

State Water Resources Control Board

WATER QUALITY ORDER WQ 2025-0044-DWQ CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Effective Date: Upon Deputy Director's Signature
Expiration Date: Five Years from Effective Date
Project: State Route 55 (Interstate 5 to State Route 91) Improvement Project (12-0K7201; Project)
Project Type: Roads and Highways
Program Type: Fill/Excavation
Identifiers:
 WDID No: SB24086IN
 USACE No: SPL-2024-00267
 Federal Lic: Letter of Permission
 Place ID: 896372
 Reg. Meas. ID: 458324
Applicants: California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 12, and Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)
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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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I. Summary

This grant of Clean Water Act (CWA) section 401 certification with conditions (Certification or Order) is issued at the joint request of Caltrans, District 12, and OCTA (hereinafter Permittee) for the Project. The initial application was received on September 3, 2024, and the Permittee responded to requests for additional Project information through June 4, 2025. A complete application, as verified by Water Board staff, was submitted on May 26, 2025.

II. Findings

- A. This Order is adopted pursuant to CWA section 401 and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Wat. Code § 13000, *et seq.*). This Certification also serves as waste discharge requirements in accordance with State Water Board Water Quality General Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ. Discharges to waters of the state are prohibited except when in accordance with Water Code section 13264.
- B. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this Order, the violation or threatened violation shall be subject to any remedies, penalties, process, or sanctions as provided for under state and federal law, including the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.
- C. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this Order, the Water Board may require the holder of this Order to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the Water Boards deem appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the reports.
- D. This Order and all conditions contained herein continue to have full force and effect regardless of the expiration or revocation of any federal license or permit issued for the Project.
- E. This Order does not provide coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ; NPDES No. CAS000002) (Construction General Permit).
- F. This Order does not authorize any act which results in the take of a threatened, endangered or candidate species, which is now prohibited, or becomes prohibited in the future, under either the California Endangered Species Act (Fish & G. Code, §§ 2050-2097) or the federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. sections 1531-1544). If a “take” will result from any act authorized under this Order held by the Permittee, the Permittee must obtain authorization for the take prior to any construction or operation of the portion of the Project that may result in a take. The Permittee is responsible for meeting all requirements of the applicable endangered species act for the Project authorized under this Order.

III. Project Purpose and Description

Project Purpose: The purpose of the Project is to improve mobility and traffic operations, reduce congestion, and increase freeway capacity along the State Route (SR) 55 corridor.

Project Description: The Permittee proposes adding one general purpose lane to the SR 55 mainline in both directions between the interchanges with Interstate 5 (I-5) and SR 22. Improvements also include new retaining walls, realignment of the median barrier, additional lanes to on- and off-ramps, and a new bridge structure to accommodate relocation of an off-ramp.

Construction will impact concrete highway drainage features that support waters of the state. Project activities will include relocation of a concrete channel outside the widened roadway, improvements to existing drainage features, and replacement of existing concrete channels with underground pipe.

Project Location

County: Orange

Start: Latitude 33.739910° and Longitude: -117.833723°

End: Latitude: 33.843547° and Longitude: -117.827781°

Highway: SR 55 (postmiles 10.9 to R17.3) through the cities of Tustin, Santa Ana, Orange, and Anaheim

Maps showing the Project location are found in Attachment A of this Order.

IV. Project Impact and Receiving Waters Information

The Project is located within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Regional Water Board). Receiving waters and groundwater potentially impacted by this Project are protected in accordance with the applicable water quality control plan (Basin Plan). The plan for the region and other plans and policies may be accessed at the [State Water Resources Control Board's Plans and Policies Web page](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/) (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/). The Basin Plan includes water quality standards, which consist of existing and potential beneficial uses of waters of the state, water quality objectives to protect those uses, and the state and federal antidegradation policies.

It is the policy of the State of California that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes. This Order promotes that policy by requiring discharges to meet maximum contaminant levels designed to protect human health and ensure that water is safe for domestic use.

Project impact and receiving waters information is in Attachment B. Table 1 of Attachment B lists the receiving waters and beneficial uses of waters of the state impacted by the Project. Tables 2 and 3 of Attachment B list the individual impact locations and quantities.

