

WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

OCTOBER 8, 2003 - Water Resources

McDonald, Little

OCTOBER 27, 2003 - Board Meeting

Prepared by: Uzi Daniel

Submitted by: Richard Nagel

Approved by: Darryl G. Miller

INFORMATION CALENDAR

SEAWATER BARRIER WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT UPDATESUMMARY:

West Basin is working aggressively on requirements for the Barrier expansion. Numerous permit provisions must be fulfilled before startup of the plant as well as during continued operation of the water recycling plant.

The "discharge" of recycled water to the Barrier requires permit approval from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB will look to the Department of Health Services (DHS) for a "Letter of Recommendation" (LOR) supporting the Barrier project. A draft letter has been prepared for DHS that included a LOR, a summary of the public hearing, conditions of the permit as well as the facts and findings. This letter was recently sent to DHS for their review and approval. It is likely RWQCB will include additional provisions to the DHS recommendations.

On Thursday, October 2, 2003, the Los Angeles Regional Board heard the permit for the Department of Water and Power's (DWP) Dominguez Gap Barrier Project. West Basin was concerned about the inclusion of advisory leveled "Action Levels" being included as enforceable permit standards. This permit will probably look identical to our future permit. While, many agencies spoke out against the inclusion of "Action Levels," the permit did pass by a 6 to 1 vote.

Subsequently, DWP has decided to appeal their permit to the State Water Resources Control Board. An appeal must be filed within 30 days. The main issue is the Regional Board's authority under the Porter-Cologne Act to include the non-enforceable "Action Levels" as mandatory compliance limits. Injection barrier projects fell under the Regional Board's MUN (Municipal drinking water) designation.

Staff is working closely with DWP, Water Replenishment District, the City of Los Angeles, the County Sanitation District of Los Angeles County, and Metropolitan Water District to develop the strategy for the appeal. Of greater concern, staff has recently become aware that the Regional Board has imposed "Action Levels" in non-potable reuse permits. This could preclude the use of recycled water as a non-potable supply. At this time, only the Los Angeles region is imposing such limits, but there is discussion among other boards whether to adopt the Los Angeles Board's strategy.

The DHS will require approximately three weeks for finalization of our letter to the RWQCB. The RWQCB should be ready to consider the permit application three to six months following their review.

As part of the Barrier permit from the RWQCB, West Basin will be required to obtain an outside "independent" professional to submit annual reports related to Flow and Transport, Mass Balance of Groundwater, and Tracer Programs. Additional quarterly water quality reports will be submitted by staff to comply with all permit conditions for the Barrier Expansion.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

Funds are available in the fiscal year 2003-04 budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:

Environmental documentation needs have already been approved by the Board.

COMMITTEE STATUS:

This item was reviewed by the Water Resources Committee on October 8, 2003 and agendaized to the October 27, 2003 Board meeting as information for discussion.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS:

This item is for information only.

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit "A" - Draft Letter of Recommendation with Conditions of Permit