

# UNCONTESTED

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Tong Yin)  
MEETING DATE: June 8, 2011

**ITEM:** 5A

**SUBJECT:** California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Napa River Salt Marsh Restoration Project, Ponds 7, 7A, and 8, Napa County – Issuance of NPDES Permit

**CHRONOLOGY:** The Board has not previously considered this discharge.

**DISCUSSION:** This Revised Tentative Order (Appendix A) would issue an NPDES permit to the Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps to discharge diluted bittern from Napa River Salt Ponds 7, 7A, and 8. Water from adjacent sloughs will be introduced via Ponds 7A and 8 to dilute bittern in Pond 7, and the mixture will be discharged to Napa Slough. Bittern is a highly-concentrated brine byproduct made up of salts leftover after removal of most of the sodium chloride from historic solar salt production. Diluting the bittern in Pond 7 will eliminate its toxicity prior to discharge to Napa Slough. Circulating water from the sloughs will also reduce salt concentrations in the ponds themselves, thus improving habitat value over time. It is expected that in eight to ten years the salinity in the bittern pond will return to background levels.

The Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps applied for this NPDES permit as a part of a much larger restoration effort—the Napa Sonoma Salt Marsh Restoration Project—that encompasses nearly 10,000 acres and is the second largest restoration project in the San Francisco Bay Area. The project is to restore former salt ponds in the Napa and Sonoma areas to a mosaic of habitats that support populations of fish and wildlife, including endangered species, migratory waterfowl, and shorebirds.

The Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps together submitted comments (Appendix B) on the publically-circulated tentative order, and our response to their comments (Appendix C) describes changes we made to address their comments. We expect this item to remain uncontested.

**RECOMMEN-  
DATION:** Adopt the Revised Tentative Order

**CIWQS PLACE  
ID:** 654284

**APPENDICES:** A. Revised Tentative Order  
B. Comments Received  
C. Response to Comments