V. Description of Direct Impacts to Waters of the State

The Project will result in direct temporary and permanent impacts to waters of the state. Temporary impacts include general ground disturbance due to heavy equipment use and construction vehicle access as well as replacement of existing features. Permanent impacts will result from the loss of surface waters due to conversion of concrete channels to underground pipe.

Total Project fill/excavation quantities for all impacts are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. Permanent impacts are categorized as those resulting in a physical loss in area and also those degrading ecological condition.

Table 1: Total Project Fill/Excavation Quantity for Temporary Impacts¹

Aquatic Resources Type	Acres	Linear Feet
Stream Channel	0.007	437

Table 2: Total Project Fill/Excavation Quantity for Permanent Physical Loss of Area Impacts

Aquatic Resources Type	Acres	Linear Feet
Stream Channel	0.049	1,112

VI. Description of Indirect Impacts to Waters of the State

The Water Board recognizes the potential for indirect impacts to waters of the state associated with the Project including siltation of receiving water during construction, introduction of pollutants (e.g., metals, trash, petroleum products, concrete waste (dry and wet), sanitary waste, and chemicals) to receiving waters during construction, introduction of invasive plant species to disturbed soils, and an increase of impervious surfaces resulting in a reduction in water quality for receiving waters.

The conditions set forth in section VIII will avoid and minimize the indirect impacts to waters of the state.

VII. Avoidance and Minimization

Avoidance and minimization measures were identified in the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) of the Project's Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The following mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize direct and indirect impacts to waters of the state:

¹ Includes only temporary direct impacts to waters of the state and does not include area of temporary disturbance which could result in a discharge to waters of the state. Temporary impacts, by definition, are restored to pre-project conditions and therefore do not include a physical loss of area or degradation of ecological condition.

- *BIO-3, PF-BIO-1, PF-BIO-2, PF-WQ-1, PF-WQ-2, PF-WQ-3, and PF-WQ-4*

No alternatives analysis is required because the Project was conducted in accordance with a watershed plan, the OCTA Measure M (M2) Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP; November 2016), that has been approved by the Water Board (State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State, section IV.A.1.g.iii).

VIII. Conditions

The Water Board has independently reviewed the record of the Project to analyze impacts to water quality and designated beneficial uses within the watersheds of the Project. This Order provides reasonable assurance that the Project authorized under this Order will comply with state and federally approved water quality requirements, provided that the following conditions are adhered to:

A. Impacts to Waters of the State

Impacts to waters of the state shall not exceed quantities shown in Tables 1 and 2.

B. Reporting and Notification Requirements

The following section details the reporting and notification types and timing of submittals. Requirements for the content of these reporting and notification types are detailed in Attachment C, including specifications for photo and map documentation during the Project. Written reports and notifications must be submitted using the Reporting and Notification Cover Sheet located in Attachment C, which must be signed by the Permittee or an authorized representative.

1. Project Reporting

- Monthly Reporting:** The Permittee must submit a Monthly Report to the Water Board on or before the 20th of each month during construction. Monthly reporting shall continue until the Water Board issues a Notice of Completion of Discharge Letter to the Permittee.
- Annual Reporting:** The Permittee shall submit an Annual Report each year on the anniversary of the Effective Date of this Order. Annual reporting shall continue until the Water Board issues a Notice of Project Complete Letter to the Permittee.

2. Project Status Notifications

- Commencement of Construction:** The Permittee shall submit a Commencement of Construction Report at least 7 days prior to start of initial ground disturbance activities and, if applicable, corresponding Waste Discharge Identification Number (WDID#) issued under the Construction General Permit.
- Request for Notice of Project Complete Letter:** The Permittee shall submit a Request for Notice of Project Complete Letter when construction and/or any post-construction monitoring is complete, and no further

Project activities will occur. This request shall be submitted to Water Board staff within 30 days following completion of all Project activities. Upon approval of the request, Water Board staff shall issue a Notice of Project Complete Letter to the Permittee which will end the post discharge monitoring period and associated annual fees. Completion of post-construction monitoring shall be determined by Water Board staff and shall be contingent on successful attainment of restoration objectives.

