

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Vincent Christian)
MEETING DATE: May 14, 2014

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: **Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection System, Sonoma, Sonoma County** – Reissuance of NPDES Permit and Rescission of Cease and Desist Order

CHRONOLOGY: February 1997 – Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) imposed for \$83,000 for 62 sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) from 1994 to 1997
October 2008 – NPDES Permit reissued
July 2010 – ACL imposed for \$200,000 for 37 SSOs from 2007 to 2010

DISCUSSION: The Revised Tentative Order (Appendix A) would reissue the NPDES permit and rescind a cease and desist order for the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, which owns and operates a three million-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment plant serving Sonoma and nearby areas. Most of the treated wastewater is recycled, but some is discharged to Schell Slough during the wet season when flows exceed the treatment capacity of the District's tertiary filters.

The District is currently subject to a cease and desist order because of historical challenges meeting copper effluent limitations. However, because the District has installed a copper removal process that has lowered copper effluent concentrations, the Revised Tentative Order would also rescind the cease and desist order.

Ms. Anna Gomez submitted comments (Appendix B) on a tentative order distributed for public review. She is concerned about the poor condition of the District's collection system and how service expansion plans could affect the system. She asserts that collection system leaks threaten human health and the environment and violate the permit. She specifically requests a ban on new system connections until repairs are made.

We have not revised the tentative order based on Ms. Gomez's comments. While we share her concerns, we do not believe a connection ban is warranted at this time. The treatment plant has adequate capacity to treat projected wastewater flows. The cause of the District's largest overflows has been excessive inflow and infiltration during rains, which a connection ban will not correct. Further, consideration whether to impose a connection ban is an enforcement matter and should not delay this permit reissuance. We expect Ms. Gomez to testify at the hearing.

CIWQS Place ID: 257754

Appendices: A. Revised Tentative Order
B. Comments
C. Response to Comments