stopped to prevent any off-site discharge.

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins, Fifth Edition, revised May 2018 (hereafter Basin Plan), designates beneficial

uses, establishes water quality objectives, contains implementation plans and policies for protecting waters of the basin, and incorporates by reference plans and policies adopted by the State Water Board. Pursuant to §13263(a) of the California Water Code, waste discharge requirements must implement the Basin Plan.

FACILITY-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

The General Order and this NOA covers the discharge of encountered nuisance water from construction dewatering to onsite vegetated/open space land within SF PUC ROW at the P4J site in Stanislaus County. The Discharger shall comply with the requirements specified in the General Order and the facility-specific requirements listed below.

1. Discharge to surface water or surface water drainage courses is prohibited.
2. Discharge of wastewater at a location or in a manner different from that described in this NOA is prohibited.
3. The discharge of water main, water storage tank, water hydrant pipeline flushing, or hydrostatic testing water from tanks or pipelines that have been used to store or convey any medium other than potable water is prohibited, unless the Discharger has demonstrated to the Regional Board that all residual pollutant concentrations have been reduced to levels below Regional Board Basin Plan groundwater quality objectives.
4. Discharge of wastes to lands not owned or controlled by the discharger is prohibited, unless the Discharger has a written lease or an agreement with the owner.
5. In accordance with the General Order's Monitoring and Reporting Program all monitoring results, including volume and location of discharges, shall be submitted on a semi-annual basis (i.e., July through December monitoring data shall be submitted by 15 February of each year, and January through June monitoring data shall be submitted by 15 August of each year). Monitoring shall include the approximate volume of discharge at each discharge location and date of each discharge.
6. The Discharger shall submit the required annual fee (as specified in the annual billing statement issued by the State Water Resources Control Board) until this NOA is officially terminated.

Please review this NOA carefully to ensure that it completely and accurately reflects the details of the proposed discharge. Failure to comply with the requirements of this NOA, Low Threat Order 2003-0003-DWQ, or applicable monitoring requirements may result in enforcement action as authorized by provisions of the California Water Code, which could include civil liability.

DOCUMENT SUBMITTALS

All monitoring reports and other correspondence should be converted to a searchable Portable Document Format (PDF) and submitted electronically. Documents that are less than 50 MB should be emailed to: centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov.

To ensure that your submittal 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:

Facility Name: San Joaquin Pipeline – P4J
Program: NON-15
Order: 2003-0003-DWQ-0266
CIWQS Place ID: 902413

Documents that are 50 MB or larger should be transferred to a CD, DVD, or flash drive and mailed to:

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Fresno Office
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706

All documents, including responses to inspections and written notifications, submitted to comply with this Waiver shall be directed, via the paperless office system, to the Compliance and Enforcement Unit, attention to Howard Hold. Mr. Hold can be reached at (916) 464-4679 or howard.hold@waterboards.ca.gov. Questions regarding the permitting aspects of the General Order, and notification for termination of coverage under the NOA, shall be directed, via the paperless office system, to the WDR Permitting Unit, attention Salvador Vargas-Maravilla. Mr. Vargas-Maravilla can be reached at (559) 444-2488 or by email at Salvador.Vargas@waterboards.ca.gov.

Any person aggrieved by this action of the Central Valley Water Board may petition the State Water Resources Control Board to review the action in accordance with California Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Resources Control Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the date of this NOA, except that if the thirtieth day following the date of this Order falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Resources Control Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. [Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions](#) may be

found on the internet or will be provided upon request.
(http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality).