3. **Conditional Notifications and Reports:**

The following notifications and reports are required as appropriate.

a. **Accidental Discharges of Hazardous Materials²:**

Following an accidental discharge of a reportable quantity of a hazardous material, sewage, or an unknown material, the following applies (Wat. Code, § 13271):

- i. As soon as (A) Permittee have knowledge of the discharge or noncompliance, (B) notification is possible, and (C) notification can be provided without substantially impeding cleanup or other emergency measures then:
 - a. First call – 911 (to notify local response agency)
 - b. Then call – Office of Emergency Services (OES) State Warning Center at: (800) 852-7550 or (916) 845-8911
 - c. Lastly, follow the required OES procedures as set forth in the [Office of Emergency Services' Accidental Discharge Notification Web Page](https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/response-operations/fire-rescue/hazardous-materials/spill-release-reporting/) (https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/response-operations/fire-rescue/hazardous-materials/spill-release-reporting/)
- ii. Following notification to OES, the Permittee shall notify the Water Board, as soon as practicable (ideally within 24 hours). Notification may be delivered via written notice, email, or other verifiable means.
- iii. Within 5 business days of notification to the Water Board, the Permittee must submit an Accidental Discharge of Hazardous Material Report.

² "Hazardous material" means any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. "Hazardous materials" include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material that a handler or the administering agency has a reasonable basis for believing that it would be injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. (Health & Saf. Code, § 25501.)

b. Violation of Water Quality Standards

- i. The Permittee shall notify the Water Board of any event causing a violation of water quality standards. Notification may be delivered via written notice, email, or other verifiable means.
- ii. This notification must be followed within 3 business days by submission of a Violation of Water Quality Standards Report.

c. Modifications to Project

Project modifications may require an amendment of this Order. The Permittee shall give advance notice to Water Board staff if Project implementation as described in the application materials is altered in any way or by the imposition of subsequent permit conditions by any local, state, or federal regulatory authority by submitting a Modifications to Project Report. The Permittee shall inform Water Board staff of any Project modifications that will interfere with the Permittee's compliance with this Order. Notification may be made in accordance with conditions in the Deviation section of this Order.

d. Transfer of Property Ownership

This Order is not transferable in its entirety or in part to any person or organization except after notice to the Water Board in accordance with the following terms:

- i. The Permittee must notify the Water Board of any change in ownership or interest in ownership of the Project area by submitting a Transfer of Property Ownership Report. The Permittee and purchaser must sign and date the notification and provide such notification to the Water Board at least 10 days prior to the transfer of ownership. The purchaser must also submit a written request to the Water Board to be named as the permittee in a revised order.
- ii. Until such time as this Order has been modified to name the purchaser as the permittee, the Permittee shall continue to be responsible for all requirements set forth in this Order.

e. Transfer of Long-Term Best Management Practices (BMP) Maintenance

If maintenance responsibility for post-construction BMPs is legally transferred, the Permittee must submit to the Water Board a copy of such documentation and must provide the transferee with a copy of a long-term BMP maintenance plan that complies with manufacturer or design specifications. The Permittee must provide such notification to the Water Board with a Transfer of Long-Term BMP Maintenance Report at least 10 days prior to the transfer of BMP maintenance responsibility.

C. Water Quality Monitoring**1. General**

If surface water is present, continuous visual monitoring shall be conducted during active construction to detect accidental discharge of construction related pollutants (e.g., oil and grease, turbidity plume, uncured concrete).

2. In-Water Work or Diversions

No in-water work or water diversions are proposed; all Project activities are proposed to occur when channels are dry. Therefore, no such work or diversions are authorized by this Order.

3. Accidental Discharges/Noncompliance

Upon occurrence of an accidental discharge, the Permittee shall determine whether the discharge includes hazardous materials or will cause or contribute to an exceedance of water quality objectives, and if so, notify the Water Board in accordance with the Conditional Notifications and Reports section VIII.B.3. Water Board staff may require additional water quality monitoring based on the discharge constituents and/or related water quality objectives and beneficial uses.