Original signed by Alex S. Mushegan
For Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

Attachments:

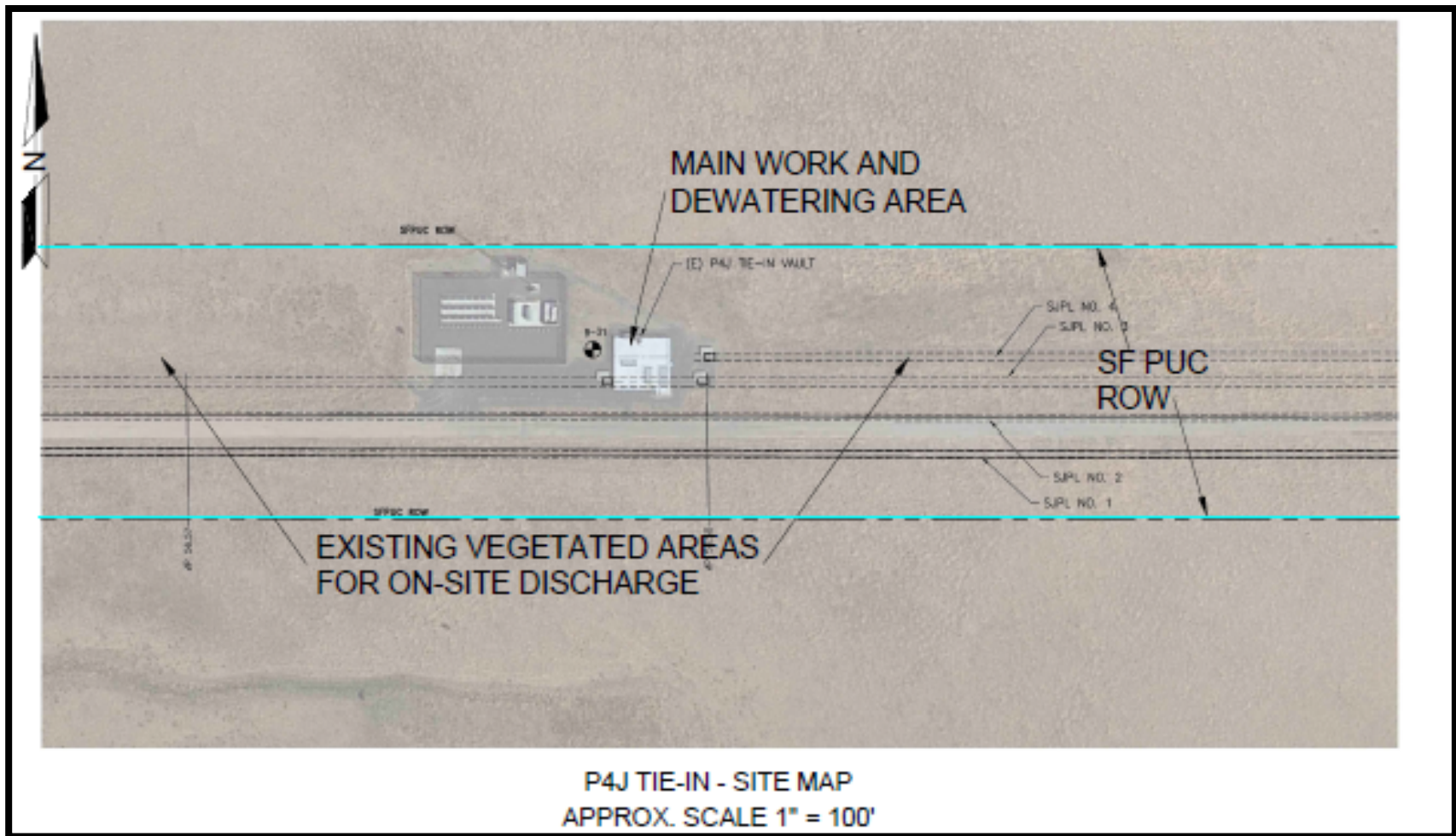
- Attachment A – Site Map

Enclosures:

- Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges to Land with a Low Threat to Water Quality, WQ Order 2003-0003-DWQ

cc w/o encs:

- Christopher Moskal, State Water Resources Control Board, OCC (via email)
- Stephanie Torres, State Water Resource Control Board (via email)
- Howard Hold, Central Valley Regional Water Board (via email)
- Scott Armstrong, Central Valley Regional Water Board (via email)
- Jamie Karg, Ranger Pipelines (via email)
- Jimmy Leong, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (via email)



ATTACHMENT A – SITE MAP
Reference: 28 July 2025 Notice of Intent