4. Post-Construction

The Permittee shall visually inspect the Project site between October 30 and April 15 following each rain event that results in 0.5 inch or more of rainfall in 48 hours for one year to ensure excessive erosion, stream instability, or water quality pollution is not occurring in or downstream of the Project site. If erosion control measures have failed or water quality pollution is occurring, contact the Water Board staff member overseeing the Project within 3 business days. The Water Board may require the submission of a Violation of Water Quality Standards Report. Additional permits may be required to carry out any necessary site remediation.

D. Standard Conditions

1. This action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to Water Code section 13330, and California Code of Regulations, title 23, chapter 28, article 6 commencing with section 3867.
2. This Order is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any activity involving a hydroelectric facility and requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license, unless the pertinent certification application was filed pursuant to subsection 3855(b) of chapter 28, title 23 of the California Code of Regulations, and that application

specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.

E. Fees

1. This Order is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under title 23 of the California Code of Regulations.

The total fee amount required by the California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3), Category A – Fill & Excavation, is \$2,985.00, which was received on July 26, 2024.

2. **Annual Fees:** This Order is subject to annual billing based on the fee schedule in effect at the time of billing. Annual billing will continue until the Project, including monitoring, is complete and the Water Board receives an acceptable request for a Notice of Project Complete Letter (see Attachment C). Invoices are usually sent out at the end of each calendar year.³

To stop annual billing, the Permittee must request a Notice of Project Complete Letter from the Water Board. Water Board staff will verify if the conditions of the Order are met and may conduct a site visit to confirm compliance.

For more information on fees, visit the State Water Board's [Water Quality Fees website](#),⁴ under Water Quality Certification (WQC) Program Fees.

F. General Compliance

1. Permitted actions must not cause a violation of any applicable water quality standards, including impairment of designated beneficial uses for receiving waters as adopted in the Basin Plan by the applicable Regional Water Board. The source of any such discharge must be eliminated as soon as practicable.
2. The Project must conform to the engineering plans, specifications, and technical reports submitted with the application materials. Water Code section 13264 prohibits any discharge that is not specifically authorized in this Order.
3. The Permittee shall adhere to all requirements in the adopted IS/MND for the Project, including the ECR (March 30, 2020) which is incorporated herein by

³ Annual invoices for fill and excavation projects are issued for projects active for any amount of time in the current fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Annual invoices for dredging projects are based on the quantity of dredged material in the previous fiscal year.

⁴ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/fees/water_quality/

reference and included in Attachment D, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Findings of Fact.

G. Administrative

1. Signatory requirements for all document submittals required by this Order are presented in Attachment E.
2. **Site Access:** The Permittee shall grant Water Board staff, including State Water Board and Santa Ana Regional Water Board staff or an authorized representative (including an authorized contractor acting as a Water Board representative), upon presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, permission to:
 - a. Enter upon the Project or compensatory mitigation site(s) premises where a regulated facility or activity is located or conducted, or where records are kept.
 - b. Have access to and copy any records that are kept and are relevant to the Project or the requirements of this Order.
 - c. Inspect any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this Order.
 - d. Sample or monitor for the purposes of assuring Order compliance.
3. The Permittee is responsible for work conducted by its consultants, contractors, and any subcontractors. A copy of this Order shall be provided to any consultants, contractors, and subcontractors working on this Project. Copies of this Order shall remain at the Project site for the duration of this Order. All personnel performing work on the Project shall be familiar with the content of this Order and its posted location at the Project site.

H. Construction Conditions

1. All materials and supplies necessary for implementing these construction conditions must be on-site and ready for use at the start of the construction activity and must remain in supply and ready for implementation throughout the construction process. All non-structural BMP materials (e.g., training documents, compliance tracking procedures) must be ready for use at the start of construction.
2. Construction material, debris, rubbish, spoils, soil, silt, sawdust, steel, welding slag, welding rods, waste material, waste containers, other organic or earthen material, or any other substances which could be detrimental to water quality or hazardous to aquatic life that is discharged as a result of Project related activities shall be prevented from entering waters of the state. Spoils from excavations shall not be stored in waters of the state.
3. Environmentally sensitive areas and environmentally restricted areas, including any avoided waters of the state, must be clearly identified in the field for exclusion prior to the start of construction. Such identification must be properly maintained until construction is completed and the soils are

stabilized. Equipment, materials, or any other substances or activities that may impact waters of the state outside of the limits of Project disturbance are prohibited.

4. The number of access routes, number and size of staging areas, and the total area of the activity must be limited to the minimum necessary to achieve the Project goal. Routes and work area boundaries must be clearly demarcated.
5. Bridges, culverts, dip crossings, or other structures must be installed so that water and in-stream sediment flow are not impeded. Appropriate design criteria, practices and materials must be used in areas where access roads intersect waters of the state.
6. Temporary materials placed in any water of the state must be removed as soon as construction is completed at that location, and all temporary roads must be removed or re-contoured and restored according to specifications provided in the application materials.
7. Unless authorized for restoration, material excavated to prepare a site for placement of the permitted fill material must be properly disposed of in an upland area. The disposal site must be located at a sufficient distance away from flowing or standing water such that the excavated material does not erode or move in any way into any water of the state.
8. **Dust Abatement:** Dust abatement chemicals added to water can be hazardous to wildlife and, if allowed to enter streams, detrimental to water quality. Therefore, dust abatement activities shall be conducted so that sediment or dust abatement chemicals are not discharged into waters of the state. Dust abatement products or additives that are known to be detrimental to water quality or wildlife shall not be used, unless specific management needs are documented, and product-specific application plans are approved by Water Board staff.
9. **Use of Mechanized Equipment:** Activities permitted under this Order shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes ground disturbance, soil compaction, rutting and other mechanical impacts. Equipment shall be operated and maintained in a manner that reduces the risk of spills or the accidental exposure of fuels or hazardous materials to water bodies or wetlands. Appropriate Project specific BMPs shall be specified by the Permittee and shall be approved by Water Board staff prior to Project discharges.
10. **Culvert Construction or Maintenance**
 - a. Cured in Place Pipe is prohibited where it could cause detrimental physiological responses to human, plant, animal, or aquatic life, or cause discharges to waters of the state that do not comply with water quality objectives or goals.
 - b. Replacement of culverts acting as grade control structures is prohibited. A vertical gap between the outlet of the culvert and the immediate

downstream invert of the stream channel indicates that the culvert likely functions as a grade control structure.

- c. Projects proposing to replace culverts must repair any existing scour or headcutting actively discharging sediment, caused by prior culvert design.
- d. The replaced or maintained culvert shall be in alignment with the stream channel upstream and downstream of the culvert.
- e. Any replacement culvert or culvert that is to be left in place by a repair or maintenance Project must be placed at a gradient and orientation that will not result in erosional scour at the outlet.
- f. Replacement of a culvert with a similarly sized culvert is allowable only where there is no visual indication that the existing culvert is undersized. Visual indications of undersized culverts include but are not limited to: sediment aggradation upstream of the culvert; evidence of flow over the top of the culvert (e.g., erosional rills in dirt road surfaces or erosion of shoulders adjacent to paved road surfaces), erosion of the fill cell between the culvert and the road surface, scour pools at the culvert outlet, or erosion of creek banks immediately downstream of the culvert.
- g. Culverts with solid bottoms (e.g., cylindrical culverts or box culverts) may be replaced with arch culverts or free-span bridges, if the existing culvert is not acting as a grade control structure.
- h. The culvert must not be located in a meander bend of the stream channel.
- i. Replacement culverts that cross from one side of the freeway to the other must be sized to convey a 100-year flow event or greater with debris, without pressurizing flow passing through the culvert. The 100-year flow event should be modeled under climate change projections, if available. Replacement culvert designs that do not span the freeway, shall at minimum meet standards described in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM), available at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/manual-highway-design-manual-hdm> and incorporated herein by reference.

11. Toxic and Hazardous Materials

- a. Activities permitted under this Order shall not discharge toxic substances in concentrations that produce detrimental physiological responses to human, plant, animal, or aquatic life.
- b. Discharge of unset cement, concrete, grout, damaged concrete spoils, or water that has contacted uncured concrete or cement, or related washout to surface waters, ground waters, or land is prohibited. If concrete washout is necessary at the site, washout containment shall be used to prevent any discharge. Wastewater may only be disposed by delivery to a sanitary wastewater collection system/facility (with authorization from the facility's owner or operator) or a properly licensed disposal or reuse facility.

- c. Appropriate BMPs must be implemented throughout Project activities to prevent and control potential leaks/spills/drainage of potentially hazardous materials such as: non-petroleum hydraulic fluid; epoxies; paints and other protective coating materials; cement concrete or asphalt concrete; and washings and cuttings thereof.
- d. Activities permitted under this Order shall not discharge waste classified as "hazardous" as defined in California Code of Regulations title 22, section 66261 and Water Code section 13173. Appropriate BMPs for hazardous substances shall be specified by the Permittee and shall be approved by Water Board staff prior to Project discharges. These BMPs shall include, at a minimum:
 - i. All personnel handling fuels and other hazardous materials shall be properly trained.
 - ii. Adequate spill prevention and cleanup equipment and materials shall be present on-site at all times during Project implementation.
 - iii. All mechanized equipment shall be maintained in good operating order and inspected on a regular basis.
 - iv. All on-site fuel trucks or fuel containers shall be stored in an area where risk of contamination of water bodies by leaks or spills is minimized.
 - v. All equipment shall be fueled, maintained, and/or parked overnight in an upland area at least 100 feet from any delineated waters of the state.
 - vi. Hazardous materials, including chemicals, fuels, and lubricating oils, shall not be stored within 100 feet of any delineated waters of the state, and shall be stored in appropriate containers with appropriate secondary containment.
 - vii. Pumps or other stationary equipment operating within 100 feet of a waterbody or wetland shall utilize appropriate secondary containment systems to prevent spills.
 - viii. Any spills or leaks of hazardous materials, chemicals, fuels, lubricants, or any other potential pollutants shall be promptly and completely treated using appropriate materials and equipment.
 - ix. Spill containment supplies shall be on-site in all work areas in sufficient quantities to allow immediate remediation of fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid or similar leaks and spills.
 - x. A staging area for equipment and vehicle fueling and storage shall be designated at least 100 feet away from waters of the state, in a location where fluids or accidental discharges cannot flow into waters of the state.

12. Invasive Species and Soil Borne Pathogens

- a. The Permittee is responsible for ensuring that all Project personnel follow proper weed control practices, and that appropriate weed prevention measures are included in Project plans.
- b. Any straw, hay or other unprocessed plant material used for any purpose must be certified or documented as being weed free.
- c. Soil borne pathogens are any nematodes, or any bacterial, protozoan, viral or fungal pathogens that can cause disease or death to native plants, agricultural crops, or ornamental plants (e.g., *Phytophthora ramorum*, the cause of sudden oak syndrome, and *Phytophthora lateralis*, the cause of Port Orford cedar root disease). Any equipment entering or leaving the Project area from an area of known soil borne pathogen infestation shall be thoroughly cleaned using methods appropriate for the known pathogen before entering or leaving the Project area. The fungus that causes Valley Fever, *Coccidioides spp.*, is not considered a soil borne pathogen in this certification.

13. Work in Delineated Waters of the State

Work in waters of the state must not cause or contribute to an exceedance of water quality objectives in the receiving waters. Work in delineated waters commences at the onset of the regulated activity and continues until the activity is finished and all restoration of the affected work area is complete. This requirement applies to work in any delineated waters of the state, regardless of the presence or absence of flowing or standing water.

14. Stormwater

The Permittee shall comply with the requirements in the Construction General Permit. Generally, coverage under the Construction General Permit is required for construction activity resulting in a land disturbance of one acre or more, or less than one acre but is part of a larger common plan of development or sale that results in a land disturbance of one acre or more. Covered activities are described with additional detail in the Construction General Permit.

I. Temporary Impact Restoration

1. The Permittee shall restore all areas of temporary impacts to waters of the state in accordance with the Project specifications submitted as part of the application materials. The Permittee shall submit a copy of the Post-Project Report (also submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) within 45 days of the completion of impacts. One qualifying rainfall event in accordance with section VIII.C.4 must be reported before submitting a request for Project Complete. The results of post-construction monitoring shall be summarized in the annual report submitted to Water Board staff. Reporting shall include pre- and post-construction photo documentation of each affected drainage feature. Any degradation of restored features observed during monitoring shall be

reported to the Water Board in accordance with the appropriate report (see Conditional Notification and Report section VIII.B.3).

2. Total required Project restoration information for temporary impacts is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Required Project Restoration Quantity for Temporary Impacts

Aquatic Resource Type	Units	Quantity to be Restored
Stream Channel	Acres	0.007

J. Compensatory Mitigation for Permanent Impacts

Compensatory mitigation is for permanent physical loss and permanent ecological degradation of a water of the state and may include mitigation for temporary impacts that result in temporal loss of function.

The Permittee is required to provide compensatory mitigation for permanent impacts to waters of the state in accordance with the Orange County Measure M2 Environmental Mitigation Program (M2 EMP), which includes efforts related to the OCTA M2 HCP/NCCP and was approved by the Water Board through a letter of assurance dated January 22, 2018. The M2 EMP was developed to provide a comprehensive, watershed-based compensatory mitigation approach for all the Measure M2 Projects for all resources. Therefore, per the Streambed Program Guidelines (Appendix E of the OCTA M2 HCP/NCCP), Project-specific compensatory mitigation is not required because all of the impacted aquatic features (for this Project) are constructed concrete channels that will be replaced in-kind or converted to underground pipe.

K. Deviation

1. Minor modifications of Project locations or predicted impacts may be necessary as a result of unforeseen field conditions, necessary engineering re-design, construction concerns, or similar reasons. Some of these prospective Project modifications may have impacts on water quality. Some modifications of Project locations or predicted impacts may qualify as Deviations as set forth in Attachment F. For purposes of this Certification, a "Deviation" is a Project locational or impact modification that does not require an immediate amendment of the Order, because the Water Board has determined that any potential water quality impacts that may result from the change are sufficiently addressed by the Order conditions and the CEQA Findings. After termination of construction, this Order will be amended to reflect all authorized Deviations and any resulting adjustments to the amount of water resource impacts and required compensatory mitigation amounts.
2. A Project modification shall not be granted a Deviation if it would require changes to the Order conditions or the CEQA environmental document such that the Project impacts are not addressed in the Project's environmental document or the conditions of this Order. In this case a supplemental environmental review and different Order will be required.

IX. Public Notice

The Water Board complied with applicable public notice requirements. The Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3858 from October 9, 2024, to October 29, 2024. The Water Board did not receive any comments during the comment period.

X. CEQA

Caltrans, District 12, as lead agency, adopted an initial IS/MND for the Project on March 30, 2020, and filed a Notice of Determination (NOD) at the State Clearinghouse (No. 2019099104) on April 1, 2020. Pursuant to CEQA, the Water Board has made Findings of Fact (Findings) which support the issuance of this Order and are included in Attachment D.

The Water Board will file a NOD at the State Clearinghouse within 5 business days of issuance of this Order.

XI. Petitions for Reconsideration

Any person aggrieved by this action may petition the State Water Board to reconsider this Order in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3867. A petition for reconsideration must be submitted in writing and received within 30 calendar days of the issuance of this Order.

XII. Water Quality Certification

I hereby issue the Certification for the SR 55 (I-5 to SR 91) Improvement Project (12-0K7201), SB24086IN, certifying that as long as all of the conditions listed in this Order are met, any discharge from the referenced Project will comply with the applicable provisions of CWA sections 301 (Effluent Limitations), 302 (Water Quality Related Effluent Limitations), 303 (Water Quality Standards and Implementation Plans), 306 (National Standards of Performance), and 307 (Toxic and Pretreatment Effluent Standards).

This discharge is also regulated pursuant to Water Board Water Quality Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ which authorizes this Order to serve as Waste Discharge Requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Wat. Code, § 13000 et seq.).

Authorization is contingent on: (a) compliance with the conditions of this Order and the attachments to this Order; and (b) compliance with all applicable requirements of Statewide Water Quality Control Plans and Policies, and the Regional Water Boards' Water Quality Control Plans.

Date

Phillip Crader Digitally signed by Phillip Crader
Date: 2025.07.02 10:48:26 -07'00'
Water Boards

Phillip Crader, Deputy Director
Division of Water Quality